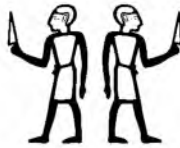




SLAUGHTERERS, KNIFE-BEARERS AND PLAGUE-BRINGERS

A study of the role and significance of the *ḥ3.tyw*
in ancient Egyptian thought



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For Tom, who I miss and love every day. I hope you have found peace.

&

For my Mum, Dad and family who are everything to me.

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Thesis Summary

This project aims to produce a systematic and comprehensive study on a particular group of ambivalent beings that are conceptualised in ancient Egyptian thought as belonging to the world of the divine. These beings are identified in the written record by the designation *h3.tyw* in the first three phases of the Egyptian Language (Old, Middle and Late Egyptian) or as *ht.w* in the fourth stage known as Demotic. Through a systematic methodological approach, that is philological, archaeological and iconographic in nature, this project seeks to establish the orthography and etymology of the designation *h3.tyw*, the form and appearance of the *h3.tyw*, the position of the *h3.tyw* in the hierarchy of the pantheon and the extent of their subordination, the celestial nature of the *h3.tyw*, and finally the role of the *h3.tyw* as bearers of disease. The compilation of information pertaining to these factors will contribute to a greater understanding of the agency of this type of divine being at both state and personal levels of religion, which will in turn further scholars understanding of Egyptian world-view and society as a whole due to the dualistic nature of the *h3.tyw* that encompasses components of both *ma'at* and *isfet*.

Declaration

I, Danielle Sass, certify that this work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Date: 11.11.14

Signature: *D. Sass*

List of Abbreviations

<i>ASAE</i>	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte
<i>BdÉ</i>	Bibliothèque d'Étude
<i>BIFAO</i>	Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
<i>BMSAES</i>	British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan
<i>BSEG</i>	Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie Genève
<i>BSFE</i>	Bulletin de la Société française d'Égyptologie
<i>CdÉ</i>	Chronique d'Égypte
<i>GM</i>	Göttinger Miszellen
<i>JAEl</i>	Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections
<i>JANER</i>	Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions
<i>JEA</i>	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
<i>JNES</i>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
<i>KMT</i>	KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt
<i>MIFAO</i>	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
<i>MPER</i>	Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Oesterreichischen Nationalbibliothek Erzherzog Rainer
<i>OLA</i>	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
<i>OMRO</i>	Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden
<i>PNAS</i>	Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences
<i>RdÉ</i>	Revue d'Égyptologie
<i>SAK</i>	Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur
<i>SAT</i>	Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch
<i>ZÄS</i>	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde

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Chapter 1

Preliminaries

1.1 Introduction and Overview

This project aims to produce a systematic and comprehensive study on a particular group of beings that are conceptualised in ancient Egyptian thought as belonging to the realm of the divine. They are identified in the written record by the designation *ḥ3.tyw* in the first three phases of the Egyptian Language (Old, Middle and Late Egyptian) or as *ḥt.w* in the fourth stage known as Demotic. The compilation of information pertaining to the *ḥ3.tyw* will contribute to a greater understanding of the agency of this type of divine being at both state and personal levels of religion. This in turn will further scholars understanding of Egyptian world-view and society as a whole on account of the dualistic nature of the *ḥ3.tyw* that encompasses components of both *ma'at* and *isfet*. In order to achieve this expansion of disciplinary knowledge in the context of ancient Egyptian religion this project seeks to establish:

- The orthography and etymology of the designation *ḥ3.tyw*
- The form and appearance of the *ḥ3.tyw*
- The position of the *ḥ3.tyw* in the hierarchy of the pantheon and the extent of their subordination
- The celestial nature of the *ḥ3.tyw*
- The role of the *ḥ3.tyw* as bearers of disease

