

# Ba, Ka, and Akh Concepts in the Old Kingdom, Ancient Egypt

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[Abstract]

The study of religious concepts in a synthetic and unified framework is necessary to understand the ancient texts on the basis of Egyptian features. This is required since there are numerous religious concepts and their complex usages appearing in various religious texts and in non-religious texts as well. The study of religious concepts in ancient Egypt is one of the keys by which we can approach to the understanding of Egyptian texts and Egyptian mentality.

Some characteristics of Egyptian religious anthropology are elucidated around Ka, Ba and Akh in this paper. In addition, “Pseudo-Dualism” and “Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive” are applied to the religious concepts. While the body and the spirit (soul) seem to be divided, the Egyptian regarded each of them as perfect being as a whole, which cannot be divided (Pseudo-Dualism). This leads to another idea that the subject can be indicated by the following genitive (Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive). Without understanding these peculiar usages, moderns would be puzzled about the seeming plurality of entities, which is one character in fact.

Keywords: Ka, Ba, Akh, religious anthropology, Old Kingdom, Pyramid Texts

## 1 Introduction

The study of religious concepts in a synthetic and unified framework is necessary to understand the ancient texts correctly on the basis of Egyptian features. Such an approach is required since there are numerous religious concepts and their complex usages appearing

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☆ Simple text correction like between “*nb*” and “*.k*” (suffix) is not mentioned, and some restoration as Sethe or Faulkner did is also not noted in translation.

in various religious texts and in non-religious texts as well. The study of religious concepts in ancient Egypt is one of the keys by which we can better understand Egyptian texts and Egyptian mentality.

In the present paper, the three concepts of Ka, Ba, and Akh will be treated within a new framework that can be applied for them all, elucidating their different peculiarities. Among religious concepts, these three are representative since they provide us with a good example of the sufficient structure of the ancient Egyptian religious mentality through their peculiar meanings and usages.

Most of the texts cited in this paper are taken from the Pyramid Texts and some from non-religious texts, when they are useful to expose the feature of the concepts. As the first collected and arranged texts, the Pyramid Texts are the most basic sources thanks to which we can elucidate the peculiar structures, meanings, and usages of the above-mentioned concepts.

Before discussing, we may question generally about what a soul or a spirit is in our understanding. We become aware that it consists of complex and confusing ideas. In a fair tale, a soul goes out of human body and trips or wanders to a far area as it likes, the soul being an entity. In expressions like “I am out of spirits,” or “this music has no soul,” the spirit and the soul mean “power.” The above implies that the soul or spirit can express a variety of entities who have a power, and a variety of abstract powers.

Egyptologists have researched the religious concepts of Ka, Ba, and Akh “independently” or “separately” without connecting them with one another. Among them, the Ka has been well studied early on in the history of Egyptology. It is nowadays recognized to be the “vital force,” although it can be interpreted and translated in various ways, such as “spirit,” “double,” “totem,” etc. The Ba is usually translated as “become a soul” as verb, and as “soul” and often “power,” when necessary. As for the Akh, it means “to be splendid, glorious, beneficial,” etc. as an (adjectival) verb, or “spirit” as a noun.

Here, we can notice that ancient Egyptians had verbs of soul and spirit,<sup>1</sup> while European and Japanese have no equivalent of verbal form. This fact means that Egyptian concepts of soul and spirit are more various and more complex than other people’s ones.

The essence of religious anthropological conceptions is called “power” according to the classical definition of religious studies. Any concept translated as “soul” or “spirit” is a kind of power. The spirit or the soul is originally a kind of power that a man can feel in his body, although it looks to appear in various expressions. Such is also the case with the ancient Egyptian concepts studied here.

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<sup>1</sup> This denominative verb of “soul” was pointed out by “Soul (Semitic and Egyptian),” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* 11 (Edinburgh, 1920), p. 752.

Based on the complexity and ambiguity above, the new framework that we are going to establish shall be simple basically, which can be applied to any kind of religious concept.

## 2 Framework of Religious Concepts

When mentioning religious or cultural phenomena, we often forget that they have been influenced by the time period and the culture of their country of origin and we often interpret them according to our own values. The spirit or the soul in which ancient Egyptians believed had its own background in the history of ancient Egypt. Similarly, English, French, German, Chinese or Japanese spirits and souls should have each different features, while sharing some core essence under the concepts of spirit and soul.

As for the religious concepts of the ancient Egyptians, their variety shall be mentioned as a chief distinction for our research. While there are only the two expressions “spirit” and “soul”<sup>2</sup> in English and also in Japanese<sup>3</sup>, there are the terms Ka, Ba, Akh, Sekhem, shade, etc. in ancient Egyptian. Egyptologists usually translate these concepts simply as “spirit” or “soul.” Sometimes, as for entities, “double, “human-headed bird” etc. are recalled in a moment, while as for powers, “essence,” “fortune, “vital force, “fame,” “dignity” etc. are named.

To avoid any simple and arbitrary interpretation, religious anthropology gives us a valid approach, showing us that the spirit and soul are intimately connected with the human concept. Apart from the complexity or the lack of universality, the methodology of Religionsphänomenologie was adopted in the studies of the religious concepts by some Egyptologists to point out the importance of religious experience.

“Sie [die ägyptischen Aussagen] erscheinen nicht mehr als sinnlose Spekulationen, sondern wie alle religiösen Grundpositionen als Niederschlag von Erlebnissen der damaligen Menschen, die – gewiss in anderem Gewand – prinzipiell auch heute möglich sind.”<sup>4</sup>

“Difficiles d'accès, ces notions ne doivent tout de même pas être inaccessibles à la pensée occidentale moderne car le champ d'expériences religieuses doit en principe être le même.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The distinction is that “spirit” is of Latin origin while “soul” is of German origin. The English expressions were derived from the major traditions within Europe. In ancient Egypt, the variety of the concepts coexisted in the monoculture of Egyptian society.

<sup>3</sup> “霊” (rei) and “魂” (tamashii).

<sup>4</sup> Beate George, *Zu den altägyptischen Vorstellungen vom Schatten als Seele* (Bonn, 1970), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Gertie Englund, *Akh: Une notion religieuse dans l'Égypte pharaonique* (Uppsala, 1978), p. 14f.

B. George<sup>6</sup>, who published a monograph about the “shade” concept, cited two definitions of the soul in Religionsphönomenologie, which are from G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion*: (a) “das Mächtig-Wirkungsvolle”; (b) “der ganze Mensch in seiner Heiligkeit.” Generally speaking, the soul or spirit is, first of all, “power in abstract” or “man as a whole in his sacred power.” Similar classifications occur in the Ba studies by E. M. Wolf-Brinkmann and L. V. Žabkar, which have inspired the author in this paper.

The “soul” or the “spirit” is connected with some kind of power. It is an abstract “power” or a “powerful one” basically. In addition, it must be notified that Egyptian soul and spirit have their verbal forms, which can lead to their nominalization through participle. And the power practically can be independent as entity, as often seen in fairy tale etc.

The classification of the Egyptian religious concepts is listed below:

	Power in abstract (Noun)	Be Powerful in abstract (Verb)	Concretized Power (Nominalization)	Personification of Power
Ka	○	—	○*, **	—
Ba	○	○	○	—***
Akh	○	○	○	—

\* Strangely, the Ka can be used for “one who is under the Ka-power” like participle.

\*\* It should be notified that another usage can be seen in case of “*k3.f*” (his Ka), which simply means “he.” This example is just in the same usage as “*hm.f*” means “His Majesty” (=he), “*hm*” being “servant” (maybe originally, body).

\*\*\* This personification can be seen from the New Kingdom: a human-headed bird as in hieroglyph.

Among the concepts of Ba, Ka and Akh, the Ba covers the full range of usage: noun, verb, nominalization (participle), and personification. Moreover, the Ba is more active than the others. The following occurrences of the Ba come from the Pyramid Texts. They do not include examples of the personification of the Ba, since such a concept appears starting from the New Kingdom. We will see some examples on each class.

## 2.1. Nouns

The passage below shows the late king Unis ascending to the sky after his resurrection. It is worth noting that his ascension owes to the powers of the Ba, terror (*sꜥt*), and magic

<sup>6</sup> B. George, p.18. She cites: G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (second edition; Tübingen, 1956), p. 311 and p. 318.

(*hk3w*). The Ba is paralleled with other concepts that should be similar in their essence.

*nfr.w(i) 3 m3w htp.w(i) 3 ptr*

*i.n.sn i.n ntrw*

*pr(i)t<sup>7</sup> r.f<sup>8</sup> ntr pn ir pt pr(i)t r.f Wr r pt*

*b3w.f tp.f š<sup>c</sup>t.f r-gšwi.f hk3w.f tp rdwi.f*

How good to see! How pleasant to behold!

They said, the gods said,

that this god goes to the sky, that Unis goes to the sky,

his Ba [plural of Ba]<sup>9</sup> being upon him, Shat-power (terror) of him being beside him, his

Hekau-power (magic power) is at his feet. (Pyr. 476a-477b W)

Here, the concepts are probably abstract powers rather than concrete objects. In the similar passages below, the location of the same concepts differs, and this flexibility may support the idea that they are indeed abstract powers.

How good to see! How excellent to see!

that this god goes to the sky, as father, Atum, goes to the sky,

his Ba being upon him, his Hekau-power (magic power) being beside him, Shat-power

(terror) of him being at his feet. (Pyr. 992a-c P)

How good to see! How pleasant to behold! She said<sup>10</sup>, Isis said,

that this god goes to the sky, his Ba being upon him,

Shat-power (terror) of him being beside him, his Hekau-power at his feet. (Pyr. 1472a-c

P)

In the case below, the term Ba is put in parallel with Sekhem (*šhm*). The late king is able to succeed Osiris thanks to these powers. This text also shows us the difficulty there is to make a distinction between abstract powers and concrete powerful objects. The fact that the terms Ba and Sekhem are paralleled with concrete objects, that is, the Wereret-crown

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<sup>7</sup> The expression “*pr(i)t*” should be the object of “*m3w*” and “*ptr*” (verbs of perception) as *sdmt.f* form. (Pyr. 1472a-c P). Cf. James P. Allen, *The Inflection of the Verb in the Pyramid Texts* (Malibu, 1984), §469.

<sup>8</sup> The suffix pronoun refers to the previous sentence. See Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 192.

<sup>9</sup> This is called “intensive plural.” Cf. Louis V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts* (Chicago, 1968), p. 55.

<sup>10</sup> Old perfective (stative). See K. Sethe, *Übersetzung und Kommentar zu den altägyptischen Pyramidentexten* iv, p. 223.

(*wrrt*) and the Mizut-crown (*mswt*), suggests that the Ba may be a panther-kilt, and the Sekhem a Sekhem-scepter. The ancient Egyptians may not have been so keenly aware of the distinction to be made between “abstract” and “concrete,” and may simply have expressed the names of the powers they felt, no matter which ones referred to an abstract concept or to concrete objects.

Oh Pepy<sup>11</sup> II,

Go that you might be Akh-powerful, that you might be Sekhem-powerful, as god, as successor of Osiris.

Your Ba is for you within you, your Sekhem is for you behind you, your Wereret-crown is for you upon you, your Mizut-crown is for you upon your shoulder. (Pyr. 752a-753b N)

In the case below, the power concepts of Ba and Sekhem are put in parallel with Isis and Nephthys, sisters of Osiris. The sisters are in position to protect their brother Osiris. The parallelism between the Ba and the Sekhem in these passages does not conflict with our theory, although it looks irregular in the parallelism between powers and goddesses. Egyptians made no distinction between “abstract” and “concrete” in this context, because what matters is the fact that the powers themselves protect the dead brother.

Your face is (that of) Jackal. Your flesh is (that of) Atum.

Your Ba is within you, your Sekhem is behind you, Isis is in front of you, Nephthys is behind you. (Pyr. 2098a-b N)

The next passage mentions Seped (*špd*), Wash (*wšš*), Ba and Sekhem. These powers are named in the address to Geb, father of Osiris, who is expected to divert death from his son, Osiris. The grouping of the powers must be a guarantee for Geb and Osiris to stay alive.

May he (Pepy II as Osiris) not die! He did not die.

He will live and you will live. He will be hale, and you will be hale.

Seped-power is for you, Geb! Wash-power is for you, Geb!

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<sup>11</sup> There is a possibility to read Pepy as “*Pipi*,” as H. Ranke and E. Edel suggest. Here, I have adopted the reading “Pepy,” following G. H. Fischer, “The Transcription of the Royal Name Pepy,” *JEA* 75 (1989), 214f. According to him, although the writing of the ending “y” in Old Kingdom names is “undeniably unusual” in comparison with the ending “i,” “evidently Pepy I preferred this alternative, perhaps precisely because it was less usual, and having adopted, bequeathed it to his son of the same name.”

Ba is for you, Geb! Sekhem-power is for you, Geb! (Pyr. 1810c-1811c N)

Other similar passages can be shown in combination with various concepts.

Meryre came to you, O Horus!

so that you might do (say) it for him, (that is,) this great and good word that you gave to  
Osiris,

by which Meryre might be great, by which he might be mighty,

his Sekhem-power being within him, his Ba-power being behind him,

his Seped-power being upon him. (Pyr. 1558a-1559b P)

Oh Neit! May your Akh-power be<sup>12</sup> within you for you!

May your Ba-power be behind you for you! May your heart be for your body for you!

Cut your bonds for you as Horus who is in his house!

Throw away your fetters for you as Seth who is in Henbet! (Pyr. 1921d-g Nt)

Purify Unis, make Unis bright,

in this your Lake of Jackal, O jackal, where you clean the gods!

Ba-power is for you, Seped-power is for you, O Horus, lord of green stone. (Pyr. 457a-c W)

The passage below is from the Cannibal Hymn, which seems to belong to the oldest part of the Pyramid Texts. Although ambiguous in this context, the concepts of Ba, Akh, and shade are paralleled to strengthen the late king Unis. By eating gods and men, the dead king absorbs their powers.

Look, their Ba-power is in the belly of Unis, and their Akh-powers are with Unis,

as his offering to the god, cooked for Unis with their bones.

Look, their Ba-power is under Unis, and their shades are together with<sup>13</sup> their owners.

(Pyr. 413a-c W)

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<sup>12</sup> The expression “*3h n.k*” should be interpreted as “*3h.k*.” See R. O. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, Supplement, p. 33. The “*b3.k*” and “*ib.k*” follow it as parallels. The spell is used for Neit, who was the daughter of Pepy I and the wife of Pepy II. In her texts, she is usually referred to by using the male suffix pronoun (*.k*).

<sup>13</sup> R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 83) translates the compound preposition “*m-<sup>c</sup>*” as “(removed) from,” following K. Sethe’s interpretation: “(weggenommen) von” (*Komm.* ii, p.140). J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 52, W180b) translates “(still) with.” C. Carrier (*Textes des Pyramides de l’Égypte ancienne*, Paris, 2009-2010; p. 151) seems to follow the same interpretation: “accompagnées de.”

## 2.2 Verbs

In the spell below, Ba is used with Sekhem, Wash and two other powers (“active of arms,” “wide-striding”). The spell depicts the splendid, glorious state of the late king. His behavior is just like that of young king who is active and full of energy, as the last two expressions of “active of arms” and “wide-striding” suggest.

Oh Ra, thing that you said. Ra, “oh son,” you said, Ra,  
“(he is) Ba-powerful, Sekhem-powerful, Wash-powerful,  
active of arms, wide-striding.”  
Behold, Pepy II<sup>14</sup>, O Ra, Pepy II, your son,  
Pepy II is Ba-powerful, Pepy II is Wash-powerful, Pepy II is Sekhem powerful,  
Pepy II is active of arms, and Pepy II is wide-striding. (Pyr. 886a-887c N)

Two similar expressions are shown below. The active state of the king is depicted more elaborately. The Ba is paralleled with Akh, Wash, Sekhem, and the two concepts of “active of arms” and “wide-striding,” as expected here and as in other places. In addition, the term *hʿi* “shining” also deserves our attention. This word, which originally means “appearing” when referring to sun regarded as divine, can be applied to the situation where a god or a king “appears” in glory. This usage expresses well the glorious appearance of the late king in an active state.

