

‘Demons’ and Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt

Hamada Hussein Mohamed¹

Maher Hammam Mohamed²

^{1 2} *Tourism Guidance Department- Faculty of Tourism and Hotels- University of Sadat City*



ABSTRACT:

Recently, there has been a tendency among Egyptologists to use the term ‘demon’ to identify supernatural beings, minor deities, and personifications in ancient Egypt. Some of these, including *h3tyw*, were thought to harm the living. *h3tyw*, and other supernatural beings were designated in this way by some scholars as demons. Therefore, this paper, on one hand, investigates the validity of the term demon and attempts at finding out to what extent it might fit into Egyptian thought. On the other, the in terms of divine intervention, instead of using ‘demon’, genuine Egyptian conceptions should be considered. Gods, of any rank, took forms. Among these were the *baw*, *akh*. Sticking to what ancient Egyptians’ texts say is inevitable for a reasonable interpretation of their culture. The application of the term demon to Egyptian entities results in establishing a category that does not fit into Egyptian thought.

KEYWORDS: Demons, Demonology, Egyptian divinities, Divine intervention, *baw*, *akh*, Fiend.

INTRODUCTION:

A plethora of articles were devoted to the concept of demons in ancient Egypt. A wide range of papers were presented in the 2016 conference at the University of Swansea. Specifically, Egyptian entities including the *h3tyw*, *w3y* and the dead were thought to be demons and to cause harm to the living.¹ A collection of ‘demonic’ beings is beyond the scope of this paper. Rather a selection of demons thought to intervene in people’s lives will suffice to clarify the researchers’ viewpoint.

This paper, on one hand, investigates to what extent the term demon applies to ancient Egyptian entities of any kind. On the other, attention is drawn to Egyptian ways of divine intervention. This is exemplified in the *baw* ² and *akh* ³. Understanding the concept of divine intervention as it is provided by the Egyptians narrows the room for any foreign concepts and help better understand Egyptian culture.

DEMONS IN EGYPTIAN THOUGHT

In the ‘*Demon Things*’ conference, held at the University of Swansea in 2016, a host of scholars have presented articles on a range of ancient Egyptian entities which they identified as demons. A sample might be sufficient to clarify the point and how the authors justified it. For example, in her article, Bennet surveyed 100 coffins dated to the Middle Kingdom. She made about 18 different types of typologies (serpentine, reversed

¹ See the full discussion of these entities below under ‘Demons in Egyptian thought’.

² R. Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, Oxford, 1962, 77. (Abbreviated below as *CDME*)

³ Faulkner, *CDME*, 4.

anatomy, humanoid, multiple form, bovine.... etc). The primary role of these ‘demonic’ entities was to maintain Maat. Bennet justifies the adoption of each of the anatomy types and elaborates on how it relates to the function of the being.⁴

Another group of ancient Egyptian entities envisaged by some scholars as demons were the door-guardians. These are seen in the Book of the Dead and who were depicted on the temples walls in the Late Period.⁵ Bareš interpreted the door guardians in the tombs of the priest Nekau and the general Menekhibnekau as demons.⁶ Earlier in 2010, Lucarelli identified the door guardians in chapters 144-147 of the Book of the Dead as being ontologically ‘demons’. Quoting her: “I would define these guardian figures as ‘demons,’ namely supernatural beings which mediate between gods and mankind.”⁷

Categories of demons are also suggested. Lucarelli distinguishes two sub-categories of ‘demonic beings’ which, according to their locations, are either stationary or wandering.⁸ She admits, however, that it is not possible to fit all the ‘demonic’ beings in these two groups. This is obvious in the case of the beings represented on the amuletic objects including the ancient Egyptian ivory wands.⁹ Most importantly, demons could be categorised into benevolent and malevolent.¹⁰

In terms of the content of the name and iconography, figures as “Swallower-of-shadows”,¹¹ “Big-and-fiery”, and “He-whose-face-is-hot”,¹² either animals or hybrid of animals brandishing knives,¹³ are identified by Szpakowska as demons.¹⁴

More directly to the point, the authors would like to turn to specific ‘demonic’ groups, namely those who were thought to intervene in people’s lives. A collection of all demonic groups of this kind is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to refer to certain groups of different sources. The first of these are the *ḥ3tyw* “Slaughterers”, “executioners”, or “disease-bringers.”¹⁵ The *ḥ3tyw* were mentioned in both the Pyramid

⁴ Z. Bennet, “The Anatomy of A Coffin Text Demon”, *JA EI* 25 (2020), 34-45.

