The Term of Nefer in Ancient Egyptian Conception
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Abstract
The Ancient Egyptian record their actions and doings on Temples and tombs' walls. Thus these writings commemorate their civilization. All writing had different expression and terms. Between these terms was the term of nefer. As a result the idea and importance of this paper arise. This current study aims to shed light on the term of nefer in Ancient Egyptian conception and takes just examples to illustrate the meaning of the term only; show the different ways of its writing; indicate the different meaning of the term; refer to the term in personal and places names; point out the term in Egyptian gods descriptions; and finally show the term in personal names and titles. Throughout this study, the term nefer had different meaning according to the determinative. Furthermore, it used as a god and mentioned in personal names and titles.

Keywords: Nefer, Egyptian Conception, God, Ennead.

Introduction
Ancient Egyptian writings are the way that made civilization survives until now. These writings contained many scripts (Hieroglyphic, Hieratic, Demotic, and Coptic). Moreover, the Ancient Egyptian language had a lot of terms and expressions. The term nefer was a trilateral sign (Gardiner, 1994). This sign of nefer (F35) means in nature the heart and windpipe (Gardiner, 1994; Allen, 2010). Firstly, the sign was written with details, then the details were disappeared in the late period and the sign was (Erman and Grapow, 1971).

Furthermore, the following ideogram signs had the same phonogram of nfr, Erman and Grapow, 1971), (Brugsch, 1868) and (Valures, 1988).

The different methods of writing the term nefer
The term nefer was written by different ways as follows: (Ranke, 1935), (Lutz, 1927), (Erman and Grapow, 1971), (Brich, 1967) and rarely written (Grddiner, 465).

The different meaning of the term nefer
The following table had the different meaning of the term nefer in ancient Egyptian Language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Good, Kind, perfect, happy, faire, well</td>
<td>Meeks, 1998; Dickson, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>goodness</td>
<td>Sehte, 1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Crown of Upper Egypt</td>
<td>Sehte, 1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>door</td>
<td>Brugsch, 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Phallus, penis</td>
<td>Dickson, 2006; Brugsch, 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Hieroglyph</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Grave or tomb</td>
<td>Lesko, 2002,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>Gardiner, 1994</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>nfr pw</td>
<td>There isn't, not</td>
<td>Bates, 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>nfr (w)</td>
<td>Zero, nil</td>
<td>Dickson, 2006; Bates, 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Pure gold</td>
<td>Lesko, 2002,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>plant</td>
<td>Brugsch, 1868</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Warmth, heat, fire</td>
<td>Brich, 1967; Meeks, 1998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>youth</td>
<td>De Buck and Gardiner, 1950; Meeks, 1998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>Handsome</td>
<td>Faulkner, 1988</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>grain</td>
<td>Erman and Grapow, 1971</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>nfr</td>
<td>The foal</td>
<td>Erman and Grapow, 1971</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>nfri</td>
<td>Couch, bench</td>
<td>Erman and Grapow, 1971</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>nfr ti</td>
<td>bless</td>
<td>Brich, 1967</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>nfryt</td>
<td>End or bottom</td>
<td>Erman and Grapow, 1971</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>nfry. t</td>
<td>Tiller rope</td>
<td>Faulkner, 1988</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>nfrit</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>Sehte, 1909</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Nfrwt</td>
<td>Faire and young women</td>
<td>Meeks, 1998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>nfrw or</td>
<td>Beauty, goodness or end (period of time).</td>
<td>Sethe, 1909, Dickson, 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>nfrw</td>
<td>Recruits</td>
<td>Schulman, 1954; Jones, 2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>nfrw</td>
<td>End part of the building</td>
<td>Erman and Grapow, 1971</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>nfrw</td>
<td>Deficiency</td>
<td>Brich, 1967</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>nfrw</td>
<td>In Min god titles, refer to phallus</td>
<td>Wilson, 1997</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The term nefer as a god

The god Nefer appeared in ancient Egyptian texts by two ways: the first, with the determinative of gods as follows: in Pyramid Texts (Spell 683)

\[ i \text{nfrk} \text{sp} \text{t} \text{nfr} \text{O, sheps (god), protect my face, O, nefer; protect my face (Samuel, 1952; Faulkner, 1978; Timofey, 2012).} \]

In addition, God Nefer appeared in two Spells of Coffin Texts: Spell 474:

\[ \text{wh} \text{w ipw nw inyt}^* \text{i nfr these fishermen of inyt net, O, nefer,} \]

and Spell 683\(^\dagger\) is written (De Buck and Gardiner, 1956)

During the New Kingdom the name of the God Nefer was written with one of his titles in the tomb of sn-nfr (TT 96):

\[ \text{and nfr nb m33, Nefer the lord of visibility (eyesight)} \] (Eggebrecht, 1986; Lüscher, 1998; Calmettes, 2007).