Oh father, oh Ra, thing that you said,  
“Oh, son is Akh-powerful, shining, Ba-powerful, Wash-powerful, Sekhem-powerful,  
wide of his arm, wide-striding.”  
Behold, I am here<sup>15</sup>. I am your son. Behold, I am here. I am Neit.  
I am Akh-powerful, I am shining, I am Ba-powerful, I am Wash-powerful, I am  
Sekhem-powerful,  
wide of arm, far of my striding. (Pyr. 2120a-2121c Nt)

The spell below shows that the cooperating powers give the late king to walk to and fro as he wishes.

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<sup>14</sup> R. O. Faulkner emends “*mk N*” to “*mk w(i) ir.(i)*,” and translates the phrase as “Here am I.”

<sup>15</sup> The phrase “*mk w(i) ir.i*” can be translated “Behold, I am here,” as R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 301, Utterance 691) maintains. C. Carrier (*Textes des Pyramides*, p. 2599) has another simple translation: “Regarde-moi, quant à moi.”



May you live so that you may go to and fro every day!

May you be Akh-powerful in your name of horizon where Ra comes out!

May you be Wash-powerful! May you be Seped-powerful! May you be Ba-powerful! May you be Sekhem-powerful for ever and ever! (Pyr. 621a-c T)

In the spell below, the powers create the divine and sacred state or atmosphere around the gods who help the late king. The supernatural state can be given to them as a reward for helping the king.

All gods who will make this pyramid and this building of Pepy II beautiful and enduring, you will be Seped-powerful, you will be Wash-powerful, you will be Ba-powerful, you will be Sekhem-powerful. (Pyr. 1650a-c N)

The following example of parallel concepts mentions the resurrection of the late king so that he can ascend to the sky. The king is expected to be very strong, equipped with powers.

You shall reach the sky like Orion. Your Ba shall be effective like Sothis<sup>16</sup>.

You shall be Ba-powerful, being Ba-powerful. You shall be Wash-powerful, being Wash-powerful<sup>17</sup>. (Pyr. 723a-b T)

Below is a similar example, with a scene depicting the first step of the king after his resurrection. He is full of Ba-power and Wash-power. The same grammatical construction as in the previous example is used in the second combination group below (double underline). In the first combination group (single underline), the Akh-power and Sekhem-power both contrasted by the dead (or gods) and the living.

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<sup>16</sup> Sothis (*spd*) is the star Sirius, which is the brightest in the night sky. Such a strong brightness may be regarded here as suitable for the Ba concept.

<sup>17</sup> Intensive expression: “*i.b3.k b3.ti w3.s.k w3.s.ti*.” The first part “*i.b3.k*” should be a nominalized form and the second “*b3.ti*” is adverbial as a stative (old perfective). J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 86 [Teti, 228]). translates here: “You shall become ba and be ba, you shall become esteemed and esteemed.” He may interpret the sentences consisting of a subjunctive *sdm.f* and a stative as concomitant. Alternate interpretation is possible, with a nominalized *sdm.f* followed by an adverbial stative. It emphasizes the state of the king. The prefix “*i*” can be used both for subjunctive and nominalization for 2-lit. verb. See J. P. Allen, *Inflection*, p. 722 (Table 20). Sethe translates: “Seele sollst du sein und Seele bist du, machtvoll sollst du sein und machtvoll bist du.” His explanation is that “Das Nebeneinander der *sdm.f*-Form und des Pseudopartizips ebenso auch 945b, wo gleichfalls das *i* prosth. bei *b3* nur in *sdm.f* steht. Das Pseudop. wird dabei die Bedeutung des Resultates haben.” C. Carrier (*Textes des Pyramides*) translates them in the same way as K. Sethe: “Tu détruiras (alors que) tu es détruit! Tu deviendras fort (alors que) tu es (déjà) fort!”

Oh Pepy II! You went so that you might live. You did not go so that you might die.  
You went so that you might be Akh-powerful in front of Akh-powerful ones (the dead or gods), so that you might be Sekhem-powerful in front of the living.  
You may be Ba-powerful, being Ba-powerful! You may be Wash-powerful, being Wash-powerful! (Pyr. 833a-c P)

In the case below, the competition between Horus and Seth is described on the basis of Ba-power and Sekhem-power. Both are addressed to outstrip each other in the powers.

You were born, O Horus, to Osiris. You were Ba-powerful more than he. You were Sekhem-powerful more than he (Seth).  
You were conceived, O Seth, to Geb. You were Ba-powerful more than he. You were Sekhem-powerful more than he (Horus). (Pyr. 144a-b W)

The above-mentioned powers, that is, Ba-power and Sekhem-power are allotted to Seth.

You provided yourself<sup>18</sup> as great of Hekau-power (magic power), Seth who is in Ombos, lord of Upper Egypt.  
Anything was not lost for you. Anything was not stinking<sup>19</sup> for you.  
Behold, you are Ba-powerful, Sekhem-powerful more than the gods of Upper Egypt and their Akhs. (Pyr. 204a-c W)

And the same powers should be allotted to Horus as a competitioner.

You provided yourself as Horus, who is young.  
Anything was not lost for you. Anything was not stinking for you.  
Behold, you are Ba-powerful, Sekhem-powerful more than the northern gods and their Akhs. (Pyr. 206a-c W)

When the late king goes to the sky, to the place where Ra is, Geb, god of the earth is

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<sup>18</sup> The transliteration “*htm.n.k*” is modified from “*htm.ti n.k*,” according to K. Sethe, *Komm.* i, p. 131f. R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 51, n.7) takes it to be a hortative stative. J. P. Allen (*Inflection*, §553) seems to follow Sethe. Cf. Pyr. 206a-c, where we can see this “*htm.n.k*” in the same Utterance 222.

<sup>19</sup> The word “*ibb*” is translated as “*übelriechend, stinkend sein*” by R. Hannig. See Hannig, *Wb.* I, p. 30. Faulkner reads it as “*i.3b*,” Sethe as “*ibb*” and they translate it respectively as “*cease*” and “*aufhören*.” J. P. Allen (*Inflection*, §486B) translates “*ibb*” as “*omit*.”

expected to guide him. Then, the king is filled with Ba-power, Wash-power, and Sekhem-power.

May Geb guide you, you being Ba-powerful as a god, Wash-powerful as a god,  
Sekhem-powerful in your body as a god,  
as Ba who is in the head of the living,  
as Sekhem who is in the head of Akh-powerful ones! (Pyr. 2096a-d N)

In the passage below, I suppose that the first citation mentions the past event that has happened on the mythical level, and the second applies the historic event to the present situation that a newcomer, deceased king, who is called falcon, shall be strong during the resurrection after receiving all processes of his funeral rite.

Geb gave an utterance in the mouth of Ennead,  
“Falcon who succeeds, he took.” They said, “Behold<sup>20</sup>, you are Ba-powerful,  
Sekhem-powerful.” (Pyr. 162b-c W)

As we see, the Ba appears in parallel with other power concepts. As a noun, the Ba is put in parallel with Shat-power (fear), Heka(u)-power (magic power), Sekhem-power, Seped-power (effectiveness), Wash-power, Akh-power (knowledge and qualification power), Wereret-crown, Mizut-crown, and Ib (heart), and in verb, Sekhem, Wash, active of arms, wide-striding, Akh, and Seped. They are powers (noun and verb) or the things from which ancient Egyptians felt some power. The nominalized or concretized entities will be treated later.

The Ba as a noun not only belongs to the deceased king, but also it can appear on the late king, within him, and behind him. The Ba is not limited to any specific location in appearance. It means that the Ba is not a concrete object like leopard-skin. This suggests that the Ba might be an abstract power in these cases.

The paralleling or enumerating of power concepts seems to equip the late king with the perfect, or at least a much more desirable condition for the transition from the death to the next life. The texts above, which enumerate the power concepts, admire the splendid condition of the king after death.

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<sup>20</sup> The expression “*mkw*” can also be read as “*mk kw*,” as suggested by K. Sethe (*Komm.* I, p. 68). R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 46 [Utterance 218, n. 3]) gives two possible readings: “*mk kw*” or “*m kw*.” EäG (§612) explains that it consists of the non-enclitic particle “*m(i)*” and the dependent pronoun “*kw*.”

### 3 Prior Studies

As we saw with the Ba examples, the power concepts share some meaning sphere in the same or similar expressions or phrases, and thus should be treated in the same framework of research, this parallelism of the concepts being a new base for the research of the religious concepts.

On the other hand, the concepts have their own meaning fields, which are used in their peculiar contexts according to their specificities. The meanings should be interpreted adequately, in connection with the other concepts. When the original spheres of each concept are made clear, only then can we have a better understanding of the obscure texts of the ancient Egyptian religion.

In the field of religious anthropology, the Ka concept has been a focus of attention from the early days of Egyptology. This early interest might have been encouraged by the excavation works and discoveries of funeral objects, such as Ka-statues, Ka-houses, or false doors in front of which offerings were devoted to the Ka of the deceased.

Later, a human-headed bird, which appears from the New Kingdom in vignettes of the Book of the Dead and in some of rock-cut tombs, gave modern scholars the impression that the Ba was also a soul, leaving the deceased at the time of death. The image of the human-headed Ba was so impressive that people accepted it as a depiction of the soul without feeling uncomfortable.

Here, we can see the confused situation in the translation or terminology of the religious concepts. The inconsistent explanation of these concepts holds also true for the relationship existing between them. The fact is that few Egyptologists have attempted to compare these concepts, and therefore the same confusion in understanding and translating them tends to be recurrent. Here are some views on the topic.

In his *Egyptian Grammar*, which is one of most influential references in Egyptology, A. H. Gardiner translates Ka as “spirit” and Ba as “soul.”<sup>21</sup> As for Akh, he translates it as “blessed spirit.”<sup>22</sup> His translation of these concepts served as model in Egyptology: Ka is usually translated as “spirit,” Ba as “soul,” and Akh as “spirit.” Note, however, that, when discussing the translation of the Ka, Gardiner adds “if translated at all.”<sup>23</sup>

In his study of the tomb of Amenemhēt, Gardiner also mentions that “the Egyptians believed that the human individuality could present itself under a variety of forms, which are less ‘parts’ of its nature, as vulgarly stated, than shifting modes of its being. The often visualized bird-like soul (*bai*) is one of these forms, the ka or double another, the shadow a

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<sup>21</sup> Gardiner, *EG*, p. 172f.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 550.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

third, the corpse a fourth, and so on.”<sup>24</sup> In general, Egyptologists are in disorder due to their various manifestations.

K. Sethe is another influential scholar, who also refers to the various power concepts in his commentary on the Pyramid Texts.<sup>25</sup> As a philologist of the first order, he gives us a basic interpretation and a translation of these religious texts and many interesting and stimulating insights on their interpretation. On his translation, the Ba as “Seele,” and Akh as “Geist, Geisterwürde.” He does not, however, translate the term Ka.

Moreover, K. Sethe also regards the Ba and others (except the Akh) from a unique perspective. He states that “*b3* und *šhm* etwa geistige and körperliche Macht”<sup>26</sup>; “beide [*b3* und *šhm*] werden ‘machtvoll’ bedeuten, das eine geistig, das andere körperlich (daß *b3* gegenüber den ‘Geistern’ *3h.w* der gewöhnlichen Toten etwas Gebietendes sein muß, ist ja klar)”<sup>27</sup>; “Korrelate sind, *w3š* und *špd*, *b3* und *šhm* (*sic*), in jedem Paar wohl das erste Wort geistig, das zweite körperlich gedacht.”<sup>28</sup>

H. Kees discussed about the various concepts at length in 1956 study titled *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Ägypter*.<sup>29</sup> He says that “Bei den mannigfaltigen Formen, die wir kennen gelernt haben, handelte es sich nicht um ‘Teil’ eines belebten Wesens, die sich etwa aus Ka, Seel, Schatten, Zauber, usw. zu einem Gesamtbild zusammenfügen lassen, sondern gerade bei den wichtigsten Begriffen um Bildungen, die sich vielfach überschneiden. Allerdings kehrte jede von ihnen bestimmte Wesenszüge, die ihre besondere Macht bedeuten, als dominant heraus, und in diesem Sinne hat sie der Ägypter als selbständige Gottheiten und Erscheinungsformen des Menschen empfunden,”<sup>30</sup> and “es handelt sich dabei, ähnlich wie bei Aufhäufung der Schutzkräfte, die den verstorbenen König bei der Himmelfahrt benützen sollten, um eine beabsichtigte Zusammenballung aller erdenklichen Begriffe zum Zwecke der Vollständigkeit und um so größere Wirksamkeit.”<sup>31</sup>

As for Kees, he makes a distinction between the notion of “Ganzheitsbegriff” and that of “Teilbegriff.” Regarding the Ba, he thinks that “dabei zunächst kein Teil des menschlichen Wesens gemeint war, sondern im Gegenteil ein Ganzheitsbegriff vorliegt, der göttliches Wesen von menschlicher Formgebundenheit absetzen soll.”<sup>32</sup>

J. H. Breasted discusses the religious concept of Ka, Ba, and Akh in his *Development*

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<sup>24</sup> N. de Garis Davies and A. H. Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhēt* (London, 1915), p. 99.

<sup>25</sup> K. Sethe, *Komm.* vi (Index), p. 118f. (Ba), and p. 85 (Akh).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, i, p. 15 (§139c).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, i, p. 158 (§215b).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, iii, p. 150f (§621c).

<sup>29</sup> H. Kees, *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Ägypter* (Leipzig, 1956), pp. 35-58.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>32</sup> H. Kees, *Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten* (Fifth edition; Berlin, 1983), p. 46.

*of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*. According to him, a man consists of a body and a Ba (soul), the Ka is a protecting genius, and the Akh and other concepts are symbols, but not elements of his personality. With regard to a human being, Breasted thinks that “there were not additional elements of his personality besides the *ba* and the *body*,” and that “there is no ground for the complicated conception of a person in ancient Egypt as consisting, besides the body of a ka, a ba (soul), a *yḥw* (spirit), a shadow, etc. Beside the body and the ba (soul), there was only the ka, protecting genius, which was not an element of the personality.”<sup>33</sup>

As we saw, the modern terminology is quite confused and complex in the studies of the religious concepts and their relation between them. The ambiguity of these religious concepts has, from the first, its origin in the fact that people, including the ancient Egyptians, do recall each concept and use it only in corresponding, individual situations by necessity with no need to systematize each concept and the relation existing between each for them as long as this takes place in daily life. J. H. Breasted mentions that “These views are of course not the studied product of a highly trained and long-developed self-consciousness.”<sup>34</sup>

Even for the concept of “god,” people do not systematize the theory in polytheistic cultures at an early stage. J. Assman identifies two stages in theology: “implizite Theologie” and “explizite Theologie.” It is only when they meet serious difficulties that people start thinking about who should be held responsible for the problems they are confronted to have responsibility of the problems in front of them. Similarly, when a new class of professional priests appeared together with an expanding bureaucracy in the New Kingdom, the condition was met to systematize the disordered concepts.

Nowadays, Egyptologists who are aware of the subtlety existing between these concepts do not translate them into their own language, but rather to transcribe them into Roman characters while adding an appropriate explanation if necessary.<sup>35</sup> In the Egyptological literature, these concepts are usually mentioned with minimum explanation.

Based on the above, we proceed on the systematic descriptions or representative monographs on the various concepts discussed so far:

#### On the Ka:

- L. Greven, *Der Ka in Theologie und Königs-kult der Ägypter des Alten Reiches* (Ägyptologische Forschungen 17; Glückstadt, 1952).

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<sup>33</sup> J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (Penssylvania Paperback, Philadelphia, 1972 [Original edition: 1912]), p. 56f, n. 2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51f.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. G. Englund, *Akh*, p. 14.