⁵ S. Beck, “Disease Demons in Mesopotamia and Egypt: Sāmānu As a Case Study”, *JA EI* 25 (2020), 23.

⁶ L. Bareš, “Underworld Demons in the Decoration of the Large Late Period Shaft Tombs at Abusir”, *JA EI* 25 (2020), 10.

⁷ R. Lucarelli, “The Guardian-demons of the Book of the Dead”, *BMSAES* 15 (2010), 85.

⁸ R. Lucarelli, “Towards a Comparative Approach to Demonology in Antiquity: The Case of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia”, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 2013 (14) 1, 17.

⁹ R. Lucarelli, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 2013 (14) 1, 18.

¹⁰ K. Szpakowska, “Demons in Ancient Egypt”, *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 799.

¹¹ Ch. Leitz., (ed), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, 8 vols, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Leuven: Peeters, 2002-2003, Vol. II, 111.

¹² K. Szpakowska, *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 802.

¹³ N. Guilhou, “Génies funéraires, croque-mitaines ou anges gardiens? Étude sur les fouets, balais, palmes et épis en guise de couteaux”, in: S. H. Aufrère, *Encyclopédie religieuse de l’univers végétal: croyances phytoreligieuses de l’Égypte ancienne* 1, *Encyclopédie religieuse*, 1999, Vol. I, 365-417.

¹⁴ K. Szpakowska, *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 802.

¹⁵ *Wb* III, 326, 6-7; D. Sass, “The Slaughterers: A Study of the *ḥ3tyw* as Liminal Beings in Ancient Egyptian Thought”, *JA EI* 25 (2020), 181-200.

Texts and the Coffin Texts.¹⁶ They were also mentioned in Chapter 149 of the Book of the Dead, the deceased desires that *h3tyw*, a variant of the *h3tyw*, do not chase him:



nn shm shr d im=i He-who-overthrows-the-catfish shall have no power over me,

nn iwt h3tyw m-s3=i the *h3tyw* will not come after me,

nn iwt d3tyw m-s3=i the fiends will not pursue me.¹⁷

In the Book of Caverns, the *h3tyw* are represented as four knife-brandishing figures who slaughter the enemies of Osiris (Fig. 1). In Book of Caverns, they do massacre to the enemies of Osiris:



h3tyw imyw nmwt nt wsir The Slaughterers who are in the slaughterhouse

dtt (sic) tn irt =<s>n mi of Osiris slaughter(?) you and do as ...

{.....}

dt shpr...=tn The massacre create (d) ... you.¹⁸

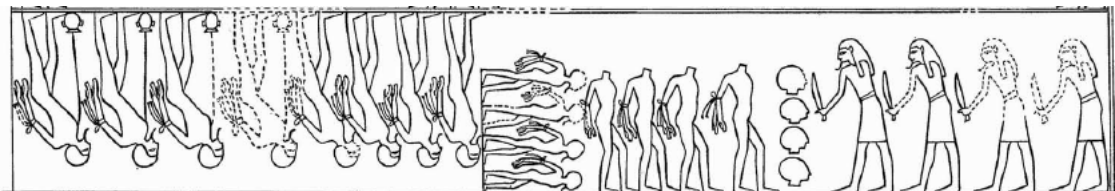


Fig. 1: *h3tyw*-slaughterers in the Book of Caverns.
(After Piankoff, *Tomb of Ramesses VI*, fig. 11)

Outside of the funerary literature, *h3tyw* also occur in the Edwin Smith medical papyrus. This scientifically oriented papyrus focuses on the performance of surgery and the magical perspective.¹⁹ Here, *h3tyw* are linked to Sekhmet: *sm3yw shmt* “disease-agents(?) of Sekhmet.”²⁰ The threat of the *h3tyw* is to be averted as the incantation reads: “Withdraw O *h3tyw*. The wind shall not reach me that those who pass by may pass by to

¹⁶ R. Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, 234; CT III 366a (Spell 256).

¹⁷ S. Quirke. “Going out in Daylight *prrt m hrw* The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead translation, sources, meanings, London, Golden House Publications, 2013, 360.


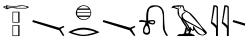
¹⁸ A. Piankoff, *Le livre des Quererets*, BIFAO 42 (1944), pls. XXV.


¹⁹ M. J. Raven, *Egyptian Magic: The Quest for Thoth’s Book of Secrets*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012, 94.