In an unpublished papyrus at Cairo Museum\(^\dagger\) CG 58007 (Fig. 1) which dates back to the 19\(^{th}\) Dynasty, Nefer is listed between the members of the Small Ennead as follows:

\[ \text{(The member of the enneads)} \] ………

\[ \text{i psdt 3t psdt nds m5 rwd rn m pr-nw n w3st m pr nw sp3t iw nhh} \] ……… \[ mi rwd rn nfr. \]

O, the great Ennead, O, the small Ennead. Your name was strong in the chapel (Pr-nw) at Thebes in the chapel of spat forever…….. like the strength of the name of Nefer.

In addition, the god nefer was mentioned in a ritual of plague (Smith Surgical Papyrus)

\[ k^5w nfr \text{bs3 r.i wd3 h3t s3} \]

The ass god (form of god Ra) entre to him, Nefery, Protect to me the fresh forepart of son (Smith, 1930; Leitz, 2002).

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\(^*\) Leitz mistakenly read as fdw.

\(^\dagger\) The outer coffin of DHwt nxt from El-Bersha, Now (Boston 20.1822-27).

\(^\dagger\) Unpublished papyrus at Cairo Museum, CG 58007, many thanks to Dr. M. Nassar at Faculty of Archeology, Fayoum University, that he showed me this papyrus.

\(^\dagger\) All the members of the small Ennead preceded Nefer except one the god Min, for more details about the small Ennead look: Sethe, 1905; Barta, 1973).
The second way, He inscribed without the determinative of god but the meaning showed an indication of god as follows: In the Old Kingdom, he was mentioned in the Pyramid Texts Spell (820b):  nfr dd n mwt.f iw dd.n it nefer (the perfect one) of whom his mother has spoken "Heir", as his father said" (Samuel, 1952; Faulkner, 1978; Timofey, 2012). Furthermore, his name appeared during the Graeco-Roman period on the Sarcophagus of tibhw daughter of ith-ms at Cairo Museum (CG 29305) nfr hw smtyt.f nysw mš†tw sm r lftyw.f Nefery, who strike his smayt† (Fig. 2). With the help of righteous (mš†tw)†, (he) go to his enemies (Maspero and Gauthier, 1908-14; Leitz, 2002).

It was worth mentioned that the iconographic of Nefer as a god was shown on the Sarcophagus of tibhw daughter of ith-ms at Cairo Museum (CG 29305) (Fig. 3). He was depicted as a human figure holding wšs and nšh scepters (Fig. 4) (Maspero and Gauthier, 1908-14; Goyon, 1985).

The term nefer in gods' description
The term nefer was listed in descriptions of various gods as follows:

A. Buchis:
In a stela of Ptolemaic VI (line 7) (Fig. 5) the term nefer appeared in the description of god Buchis. nfr pn nfr bwšs nfr imn This good god, Buchis, the hidden god (Mond and Myers, 1934).

B. Min:
In the description of God Min (or gods attributes with Min as Amun, Kamutef), the term nefer was appeared. The god Min was described as šb m nfrw.f "one who boasts of his beauty" (Wilson, 1997).

C. Osiris Wn-nefer:
The name means "he who is everlastingly good condition" (Wilkinson, 2003). Nefer in Osiris titles refer to god's physical well-being, youthfulness and renewed his vigor (Smith, 1987) or refer to Osirian resurrection (Donohue, 1978). The text as follows:

ink st snf n wnn nfr I am Isis, the sister of (wnn nfr)§ the beneficence of Osiris (Goyon, 1999).

In addition, the god Osiris was described as nfr nfr the kind god or the Perfect god (Tillier, 2011), ity nfr the good Sovereign and hwn nfr the good youthful man (Cauville, 1997). It can be noted that the name of the god Osiris Wn-nefer was written at Dendara Temple as (Valures, 1988).