1.2 Methodological approach and Conceptual frameworks

The methodological approach of this project is fundamentally philological in nature, involving a consideration of historical linguistics and the systematic analysis of ancient written records and literary texts that will result in the compilation of a comprehensive taxonomy of the *ḥ3.tyw* beings. However, the content of these textual records cannot be considered in isolation, the

physicality of the documents, the environment in which they were produced and received, and the purpose for their production must also be addressed. Thus the application of a secondary methodological approach is necessary that is archaeological in nature, involving the consideration of artefacts and architectural features that are directly connected to the textual sources. While the vast majority of evidence for the *h3.tyw* that survives in the historical record is of a philological nature, a very small number of examples exist where the *h3.tyw* have been represented in pictorial contexts, on this basis a iconographic methodology in which the form and appearance of this being is studied, will be utilised on occasions where it is able to supplement and extend on the information provided in the written record. It is here important to outline the delimitations of the project which have resulted in the exclusion of all other material that is not directly related or attributable to the *h3.tyw* beings, this primarily concerns the apotropaic material preserved in the archaeological record, which includes amulets of anthropomorphic and zoological stylizations, the magical ivory wands and rods whose surfaces were adorned with a diverse range of figures,¹ clay cobra figurines² and rattles³ among other devices used to ward off the malevolent influence of deities. While as a whole this corpus of material provides an immensely valuable insight into instances of direct interaction between the divine and secular world, they are not specific to the *h3.tyw* beings alone, and their consideration would far exceed the parameters set by the word-limit of the project.

The combined implementation of philological, archaeological and iconographic methodological approaches is justified on account their intrinsic value in imparting data that will provided answers to the research aims listed above. They form a mode of enquiry that is prevalent and well established in the discipline of Egyptology that scholars use to form a

¹ H. Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens. Eine typologische und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der sogenannten "Zaubermesser" des Mittleren Reichs* (München, 1965).

² K. Szpakowska, 'Playing with Fire: Initial Observations on the Religious Uses of Clay Cobras from Amarna', *JARCE* 40 (2003), 113-122; K. Szpakowska, 'Striking Cobra Spitting Fire', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 14 (2012), 27-46.

³ See for example the hedgehog form rattle in the Brooklyn Museum collection, BM 59.186, in Brooklyn Museum, *Online Catalogue*, <www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3675/Hedgehog_Rattle> (viewed 14.3.14).

specialised body of evidence in their pursuit for the most complete and contextualised view of ancient Egyptian society that once can hope to achieve.

On account of this project being situated within the sub-discipline of ancient Egyptian religion, it is necessary to implement a conceptual framework that allows for the systematic investigation of the existence and nature of this particular divine entity, its relationship to and influence on other beings, both divine and human. Jann Assman has devised a number of conceptual structures that form a framework for the study of Egyptian theology that encompass the dimensions of divine and secular contact.⁴ These conceptual structures are transferable to this project due to the high level of congruency they display with the methodological approaches that are being applied. A focus on textual material, will allow the nature and agency of the *h3.tyw* beings to be studied through the two conceptual structures designated as the ‘cosmic’ and the ‘mythic’, in which there is ‘*an area of activity and conceptual horizon of both divine care and human religious activity and experience*’.⁵ The conceptual structure known as the ‘mythic’ concerns sacred tradition and involves the presence of the divine in the cultural memory as set down (for us) in written documents in the form of names, epithets, genealogies and myths.⁶ The ‘cosmic’ involves the hierophanic manifestation of the sacred, wherein the different modes of appearance and forms of the divine were perceivable at the secular level, like the ‘mythic’ this element of the divine is also transmitted through the written record.⁷ A third conceptual framework also exists, which is designated as the ‘cultic’, it involves the study of the divine through their cult image depicted on the walls of temples and tombs, in statuary and drawn representations,⁸ as outlined previously this framework has a secondary application to this project.

⁴ J. Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt* (London, 2001), 7-8.

⁵ Assmann, *The Search for God*, 7-8.

⁶ Assmann, *The Search for God*, 8.

⁷ Assmann, *The Search for God*, 8.

⁸ Assmann, *The Search for God*, 8.