²⁰ J. H. Breasted, *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus: Published in Facsimile and Hieroglyphic Transliteration with Translation and Commentary*, 2 vols, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930, 477.

work disaster against me. I am Horus who passes by the diseased ones of Sekhmet, (even) Horus, Horus, healthy despite Sekhmet. I am the unique one, son of Bastet. I die not through you (fem).”²¹

The mention of *h3tyw* also recurs in the *Oracular Amuletic Decrees*. These were concerned with the supernatural protection of people from diseases, saving them from injuries while traveling, and providing protection against all evil kinds.²² The principal groups mentioned in the *Oracular Amuletic Decrees* are various ghosts, minor deities including the dead, the *3hw*, and the *wrt*. Besides, there are other minor groups such as *h3tyw* “slaughterers”, *šm3tyw* “disease-demons”,²³ and *wpwtyw* “messengers.”²⁴

The medical papyri also indicate to a being called *w3y*, perhaps the “distant one”. In Berlin Medical Papyrus, a spell is recited to expel *w3y* from one’s limbs: *kpw nt dr w3y m hwt n s* .²⁵ Also, in the Book of Overthrowing Apophis, *w3y* is Apophis himself.²⁶ The related text reads:  *3pp hr w3y* “Apophis, the fallen one, *w3y*.”²⁷

Outside of the divine sphere, the dead (*mwtw*)  could also be included in the category of demons, while the spirits (*akhw*) are controversial. Lucarelli differentiates these two groups from demons. She thinks that, despite their demonic tendencies, they are to be envisaged as ‘deceased human’ because they had no existence before death.²⁸

That said, the door guardians and other ‘demonic’ groups will be left aside. Rather, the focus will be on these entities which were believed to intervene in people’s lives, and which were described as demons. It is noteworthy that these denizens of entities could be easily differentiated through the determinatives used as follows:

A. Epithets ending with divine determinative (*h3tyw* () “seated god”).²⁹

²¹ Breasted, *Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus* I, 477.

²² R. Lucarelli, “Popular Beliefs in Demons in the Libyan Period: the Evidence of the oracular Amuletic Decrees”, in: Broekman, Demarée and Kaper (eds.), *The Libyan Period in Egypt. Proceeding of a Conference at Leiden University*, 231.

²³ *Wb* IV, 471, 1-6.

²⁴ *Wb* I, 304, 6-11; R. Lucarelli, in: Broekman, Demarée and Kaper (eds.), *The Libyan Period in Egypt. Proceeding of a Conference at Leiden University*, 232.

²⁵ W. Wreszinski, *Medizinsche Papyrus des Berliner Museums (Pap. Berl. 3038)*, Leipzig, 1909, 13 (No. 69).



²⁶ For further studies on Apophis, see L. D. Morenz, “Apophis: on the Origin, Name, and Nature of an Ancient Egyptian Anti-God”, *JNES* 63 (2004), 201; Willems, *JEA* 76 (1990), 27-54.


²⁷ R. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum no. 10188)*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 3, Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1933, 90. Azzam elaborates on the possible stems from which the epithet *w3y* was derived, see Azzam, “*šsr* and *w3y*: Two Ancient Egyptian Demons”, *GM* 227 (2010), 9-16.

²⁸ R. Lucarelli, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 2013 (14) 1,17; D. Meeks, “Génies, anges, demons en Égypte”, in: J Yoyotte et al. (eds.), *Génies, anges et demon*, Sources Orientales 8, 1971, 19-84.

²⁹ A. Piankoff, *BIFAO* 41 (1942), pl.VIII. However, the orthography of the term changes from the 1d Kingdom throughout the Graeco-Roman Period. Sass has collected the various forms in which the term

B. Epithets ending with non-divine determinative:


B.A. Gardiner List Z6 (as in the case of *w3y*)  “the hieratic substitute for ”




B.B. Gardiner List A14 (as in the case of *mwtw*)  “man with blood streaming from his head.”

The following discussion will address, on one hand, the possibility of applying the term ‘demon’ to these Egyptian entities. On the other, the researchers will elaborate on how the ancient Egyptians themselves understood the divine intervention and how it worked and whether or not it was by means of demons.

“Demon” is derived from the ancient Greek word *δαίμων* which has several meanings. It had neutral connotations since both positive and negative actions were associated with it. Primarily, it means “god/goddess” or “the divine power.” It can also describe “the power controlling the destiny of individuals” or a “spiritual” or “semi-divine being.”³⁰

In his *Greek Philosophical Terms*, F. E. Peters defines *daimon* as “supernatural presence or entity, somewhere between a god (*theos*) and a hero.”³¹ In Christianity, demons were thought to be Satan’s followers.³² With the spread of Christianity throughout Europe and the Mediterranean world, more negative connotations associated with evil were linked to the term ‘demon’.³³ Therefore, “Demon”³⁴ and “demonology”, are now based on the negative, Judaeo-Christian conceptualisation and practice.