* Leitz mistakenly mentioned it as Dd Hr son of iaH ms
† They were the allies of god Seth.
‡ mAatyw were minor gods associated with the sun god Ra, and they were the men of Maa't (Wilson, 1997; Chassiant, 1933).
§ This is one of the names of Osiris in the Graeco-Roman period, he was written inside a cartouche (Chassiant, 1965; Favard, and Meeks, 2012; Traunecker, 2012).
D. Osiris Sokar:
In the temple of Deir Chelouit, the inscription of the naos described the god Osiris Sokar in line 4 as (Fig. 6):

\[ \text{hy n.k p3 nfr sp-sn} \]

The happenies is to you twice, …… you lead you their lives to your tomb and made your place (cemetery) (Zivie, 1986).

E. Sia:
The Ptolemaic addition at El-Kab Temple revealed the king on the walls of the court in front of Nekhbet and Sia (Fig. 7) while the text described the god Sia with the good image 

\[ \text{dd mdw in spd-nfr s3 Hr-i3btt} \]

Words spoken by Sia, the good image of Ra who Rekhyt birds love (Derchain, 1971).

F. Sopdu:
The temple of Hibis at El-Kharga oasis, Contained an incorporated text of a scene (Fig. 8), on West Wall of the hypostyle hall. The scene shows the king in front of Sopdu and the collateral text refers to Sopdu as the good one.

\[ \text{dd mdw in htm imy-r pr inn m h3t i nd hr.k wp w3wt hnt nt b3w iwn in ir nfr in irt n.k n.i nfr I nd hr.k R3 nb psdw wp w3wt nfr hr sf hnt 3bdw} \]

Words were spoken by the royal seal bearer, the director of the house, Amenemhat "salute to Wepwawt who is in front of the spirits of Heliopolis, O, you bring and make good, bring which you made good. Salut to Ra, the lord of the Ennead, Wepwawt the good, Hershaef who is in front of Abydos" (Hassan, 1928).

Finally, there were a lot of gods who's their names contain the term nefer* such as the god Nefertem the third member of Memphis triad \[ \text{\(\text{ah nfr}\)} \] which means "Atum is good" or "who he has newly appeared is perfect" (Winger, 2000) and \[ \text{\(\text{h3 nfr}\) or \(\text{h3}\)} \] only sacred snake†, guardian snake (Wilson, 1997).

The term nefer in places' names
The term nefer was incorporated between Ancient Egyptian names of places such as pyramids, temples and settlement or villages. The name of the capital of the Old Kingdom was Memphis (\(\text{nn nfr}\)) which means the white enclosur (Gauthier, 1925). Moreover, there were some village or settlement had the term nefer in their names such as \(\text{bw nfr}\) the good place (Menuf nowadays, Menoufia Governorate) (Gauthier, 1927), \(\text{iw nfrt}\) north west

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* For details about these gods look: Leitz, 2002, PP. 207-235.
† This snake protected Osiris in the afterlife.
of Thebes (Gauthier 1925), and nfr wsy village in the 15th Nome of Upper Egypt, north of Elkom El-Ahmar (Gauthier, 1927).

Some pyramids of the Old Kingdom had the term nefer between their names for instance the pyramid of King Ounas nfr swt wn is beautiful are the places of Wnis (Gauthier, 1927), the pyramid of the king Pepy I mn nfr ppy Pepy is fixes and beautiful, and the pyramid of king Meryenra hfr mri n r the beauty of Meryenra is rising (Gauthier, 1927).

Edfu Temple is called in the temple description iw nfr n id the beautiful island of the child (Wilson, 1997). Furthermore the name of Osiris Temple at Dendera is known as iw nfr 45 (Brugsch, 1879).

The term nefer in personal names

The term nefer appeared in personal names of officials as well as kings. There were a lot of names of officials whose their names nfr only (Ranke, 1935). It can be observed that this name was named throughout the Ancient Egyptian History (Ranke, 1935, 1952).

Some official had the term nefer between their names such as: in the Old Kingdom nfr ss (Lepsuis, 1849), nfr k3 s3hw nfr hr snfrw (Ranke, 1935), nfr tm (Mariette, 1885) Nfr iw hthr (Ranke, 1952). The Middle Kingdom coupled with the New Kingdom personal name had the term nefer for instance: nfr rnpt nfr iw, and nfr ss (Ranke, 1935), nfr mwt. In The late period had the same of the previous times such as: w3h ib and Wnn nfr* (Ranke, 1935).