- Ursula Schweitzer, *Das Wesen des Ka im Diesseits und Jenseits der alten Ägypter* (Ägyptologische Forsschungen 19; Glückstadt, 1956).

#### On the Ba:

- Louis V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 34; Chicago, 1968).
- Elske Marie Wolf-Brinkmann, *Versuch einer Deutung des Begriffes “b3” anhand der Überlieferung der Frühzeit und des Alten Reiches* (Dissertation, Universität Basel; Freiburg i. Br., 1968)

#### On the Akh:

- Gertie Englund, *Akh: Une notion religieuse dans l’Égypte pharaonique* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis: Boreas: Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations 11; Uppsala, 1978).

#### On the Shade:

- Beate George, *Zu den altägyptischen Vorstellungen vom Schatten als Seele* (Habelts Dissertationsdrucke, Reihe klassische Philologie 7; Bonn, 1970).

Note that, chronologically, the study of the Ka started before that of the Ba, and the study of the Akh followed. Studies devoted to the Ka are over-represented, while there is only one study of the shade (*šwt*), published by B. George in 1970 among the minor concepts like Sekhem, Heka and others, which all appear in fact in non-negligible scale in the texts.

As for the Ba studies by Elske Marie Wolf-Brinkmann and Louis V. Žabkar, they give us a good perspective for a coherent explanation applicable to the various concepts.

So far, we have discussed the history of the research on the Ka, the Ba, and the Akh in order to build a framework for the study of these religious concepts. Next, we will observe some noticeable researches for each concept.

### 3.1 Ka

Ka is one of the most popular terms in Egyptian texts and it has been usually translated as “spirit” by modern Egyptologists. Although such a translation is possible, it does not contribute, however, to a better understanding of the Egyptian texts. The main issue which should be the focus of further studies is the shape of the Ka.

Each *ethnos* has its own culture. There are indeed some specific structures in each culture. Ancient Egyptian culture differs from European, American, and Asian ones.

Among the main similar religious concepts of Ka, Ba, and Akh, A. Erman maintained

that the Ka was “evidently the most important.”<sup>36</sup> Despite the fact that the Ka has been studied more than any of the other concepts, the real nature of the Ka is still obscure.

What shape does the Ka take when it is called as concrete? This is the point in the research history of the Ka. On the other hand, it has been approved that the Ka is connected with the vital force in its core. We must avoid arbitrary imaging of its concrete shape under the impression of the translated word “spirit” in the occidental world. Is the Ka an independent entity from the deceased, having its own original shape? Or, does the Ka mean the deceased himself who is under the power of Ka?

Many reseachers mention the difficulty to understand the Ka concept. For example, A. H. Gardiner says that “The student must beware of the attempts which have been made to give a harmonious and self-consistent account of the nature of the *ka*; this always remained a shadowy and ill-defined concept, variously regarded in different contexts.”<sup>37</sup>

There are two different opinions on the Ka: pre- and post-World War II. The first one, which is traditional and conservative, prevailed from the later 19th to the early 20th century, and this consists of three views:

The most basic one was presented by A. Erman in a 1906 article where he regards the Ka as “Lebenskraft” (vital force),<sup>38</sup> and he adds that the meanings of “Seele” (soul) and “Nahrung” (*k3w*)(food) come from this original meaning. This idea of vital force, which, in his paper, is simply mentioned in a footnote, has been consistenly accepted in Egyptology.

The next scholars set the main pre-World War II trend for Ka studies, which has been influential until now.

In his *Étude de mythologie et d'archéologie* in 1892, G. Maspero thinks that the Ka is a “double” and describes it as “un second exemplaire du corps en une matière moins dense que la matière corporelle, une projection colorée, mais aérienne de l'individu, le reproduisant trait pour trait enfant s'il s'agissait d'un enfant, femme s'il s'agissait d'une femme, homme s'il s'agissait d'un homme.”<sup>39</sup>

In a 1910 article, G. Steindorff defines the Ka as “Genius”<sup>40</sup> and adds that “mit dem Menschen geboren, begleitet er ihn unsichtbar durchs Leben, und auch nach dem Tode hört seine Fürsorge für den Verstobene nicht auf”<sup>41</sup> and that he is “ein ganz besonders gestaltetes und mit eigenartigen Attributen versehenes Wesen.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> A. Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1971 [original English version 1894]), p. 307.

<sup>37</sup> A. H. Gardiner, *EG*, p. 173. This part was translated into Japanese and introduced in Japan: Ichiro Kato, “On the Ka of Kings,” *Tozai Gakujuutsu Kenkyusho Ronso* [Journal of The Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies, Kansai University] (1962), 1.

<sup>38</sup> A. Erman, “Die Geschichte des Schiffbrüchigen,” *ZÄS* 43 (1906), 14, n. 2.

<sup>39</sup> G. Maspero, *Étude de mythologie et d'archéologie I* (Paris, 1893), pp. 47-49.

<sup>40</sup> G. Steindorff, “Der Ka und die Grabstatuen,” *ZÄS* 48 (1910), 153.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.



As for J. H. Breasted, he does not share the view according to which the Ka begins to protect an individual at birth, but instead thinks that the Ka is most useful to his *protégé* after his earthly life.<sup>43</sup>

These three opinions, whether considered individually or collectively are representative of the pre-World War II views on the Ka and, as mentioned above, are still influential nowadays. Note that, Maspero and Steindorff are the origin of the modern conception of the concrete image of the Ka shape.

Below are some other interesting ideas as references:

A. Moret is the only one who thinks that the Ka is a totem.<sup>44</sup> He is eclectic in the other points: “enseigne de tribu; nom privé ou royal; dieu protecteur; principe de vie d’où sortent les êtres et où ils rentrent après la mort; source des forces universelles et de la nourriture qui entretient la vie.”<sup>45</sup>

It is well known that *k3w*, the plural of Ka, means “food.” As shown by Erman, this connection has been approved from the beginning of Ka studies. Fr. W. von Bissing focuses on such a connection, mentioning that the Ka is “was den Menschen leben macht, die Lebenskraft, die bei seiner Geburt ihm verliehen wird und die durch das Essen weiter erhalten wird.”<sup>46</sup>

As a grammarian, A. H. Gardiner has an original position in that he seems to abandon what he describes as “a harmonious and self-consistent account” to define the nature of the Ka. According to him, the Ka always remains “a shadowy and ill-defined concept”<sup>47</sup> and he proposes to translate it as “spirit,” “self,” “personality,” “soul,” “individuality,” “temperament,” “fortune,” “position,” “mood,” “attribute,” “person.”<sup>48</sup> The majority of the translations are variations of abstract power, while some of them are not sure of their class (abstract power or entity).

H. Junker, using the Pyramid Texts and others from the Old Kingdom, gives us a simple explanation about “das Verhältnis zwischen dem Ka und dem Menschen.” He maintains that “er [the Ka] ist im Diesseits noch von ihm getrennt und erst im Jenseits findet die wirkliche Vereinigung statt,” adding “ist es nicht so, daß der Ka mit dem Verstorbenen verschmilzt oder daß er nun dessen Persönlichkeit in ihrer Vollendung darstellt.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought* (Philadelphia, 1912), p. 54.

<sup>44</sup> Moret, *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 67 (1913), 181-191.

<sup>45</sup> *Actes du IVe Congrès international d'histoire des religions: tenu à Leide du 9e-13e septembre 1912* (Leiden, 1913), p. 92.

<sup>46</sup> Fr. W. von Bissing, Versuch einer neuen Erklärung des Kai der alten Aegypter, *SBAW* (1911), p. 3.

<sup>47</sup> A. H. Gardiner, *EG*, p. 173. The first edition of this book was published in 1927.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172 and p. 597.

<sup>49</sup> H. Junker, *Giza III* (Wien, 1938), p.117.

H. Kees stands out by presenting a multilayered opinion.<sup>50</sup> When considering on fourteen Kas<sup>51</sup> of a king or a god in the New Kingdom, he describes them as “Lebenskräfte”<sup>52</sup> and gives a wider interpretation to the Ka concept by defining it “alle wesentlichen Eigenschaften.”<sup>53</sup>

In light of the above-mentioned studies, we can discern two trends in post-World War II studies: one stemming from pre-World War II conceptions, to which was later added the idea to distinguish between two kinds of Kas: royal and private; the other, which appeared after World War II, taking the Kas to be an “Inkarnation.”

Among the proponents of the former trend, H. Frankfort confirms that the Ka is a “vital force”<sup>54</sup> and distinguishes between the Ka of the king and that of the commoner in a different way than Kees does. He thinks that the royal Ka can only be a “twin” and a “protective genius.” According to him, “the Ka has never been the object of concrete imaginings as far as the ordinary man is concerned,”<sup>55</sup> and “it is born with the king as his twin; it accompanies him through life as a protective genius; it acts as his twin and his protector in death.”<sup>56</sup>

As for the new trend regarding the Ka as an “Inkarnation,” it appeared in L. Greven’s 1948 dissertation at the University of Munch, and then in U. Schweitzer’s 1950 Habilitationsschrift at the University Basel, both published in the “Ägyptologische Forschungen” series. These authors, who share basically the same conception about the Ka, tend to fall into reductionism, attributing the Ka to non-religious elements.<sup>57</sup> Apart from this reductionism, we can reasonably estimate that they introduced a new approach to the study of the Ka.

L. Greven thinks that the Ka is “der göttliche Wesensursprung.”<sup>58</sup> This definition denotes that he sees the nature of the Ka not only in horizontal direction (from birth through death to the afterlife), but also in vertical direction (from the primordial god to the present ruling king) of the Ka transferring. He approves the concept of “Inkarnation” only for the king and mentions that “dieser Ursprungsgott, das ist der jeweils herrschende Reichs- bzw. Systemgott, inkarniert sich im regierenden König dadurch, daß er zu seinem Ka wird.”<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> H. Kees, *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Ägypter* (4th edition; Berlin, 1956), pp. 43-52. The first edition was published in 1926.

<sup>51</sup> “Stärke, Macht, Gedeihen, Speisung, Ehrwürdigkeit, Lebensdauer, Strahlen, Glanz, Ruhm, Zauber (Hike), Ausspruch (das schöpferische Wollen), Sehen, Hören, Erkennen.” *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>54</sup> H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago, 1948), p. 62.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. U. Schweitzer, *Das Wesen des Ka*, pp. 17-19; L. Greven, *Der Ka in Theologie und Königs kult der Ägypter des Alten Reiches*, p. 27.

<sup>58</sup> L. Greven, *Der Ka*, p. 19 and p. 27.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

The gods other than the “Ursprungsgott” are “die Personifizierungen” as “selbständige Götter.”<sup>60</sup>

U. Schweitzer discerns two aspects of the Ka, “alles Lebendige zu erschaffen” and “alles Lebendige zu erhalten,” and mentions, concerning the concept of incarnation, that “Nach der Auffassung von Stock scheint der Ka ursprünglich ein Machtfaktor gewesen zu sein, der sowohl im Horusfalken, als dem Fetischnumen eines Stammes als auch im Häuptling, d.h. in der gegenwärtigen Verkörperung des Falken, innewohnte.”<sup>61</sup>

The study of the Ka started early on and has therefore prompted more extensive research than that of the Ba, the Akh, and the shade, which started later and, adopted newer approaches. As a result, the theory supported by H. Frankfort, which makes a distinction between the Ka of the king and that of commoner, and identifies the royal Ka with a “twin” and “proactive genius,” became popular among the two trends after World War II. As for the concept of incarnation with regard to the Ka, an extensive study seems to lack. I believe, however, such an approach might be valid and useful, unless it is limited to uncertain religious factors.

The above can be summarized as follows: (a) the soul or spirit can be a kind of abstract power; (b) this abstract power can enter into an entity, which corresponds to an “incarnation”; (c) the abstract power can take its original shape and act independently from its owner, which corresponds to a “personification.” The “vital force” can be classified as (a) “abstract power,” according to Erman and Frankfort, or as (b) “incarnation,” according to L. Greven and U. Schweitzer. As for the concepts of “double,” “protective genius,” and “twin,” they are classified as (c) personification.

Depending on the context, however, we are faced with a problem regarding the notions of (b) incarnation and (c) personification. For instance, how should we interpret a text where both a king and a Ka are mentioned? If we consider that the Ka is an “incarnation,” it implies that there is only one king filled with Ka-power. However, if we take it to be a “personification,” it means that we are dealing with two different entities, that is, a king and his independent Ka. Such is the issue that should be clarified in the study of the Ka.

### 3.2 Ba

The word Ba has usually been translated as “soul.” This translation dates back to Horapollo, an Egyptian scholar who lived in the fifth century A.D. In his *Hieroglyphica*, composed in Greek, Horapollo states that “the word BAI is the soul, and ETH the heart; and

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19 and p. 27.

<sup>61</sup> U. Schweitzer, *Das Wesen des Ka*, p. 17.

the heart, according to the Egyptians, is the shrine of the soul.”<sup>62</sup>

In modern Egyptology, there are two simplistic views about the Ba. One is that the Ba has the same shape as the hieroglyph used to designate. The word Ba was written with a jabiru (𓆎 [G29]) during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and then with a human-headed bird (𓆎 [G53] or 𓆎 [G53B], etc.) from the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty onward. With such preconceived ideas, it is assumed that these two hieroglyphic signs represent the real shapes of the Ba, which would imply that the Ba changed its shape, from the jabiru to a human-headed bird in the early New Kingdom. Such a simplistic view can be found, for example in the *Britannica*.<sup>63</sup>

Another influential opinion is that of K. Sethe. As mentioned earlier, the Ba and the Sekhem are, in opposition to each other, “etwa geistige und körperliche Macht.” More precisely, Sethe adds that “beide werden ‘machtvoll’ bedeuten, das eine geistig, das andere körperlich (daß *b3* gegenüber den ‘Geistern’ *3h.w* der gewöhnlichen Toten etwas Gebietendes sein muß, ist ja klar).”

It has been pointed out that the translation of the word Ba was not adequate in the early stage of Egyptology. For example, J. Vandier, “On traduit généralement le mot *ba* par ‘âme’, mais il ne faut voir, dans cette traduction, qu’une convention commode.”<sup>64</sup>

The standard work of the Ba concept is Lois V. Žabkar’s, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts* (Chicago, 1968). He concludes that the Ba means “either *the manifestation of the power* of a being or *a being whose power is manifest*” (italics mine).<sup>65</sup> According to our definition, “*the manifestation of the power*” corresponds to “abstract power” and “*a being whose power is manifest*” to “concretized power.”

In 1968, when L. V. Žabkar published his monograph, Elske Marie Wolf-Brinkmann published her University Basel Dissertation, *Versuch einer Deutung des Begriffes ‘b3’ anhand der Überlieferung der Frühzeit und des Alten Reiches*. Her definitions of the Ba are divided into noun and verb: “die Gestaltfähigkeit: der Gestaltfähige: die Verkörperung; das Erscheinungsbild usw.” and “gestaltfähig sein, sich verkörpern.” To this list, she also adds “---fähig” as a translation of the Ba. This expression was criticized by Dieter Mueller.<sup>66</sup> In my opinion, the notion of experience is more important than that of ability as an attribute of

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<sup>62</sup> Alexander Turner Cory, *The Hieroglyphics of Horapollo Nilous* (Chthonios Books, London, 1987 [original edition, 1840]), p.15f. The word “BAI” (βαῖ), referring to the soul, corresponds to Ba, and ETH (ἠθ) of heart, corresponds to “*h3ty*.” In Greek, the soul is rendered as “ψυχή.”

<sup>63</sup> E.g. “ba,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ba-Egyptian-religion>. Accessed 18 March 2022: “the *ba* appears in bird form, thus expressing the mobility of the soul after death. Originally written with the sign of the jabiru bird and ..., the *ba* was later represented by a man-headed hawk, often depicted hovering over the mummies of kings and commoners alike.”

<sup>64</sup> J. Vandier, *La religion égyptienne* (2nd edition; Paris, 1949), p. 131.

<sup>65</sup> E. M. Wolf-Brinkmann, *Versuch einer Deutung des Begriffes ‘b3’*, p. 12.