The question that immediately arises is the place of demons and demonology in Egyptian thought.³⁵ This requires the exploration of the terms used to describe ‘divine’ by the Egyptians themselves.³⁶ The Egyptian textual record is full of theology,³⁷ although it forms only part of the evidence,³⁸ and seemingly ritual rather than theological in their conceptions. However, it makes clear the way the Egyptians defined entities inhabiting the universe. In a Middle Kingdom text, for example, these are defined as:  *rmt*

was written. These include, for example, , , and , see D. Sass, *JAIE* 25 (2020), 182-187; see also P. Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*, OLA 78, Leuven, 1997, p.705-706.

³⁰ Liddell & Scott, *Lexicon*, 365-366.

³¹ F. E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon*, New York University Press, 1967, 33.

³² E. R. Guiley, *Encyclopedia of Demons and Demonology*, New York, 2009, 55.

³³ R. Lucarelli, *BMSAES* 15 (2010), 85-102; Kousoulis *JAIE* 5 (2013), 14.

³⁴ And its cognates *dämon*”, “*démon*”, “*demone*”, and “*demonio*.”

³⁵ D. Meeks, ‘Demons’ in: (ed.), *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, Vol I, Oxford, 2001, 375ff.

³⁶ E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the many*, translated from German by J. Baines, London, 1982, 33.

³⁷ Eyre, “Belief and the Dead in Pharaonic Egypt”, in: M. Poo (ed.), *Rethinking Ghosts in World Religions*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009, 35.

³⁸ J. Baines, Presenting and Discussing Deities in New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period’, in B. Pongratz-Leisten (ed.), *Reconsidering the concept of revolutionary monotheism*, Eisenbrauns, 2011, 43.

To wrap up, it is obvious that demon does not apply to an Egyptian *ntr* “god.” *ntr* was equal to the Greek *theos* “god” as in, for example, the Rosetta stone.⁴⁸ In Coptic, *ntr*, perhaps in monotheistic sense, was equal to ΝΟΥΤΕ .⁴⁹ There is also a lack of consensus among scholars regarding the position of ‘demons’ in Egyptian pantheon. Hutter classifies demons as *lesser gods* or *anti-gods* who, though different from human beings, are less powerful than major gods. He also highlights their ‘otherness’ in ancient Near Eastern texts where they have non-human elements.⁵⁰ In case of ancient Egyptian demons, Lucarelli opines that they rank between gods and humans and do not exactly belong to the gods’ category. Meeks, however, places these supernatural beings as ‘sub-category’ of the ‘divine beings’.⁵¹ Kurth has proposed an ‘alternative’ interpretation of the divine and the demonic in Egypt. He understands magic and religion, two opposite poles of one scale, as *acting* and *examining* respectively. He thinks that although the demonic beings’ power superseded that of the humans, the power of the major deities was mysterious and infinite. Also, he stresses, as Beck does,⁵² the fact that ‘demons’ were subordinate to major deities and concludes his discussion stating: “Dämonen bzw. Götter entspringen entgegengesetzten Ausrichtungen des menschlichen Denkens.”⁵³

In most cultures, perhaps drawing on the Judaeo-Christian conceptions, demons are bothersome rather than beneficial. However, Meeks argues that demons are intrinsically neither malevolent nor benevolent. Instead, they have a protective aggressive role that means that they behave in a malevolent manner towards some entities and in a benevolent manner towards other entities.⁵⁴ In contrast to this, te Velde believes demons are to be at least mortal, if not evil, entities, which fits with his definition of demons as representatives of chaos.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ Hornung, *Conceptions of God*, 42.

⁴⁹ W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1939, 230; Y. Volokhine, *La religion égyptienne: monothéisme, polythéisme, théisme?*, in: A. Quertinmont (ed.), *Dieux, génies et démons en Égypte ancienne: à la rencontre d’Osiris, Anubis, Isis, Hathor, Rê et les autres*, Paris: Somogy éditions d’art, 2016, 60f.

⁵⁰ Hutter, in: Liesen and Bentjes (eds.), *Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook*, 21, 23-24, 25-26. 28-32.