The coronation names of Egyptian Kings (Gauthier, 1907 and 1912) contained the term such as: nfr k3 r 6th king of the second Dynasty, nfr k3 skr 7th king of the second Dynasty, snfrw fourth Dynasty, nfr ir k3 r 5th fifth Dynasty, nfr f r 5th fifth Dynasty, nfr k3 r Pepi II.

In the Middle Kingdom the Queen Neferwptah of 12th Dynasty nfrw pth (Gauthier, 1907).

In the Second Intermediate Period king hfr r King Sobekhotep IV 13th Dynasty and nfr ib r 14th Dynasty, had the term in their names (Gauthier 1912). The New Kingdom had one name of the king Amenhotep IV nfr hprw rw w n r (Gauthier 1912).

* wnn-nfr (w), the imperfective participle of wnn, "to be", + nfr in the old perfective, was employed in the Fifth Dynasty as a personal name. It was known as a divine epithet from the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty (Donohue, 1978).
The late Period had two kings whose nefer was incorporated between their names, the first was the king Shbaka (25 Dynasty) $nfr$ $k^x$ $r^x$ and the king Pasmatek II (26 Dynasty) $nfr$ $ib$ $r^x$ (Gauthier 1912). It can be noted that there is one birth name of the king Neferhotep $nfr$ $htp$ 13th Dynasty who had nefer in his name (Gauthier 1912).

In addition, the term was listed in female names such as: $nfr$ $htp.s$ daughter of King Jedefa (Gauthier, 1907), $i'h$ $ms$ $nfr$ $itry$ Ahmose nefertari, the wife of King Ahmose (Gauthier, 1912), $nfrt$ $imn$ (Kamal, 1907), $nfr$ $nfrw$ $itn$ $ity$ Queen Nefertiti Wife of King Amenhotep IV (Gauthier, 1912), $nfrt$ $tAy$ (Ranke, 1935), and $nfrt$ $ist$ (Ranke, 1952).

The term nefer in personal titles

The royal titles together with personal titles had the term nefer. The title $nTr$ $nfr$* is more known as a royal title than as a divine epithet; nevertheless, many deities are called $nfr$ $nfr$. The most frequent and ancient god was Osiris.

It was one of the most famous titles of king all over the Ancient Egyptian History especially in the Ramessid era. There were a lot of king who was taken this title such as Khafra 4th Dynasty, Mentouhotep II 11th Dynasty (Gauthier, 1907), Sobek Hotep III 13th Dynasty (Gauthier 1912), Ahmose 18th Dynasty (Gauthier, 1912), and Ramses II 19th Dynasty (Kamal, 1952).

The officials had the term nefer in their titles for example: $iry$ $ht$ $nfr$ $hst$ concerned with the affairs of the crown (Jones, 2000), $imy-r$ $ht$ $nbt$ $nfrt$ overseer of every good thing (Fischer, 1997), $nfr$ $hst$ Keeper of the headdress, $iry$ $nfr$ $hst$ keeper of the diadem $nfrw$ recruit (Ward, 1982).

Finally the term nefer listed between the funerary titles such as $pr-nfr$† funerary workshop (Donohue, 1978; Ward, 1982).

Discussion and results

The term of nefer was used to deliver the concepts of goodness and beauty and comeliness. Furthermore, the meaning was varied according to the determinative. The term was used as Adjective such as $sp$ $nfr$ (good event), noun such as $bw$ $nfr$ (beauty), Adverb for instance $r-nfr$ (in good part), and verb such as $nfr.n.i$ It went well with me.

The term nefer as a god was written in texts with Horus determinative $+$ and god sitting $+$ on one hand. On the other hand, he was inscribed without determinative of god but the meaning refer to the god.

* The word $nfr$ is appeared in the epithets of gods. In the First Intermediate Period, the presence of $nTr + nfr$ alone was virtually obligated to Osiris or Anubis (Dunham, 1937; Petrie and Murray, 1952; Fischer, 1968).