<sup>66</sup> *BiOr* 27 (1970), 344. According to Dieter Mueller, the German expression “---fähig” is “wonderfully pliable” and contradicts “translation into any other language.” He adds that such a translation is a “based entirely on later texts” and “a possibility, though by no means the only one.”

the Ba. Apart from her translation of the word Ba as “---fähig,” the others do not conflict with our above-mentioned classification of the religious concepts. The definition of “die Gestaltfähigkeit” belongs to the abstract power, while those of “der Gestaltfähige,” “die Verkörperung,” and “das Erscheinungsbild” belong to the concretized power.

In his 1978 study titled *The Four Egyptian Homographic Roots B-3*, William A. Ward proposes that the word Ba means to “be endowed with supra-mundane power,” as a verb and “supra-mundane power,” as a noun.<sup>67</sup> Such translations also fit our category, although these opinions differ in some details.

Some noteworthy opinions are shown about the nature of the Ba, which sometimes appear in the research history of the Ba concept: ability of movement (as bird); transformation. According to J. Vandier, “le *ba* semble exprimer, à l’origine, la faculté qu’a dieu de se mouvoir et de prendre les aspects les plus divers.”<sup>68</sup> He pointed to the ability to move freely and to take on shapes freely.

In the new scholarship on the Ba concept, what is remarkable about the ideas of L. V. Žabkar, followed by Wolf-Brinkmann and Ward, is that his definitions of the Ba as “the manifestation of the power” and “a being whose power is manifest” can also be applied to the Ka, the Akh etc. And I am going to improve them for our framework.

In addition, J. Assmann succeeds in outlining the Egyptian solar monotheism in which the Ba can be used to express a hidden unique god. Therefore, his idea can be incorporated in our framework.

### 3.3 Akh

The Akh concept has been much less studied in comparison with the Ba and Ka concepts. Traditionally, the term Akh has been translated as “spirit” by Egyptologists. Faulkner, for example, translates the noun Akh as “spirit”<sup>69</sup> and its adjectival form as “glorious,” “splendid,” “beneficial,” “useful,” and “profitable.”<sup>70</sup> As for the plural noun Akhu (*3hw*), he renders it as “power” (of a god).<sup>71</sup> These translations are quite widely accepted without objection in Egyptology. Hannig also uses the same or similar translations<sup>72</sup>: “Akh-Geist, Verklärter” for the noun, “nützlich, brauchbar, hilfreich, nutzbringend, ergiebig” for the adjectival verb, and “Macht (des Gottes oder Ach-Geistes), Zauberkraft,” “nützliche

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<sup>67</sup> William A. Ward, *The Four Egyptian Homographic Roots B-3: Ethnological and Egypto-Semitic Studies* (Studia Pohl: Series Minor 6; Rome, 1978), pp. 73-75.

<sup>68</sup> J. Vandier, *La religion égyptienne* (2nd edition; Paris, 1949), p. 131.

<sup>69</sup> *CD*, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>71</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>72</sup> R. Hannig, *Hwb*, p. 11f. I selected some of his translations.

Kenntnis, Meisterschaft” for the plural noun Akhu.

The only extensive monograph on the subject, that is, by *Akh: Une notion religieuse dans l’Égypte pharaonique* (Uppsala, 1978), was authored by Gertie Englund.

In the preface of her monograph, Englund says that “Ce sujet [Akh], et les passages de textes le concernant, ayant été peu traités dans la littérature égyptologique, et dans ce cas le plus souvent dans des termes généraux, ce n’est qu’exceptionnellement que j’ai pu discuter les opinions de mes prédécesseurs, et c’est aux textes eux-mêmes que je me suis adressée.”<sup>73</sup> She also discusses the present state of religious studies on the above-mentioned concepts, describing her method as follows: “L’ambition a été de présenter et d’analyser la totalité des exemples afin de ne pas baser des théories sur un choix arbitraire fait en fonction d’idées personnelles et préconçues.”<sup>74</sup>

According to the definition of the Akh concept suggested by Englund, “*ꜥḥ* est un puissance du dieu suprême, inhérente à l’unité et virtuellement présente en elle, se manifestant et manifestant l’Unique lors de l’acte créateur. Puisque cet acte en Égypte comme ailleurs est lié à l’idée de la naissance de la lumière, un aspect lumineux s’attache à la notion de *ꜥḥ*. *ꜥḥ* est attribué à des divinités se consacrant à cet acte tels Atoum et Rê. *ꜥḥ* est en outre, parmi les divinités principales, attribué à Osiris et Horus, Nout et Isis.”<sup>75</sup> Such a view implies that the Akh originated from the creation of the Universe and has both positive and negative aspects. Moreover, note that Englund limits the Akh-power to the gods of Atum, Ra, Osiris, Horus, Nut, and Isis.

Although she tries to reject arbitrary interpretations, Englund seems to adopt some ideas such as the role of the creation of the Universe in the creation of Akh and the major gods who are endowed with such a power. She also has an original view on the positive and negative aspects of the Akh. In a sense, one could argue that all kinds of power originates in the creation, and they can be “switched on and off.” Even the Ka, which works constantly as a vital force, can stop at the time of death, which is expressed as “rest.”

A neutral approach should then be presupposed for the study of the religious concepts, while this approach must be applied to each concept by taking into account in their original differences. On the present paper, we prefer interpreting the various concepts from the experience that ancient Egyptians received, which is useful for establishing the unified framework.

#### 4 Establishing the Framework

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<sup>73</sup> G. Englund, *Akh: Une notion religieuse dans l’Égypte pharaonique*, Préface.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

To establish the framework of the concepts, one should first identify an Egyptian feature. While the Ka appears occurs as a noun, the Ba and the Akh can be both a noun and an (adjectival) verb. In addition, it is possible for the Ba and the Akh to be nominalized as participles. This usage should be the concrete nominalization or the concrete substantiation, which can give us a variety of choices about who or what is nominated in texts.

Although it is used neither as a verb nor as a participle, the Ka can point to a concrete entity who/which is under the power of Ka. This usage, unique to the Ka concept, may show an essential feature shared by all Egyptian religious concepts. Or, to be exact, the commune essence of the concepts forces the Ka to be used in the same manner as the Ba and the Akh.

First, by using an example citing the Ba, we should examine the case of concrete nominalization, which the concrete nominalization, which should also be applied to the Akh as a nominalization of participle.

He is Pepy I, Ba who passes among you, O gods. (Pyr. 1205a P)

Since it is paralleled with the late king Pepy I, the term Ba must refer to the king himself, and can be grammatically as a nominalized participle of the verb “to be Ba-powerful.” The human-headed Ba, which appears in the New Kingdom, should not taken into account here.

Here is another example, this time with the Ka and from the pyramid of Tety I:

Horus is not far from you. You are his Ka. (Pyr. 610d T)

In this context, the late king Tety is identified with Osiris, god of the dead. According to Osirian Myth, Horus, son of Osiris, cannot stay far from his father because the latter shall be cared for by him. In the application of the myth to the funeral practice, the deceased is identified with Osiris and his son with Horus. Here, the term Ka clearly refers to Osiris, that is, the late king, and it can be translated as “the one who is under Ka-power (vital force)” for his son, suggesting that the dead king is revived as Osiris, filled with the vital force.

A distinctive usage, where the concepts appear out of their contexts, might force Egyptologists to conclude exactly what is meant in logical conjuncture. Here is such an example:

The one that his Ba established (*grgw-b3.f*). (Pyr. 719a T)

To understand who or what the Ba is in this idiomatic expression, we cannot rely on

the context, but just on internal clues, such as the fact that this word ends with the town determinative, which means that we are dealing with a toponym. Another occurrence of this word in Pyr. 1762a, has a chapel determinative, and probably refers to a funeral domain (pyramid town) or funeral chapel that is devoted to the late king by his son, according to the Osiris Myth. In this case, the Ba may logically refer to Horus, son of the dead Osiris, and who is Ba-powerful. This kind of concrete nominalization should be treated carefully and especially according to the features of each concept.

Indeed, the “personification” of religious concepts can also be logically used under the definition: “another being who is independent from its owner and who acts in its own will.”<sup>76</sup> L. V. Žabkar defines it as “a fully and independently functioning individual.”<sup>77</sup> Such a personification may be the case with human-headed Ba appearing from the New Kingdom on, not the case for “jabiru Ba” that is under the main scope of the present paper.

The above-mentioned concepts can be classified as follows:

- a. Power in abstract (Noun)
- b. Be Powerful in abstract (Verb)
- c. Concretized Power (Nominalization)<sup>78</sup>
- d. Personification of Power

The parallelism existing between these religious concepts strongly suggests that they should be treated under a single framework. On the other hand, they have been the subject of many different explanations. Their definitions have not been well-established due to both the fact that they have been studied independently of each other and the different and shifting prevalence of their research.

## 5 Basic Meaning and Peculiarities of Ka, Ba, and Akh

We will first discuss the characteristics of each concept and then their basic meaning. The Ka “vital force” has a Linear Nature, which is transferred vertically from a father to his son, and horizontally from birth to death in horizontal direction continuously. In addition, the

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<sup>76</sup> According to a dictionary definition, it is “the practice of representing objects, qualities, etc. *as human*, in art and literature” (italics mine). See *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (7th edition: Oxford, 2005), p. 1271. See also G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (Tübingen, 1956), p. 80f. As human beings, the objects or qualities have “Willen und Gestalt.”

<sup>77</sup> L. V. Žabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts* (Chicago, 1968), p. 98.

<sup>78</sup> As for the inanimate objects that are called Ba, W. A. Ward regards them as “vessels which reflected the *bꜣ* of the supra-mundane forces (deities, etc.) with which they were associated.” W. A. Ward, *The Four Egyptian Homographic Roots B-3*, §139. As Egyptians call them Ba, I have no reason to exclude the inanimate Ba.



Ka displays a pseudo-dualistic aspect, which seems to show the opposition between the body and the soul, the latter being presented as a perfect component of the personality that is not as part of its owner.

The Ba is the “overwhelming power,” which can be exercised on the occasion of some short term events such as fighting against an enemy. Once the extraordinary event is over, the Ba-power must be pacified quickly. The way to gain Ba-power is often mentioned in the texts, which may show a feature in the Old Kingdom.

The Akh is the power of knowledge or enlightenment that can be given through a rite, virtually through a funeral rite. Thanks to this power, the deceased can be revived and pass to the next life. The possessor of such a power can often rise as Osiris, into whom he can transform himself by the Akh-power. Once he has acquired it, the deceased can keep this power forever, like an academic degree or an authorized qualification. As the power of the Akh is not so self-sufficient, other power concepts are often used in parallel to strengthen it. The Sekhem-power, in particular, occurs with the Akh-power, since just as the possessor of Akh-power can keep it forever, so does the possessor of Sekhem-power as long as he/she holds the Sekhem-scepter with him.

## 5.1 Ka

The Ka is linked with the “vital force.” The word implies that the Ka is a continuous, long-term power that can neither be dissociated from the birth, death and resurrection of an individual, nor regarded as a power that can be effective temporarily. This nature of the Ka is horizontal. In addition, as mentioned by L. Greven,<sup>79</sup> the power of Ka can be transferred from generation to generation. It means that the Ka has been perpetuated since the creation of the Universe until our generation. This nature is vertical. The Ka is a continuous power both in horizontal and vertical directions.

Another feature of the Ka is its pseudo-dualistic nature. Dualism supposes that a man consists of soul (or spirit) and body. Such a conception can be found in many civilizations from ancient to modern time. Platonism is the typical representative of dualism, opposing pure soul to pure body. This idea of Platonism has been accepted in European philosophy and has taken root in all levels of life, even in the collective unconscious, affecting a majority of people in the world. However, to be exact, most civilizations, including the ancient Egyptian one, do not discriminate the pure soul from the body. Soul does not lose the function of the body.

In ancient Egypt, there is a significant number of texts where the soul and the body

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<sup>79</sup> L. Greven, *op. cit.*, p. 19 and p. 43f.

seem to be opposed. This is called “Pseudo-Dualism.”

The concrete shape of the Ka was generally supposed to be a “double” or a “twin,” as maintained by G. Maspero and accepted by H. Frankfort accepted with some modifications. The Ka is born with a man, accompanies him during his life as his protector, and remains with him after death. By then, the Ka has its own body and its shape is absolutely the same as that of the man it accompanies. In the recent study, this idea corresponds to the notion of “personification.”

This idea of “personification” contradicts that of “Linear Nature.” We will see that the Ka is an “abstract power” or an “incarnation” in all the cases, no case of “personification.”

### 5.1.1 Linear Nature

In the beginning, we can observe the vertical transfer of the Ka-power. The Ka is given to an individual at his birth as vital force. Here, the Ka flows from a superior to a subordinate, such as in the typical case of a father to his son.

The character of the Ka flowing from higher to lower is best exemplified in Utterance 600 of the Pyramid Texts, where the primeval god Atum-Kheperer creates Shu and Tefnut amid the chaos of the emerging Universe. The Ka is transferred when Atum, the father, places his arms behind Shu and Tefnut, his children, by making the Ka-sign (𐀀), and embraces them.<sup>80</sup> Then, the text mentions the same action being done to the dead king, Neferkare. This means that the Ka is transferred from Atum-Kheperer via Shu and Tefnut to the new reigning king vertically. In this case, the Ka is the “vital force.”

Atum-Kheperer! You were high in the height.

You rose up in the benben-stone in the House of Phoenix in Heliopolis.

You spat out Shu and you expectorated Tefnut.

You placed your arms behind them as arm of Ka. May your Ka-power be in them!

Atum! May you place your arms behind Neferkare

as the arm of a Ka!

May the Ka-power of Neferkare be in him enduring for ever and ever! (Pyr. 1652a-1653d

N)

In the above passage, the Ka-line traces back vertically to the primeval god before creation. This Ka-power flows from this father-creator to his children. In the texts, usually a

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<sup>80</sup> A. H. Gardiner (*EG*, p. 453 [D28]) defines the Ka-symbol as “arms extended so as to embrace?”; note the question mark.

funeral context, this vertical line is typically described as a relation between father and son.

In the Pyramid Texts, this relation occurs between the deceased king and the new king succeeding him, that is, between Osiris and Horus on a mythical level. When interpreting a text, we should always identify who is referred to as a Ka. Then, it is clear that the deceased king is called Ka in relation to the new appointed king. The deceased king owns the Ka (abstract power = vital force), which should be passed on to his successor.

The case below is typical of the Pyramid Texts. Horus is the new king, and the one who is referred to a Ka should be his father, acting as Osiris.

Oh Osiris Tety, Horus protected you.

He acted because of his Ka (vital force) in you, so that you might be content in your name of “content Ka (content one who is filled with Ka-power).” (Pyr. 582c-d T)

In the above passage from Utterance 356, a priest addresses the late king. The effect of the spell is that the new king protects his father in accordance with the myth and even more so if he performs a funeral rite for his deceased king. Among the two mentions of the Ka, the first one, “his Ka in you (the late father),” may refer to the abstract power (vital force), which is still in the body of father and is being transferred to the new king, while the second one, “your name of ‘content Ka,’” should refer to the king himself, filled with Ka-power.

The following passage, Horus cares for the late king, who is referred to as “you.” Alternatively, one should argue that since the vital force (Ka) is with his father, Horus must care for him.

Horus is not far from you. You are his Ka. (Pyr. 610d T)

Utterance 176 consists of the short text below, which is complete as a whole, but lacking its context. Here, R. O. Faulkner interprets the word “his” in the phrase “his Ka” as referring to Geb.<sup>81</sup> According to our interpretation, it should be noted, however, that the word “his” referred to Horus.

Osiris Pepy II, you are his Ka (one filled with vital force). (Pyr. 102b N)

In the passage below, R. O. Faulkner translates the term Ka as “fate,”<sup>82</sup> which is a variant of “power.” He may suppose that Osiris is the Ka of Seth. As we already discussed,

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<sup>81</sup> R. O. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, p. 33 (Utterance 176, n. 1).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115 (Utterance 357, n. 3).

however, Osiris is the Ka for Horus. Here, according to our framework, the person referred to “you” is Osiris

Horus came that he might recognize you (Osiris).