⁵¹ Z. Bennett, *Conceptions of demons in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts*, in Miniaci, Gianluca, Marilina Betrò, and Stephen Quirke (eds.), *Company of images: modelling the imaginary world of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-15000 BC)*, Proceedings of the International Conference of the EPOCHS Project held 18th-20th September 2014 at UCL, London, 15-34. Leuven: Peeters, 2017, 18; D. Meeks, “Génies, anges, démons en Égypte”, 19-84.

⁵² S. Beck, *JAIEI* 25 (2020), 22.

⁵³ S. Beck, *JAIEI* 25 (2020), 21.

⁵⁴ Bennet, in: Miniaci, Betrò and Quirke (eds.), *Company of Images*, 21, especially fn. 32.

⁵⁵ Bennet, in: Miniaci, Betrò and Quirke (eds.), *Company of Images*, 21, fn.33.

Frandsen observes that a ‘demon’, as a representative of chaos or evil, is characterised with aggression even when acting as a protective agent.⁵⁶ Also, as representatives of chaos, Szpakowska argues that demons did not belong to the ordered world.⁵⁷ Therefore, she is inclined to use the term *genii* to identify the guardian beings.⁵⁸

On representational level, ‘demons’, with a few exceptions, lack a typical description in Egyptian tradition. For example, the *sh3kk*-being, originally non-Egyptian,⁵⁹ was described as: “*sh3kk* (...) whose both eyes are in his head, whose tongue is in his hinder parts.”⁶⁰

Also, Lucarelli draws the attention to the fact that the epithets of ‘demons’ were written in red ink.⁶¹ This, however, should be considered in the context in which these names appear and what determinatives are used: evil or slain enemy.⁶² Meeks differentiates demons from ‘genii’ and assistants.⁶³

DIVINE INTERVENTION:

Divine intervention in ancient Egypt is problematic although it is documented in textual record.⁶⁴ A sample of relevant text will suffice. In the autobiography of Samutkyky from the New Kingdom we read: “Now his god has instructed him, he taught him according to his teaching. He placed him upon the path of life.”⁶⁵

Ways in which Egyptian gods manifested themselves or interacted with the living are also evident in Egyptian thought. The variety of forms (*irw*) and manifestations (*hprw*) are both crucial characteristics of Egyptian religion. Every god could take manifestations. In polytheism, a god is not Monophysite. A major god’s omnipotence does not imply that other gods’ omnipotence is restricted. A god is naturally distinguished, but not restricted, by his unique iconography and mythology. Therefore, man might encounter the manifestations of the greatest god in the same way as any lower group of the spiritual

⁵⁶ J. P. Frandsen, ‘Faeces of the Creator or the Temptations of the Dead’, in: P. Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Demonology. Studies on the Boundaries between the Demonic and the Divine in Egyptian Magic*, OLA 175, 2011, 25.

⁵⁷ K. Szpakowska, *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 799.

⁵⁸ K. Szpakowska, *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 801.

⁵⁹ S. Beck, *JAEG* 25 (2020), 21.

⁶⁰ Composite text of O. Leipzig 42 R: 1-2, Černy and Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, Oxford University Press, 1957, pl.III; O. Gardiner 300, R: 1 Černy and Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, pl.XCI. The English translation here is after S. Beck, *JAEG* 25 (2020), 23.

⁶¹ R. Lucarelli, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* (14) 1, 12 and fn. 7.

⁶² As, for example, the *h3tyw* beings mentioned above, see D. Sass, *JAEG* 25 (2020), 181-200.

⁶³ Z. Bennett, in: Miniaci, Betrò and Quirke (eds.), *Company of Images*, 18-19 with footnotes; D. Meeks, “Génies, anges, demons en Égypte”, 19-84.

⁶⁴ J. Borghouts, ‘Divine intervention in ancient Egypt and its manifestation (*b3w*)’, in: R.I. Demareeand and Ianssen (eds.), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina, Egyptologische Uitgaven* 1, Leiden, 1982.

⁶⁵ E. Froot, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2007, 85.

world. Major gods can also demonstrate themselves in specific manifestations, those of the spiritual world: the *ba*, the *ka* and the *akh*.⁶⁶

The supernatural's malicious manifestations appear clearly in the form of divine retribution. The gods' *baw*, singular *ba*, were said to befall the offender.⁶⁷ The *ba* is conceptualised as a bird or a human-headed bird (Fig. 3).⁶⁸ However, the *ba* is not the principal form of interaction with the living but, alternatively, it is how the manifestations of the divine appear: sacred animals are the *baw* of gods.