1.3 The Body of Evidence

The material that forms the specialised corpus of evidence for this project, was selected on the basis that the designation *ḥ3.tyw* or its demotic variation *ḥt.w* could be identified in the body of the text or inscription. The choice to base selection on such a simple criteria can be justified by the need to assess the agency and nature of these beings in ‘every explicit performative environment in which they exist’.⁹ Thus the corpus in terms of date, context, media, language phase and script is extensively varied in nature. While the documentation spans an extensive time-frame of Egyptian history from the Old Kingdom c. 2686 B.C. to the end of the Greco-Roman Period c. A.D. 395, only a very limited data set can be derived from the historical periods before the beginning of the New Kingdom (c. 1550 B.C.). To current knowledge the only attestations of the *ḥ3.tyw* before the New Kingdom is in sections §1265, §1474, §1535, §1726 and §1915 of the Pyramid Texts (Old Kingdom), spells 68, 256, 257, 517, 498 and 517 of the Coffin Texts (Middle Kingdom) and in the incantations of the Edwin Smith Medical Papyrus (Second Intermediate Period). From the New Kingdom onwards the *ḥ3.tyw* are more widely attested in the written record, consequently, we encounter their mention in sun litanies, chapters 145 and 149 in various copies of the *Book of Going Forth by Day*, the protective Oracular Amuletic Decrees, biographical inscriptions, graffiti, theophoric personal names, mythological texts, and in numerous religious inscriptions found in the temples of Philae, Dendera, Esna, Edfu and Kom Ombo. This increased level of attestation is most likely the result of a change in the religious ‘decorum’ that defined what was allowed to be expressed in image and writing in particular contexts.¹⁰ This decorum which was instigated on a state level caused personal piety to be all but invisible in the historical record prior to the New Kingdom; with the disintegration of barriers between individual and deity from this period onwards, we

⁹ P. Kousoulis, ‘Egyptian Demonology within the Phylogenetic and Polymorphic environment of the Late period and Ptolemaic Egypt: Searching for modes of demonic conception, progression and praxis’, *JAIEI* 5, no. 4 (2013), 20.

¹⁰ B. Ockinga, ‘Piety’, in D. B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol.3 (New York, 2001), 44; J. Baines *Fecundity figures: Egyptian personification and the iconology of a genre* (Warminster, 1985), 277-305.

accordingly have more evidence for instances where there was direct accountability to deities and divine involvement in an individual's life that could be benevolent or malevolent in nature.¹¹

1.4 Data collection and Analysis

The *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, published from 2002-2003 and edited by Christian Leitz, was taken as a point of departure for the collection of the textual data.¹² To current knowledge this encyclopaedic publication cites all published attestations of the *h3.tyw* in conjunction with brief and concise information concerning their date, function, iconography and publication in the scholarly literature. This list was used as a guide for identifying the various designations of the *h3.tyw* in the process of consulting primary and secondary written sources. The collection of the data also involved the use of online catalogues of artefacts held by such institutional establishments as the British Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art and Louvre. Once collected, the data was managed through entering it into a catalogue with numerical assignments attached to individual sources. This allowed for the identification of significant patterns in the information, enabling the source material to then be categorised and analysed in relation to the research aims previously listed.

1.5 Limitations

The sheer volume of the material under consideration, time constraints and the inability in some cases to access copies of the original source material has caused the need for the researcher's reliance on the transliterations and translations of other scholars. This is in particular regard to cases where the sources are in hieratic or demotic script. It should also be noted, due to the problems encountered in distinguishing between the *h3.tyw* and similar emissary beings in the temple inscriptions of the Greco-Roman period, caused by ideographic spelling practices (see chapter 3.1), that it was necessary to exclude many of these attestations from the present study

¹¹ Ockinga, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol.3, 44.

¹² C. Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, Band 5 (Leuven, 2002).

due to the uncertainty associated with their translations. A further limitation that is faced by this project is caused by the nature of the evidence that is preserved in the historical record. As previously outlined there is a proliferation of source material for the *h3.tyw*, particularly in personal religious contexts from the New Kingdom onwards due to a change in ‘decorum’. This concentration of documentation has resulted in the projects inability to determine the extent of the role played by the *h3.tyw* in earlier periods of Egyptian history, and whether this role was static or subject to developments within this time frame. While some scholars regard the increased level of attestations as an heightened tendency towards interpreting daily life incidents and misfortunes as being caused by beings like the *h3.tyw*,¹³ or as a consequence of an increasingly pessimistic strain in the Egyptian culture caused by the country’s political decline,¹⁴ it is highly probable that the *h3.tyw* played a prevalent role in both personal and state religion from the Old Kingdom when they are first attested in the written record.

¹³ R. Lucarelli, ‘Demons (benevolent and malevolent)’, in J. Dieleman & W. Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, (Los Angeles, 2010), 7.