He had smitten Seth for you, he (Seth) being bound. You (Osiris) are his (Horus’s) Ka.  
(Pyr. 587a-b T)

Indeed, in the expression “Ka of all gods,” a translation of Ka as “fate” is attractive, as in the case below. It looks like that all the gods obey the deceased king or Geb, which means that the deceased king or Geb likely grasps the “fate” of all the gods. Here, however, this expression is supposed to be a rhetorical formulation to emphasize the king’s or Geb’s paternity with respect to all his descendants. This utterance is uttered by a funeral priest to the late king. So, the word “he” is Horus, and the “you” is Osiris.

In the case below, Faulkner chooses “essence” this time to translate Ka as “essence.” “Essence” is probably to be understood with the nuance of “paternity” when referring the descendants. So, it is the accent on the paternity of vital force from the higher to the lower.

Osiris Pepy II, you are the Ka (who is filled with the vital force, who distributes it) of all gods.

Horus protected you, because you have become his Ka. (Pyr. 1831d-1832a N)

In the case below, the emphasis is clearly put on the paternity of the primeval god, Geb, to all descendants (gods).

You (Geb) are the Ka (who is filled with Ka-power, distributing it) of all gods. (Pyr. 1623a M)

Theoretically, the solar god Ra can also be a Ka for other gods. The Egyptian king is his son, as indicated by his name of son of Ra (*s3-Rʿ*), which is part of the royal titular. Contrary to our expectations, only one example of this name can be found in the Pyramid Texts. In this case, messengers are sent to the late king Unis by his father Ra, namely, his Ka.

Messengers of your Ka (Ra) come to you. Messengers of your father come to you.

Messengers of Ra come to you. (Pyr. 136b W)

Next, we will study the cases in the horizontal level. At birth, a man is already equipped with Ka-power. This Ka-power accompanies him during his life, helps him survive the most critical moments during the “Rites of Passage,” and remains with him after death.

Unfortunately, the number of documents dealing with the role of the Ka in the world of the living are scarce, because most of the available sources consist of funerary texts from pyramids and tombs. Inevitably, this uneven distribution of documents influences scholars, who are inclined to connect the Ka with the afterlife.

The existence of the Ka at birth is proved from the names of kings and private people. The Ka is incorporated into their names, which are used in the living world. In the case of kings, among the names of the royal titulary, the Horus name is well known to be in connection with the Ka.<sup>83</sup>

This name is often written within the design of palace façade (*srh*) upon which Horus is depicted, which means that king on earth rules the world of the living as Horus. On monuments, the Horus name is embraced by the hieroglyph of the Ka-symbol, since it shows the strong relation existing between the living king and the Ka in the living world.<sup>84</sup>

The efficacy of the abstract Ka is also suggested on the horizontal level from the names of private individuals.<sup>85</sup> Some typical names include:

<i>wḥm k3.(i)</i>	(My) Ka repeats.	(I, 83, 23)
<i>k3.(i) ii(w)</i>	(My) Ka has come.	(I, 338, 18)
<i>w3s k3.(i)</i>	(My) Ka is strong.	(I, 74, 12)
<i>nfr k3.i</i>	My Ka is good.	(I, 200, 18)

Another example can be used from the New Kingdom: the living Kas (*k3w ḥnhw*). This expression refers only to the living people on earth who are subjects of the living king, in contrast with *k3w*, simple Kas, referring to the dead.<sup>86</sup>

As mentioned above, the Ka can work on earth with the living, royal and non-royal. This continuous power is effective after death. Only one moment is critical in the passage from life to death until a person succeeds in a funeral rite (Rite of Passage). This transitional moment, which is “a period of suspense”<sup>87</sup> when the effect of the Ka stops, is called “resting of Ka” in a monument of Meres-Ankh.

<sup>83</sup> E.g. A. Moret, *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 67 (1913), 183; U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-55.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. H. Frankfort, *op. cit.*, p. 72; U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 52. One example is seen in Fig. 2.

<sup>85</sup> H. Ranke, *Personennamen*, I and II. Cf. U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-39.

<sup>86</sup> U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>87</sup> H. Frankfort, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

Resting of her Ka-power. Her travelling to the pure place (place of mummification). . . .  
Her travelling to her beautiful tomb. (*Urk.* I, 156f)

After passing the critical, transitional term, the Ka (vital force) of the deceased restarts. Obviously, the Ka can work also after death.

The linear and continuous nature of the Ka-power may be recognized in the cycle of nature. In ancient Egypt, the year was divided into three seasons: inundation (*3ht*), winter (*pri*), and summer (*šmw*). Every year, a plant follows the cycle of birth, growth, and death. Thus, one can assume that the continuous vital force also work in nature.

In the case below, the deceased king is identified with a flower. The presupposition may be that the flower grows thanks to the vital force (Ka). Here, K. Sethe and R. O. Faulkner think that the Ka is the Nile River.<sup>88</sup> In our framework, their idea belongs to the concept of “incarnation.” Although taking the Ka to be the incarnation of the Nile is one of the possible choices, it is not conclusive, and I would prefer to see it as an abstract power. Regardless of which interpretation is correct, it is clear that the Ka’s connection with the vital force is valid even in nature.

Tety is a flower coming up from the Ka. (*Pyr.* 544a T)

So far, we have seen the various cases of the Ka-power as mentioned in our framework, that is, the Ka as a continuous power in both directions: vertically from the creation until today, across the generations, and horizontally from birth to the hereafter through the critical phase of death for an individual. The vertical direction is typically associated with the relationship from “father to son,” that is, from Osiris to Horus, from late king to new king, starting ultimately from the primeval god of the creation. In the horizontal direction, the Ka is given at birth, and is always active during and after life.

In the category “Linear Nature,” we have seen two types of Ka. The first is an abstract power, that is, the vital force, transmitted typically from “father to son.” The other is an entity full of the Ka-power, not any independent entity who would have his own will and actions; typically, a father is referred to as a Ka by his son.

### 5.1.2 Pseudo-Dualism

Since time immemorial, people think that a man simply consists of a soul and a body.

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<sup>88</sup> K. Sethe, *Komm.* iii, p. 22; R. O. Faulkner, *op. cit.*, Utterance 334, n. 3.

Platonism, according to which the soul originates from the a divine ideal world, the body is a prison for the soul, and both are therefore incompatible with each other, is a typical and ultimate form of this system of thought. Even nowadays, this dualistic way of thinking still influences a majority of people in various degree.

In the reality of various cultures in history, dualism is not so strict as to separate the two parts in a man, and the soul does not lose its physical functions. This hold also true for ancient Egyptian culture. In the present study, we refer to this kind of dualism as “Pseudo-Dualism.”

As we have seen in the history of Ka research, the most influential or current opinion is that the Ka is a “double” or a “twin” of the individual. This way of thinking, which originates with G. Maspero and was reinforced by H. Frankfort, has led to the curret image of Ka, that is: the Ka is born with a man, it is always with him as protector and it remains with him even after death; the Ka has its own shape that is exactly same as that of the man whom the Ka accompanies. This current view is classified into “personification” in our framework.

The above theory is incompatible with other cases that we have examined and which belong to the category Linear Nature. We have confirmed that the Ka has been exemplified as both abstract power and incarnation. We have had no instance of independent Ka, personification of Ka.

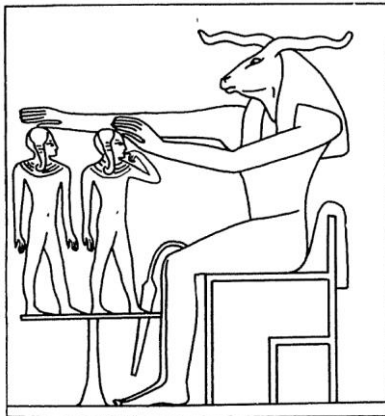


Fig.1 Khnum forming a future king and his Ka. (H. Frankfort, *Kingship and Gods*, Fig. 23)

The most famous instance of an independent Ka is known from a scene depicting the god Khnum forming the young king and his Ka on the potter's wheel (Fig. 1), which occurs both in the 18<sup>th</sup> temples of Deir el-Bahari and Luxor.<sup>89</sup> The royal Ka looks exactly like the newly-created king, whether Hatshepsut or Amenhotep III, standing beside him. The fact that a depiction of the crafting of a human and his Ka was allowed only for kings, never for

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<sup>89</sup> H. Frankfort, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

private people, is the reason why Frankfort made a distinction between the royal Ka and the private Ka.

Remarkably, there are many descriptions in the Pyramid Texts where the Ka looks to act independently from the late king. These sentences support, as a result, the vague opinion that the royal Ka is an independent entity who has the same shape of the late king.

This “Pseudo-Dualism” is another side of “Linear Nature.” We can already say in advance that all the cases of independent Ka can be explained as “incarnation” and “Pseudo-Dualism.”

The concepts of “Ka-statue” and “Ka-house” in the Old Kingdom can be confusing for modern scholars. However, thanks to our understanding of Pseudo-Dualism, they can be interpreted as representing respectively the deceased and the house of the deceased both filled with Ka-power (vital force).

In an interesting case below, the body of the sun god Ra and the body of the late king Unis are combined with each other through the Ka. Here, the addressee is Ra. First, all things belong to Ra and next they belong to the late king. This is an example of vertical Linear Nature. We should pay special attention to the last two sentences where dualism is concerned, that is: “All things belong to the of Unis. All things belong to his body.” The Ka and the body (*dt*) seem to oppose each other.

Ra, may you dawn in the sky, may you dawn for Unis, Lord of All!

All things belong to your (Ra's) body. All things belong to the Ka of Unis. All things belong to his body. (Pyr. 37b-c W)

Note that the real opposition or comparison is between Ra and the late king Unis, not between Unis and his Ka. The priest recites this utterance so that the sun god Ra may rise from the eastern horizon and help the dead king by giving him “all things.” This combination must be understood as the sun god Ra and the late king (consisting of “Ka” and “body”). Here, we should remember that the Ka is originally an abstract power, which as such infiltrates into every part of the body. “The Ka of Unis” and “his body” means the late king Unis himself in their unity. It would indeed be impossible to imagine that the things could be given only to the soul/spirit (Ka) and then only to the body separately. The expression “Ka of Unis” and “his body” is probably to be understood as meaning “Unis who is filled with the Ka-power, that is, his body (himself).”

Before taking this interpretation into consideration, let us examine further examples of similar dualism opposing the Ka and the body.



He (Horus) may purify this Unis in the Lake of the Jackal!

He may cleanse the Ka of this Unis in the Lake of the Netherworld!

He may wipe the flesh of the Ka of this Unis and of his body!<sup>90</sup> (Pyr. 372b-d W)

Here, interestingly, the comparison is first made between the late Unis (body) and his Ka in the first two sentences, and then, in the third sentence, both are combined in the flesh (*iwf*) of Unis who consists of the Ka and the body (*dt*). Such a case can also be defined as dualism.

Here is another example of dualism involving the Ka and the body.

He conducts the Ka of this Unis and his body to the Great House. (Pyr. 373b W)

We have already seen some cases of dualism between the soul (spirit) and the body, that is, between the Ka (*k3*) and the body (*dt*).<sup>91</sup> Remember that when Khnum creates a king and his Ka, both the body (*dt*) and the Ka (*k3*) are represented.

Moreover, remember the opposition between Hem (*hm*) and Ka. The expression of *hm.i*, *hm.k*, *hm.f*, limited to royal usage, means “My Majesty,” “Your Majesty,” and “His Majesty,” respectively in the first, second, and third person singular. Although its exact meaning is not so clear, Hem (*hm*) is defined by Spiegel as “irdischen Erscheinungsform des Königs,” that is, “Leib” or “Gestalt.”<sup>92</sup> In his autobiography dating back to the Old Kingdom (*Urk.* I, 98-109), Uni, during king’s lifetime, usually refers to him as “His Majesty,” but as “His Ka” immediately after his death.<sup>93</sup>

It is likely that this distinction between the soul (spirit) and the body is more widespread in Egyptian monuments than we imagine. For example, ancient Egyptians often use the expression “gods and their Kas.”

..., because you are Sekhem-powerful over gods (bodies) and their Kas.<sup>94</sup> (Pyr. 776b P)<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> The prothetic form in the third sentence “*i.sk.f*” suggests that these sentences should be in the subjunctive. See J. P. Allen, *Inflection*, §395. The prothetic form can appear “only in examples of the nominal or adverbial aorist or the subjunctive.” Cf. also Table 19.

<sup>91</sup> Note that it is not an exact opposition between the soul and the body, but rather a comparison between the plural substances. *E.g.* Pyr. 824a-c, “...because you (Nut) has Sekhem-power over the gods, their Kas, their heritages, their provisions, and all their possessions” (*n šhm.t m ntrw k3w.sn išt iw<sup>c</sup>t išt df(3)w.sn išt išt.sn nbt išt*).

<sup>92</sup> J. Spiegel, “Die Grundbedeutung des Stammes  $\parallel$  *hm*,” *ZÄS* 75 (1939), 117.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. L. Greven, *op. cit.*, p.19; U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, 41f.

<sup>94</sup> R. O. Faulkner, who supports the idea that the Ka is a double, translates “Kas” as “spirits.”

<sup>95</sup> For a similar case, see, *e.g.*: *šmś.n kw Hr i.mr(i).nf kw h<sup>c</sup>(i).ti m nšw-bit šhm.ti m ntrw nb(w) k3w.sn išt* (Pyr. 1625-1626).

You (body) do not perish. Your Ka does not perish. You are Ka. (Pyr. 149d W)

This last case is used as the basis for the “incarnation” school. The third sentence can be valid only when the first sentence and the second one are equal in meaning. It must be assumed that “you” is equal to “your Ka” and then only the conclusion comes to that “you are Ka” makes sense.<sup>96</sup>

There are lots of other cases of dualism we could discuss. Since ancient Egyptians presupposed that gods, kings, and men consist of a body and a soul, we should expect this dualism to appear in a large number of Egyptian documents.

This dualism has another side of Linear Nature. Once the continuous presence or work of the Ka-power is acknowledged in individual’s life on the horizontal level, it is possible to understand that the Ka-power overlaps the whole body of individuals. The issue of the “personification” of the Ka is focused in this horizontal part of the individual life. Here, we have two options: either we consider that the Ka is separated and independent from a man only on the horizontal level, or we conclude that the Ka still works as an abstract power without taking any concrete or independent shape, that the Ka is evoked in the body as an incarnation, being in linear and continuous nature.

For that reason, we should establish a standard in order to make a distinction between these two options. If the Ka can act independently from a man, it means that it acts as a personification of an individual, which allows the soul (spirit) to have its own will and shape. On the contrary, if the Ka behaves like the man, without any independence or action of its own, it means that it is an incarnation where the abstract Ka-power is diffused in every part of the body, and fits the whole body, so that the abstract Ka moves just as the body does. Our approach will be to apply the label “incarnation” only to the cases that fall within the scope of religious anthropologies. We do not know of any case where the Ka is free of its actions and enjoy an independent will of its own, at least among Old Kingdom sources.

First, we should discuss the double or the twin of a new created king on the potter’s wheel of the god Khnum depicted in the above-mentioned temple scene from the New Kingdom (Fig. 1). This has been usually regarded as an example of the personification of the Ka. We should note, however, that the shape of the Ka is the same as that of the young king, that the depiction of such a little and identical Ka can be used only for a king, and that such a depiction of the Ka is pretty much limited to this creation scene.

We can assume that the royal Ka of king was very much worthy of being depicted on a temple wall, and that the scene of the royal birth had to be depicted and published widely to

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<sup>96</sup> See L. Greven, *op. cit.*, p.15; U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 40. They lack the perspective of the (Pseudo-)Dualism.

the public on enduring monuments. This “double” or “twin” should then be regarded as a unique depiction necessary to represent the invisible abstract power diffused in every part of the body. The only possible method the Egyptian artist could resort to was to represent the Ka in the shape of the king.