Fig. 2: Human-headed *ba* from the Cairo Museum (Authors)

Sending and summoning the *ba* is a crucial part of Egyptian religion which was attested as early as the Old Kingdom. Texts show that the *ba* is a general category which is subcategorised by *ntr*, the *3h* and the *mwt*.⁶⁹ However, on their interaction with the living, the dead did appear in the form of *akh* which can be translated into 'ghost', and which came into Coptic as *ih* 'demon'. *Akh* was what lurked among tombs and appeared to people in the necropolis. Though helpful, *akh* would haunt one personally and threaten him.⁷⁰

Gee draws the attention to the relationship between the terms *b3*, *3h* and *ntr* in Egyptian thought. In the Coffin Texts spell 165, however, this hierarchical relationship is expressed differently where *mwt*, with the evil determinative, replaces *ba*. The related text reads: *wḏ3.kwi swḏ3.kwi m-^c sdb nb pri m r n ntr nb 3h nb mwt nb* "I am hale, having been made hale from every obstacle that has come forth from the mouth of every god (*ntr*), every *akh*-spirit (*3h*) and every dead (*mwt*)."⁷¹ Gee interprets this replacement of the *ba* with *mwt* that the former was a general category that was divided into gods (*ntrw*), *akhs* (*3hw*), the dead (*mwt*).⁷²

⁶⁶ Eyre, in: Poo (ed.), *Rethinking*, 37.

⁶⁷ Eyre, in: Poo (ed.), *Rethinking*, 37-38.

⁶⁸ L. V. Zabkar, *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts*, Chicago, 1968.

⁶⁹ J. L. Gee, 'B3 sending and its Implications' in Z. Hawass and L. P. Brock (eds), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists*, vol.2, Cairo, 2000, 230-237

⁷⁰ Eyre, in: Poo (ed.), *Rethinking*, 41.

⁷¹ CT III, 7-8a (spell 165).

⁷² Gee, in Hawass and Pinch Brock (eds.), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century*, 230-237.

To put in a cruder way, the following two examples underline the role played by the *akh*. In the Bentresh Stela, a ritual expert who was dispatched to (*bhtrn*) by the Pharaoh reports: “when the priest (*rh-ht*) arrived at Bakhtan, he found Bentresh like one afflicted by an *akh* (*m shr hr.t=3h*).” This spirit was then purified by a ritual offering.⁷³ Another interesting example, quoted by Eyre, is the Middle Kingdom statue of a priest of Senwosert II. The statue, set up in a public temple, demonstrates the belief and faith of the owner, and how he played a role in intermediating with the divine world. On the right side of the statue, there is a distinctive address to the living which specifically addresses the priests of this temple (*pr pn*) who wish to secure an employment for their children in the temple. The text reads:

I am an *akh* (*3h*) equipped with his magic-powers (*3hw*); I have been initiated (*bs*) with the great god; I know everything effective, by which one is *akh* (*ht nb 3ht 3h<y>.n(y)*); I know every initiated secret (*bs nb st3*); I am in the following of the great god. I will carry out your petition in the necropolis, in the exchange for your saying, “Welcome, *hpr-srqt*-priest Tjermet, son of ?? into this chapel (*hwt-ntr*) of Hut-Ra-*w^cti*.”⁷⁴

CONCLUSIONS:

The room for a ‘demon’, as an emic category in Egyptian thought, is practically difficult.⁷⁵ The modern attempt to add to the Egyptian thought a divine category would be simply peculiar to the Egyptians.⁷⁶ Besides, historically, demonology does not have a beginning in ancient Egypt.⁷⁷ It is not prior to the Graeco-Roman Period that ‘demonisation’ in the divine realm is tangible.⁷⁸ Thus, In the Greek Magical Papyri, the spirit that appeared in the one’s dreams was thought to derive from either gods (*theoi*), angels (*angeloi*), or demons (*daimon*).⁷⁹

Ways in which Egyptian gods manifested themselves varied. These included the *ba*, plural *baw*, which was thought to inflict punishment on adversaries. The *akh* was another form of manifestation through which gods interacted with people. *Akh* could haunt one and hurt him. It is inevitable, therefore, to interpret Egyptian thought in terms of the Egyptian texts rather than adopting non-Egyptian conceptions.

To wrap up, on one hand, Egyptian divinities, of any rank, differ from demons. On the other, divine intervention in ancient Egypt should be approached from an Egyptian perspective, starting with their own terms and concepts.

⁷³ Gee, in Hawass and Pinch Brock (eds.), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century*, 231.

⁷⁴ Eyre, in: Poo (ed.), *Rethinking Ghosts*, 42.

⁷⁵ Frandsen, in: Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Demonology*, 56.