† It was connected with the purification of the body (Grdseloff, 1941). It was appeared and performed in tombs from at least the Fourth Dynasty onwards (Hassan, 1943; Junker, 1944). In contrast, the phrase $pr-nfr$ in inscriptions appears not to have been introduced before the end of the Old Kingdom (Seth, 1903; Ricke, 1950; Settgast, 1963).
Furthermore, the god Nefer was considered the god of the necropolis in Pyramid Texts, spell (820b). He had a candid title listed in the tomb of ṣn-nfr (TT96) nfr nb mḥḥ the lord of seeing. The god nefer was mentioned in some gods description such as Wepwawet (the god who stand equal with Anubis in two side of Osiris (chapter 138 book of the dead) (Quirk, 2013), the underworld gods Osiris wen-nefer and Osiris Sokar, Buchis (thresh in the afterworld (Wilkinson, 2012), Sia (stands in the right of god Ra and held the god's sacred papyrus scroll (Wilkinson, 2012), Sopdu (equated with the teeth of the dead king (Wilkinson, 2012), and Horus Behdety. Therefore, it can be observed that the god Nefer was one of the gods of the afterworld.

The term nefer was coupled with pyramids’ names of the Old Kingdom, Temples, and Ancient places specially Memphis.

The term nefer was prevalent in Egyptian Kings' coronation names. It was listed in the Old kingdom, Middle Kingdom, Second intermediate Period, New Kingdom and Late Period. In addition, it was mentioned in some Queen such as Nefertiti the wife of Amenhotep IV.

The term nefer was common in male names as well as female one. The term nefer was put beside the name of king such as nfr ḫr ṣnfrw, name of god or goddess such as nfr ḫmn and Nfr iw ḥḥwr, and name of job such as nfr sš.

The personal titles contain the term nefer such as nfr ḥḥt. Moreover, it was listed in the most famous kings' titles in Ancient Egyptian Civilization nfr nfr. Finally, the term nefer in personal names or titles, Griffith (1966) pointed out that nefer in personal names refers to ethical or moral aspects and the beneficence of Osiris. It may have been a derived sense parallel to the moral implications of mḥḥt (Fecht, 1958).

Conclusion

The current study presented the term nefer in ancient Egyptian conception. The term nefer was very popular throughout the ages with the Ancient Egyptians. It had various meaning according to the determinative. The meaning was coupled with appearance, quality, characters, conditions, fixed expressions. In addition, the term was used as verb, noun, addictive, and adverb.

The term was used as a god who had one title (the lord of seeing). The study suggested that god was the god of the necropolis, so he was one of the gods of the afterworld.

Nefer was also incorporated into the description of Ancient Egyptian gods as Buchis, Osiris, Osiris Sokar, Sia, Sopdu and Wpwawt. In addition, He was connected with the small Ennead.

The titles of kings and officials were held the term nefer. nfr nfr was the most famous title of kings as well as gods. Official held many titles in which the term nefer was involved such as nfrw recruits (young men of the army), and ировки ḥḥt keeper of the diadem

This term appeared within many personal names of kings, Queen, and Officials, including those of the famous king as Snefrw and Amenhotep IV, queens as Nefertiti and Nefertari. It can be observed that the term nefer is used during the Old Kingdom in kings' names and places more than any times in Ancient Egyptian History.

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Figures

Fig. 1: Unpublished papyrus of the Small Ennead (Cairo Museum C.G. 58007).

Fig. 2: *smḥyt* as depicted on the wall of Edfu Temple (Goyon, 1985, PL. XXIV).
Fig. 3: The Iconography of God Nefer which depicted on the Sarcophagus of $t\dot{h}w$ daughter of $\dot{p}h-ms$ at Cairo Museum (CG 29305) (after the courtesy of the Egyptian Museum).

Fig. 4: The iconography of God Nefer the Sarcophagus of $t\dot{h}w$ daughter of $\dot{p}h-ms$ at Cairo Museum (CG 29305) (after the courtesy of the Egyptian Museum).
Fig. 5: A Stela of Ptolemaic VI, and the text which written on it (Mond and Myers, 1934, Pl. XI).

Fig. 6: The Inscription of the Naos of Deir Chelouit Temple (Zivie, 1986. PL. 13).
Fig. 7: Scene on the Walls of the Court (Ptolemaic addition), the king is shown in front of Nekhbet and Sia (Derchain, 1971, PL. 11).

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