Therefore, we can assume that the Ka appearing in texts is also an incarnation, not a personification. In the Old Kingdom, the Ka, who seems to be independent and often regarded as a double or a twin, may be an incarnation, as mentioned by L. Greven and U. Schweitzer.

Once we have accepted the concept of incarnation, we must elucidate whose Ka incarnates in whom. “Who is Ka” occurs in a variety of texts.

The texts where the Ka seems to be independent can be divided into four groups and explained on the basis of the concept of incarnation.<sup>97</sup>

#### Group A

In the texts of this group, the Ka performs the same action or is placed in the same situation as the king and is equated with the king himself.

This is perfectly exemplified in the following passages from the Pyramid Texts where the Ka has no free will and merely seem to imitate the king. Therefore, we can assume that the Ka is the late king himself who is filled with Ka-power (vital force).

Rejoice over this Pepy I! Rejoice over the Ka of this Pepy I! (Pyr. 354b P)

Rejoice over this Pepy I! Rejoice over his Ka!

The voice of this Pepy I is true and the voice of the Ka of this Pepy I is true before god.  
(Pyr. 361b-c P)

There is no bread of him (his enemy). There is no bread of his Ka. His bread has finished.  
(Pyr. 162a W)

Tety is pure. His Ka is pure. (Pyr. 683a T)

In the cases below, the king and the Ka are named side by side.

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<sup>97</sup> L. Greven supports the concept of incarnation to explain the texts from groups A and B, while U. Schweitzer interpretes the same texts on the basis of the concept of personification, stating that the Ka is a “selbständige Person, die sich aber völliger Harmonie mit dem Könige befindet.” L. Greven, *op. cit.*, p. 24f; U. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-51, especially p. 48.

This pyramid and this temple were installed for Pepy I and for his Ka.

This pyramid and this temple were enclosed for Pepy I and for his Ka. (Pyr. 1277b-c P)

One who will place his finger on this pyramid and this temple of Pepy I and his Ka.

(Pyr.1278a P)

The example below suggests a scene in which the dead king stands up after he is brought to life through the funeral rite, so that he gains the continuous Ka-power.

Oh Pepy I, stand up! You would be pure and your Ka would be pure. (Pyr. 841a P)

Once the king has survived the most critical moment of death, it is clear that he is equipped not only with his Ka, but also with his Ba and his Sekhem, which have their own specific power, which are listed in order to complete the omnipotence of the king.

Oh Pepy I, awake! Raise yourself!

Stand up! You are pure. Your Ka is pure.

Your Ba is pure. Your Sekhem is pure. (Pyr. 837a-c P)

#### Group B

Just like in Group A, the texts of this group present the Ka as performing the same action or being placed in the same situation as the king. In this case, however, the preposition *hn* "together with" and *hr* "near" are used. This may be a way to express Pseudo-Dualism.

In the following passage from Utterance 25, section 17 is well-known, since it depicts prominent gods in full possession of their life force. Although some ambiguity remains about the class of the Ka (entity or abstract power), it seems clear that each sentence presupposes that the division here between body and soul/spirit leads to express the whole person who has a body and a vital force at same time.

One who goes goes with his Ka. Horus goes with his Ka. Seth goes with his Ka.

Thoth goes with his Ka. Dun-anuy<sup>98</sup> goes with his Ka. Osiris goes with his Ka.

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<sup>98</sup> The reading "*Dwn-<sup>5</sup>nwy*" is from R. O. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, p. 5 (Utterance 25, n. 2). C. Carrier is on the same way (*Textes des pyramides*, p. 14). Note that J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 19, W20) translates this word as "god."

Khenty-irty goes with his Ka. May you also<sup>99</sup> go with your Ka!

Oh Unis! The arm of your Ka is in front of you. O Unis! The arm of your Ka is behind you.

Oh Unis! The leg of your Ka is in front of you. O Unis! The leg of your Ka is behind you.<sup>100</sup>

(Pyr. 17a-18b W)

In the case below, the parallel made between body and name supports the concept of incarnation,<sup>101</sup> and the connection with life expresses the substance of the Ka.

This Pepy I is healthy with his flesh. This Pepy I is fine with his name.

This Pepy I lives with his Ka. (Pyr. 908a-b P)

In the cases below, the late king acts “near” his Ka.

One who goes goes near his Ka. Osiris goes near his Ka. Seth goes near his Ka.

Khenty-irty goes near his Ka. May you also go near your Ka! (Pyr. 826a-b P)

The next example also belongs to this category.

To be recited. As the great one spends the day time near his Ka, this great one spends the night time near his Ka.

As this Pepy I spends the day time near his Ka, this Pepy I spend the night time near his Ka.

As the great one awakes, this Pepy I awakes,

the gods awake, the Sekhem-powerful ones rouse up. (Pyr. 894a-d P)

### Group C

In the texts of this group the Ka is the king himself.

On the basis of the context, the Ka is identified with the late king. This is a way to refer to the king in the aspect of the Ka-power, who dies and is brought back to life.

The next example is a forerunner of the “*htp-di-nsw*-formula,” which is formalized in the

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<sup>99</sup> Note that “*dd.k*,” which consists of “*dd*” and a suffix pronoun, means “also.” Cf. R. Hannig, *Hwb*, p. 1093f.: “auch, selbst,” with comment “suff nicht personengebunden.”

<sup>100</sup> Here, R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 5, Utterance 25, n. 4) explains the Ka as a double: “This jingle may mean that the king’s double strides along at his side, arms and legs swinging back and forth.”

<sup>101</sup> See L. Greven, *op. cit.*, p. 24f. He, however, interpretes here in non-monism.

funeral texts from the Middle Kingdom. The king gives an offering to the Ka of X. Here, the “Ka of X” is means “X himself” who is filled with the vital force. The Berlin Dictionary mentions “dein Ka, sein Ka u.s.w.; früh und häufig abgeschwächt für du, er u.s.w. gebraucht.”<sup>102</sup> In the case below, Unis gives an offering to Unis literally, because this text is a formula.

To be recited 4 times. The offering that the king gives to Ka of Unis. Osiris Unis, take the Eye of Horus for yourself! (Pyr. 35b W)

In the case below also, the late king is called the Ka.

Do you wish to live? Horus in charge of his meankhet-staff of justice!  
(Then,) you should not close the doors of the sky, you should not slam shut its door-leaves,  
before<sup>103</sup> you took the Ka of Pepy I to this sky. (Pyr. 815a-c)

The case above will be treated again in “6 Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive.”

#### Group D

In this group, the Ka points to another entity who is not the king himself, but who is a god in higher position.

Somebody may be called a Ka and he is not the late king who is a leading figure in the texts. The entity must be higher in vertical direction for the main personality focused in the texts.

In the example below, the Ka is addressed as Osiris, who are superior to Unis.

You shall invoke your Ka as Osiris, that he may protect you from all wrath of the dead.  
(Pyr. 63b W)

The case below is similar as above. The Ka of the late king is addressed. We have two players here. The one is the king, and the other is, theoretically, none other than a superior

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<sup>102</sup> *Wb.* V, p. 87.

<sup>103</sup> The preposition “*dr*” is translated as “after, since” or “before.” The first is suggested by Miriam Lichtheim (*Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. 1, Berkeley, 1973; p. 45, n. 3), and the latter is by R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, Utterance 440, n. 3). M. Lichtheim, “in accordance with Anthes’s study,” supposes “the *ka* has made its way into the sky ahead of the king and will announce his coming.”

god, presumably Osiris.

O Ka of Tety! Bring (food) that Tety may eat with you. (Pyr. 564b T)

In the next example, the deceased is identified with Horus, Seth, and Dun-anuy in his purity. The Ka who is named in the last should be Osiris, who should be nominated in this series of gods, who is in the higher position of Linear Nature. The deceased king is on a step before he can become Osiris by the effect of the funeral rite after his death.

Your divinity is divinity of Horus. Your divinity is divinity of Seth. Your divinity is divinity of Thoth.

Your divinity is divinity of Dun-anuy. Your divinity is divinity of your Ka. Your divinity is divinity of your divinity. (Pyr. 28a-b W)

We have seen the cases of Pseudo-Dualism, which is another side of the Linear Nature in the Ka-power. The horizontal continuity of the Ka-power in the body means the fitness of the Ka in the body. When the Ka is depicted, ancient Egyptians devised to make a double or a twin. The Ka does act just like the king does, that is, the Ka does not act independently from the king. In the Pyramid Texts, we can explain the Ka as incarnation and there is, virtually, no case where we are obliged to choose the personification option.

When the Ka is clearly another entity, not the king himself, it is a higher entity like father or primeval god who is connected with the king through the vertical effect of the Ka-power. Or, when the Ka appears alone, it may be the king himself in whom the Ka-power is incarnated.

The study of the Ka concept preceded the others and brought forth many publications, conducting two streams after the War: “Personification” of only the royal Ka after the death (H. Frankfort); “Incarnation” of the Ka (L. Greven and U. Schweitzer). On the other hand, it could not reach the consensus only halfway.<sup>104</sup> The main issue that we had to consider was what shape the Ka could have, which differed between the schools of personification and of incarnation.

We have proposed two essential natures of the Ka: Linear Nature: Pseudo-Dualism. As for the Linear Nature, the Ka is the continuous, ordinary, and daily power. This nature is applied for both of vertical line and horizontal line. The Ka-power can appear so distinctly in

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<sup>104</sup> The most recent work on the topic is: Rune Nyord, “The Concept of *ka* between Egyptian and Egyptological Frameworks,” in *Concepts in Middle Kingdom Funerary Culture* (Leiden, 2019), pp. 150-203.

the relation between the late king and the new-appointed king, between Osiris and Horus, flowing long and uninterruptedly in vertical direction from the primeval age. And it is also the horizontal power that is transferred by father, that is present and working in the body as long as the son is on earth, that does not leave him even after the death owing to the funeral rite. Probably, this horizontal and continuous power can work in the rhythm of the nature.

Furthermore, we have another nature of the Ka concept as Pseudo-Dualism, which deeply and vastly roots in the texts and materials of ancient Egypt. As the power that is continuously present in the body, the Ka-power must coexist with the body, which leads the phenomenon that a Ka looks to be an independent entity. As the Ka does not act independently from the person concerned, we believe that the incarnation of the Ka is appropriate in the contexts of the Pyramid Texts. In addition, the dead king in whom the Ka-power incarnates, and anyone, theoretically, in whom the Ka incarnates in the verticality, he can be called the Ka.

The picture of the Ka as twin on the temple wall in the New Kingdom, does not mean that the Ka is another independent entity. As the Ka does not act differently from the king, the depiction in the temple wall is the device to express the abstract Ka only on the royal monuments.

And, we have no reason to discern the royal Ka from the private Ka. The essence of the Ka is obviously the continuous power transmitted or maintained in vertical and horizontal directions. Such a peculiarity of the Ka-power does not need to discern the royal and the private. The depiction of twin or double on the temple wall in the New Kingdom is the device for expression to commemorate the royal birth in the royal monuments.

Once we understand that the Ka incarnates in somebody, we know the Ka can vary in its presentation. Then, the mechanical and nondiscriminatory translation of “spirit” does not contribute to understanding the original texts.

E. Hornung mentions, “steht der Ba auch sonst eher für das Bewußtsein, während der Ka aus der Tiefe des Unbewußtsein wirkt.”<sup>105</sup> For us, it means that the Ka is the ordinary, daily, and placid power originating from the Linear Nature, that the Ba is, which we will see, the extra-ordinary, short-term, and momental power. In this sense, the Ka is maybe a divine power, but not a mysterious power.

## 5.2 Ba

The Ba is peculiar in its momental and overwhelming power. First, the feature of the

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<sup>105</sup> E. Hornung, *Geist der Pharaonenzeit* (Zürich, 1989), p. 198.



Ba-power is confirmed as overwhelming power. Then, the method to gain the Ba is specified in the Pyramid Texts. To gain the Ba-power can be regarded as a serious issue for surviving a difficulty in ancient Egyptian life.

### 5.2.1 Overwhelming Power

The Ba or the Bas are known as power to threat any hostile enemies. L. V. Žabkar calls it “the punitive aspect of the Bas.”<sup>106</sup> First, we cite two examples of the Ba-power from the texts of the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom.

The case below is from the Story of Sinuhe. The Ba-power can expel the enemies from its owner.

The foreigners flee from his arms, as from the Bas of the great female. (Sinuhe, B 63-64)

The passage below is on the inscription of the third pylon of Karnak Temple in the reign of Amenhetep III. The Ba can drive away the enemy.

His Bas carry off him who is evel of character. (*Urk.* IV, 1724, 9)

In addition, another example is shown from the monument of Thutmose I about the expedition to Nubia. His Bas can cause the enemies to shiver because of the fear of him.

The Bas of His Majesty made them blind. (*Urk.* IV, 85, 6)<sup>107</sup>

In the Pyramid Texts, all examples are somehow pregnant with the nuance of power, threat, compulsion, fear or awe. The Ba-power is active in very limited term. Then when the Ba is depicted to appear on texts, it means that the Ba-power is active during its explosion. Without being activated, the Ba would not be depicted on texts.

### 5.2.2 Method to Gain the Ba in the Old Kingdom

As overwhelming power, the Ba is supposed to burst out when an emergent situation occurs. Consequently, there is no firm description for fixed or ruled method to evoke the Ba-power.

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<sup>106</sup> L. V. Žabkar explains this aspect in his monograph in pp. 85-89.

<sup>107</sup> This is also an example that Faulker (*CD*, p. 77) cites as instance of “power.”

Nevertheless, some scenes are seen to gain the Ba-power in the Pyramid Texts. This feature is shared in similar concepts like Sekhem, Wash, and Seped. It is notable that the Ka never appears in this context. The Ka is given or transferred at birth by a father to his son as vital force, which works always during the life without cessation.

The late kings and the gods not only need the powers to keep their life, but also they use the powers to strengthen their desirable condition by paralleling them. In the Pyramid Texts, we find some expressions how to gain the powers. In these expressions, verb-forms of powers are used in the subjunctive mood with anaphoric adverb meaning “thereby” (*im*).

In the case below, the late king starts standing up again after the funeral rite, conquering the critical situation of the death. A funeral priest calls the late king Pepy II by presenting kinds of offerings of bread and beer. The special offerings at the funerary rite can give the dead king the powers of Ba, Seped, and Sekhem.

Raise yourself to this bread of yours that does not know moldiness,  
your beer that does not know sourness.

You will be Ba-powerful thereby. You will be Seped-powerful thereby. You will be  
Sekhem-powerful thereby. (Pyr. 859a-c N)

The next case shows that another kind of offering, that is, perfume, called the Eye of Horus, also can give the deceased king the powers of Ba, Sekhem and Wash.

Its<sup>108</sup> perfume is to you. The perfume of the Eye of Horus is to you. Pepy II!

You will be Ba-powerful thereby. You will be Sekhem-powerful thereby. You will be  
Wash-powerful thereby.

You will gain the Wereret-crown among the gods. (Pyr. 2075a-c N)

The text below also belongs to the Eye of Horus. Here, the Eye of Horus is used in the depiction of the Osiris Myth. It symbolizes “all sacrifice; every gift or offering might be called a ‘Horus-Eye,’ especially if offered to the dead.”<sup>109</sup> The filial devotion also gives the powers of Ba and Sekhem to the dead king.

Your son Horus struck him (Seth).

He wrested his eye from his hand. He gave it to you.

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<sup>108</sup> The word “its” means the Eye of Horus clearly from the contexts. The Eye of Horus is nominated immediately in parallel expression.

<sup>109</sup> J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 31.

You will be Ba-powerful thereby. You will be Sekhem-powerful thereby in front of Akh-powerful ones. (Pyr. 578c-579a T)

In the text below, the departure of the dead king to the funeral rite gives him the powers of Ba, Wash and Sekhem. Because the scene describes the resurrection of the late king, the departure means the passing to the revival through the critical condition of the death. The spell is supposed to be recited by a funeral priest.