⁷⁶ Frandsen, in: Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Demonology*, 56.

⁷⁷ Kurth, in: Lange, Lichtenberger and Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen*, 34.

⁷⁸ Lucarelli, *JANER* 11 (2011), 109.

⁷⁹ Ciraolo, in: Meyer and Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 179.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Azzam, L., ‘šsr and w3y: Two Ancient Egyptian Demons’ *GM* 227 (2010), 9-16.
- Baines, J., ‘Presenting and Discussing Deities in New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period’, in B. Pongratz-Leisten (ed.), *Reconsidering the concept of revolutionary monotheism*, Eisenbrauns, 2011.
- -----, *Fecundity Figures: Egyptian Personification and the Iconology of a Genre*, Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1985.
- Bareš, L., ‘Underworld Demons in the Decoration of the Large Late Period Shaft Tombs at Abusir’, *JA EI* 25 (2020), 5-19.
- Beck, S., ‘Disease Demons in Mesopotamia and Egypt: Sāmānu as a Case Study’, *JA EI* 25 (2020), 20-33.
- Bennett, Z., ‘Conceptions of demons in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts’, in Miniaci, Gianluca, Marilina Betrò, and Stephen Quirke (eds), ‘*Company of images: modelling the imaginary world of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-15000 BC)*’, Proceedings of the International Conference of the EPOCHS Project held 18th-20th September 2014 at UCL, London, 15-34. Leuven: Peeters, 2017.
- Borghouts, J., ‘Divine intervention in ancient Egypt and its manifestation (b3w)’, in: R.I. Demareeand and J. Janssen (eds.), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina, Egyptologische Uitgaven* 1, Leiden, 1982.
- Breasted, J. H., *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus: Published in Facsimile and Hieroglyphic Transliteration with Translation and Commentary*, 2 vols, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930.
- Budge, E. A. W., *The Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani in the British Museum*, New York, 1967.
- Černý, J., and Gardiner, A., *Hieratic Ostraca*, Oxford University Press, 1957.
- Ciruolo, L. J., ‘Supernatural Assistants in the Greek Magical Papyri’, in Paul Mirecki and Meyer M., (eds.), *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, Leiden: Brill, 2002, 279-296.
- Crum, W. E., *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1939.
- Eyre, C. J., ‘Belief and the Dead in Pharaonic Egypt’ in: M. Poo (ed.), *Rethinking Ghosts in World Religions*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009, 33-46.
- Faulkner, R. O., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*. Oxford, 1969.
- -----, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum no. 10188)*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 3, Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1933.
- Frandsen, J. P., ‘Faeces of the Creator or the Temptations of the Dead’, in: P. Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Demonology. Studies on the Boundaries between the Demonic and the Divine in Egyptian Magic*, OLA 175, 2011, 25-62.
- Froom, E., *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2007.
- Gardiner, A, H., *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, vol. I, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947.

- -----, and Peet, E. T., *The Inscriptions of Sinai*, Part I. Introduction and Plates. London, 1917.
- Gee, J. L., 'B3 sending and its Implications' in Z. Hawass and L. P. Brock (eds), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists*, vol.2, Cairo, 2000, 230-237.
- Guiley, E. R., *Encyclopedia of Demons and Demonology*, New York, 2009.
- Guilhou, N., 'Génies funéraires, croque-mitaines ou anges gardiens? Étude sur les fouets, balais, palmes et épis en guise de couteaux', in: S. H. Aufrère, *Encyclopédie religieuse de l'univers végétal: croyances phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte ancienne 1*, *Encyclopédie religieuse*, 1999, 365-417.
- Hornung, E., *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the many*, translated from German by J. Baines, London, 1982.
- Hutter, M., in: Jan Liesen and Bentjes, P. C., (eds.), *Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook*, Dr Gruyter, 2007.
- Kousoulis, P., 'Egyptian Demonology within the Phylogenetic and Polymorphic Environment of the Late Period and Ptolemaic Egypt: Searching for Modes of Demonic Conception, Progression and Praxis', *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 5 (2013), 20-21.
- Kurth, D., 'Suum cuique. Zum Verhältnis von Dämonen und Göttern im alten Ägypten', in: A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger and D. Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen: die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt*, Tübingen, 2003, 45-60.
- Leitz, Ch., (ed), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, 8 vols, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Leuven: Peeters, 2002-2003.
- Liddel, H. G., Scott, R. and Jones, H. S., *A Greek-English Lexikon*, Oxford, 1940.
- Lucarelli, R., 'The Guardian-demons of the Book of the Dead', *BMSAES* 15 (2010), 85-102.
- Lucarelli, R., 'Towards a Comparative Approach to Demonology in Antiquity: The Case of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* (14) 1, 11-25.
- -----, 'Popular Beliefs in Demons in the Libyan Period: the Evidence of the oracular Amuletic Decrees', in: G. P. F. Broekman, F. J. Demarée and O. E. Kaper, *The Libyan Period in Egypt Historical and Cultural Studies into the 21st - 24th Dynasties: Proceedings of a Conference at Leiden University, 25-27 October 2007*, Leuven, 2009, 231-239.
- Meeks, D., 'Demons' in: (ed.), *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, Vol I, Oxford, 2001.
- Morenz, L. D., 'Apophis: on the Origin, Name, and Nature of an Ancient Egyptian Anti-God', *JNES* 63 (2004), 201-205.
- Peters, F. E., *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon*, New York University Press, 1967.
- Petrie, W. M. F., *Medum*, London, 1892.