Indeed, this journey of yours is, my father Merenre, as like as Horus goes to his father Osiris.

He will be Akh-powerful thereby, he will be Ba-powerful thereby, he will be Wash-powerful thereby, he will be Sekhem-powerful thereby. (Pyr. 1730a-b M)

The similar expression is seen in the case below. The deceased queen Neit can be multi-powered by the movement of coming or going to the same rite as Horus did to his father Osiris in the myth.

Oh Neit! Come<sup>110</sup> you also<sup>111</sup>! Tell of this going of yours!

You will be Akh-powerful thereby. You will be great thereby. You will be Wash-powerful thereby.

You will be Ba-powerful thereby. You will be Sekhem-powerful thereby. (Pyr. 1921a-c Nt)

In the case below, the deceased Unis, who is addressed by a priest, goes to his father Geb to gain the various powers. This part seems similar to the spells mentioned above in the point that the movement “ascending” to father is concerned with the passing to the funeral rite.

Ascend to the place where your father is, to the place where Geb is,

that he may give you the one which is in brow of Horus<sup>112</sup>, that you may be Ba-powerful thereby, that you may be Sekhem-powerful thereby,

that you may be at the head of the Westerners thereby. (Pyr. 139b-d W)

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<sup>110</sup> Reading “*mi*,” as Faulkner does.

<sup>111</sup> In the texts of Neit, the male suffix pronoun (*.k*) is usually used for her, because the traditionally transmitted texts was applied for her. Here, a female suffix (*.t*) is seen after the “*dd*.”

<sup>112</sup> It is “the royal uraeus” that “the one which is in brow of Horus” means. Cf. R. O. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, p. 41 (Utterance 214, n. 7).

In the Pyramids Texts, the late king can be Ba-powerful through the funeral offerings, Eye of Horus (offerings and filial piety), and travelling to the next life. Because of the funeral character of the Pyramid Texts, the king looks to gain the Ba-power after his death. It must be noted that the Ba-power itself is neutral and it may be used in this world, as we see in the previous section of “5.2.1 Overwhelming Power.” We know enough number of examples where the Ba-power is used in this world during Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom.

### 5.3 Akh

In comparison with the Ba and the Ka, the Akh looks rather less distinguished in its features although it appears in the texts in greater number.

The Akh-power is combined with the funeral rite and the knowledge.<sup>113</sup> Any entity who gains the knowledge through the rite can be called Akh-powerful one, the one who has the Akh-power. The Akh is a kind of “licence” of knowledge and at the same time anyone who has it is called an Akh. As a result, the distinguished usages of the Akh are limited in number, while the undistinguished usages of the Akh appear in great number.

Because it is a qualification of knowledge for the scenarios assured in advance, the Akh does not manage sudden unexpected accidents or serious crisis. Then, the Akh often appears in parallel with other power concepts, and it has affinity with some concepts. And the Akh is most often used in Pseudo-Dualism. Any honorable title (Akh-qualification) must not be ignored on the documents like in any social customs as the appellation of its holder.

#### 5.3.1 Capacity Qualified through Knowledge, Recitation and Rite

The power of Akh is well-known to be strongly combined with the knowledge of religious spells and their recite at funeral rite.

In the Utterance 473, there are suggestive expressions of the Akh. The deceased king meets some beings, who are called Akhs. They are characterized as who know sacred or magical spells in the expressions of “with their mouth equipped mouth” (*m r.sn ꜥpr*) and “whose mouth is an owner of equipment” (*m r.fnb ꜥpr*).

This Pepy I found Akhs with their equipped mouths,  
who sit on the shores of lake Sehseh,

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<sup>113</sup> E.g. J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 94.

which is a drinking bowl of Akh whose mouth is an owner of equipment.<sup>114</sup> (Pyr. 930a-c P)

In the below, a conversation is carried on between the deceased king and the gods.

Who are you? <sup>115</sup> They said to Merenre,  
Akhs with their equipped mouths said. (Pyr. 930d-e P)

The king himself is supposed to know the magical spells and, therefore, he is an Akh.

Pepy I is Akh with his equipped mouth. (Pyr. 930f P)

The same expressions repeat in this Utterance.

How has this happened to you? They said to Pepy II.

Akhs with their equipped mouths said.

You have come to this noble place more than any place. (Pyr. 931a-c N)

The combination of the Akh and the knowledge equipment is seen below.

Unis is one who is equipped and who assembles his Akhs. (Pyr. 398a W)

The below is the beginning passage of Utterance 627, where the deceased king is reborn. The equipment of magical spells is necessary for the rebirth.

Pepy II is Akh who is equipped and who demands becoming. (Pyr. 1771a N)

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<sup>114</sup> In §930c, there are some ambiguous confusions. K. Sethe translates it as “der Trinkschale für jeden wohlversehenen Geist (der dies) durch seinen Mund (geworden ist)” (*Komm.* iv, 206f.) and A. B. Mercer (*The Pyramid Texts in Translation and Commentary*, New York, 1952) accepts it as “the drinking-bowl of each spirit well-equipped by reason of his mouth” (Vol. 1, p. 168). J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 127) follows them changing the “bowl” with “place,” which seems somehow not to go well because its determinative looks a bowl, translating “the drinking place of every akh with his mouth equipped.” I follow R. O. Faulkner’s translation in taking the  $\smile$  *nb* as “owner,” not as “all” or “every.” C. Carrier’s translation (*Textes des pyramides*, p. 751) is new in interpreting the passage as two parallel adverbial phrases, “avec une coupe de possesseur de pouvoir-akh (et) avec sa bouche de possesseur d’équipement.” As R. O. Faulkner notes here as “a curious variant of the commoner *3hw m r.sn* ‘pr,’” it is rather difficult to take *nb* as adjective due to its location. I prefer to “*m* of predication” in nominal sentence: *m r.f nb* ‘pr.

<sup>115</sup> This reconstruction is after R. O. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, p. 162 (Utterance 473, n. 4).

In mastabas also, some examples of Akh appear. Harkhuf, known as governor of the South, served Merenre and Pepy II in the 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty, he says,

Oh ones who live upon earth,  
who shall pass by this tomb downstream and upstream,  
who shall say, a thousand loaves and a thousand beer jugs (shall be) for the owner of this tomb!

I will watch<sup>116</sup> them in the necropolis.

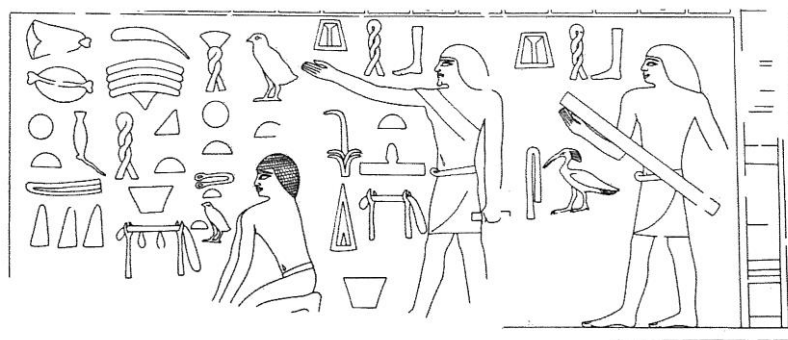
I am the Akh, who is excellent, who is equipped, lector-priest, who knows his spell. (*Urk.* I, 122, 9-13)

Ibi lived in the age of Pepy I, Merenre, and Pepy II in the 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty and he was a nomarch in This (Deir el-Gabrawi), 12<sup>th</sup> nome.

I am the Akh, who is excellent, who is equipped.

I know every secret charm of the court. (*Urk.* I, 143, 1-2)


Also on the depiction of funeral rite, the Akh is mentioned. The power of Akh is equipped with the deceased by lector-priests through the recitation of the magical spells. The below is from the mastaba of Idout, who is supposed to be daughter of Unis, the last king of the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty.



(N. Kanawati and M. Abder Raziq, *The Tombs of Inyefert and Ihy*, pl. 69(c))

The depiction above is located under the offering list of the sanctuary at the mastaba of Idout. The first man on the left is an embalmmer (*wt*), kneeling in front of various kinds of

<sup>116</sup> The expression “*sb(i) hr*” is translated “wachen über” in R. Hannig, *Hwb*, “*sbi*.” M. Lichtheim has the same translation by “watch over” in her *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. 1, p. 24.

offering: pieces of meat, sweets, loaves, beer, and wine. The man in the center is a lector-priest (*hri-hbt*), performing the funeral rite. The last man on the right is also a lector-priest and he is reading a scroll in the rite. In front of him, the word  “*sh*” is inscribed, meaning that the lady Idout is equipped with the necessary knowledge through this rite.

#### 5.4 Close Concepts

Akh has some close conceptions. Sekhem-power often appears with Akh both in verb and in noun. It is impressive that they both are paralleled in the same or similar phrases. The Sekhem is originally a scepter as depicted in hieroglyph, the scepter having a power specific for rulers, kings, or gods.

You caused him to be Akh-powerful among the Akh-powerful ones,  
You caused him to be Sekhem-powerful among the gods. (Pyr. 880c-d P)

Oh, this Pepy I! May your name live in front of the living!  
May you be Akh-powerful, this Pepy I, in front of Akh-powerful ones! May you be  
Sekhem-powerful in front of Sekhems! (Pyr. 899b-c P)

Fields are content, irrigation ditches are flooded  
for this Pepy II on this day.  
His Akh-power is given to him thereby. His Sekhem-power is given to him thereby. (Pyr.  
857a-c N)

Anubis, who is in front of shrine, ordered that your Akh-power may be behind you, that  
your Sekhem-power may be inside you,  
you having been established in front of Sekhems. (Pyr. 1364c-d P)

The text below is interesting in showing that the Sekhem may be rather concerned with the living. The Akh is known to often point to the dead, who has received the funeral rite together with beneficial knowledge, and to the god. In the text below, the Akhs means the dead obviously from the contexts.

Horus caused you to be Akh-powerful in front of Akh-powerful ones, you to be  
Sekhem-powerful in front of the living. (Pyr. 903b P)

Be silent so that<sup>117</sup> you may hear it, (that is) the word that Merenre said,  
so that he may be Akh-powerful<sup>118</sup> in front of Akh-powerful ones, so that he may be  
Sekhem-powerful in front of the living,  
so that he may sit beside the Foremost of the Westerners. (Pyr. 868c-869b M)

The case below shows that the Akh and the Sekhem are connected with Horus, who is going to become Osiris due to his death.

Oh Pepi I!

Go for you so that you may be Akh-powerful, so that you may be Sekhem-powerful as god,  
as successor of Osiris! (Pyr. 752a-b P)

In the case below, as the above, Horus is called Akh and at the same time as Sekhem. The situation that the spell depicts is a part of funeral rite.

Ointment! Ointment! Where are you?<sup>119</sup> One who (should) be at the forehead of Horus!

Where are you?

You are in front of the forehead of Horus. It is in the forehead of this Pepy II that I place you<sup>120</sup>.


You shall give pleasure to<sup>121</sup> him under you. You shall cause him to be Akh-powerful under you.


You shall cause him to be Sekhem-powerful in his body. You shall place fear of him in eyes of all Akh-powerful ones,

who will look at him, all who will hear his name. (Pyr. 52a-53b N)

The next example is the combination of Akh and Djed. The Djed is originated from a column, meaning “be stable” or “enduring.” The Akh-power is also stable and enduring power once one passes the rite.

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<sup>117</sup>  can be transliterated as “*m sdm*” or “*mi sdm*.” C. Carrier (*Textes des Pyramides*, p. 1894f.)

does as temporal preposition, and K. Sethe (*Komm.* ii, p. 132f.) as particle (later ) after imperative. J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 120, Pepy I, 297) may translate it as “(everyone)” in brackets, which may be taken as particle..

<sup>118</sup> Here, R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 153) and C. Carrier, (*Textes des Pyramides*, p. 607) regard “*3h*” and “*sh*” as noun. J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 120) takes them as verb. I prefer to the latter interpretation because of their parallel to the verb of “*hmsi*.”

<sup>119</sup> Cf. R. O. Faulkner, p. 18, n. 1.

<sup>120</sup> I take this sentence as emphatic. J. P. Allen, *Pyramid Texts*, p. 22. “I will put you on this Unis’s forehead.”

<sup>121</sup> In this Pyr. 52, R. O. Faulkner translates “*sdm n*” as “give pleasure to” on his dictionary (*CD*), “*sdm*,” p. 235. This causative verb doesn’t have an object here.



Oh my father, this Pepy I!

May you be Akh-powerful in horizon! May you be Djed-powerful in Djedit<sup>122</sup>! (Pyr. 1046a-b P)

May you be Akh-powerful in horizon! May you be Djed-powerful in Djedet (Mendes)! (Pyr. 1261b N)

The third combination with the Akh is made by “great” (ꜥ).

Hear, hear the word that Horus said to his father Osiris,  
so that you may be Akh-powerful thereby, so that you may be great thereby! (Pyr. 2264a-b JP II)

In the passages below, the Akh appears paralleled with Ba and heart. The heart is sometimes treated as indispensable for the resurrection of the deceased. The dead are expected to be perfect in his powers.

May your Ba-power be for you! May your Akh-power be within you!  
May your heart be for you for your body!  
Sever for you your bonds (as) Horus, who is in his house!  
Throw away your fetters (as) Seth who is in Henhent. (Pyr. 2228a-d JP II)

The below is a simple combination of Akh and Wash. The Wash-power is translated with “be honoured,” “be strong,”<sup>123</sup> or “mächtig sein,” “angesehen sein.”<sup>124</sup>

Take Wereret-crown for you<sup>125</sup> as lone star who destroys foes!  
In fact, this going of yours, Pepy II, is that of which Horus said to his father Osiris,  
so that you may be Akh-powerful thereby, so that you may be great thereby, so that you  
ay be Wash-powerful thereby. (Pyr. 2226d-2227b JP II)

Usually, the Wash is used together with other concepts. In the next example, the Akh is paralleled not only with Sekhem, but also with Wash, and Ba. The Utterance depicts the new journey of the deceased queen to the next life. She should be revived full of powers.

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<sup>122</sup> The word “Djedit” (*Ddit*) is the name of necropolis in Heliopolis. Cf. R. Hannig, *Hwb*, p. 1211.

<sup>123</sup> *CD*, p. 55.

<sup>124</sup> *LÄ I*, p. 261f.

<sup>125</sup> Corrected from “*ḥ*” to “*k*.”

Oh Neit! Come<sup>126</sup> you also! Tell of this going of yours!

You will be Akh-powerful thereby. You will be great thereby. You will be Wash-powerful thereby.

You will be Ba-powerful thereby. You will be Sekhem-powerful thereby. (Pyr. 1921a-c Nt)

The Akh below is combined with Sekhem and Wash. That the Ba is the last choice in this kind of combination is implied in its less number of appearing.

May you live so that you may go to and fro every day!

May you be Akh-powerful in your name of horizon where Ra comes out!

May you be Wash-powerful! May you be Seped-powerful! May you be Ba-powerful! May you be Sekhem-powerful for ever and ever! (Pyr. 621a-c T)

The example below has two different phrases. In the second passage, the Akh is paralleled with Sekhem, as expected. In the third passage, the Ba and the Wash appear in parallel, while the combination of the Ba with the Sekhem is common.

Oh Pepy II! You went so that you might live. You did not go so that you might die.

You went so that you might be Akh-powerful in front of Akh-powerful ones, so that you might be Sekhem-powerful in front of the living.

You may be Ba-powerful, being Ba-powerful! You may be Wash-powerful, being Wash-powerful! (Pyr. 833a-c P)

The case below shows that the Akh is modified by other adjectives of “excellent” (*ikr*) and “stable” (*dd*). Once the king gains the power of Akh, which gives him the knowledge, the deceased king can be excellent because of the knowledge, and he can be stable because the knowledge must endure in his mind.



He (Pepy I) will sit down beside him (Ra).