- Piankoff, A., *The Tomb of Ramesses VI*, 2 vols, edited by N. Rambova, New York, 1954.
- -----., 'Le livre des Quererets', *BIFAO* 41 (1942), 1-11, 42 (1944), 1-62, 43 (1945), 1-50, 45 (1947), 1-42.
- Quirke, S., *Going out in Daylight prt m hrw The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead translation, Sources, Meanings*, London, Golden House Publications, 2013.
- Raven, M. J., *Egyptian Magic: The Quest for Thoth's Book of Secrets*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012.
- Sass, D., 'The Slaughterers: A Study of the *h3tyw* as Liminal Beings in Ancient Egyptian Thought', *JAETI* 25 (2020), 181-200.
- Silverman, D. P., 'Divinity and Deities in Ancient Egypt', in: J. Baines, L. H. Lesko, and D. P. Silverman (eds.), *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, London: Cornell University Press, 1991.
- Szpakowska, K., 'Demons in Ancient Egypt', *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 799-805.
- Volokhine, Y., 'La religion égyptienne: monothéisme, polythéisme, théisme?', in: A. Quertinmont (ed.), *Dieux, génies et démons en Égypte ancienne: à la rencontre d'Osiris, Anubis, Isis, Hathor, Rê et les autres*, Paris: Somogy éditions d'art, 2016, 61-115.
- Willems, H., 'Cult and Capital Punishment (Mo'alla Inscription 8)', *JEA* 76 (1990): 27-54.
- Wilson, P. *A Ptolemaic Lexikon A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*, OLA,78, Leuven,1997.
- Winand, J., 'Le nome de dieu' in A. Quertinmont, (ed.), *Dieux, génies et démons en Égypte ancienne: à la rencontre d'Osiris, Anubis, Isis, Hathor, Rê et les autres*, Paris: Somogy éditions d'art, 2016, 24-33.
- Wreszinski, W., *Medizinsche Papyrus des Berliner Museums (Pap. Berl. 3038)*, Leipzig, 1909.
- Zabkar, L. V., *A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts*, Chicago, 1968.

الملخص العربي العفاريت والتدخل الإلهي في مصر القديمة

يميل بعض دارسي المصريات مؤخرًا لاستخدام مصطلح العفاريت لتسمية قوى فوق طبيعية ومعبودات صغرى وتجسيدات في مصر القديمة. من بين هذه الكائنات الخاتيو وكائنات أخرى والتي كان يعتقد في قدرتهم على إلحاق الأذى بالأحياء ووسمت هذه الكائنات بأنها عفاريت/شياطين. لذلك، فإن هذه الدراسة، من ناحية، تفحص مدى صلاحية استخدام مصطلح العفاريت للإشارة لكائنات مصرية قديمة وبيان إذا ما كانت هكذا كائنات تتسق مع الفكر المصري القديم. ومن ناحية أخرى وفيما يتعلق بالتدخل الإلهي تنبّه الدراسة إلى أهمية تبني أفكار مصرية أصلية فالمعبودات، على اختلاف درجاتهم، كانوا يتخذون أشكالاً من بينها الباو والآخ. إن الإلتزام بما تخبرنا به النصوص المصرية القديمة أمر لا بد منه لفهم الثقافة المصرية. بينما يؤدي تبني أفكار غريبة عن الفكر المصري إلى تأسيس مفاهيم لا تتناسب وهذا الفكر. الكلمات الدالة: الشياطين، علم الشياطين، الآلهة المصرية، التدخل الإلهي، باو، آخ، شريير.