Ra doesn't allow that he places himself on the ground,

because he knows that he<sup>127</sup> is greater than he is,

that Pepy I is Akh-powerful more than Akh-powerful ones,

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<sup>126</sup> Written as  <sup>sic</sup> , as R. O. Faulkner suggests.

<sup>127</sup> A suffix pronoun (third person) is added in “*wr.(f)*.” According to K. Sethe (*Komm.* iv, p. 47), the original suffix shall be first person, “aber ohne Spuren.”

more excellent than excellent ones,  
more stable than stable ones. (Pyr. 813a-f P)

The text below enumerates the Ba and the Shades (*šwwt*) besides the Akh. This text is a part of the Cannibal Hymn, where all kinds of power must be transferred to the eater.

Look, their Ba-power is in the belly of Unis, and their Akh-powers are under Unis, as his offering to the god, cooked for Unis with their bones.

Look, their Ba-power is under Unis, and their shade-powers are together with their owners. (Pyr. 413a-c W)

The examples suggest that a basic combination may be Akh and Sekhem, that the other powers like Ba and Wash may be additional. The power of Akh can be gained after the rite and it shall be valid as far as he/she keeps the knowledge with him/her. The Sekhem is a scepter and its power. The power can work as far as he/she keeps the scepter with him/her. The powers and Akh and Sekhem are similar in their active term: as far as the gained knowledge or the weared ornament is with him/her.

The power of Ba is active in much shorter term. The power of Ka is constant in their active term due to its validity and also one-way from the upper to the lower. The Ba and the Ka are incompatible with the Akh in their originality.

### 5.5 Pseudo-Dualism

The one who is qualified with religious knowledge is called Akh (one who is Akh-powerful). The gods are regarded as equipped with the qualification of knowledge. The cases below show the parallel expression of “gods” and “their Akhs.” It is difficult to suppose that there are two groups of gods and their Akhs. The context suggests that the expression is chosen for focusing the aspect of sacred knowledge that the gods have gained.

As the Ka-power is given from a father (superior) to his son (inferior) in vertical line and the power can remain in any human or god beyond the death as vital force, the Akh also can stay in any human or god who gains the power through the knowledge and the rite. Here, the Akh shares some distinctive feature as the Ka. The parallel expression of “gods” and “their Akhs” may be explained as a kind of Pseudo-Dualism also in the Akh. The combination of “gods” and “their Akhs” means the gods themselves as a whole in the aspects of body and power.

In the case below, the parallelism is seen between the gods and their Akhs. Obviously,

the text means the gods who have their Akh-power. There is no room for us to think that there are two groups: one of the gods and another one of their Akhs who are independent from the gods.

Seth and Nephthys! Go and announce to the god of Upper Egypt and their Akhs!

This Unis comes indeed, Akh-powerful one, who is indestructible.

If he wishes you to die, you will die. If he wishes you to live, you will live. (Pyr. 153a-c W)

The text below also shows the gods of Lower Egypt in their Akh-power.

Osiris and Isis! Go and announce to the gods of Lower Egypt and their Akhs!

This Unis comes indeed, Akh-powerful one, who is indestructible, as who is worshipped, who is on Nile.

Worship him, you Akh-powerful ones who are in the water!

Who he wishes<sup>128</sup> to live will live<sup>129</sup>. Whom he wishes to die will die. (Pyr. 155a-d W)

The example below is a part of Utterance 93, which consists of Offering List. Although it looks somehow like the dualism, the text expresses the late king and an abstract power of Akh.

Raise your face! Osiris! Raise your face! Oh Unis, whose Akh<sup>130</sup> goes! (Pyr. 62a W)

The meaning of Akh here can be deduced in the plot of this Utterance and in the Offering List. Although some sentences are still not unveiled, what is meant is clear in the Utterance. The main points are as follows: “Wash yourself, Unis! ..... May you invoke your Ka who is Osiris! ..... Unis! Take for yourself this bread of yours, which is Eye of Horus!” (*iʿi kw Wniś ..... ǰwi.k k3.k Wśir is ..... Wniś šsp t.k pn im irt-Ḥr*). The plot is a series of process from the wake-up (raise face), washing body, to taking bread as symbolic action of revival. The most important point is that Unis revives from death by the power of Akh.

Here, we can remember a scene of the funeral rite that was depicted on the wall of chapel in mastabas of the Old Kingdom. A lector-priest (*hry-ḥbt*) acts for a deceased to fill him with Akh-power (*ś3ḥ*). This scene must be regarded as the most important in a series of

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<sup>128</sup> The expression “*mrw.f*” is rendered as “das futurisch gebrauchte Part. perf. passivi” (K. Sethe, *Komm.* i, p. 60).

<sup>129</sup> This “*śwt*” is independent pronoun, used in Cleft Sentence in future meaning.

<sup>130</sup> Egyptologists differ in their translation. R. O. Faulkner (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 21): “O King, whose spirit goes!”; J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 26): “oh Unis, who has gone to become akh.”

rites, because this is the scene depicted beside the False Door and with the Offering List in the most inner room. The word translated “go” (*sbi*) can mean something like “start working.” In this connection, the word “go” may mean that something would “go working” or “start working.”

In this Utterance, it is impossible to interpret the going Akh as a concrete entity like a god or a dead. If we suppose that this Akh is an entity, the Akh might be one who is in the power of akh, usually a dead or a god, which is not suitable in this context. Why does the one who is in Akh-power leave the dead king? This must be an abstract power in this context: some power starts working.

## 6 Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive

When we read the story of Sinuhe, we meet an impressive sentence of Ka. Spending long time out of his mother country, Sinuhe received a royal decree that he was forgiven his flight by a Egyptian king, whom he served before. Sinuhe was so happy, shouting in his tribal camp.

Your Ka will cause me to do the end, my body being at home. (Sinuhe, B 203)

Sinuhe addresses to the king as “your Ka,” not as “your majesty” (*hm.k*), which is expected here. If the Ka is translated as spirit, if the phrase “your Ka” is interpreted as “your spirit,” we would pass over the true meaning. How can we suppose that Sinuhe expects his rescue from the “spirit” of king? Here, the living king must be addressed, who rules two lands on earth.

King or god often has some specialized denominations in the world. In English, a king is called “we,” “your majesty,” or “his majesty” in first, second, and third person singular. The expression above may be relevant to the same mentality for the highest or divine being.

In a funerary offering formula, a similar expression frequently appears. A. H. Gardiner shows an example as typical from British Museum 198 dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty.<sup>131</sup>

A boon which the king gives (to) Osiris, Lord of Busiris, the great god, lord of Abydos, that he may give invocation-offerings, bread, beer, oxen, fowl, alabaster, clothing, and all things good and pure on which a god lives,

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<sup>131</sup> A. H. Gardiner, *EG*, p. 170.

to the Ka of the revered Senwosret, true of voice.

Egyptologists may not find incongruity in the text qabove, because the expression is addressed to the dead person. This kind of expression is not rare in Egyptian texts, when offerings are presented to the dead.

The idea suggested above may be based on the dualism of body and spirit, which supposes that the body remains in the grave and the spirit goes to another world after death. As for Sinuhe, the story belongs to the present, living world. We cannot apply such a premise to the case of Sinuhe.

Here, we recall the Pseudo-Dualism of Ka that we already discussed in “5.1.2 Pseudo-Dualis.” Some part of the Pseudo-Dualism is concerned with the issue we treat with in the present chapter. The Pseudo-Dualism was categorized into 4 Groups from A to D.

Group C (The Ka is the king himself) is just the same as we discussed. From the context, the Ka should be obviously the king himself who is expressed by following genitive. The case below is from the offering formula, as already cited.

To be recited 4 times. The offering that the king gives to Ka of Unis (Unis who is filled with Ka-power). Osirs Unis, take the Eye of Horus for yourself! (Pyr. 35b W)

Do you wish to live? Horus in charge of his meankhet-staff of justice!

(Then,) you should not close the doors of the sky, you should not slam shut its door-leaves,

before you took the Ka of Pepy I (Pepy I who is filled with Ka-power) to this sky. (Pyr. 815a-c P)<sup>132</sup>

Then, we shall conjecture that the same usage of genitive may be applied to other categories. It is turned out that Group A and B are the cases for this logic. Group D is not

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<sup>132</sup> The folowing passages (Pyr. 815d-816d) might cause us to think that the Ka is an independent entity.

unto the nobles of the god, to ones whom the god loves,  
ones who lean on their staves, guardians of the Lower Egypt,  
who are clothed in the finest linen, who live on fig,  
who drink of wine, who are annointed with the finest oil.  
*He* will talk for Pepy I before the great god. *He* will elevate Pepy I to the great god. (italics mne)

K. Sethe and R. O. Faulkner regard the word “he” is the Ka according to their translation. See K. Sethe, *Komm.* iv, p. 58; R. O. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, p. 147 (Utterance 440, n. 6). J. P. Allen (*The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, p. 111) changed the personal pronoun from third person to original first one as designation of the late king. This can make sense under our framework.

included here, because the Ka in Group D refers to another entity.

In Group A (the same action or the same situation intentionally stresses the state of king in full of Ka-power, the vital force), it should be supposed that the double expression is a technique to focus the state of king in two aspects: body itself and its state of power. Both point to the king himself from different two aspects. From the contexts, from the focus on the power state, Egyptians might omit expressing the word body. It is the point for this chapter.

Rejoice over this Pepy I (body)! Rejoice over Ka of this Pepy I (who is fill wth Ka-power)!  
(Pyr. 354b P)

Tety (body) is pure. His Ka (He who is filled with Ka-power) is pure. (Pyr. 683a T)

The next example, which belong to Utterance 451, shall be notified in the point that the “Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive” can be used in parallel with other concepts. Especially, it is noticeable that the Ba and the Sekhem is used in this peculiar usage. In the Coffin Texts, there are cases where plural powers are referred to as a single who is a deceased.<sup>133</sup>

Oh Pepy I, awake! Raise yourself!  
Stand up! You (body) are pure. Your Ka (You who is filled with Ka-power) is pure.  
Your Ba (You who is filled with Ba-power) is pure. Your Sekhem (You who is filled with Sekhem-power) is pure. (Pyr. 837a-c P)

In Group B (the prepositions of “together with” and “near” are used to express that the Ka has the same action or the same situation as the king has), it is intentionally stressed that the king is in full of Ka-power, the vital force.

One who goes goes with his Ka. Horus goes with his Ka. Seth goes with his Ka.  
Thoth goes with his Ka. Dun-anuy goes with his Ka. Osiris goes with his Ka.  
Khenty-irty goes with his Ka. May you also go with your Ka!  
Oh Unis! Arm of your Ka is in front of you. O Unis! Arm of your Ka is behind you.  
Oh Unis! Leg of your Ka is in front of you. O Unis! Leg of your Ka is behind you. (Pyr.

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<sup>133</sup> CT II, 111c, j-k, VI, 67a-d, e, i-k, 69a-c, 71a-g, h-j, 71k-72d, 82a-e, 83g-84d, 85f-g. These are not the case for the personification that L. V. Žabkar defines as “a fully and independently functioning individual.” There are case where plural pronoun is used: CT V, 240d, 242d-f.

17a-18b W)

In the texts below, the Ka is lifted up to the sky. The king may be described in his Ka aspect, when he revives through the funeral rite.

Lift up the Ka of this Neit (Neit who is filled with Ka-power) to the god!

Lead him<sup>134</sup> to the double-lion! Mount him up to Atum! (Pyr. 2081a-b N)

Neit lifts up his Ka (him who is filled with Ka-power). Neit turns about. Neit ...<sup>135</sup>

O good companion, lift up the Ka<sup>136</sup>, turn about ... (Pyr. 2060-2061a N)

“Peculiar Usage of Following Genitive” is supposed as a style that does omit the expression of the body (*dt*) in the Pseudo-Dualism.

## 7 Conclusion



The present paper has shown that the religious concepts should be treated in the one framework to understand deeply and on the basis of the ancient Egyptian materials. Egyptologists sometimes observe Egyptian phenomena through their modern culture, through their bias of European, American, or Japanese views. The words “soul” and “spirit” are the typical cases where people in modern age have been simply satisfied with the specious translations.

The understanding of the religious concepts would promote our understanding of the ancient texts in the viewpoints of ancient Egyptians. The concepts of Ba, Ka, and Akh appear so often in the ancient texts from the earliest age to the latest age and give us obstacles for understanding what the texts mean. These concepts are the keys for understanding the ancient Egyptian texts, religion, culture and also mentality.

I showed the framework for the concepts in this paper. The framework has been basically developed from the study that L. V. Žabkar and E. M. Wolf-Brinkmann did for the Ba concept and has been modified to be applicable to the other concepts. The concepts are

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<sup>134</sup> The text belongs to queen Neit. The word “him” is wrongly kept from the original.

<sup>135</sup> The word “*w3hw3hw*” is not translated by R. O. Faulkner, while J. P. Allen (*Pyramid Texts*, p. 291) translates it as “perpetual.” C. Carrier (*Textes des Pyramides*, p. 1566) comments that  is a confusion of . His translations (*ibid.*, p. 1567) are “Que Néferkarê s’allonge!” and “celui qui s’est allongé!” R. Hannig (*Hwb*, p. 188) does not register any translation for “*w3hw3hw*.”

<sup>136</sup> J. P. Allen interpretes this as “good companion, ka-raiser, returner, perpetual one” in a series of vocatives.



classified into four categories: noun, verb, nominalization of participle, and personification.

As a result, the essence of each power is shown below:

Ka: vital force: daily power, durable power, and static power.

Ba: overwhelming power, non-daily power, non-durable power, and dynamic power.

Akh: power of enlightenment or inspiration in connection with learning and reciting.

During the interpretation of individual cases, we can understand each text according to their own background. In addition, we could find some curious Egyptian expressions to reach some deeper understanding of the texts.

The Ka is the vital force and then it has the static character, working constantly. There are two aspects of the Ka-power. The Ka has “Linear Nature” as coming from the primeval age to descendants. As another side of one coin, the Ka has “Pseudo-Dualism.” The Ka is always filled in the bodies of the gods, kings, and men. Then, the Ka can be depicted as overlapped with the body of the one who is filled the Ka. This unique expression has caused Egyptologists to misunderstand that the Ka is another independent entity like a spirit or a genius. And also, the Ka can indicate the person who is in higher position of lineage. These two kinds of usage must be discerned carefully when we read the texts.

The Ba is the overwhelming power. It can work shortly, but it can force other entities to do anything for the one who activates the Ba-power. The Ba is noticed when its power starts to work, as showed in “5.2.2 Method to Gain the Ba in the Old Kingdom.” And as active power, the Ba has possibilities to develop itself in some directions during the long history of ancient Egypt. In the New Kingdom, especially in Ramesside age, the Ba-powerful one comes to designate the one god who is concealed behind the multitudes of visible gods, who controls the Universe or the destiny for individuals.

The Akh is the intelligent power of knowledge, which can be gained through some rites, especially through the funeral rite. The Akh has some close concepts like Sekhem, because they are similar in the constant working after the initiation rite or the hold of the Sekhem scepter. The power of Akh is used especially at the funeral rite to defeat or conquer the death in the scheme of Osiris Myth. It is because the characters in the myth need the combination of the knowledge power and physical power to conquer their issues, not because the Akh is originated from the Osiris Myth. And the Akh is also used in the Pseudo-Dualism, as the Ka is. The Akh is always filled in the gods, kings, and men, like the Ka, once they gain it.

The two points were remarked on this paper: Pseudo-Dualism: Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive. “Pseudo-Dualism was so often applied to Egyptian texts. While the body and the spirit (soul) seem to be divided, the Egyptian regarded each of them as perfect being

as a whole, which cannot be divided. This idea was connected with the “Peculiar Usage with Following Genitive,” where the subject can be indicated by the following genitive. The indication of the body, which shall be used with that of the soul/spirit in dualism, may often be omitted. Without understanding these peculiar usages, moderns would be puzzled about the seeming plurality of entities, which is one character in fact.

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