¹⁴ G. Pinch, ‘Demons and Spirits’, in *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1994), 39.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

To date an in-depth study on the *ḥ3.tyw* that is both comprehensive and systematic has not been completed. While the *ḥ3.tyw* have received attention from scholars, albeit sporadically since the late 1930s, a publication that is solely devoted to the study of these beings does not exist. Instead, one can find mention of the *ḥ3.tyw* only within greater treatises on demonic beings of a generalised nature and in a number of usually concise textual notes or digressions that accompany scholarly transliterations and translations of ancient written material. It is important to acknowledge that it is not the intention of some of these publications to make an original contribution to the discourse on this particular divine being; as many are generalised overviews, it is not uncommon to see a reiteration of previously established concepts, a limited number of primary sources cited and absence of an analytical consideration of evidence. Furthermore, the provision of information concerning the *ḥ3.tyw* within textual notes and digressions can be considered as supplementary, intended to provide greater illumination of the specific textual material under consideration, therefore an overly critical assessment of these publications is not justified. A chronological discussion and evaluation of what can be deemed the most significant studies is an appropriate mode through which to demonstrate the development and expansion of discourse on the *ḥ3.tyw*, reflecting scholars' understanding in correlation to the archaeological, philological and iconographical evidence that was available to them.

2.1 E. Suys (1939)

'Les Messagers des dieux', in S. Mercer (ed.), *Egyptian Religion*, vol. 2 (New York), 123-139.

Suys' is the first scholar to consider the nature of the *ḥ3.tyw* within an academic context. They are addressed within a broader investigation that aims to collect key pieces of evidence for what are designated as 'harmful spirits' that come out of the west either spontaneously or on the

order of a god.¹ While the amount of textual evidence available to Suys at this time was seriously limited and the Judeo-Christian terminology employed to express ideas detracts from the value and transferability of the article as a whole, this study is still of value to this research project. The merit of the article lies within Suys' establishment of key concepts that are still prevalent in current literature, these include the notion that the *h3.tyw* were demonic beings, messengers of the gods, conveyors of disease, could act in the secular realm and were associated with Sekhmet, Osiris and the Sun god.

2.2 J. Zandee (1960)

Death as an enemy according to ancient Egyptian conceptions (Leiden).

Zandee's publication addresses Egyptian concepts of death as they are represented in such literary works as the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts, the Book of Two Ways, the Book of the Dead and the 'livres' that describe the sun's journey through the realm of the dead,² thus his laconic treatment of the *h3.tyw* occurs solely within a funerary framework. Zandee considers the *h3.tyw* as one of the dangers posed to the deceased in the hereafter and classifies them as demons, whose names are indicative of their function and the respect in which they were terrifying to the dead.³ The limitation of Zandee's work for this project, obviously stems from the limited scope of the evidence that is used to illustrate the dangers posed by the *h3.tyw* towards the deceased, which results in the impression that these beings operated solely in the hereafter and were only associated with negative connotations.

¹ E. Suys, 'Les Messagers des dieux', in S. Mercer (ed.), *Egyptian Religion*, vol. 2 (New York, 1939), 125.

² J. Zandee, *Death as an enemy according to ancient Egyptian conceptions* (Leiden, 1960), 4.

³ Zandee, *Death as an enemy*, 206.

2.3 J. Vandier (1961)

Le Papyrus Jumilhac (Paris).

Vandier addresses the *h3.tyw* in the textual notes that accompany his translation and study of Papyrus Jumilhac, a hieroglyphic manuscript that dates to the end of the Ptolemaic period, in which these divine beings are mentioned multiple times.⁴ While the textual notes that are dedicated to the *h3.tyw* are quite brief, they contain a number of important observations that are significant for the present study. Due to the specific performative environment with which the *h3.tyw* are associated in the Pyramid Texts, such as the Osirian cycle and as part of the milieu of the deceased king, Vandier stipulates that these beings were not initially conceptualised as conveyors of disease.⁵ He believes that this role developed as a result of the etymological connection between their name and the word for disease *h3y.t*,⁶ and possibly also due to their association with the goddess Sekhmet.⁷ Vandier observes that from the beginning of the Middle Kingdom the word *h3y.t* was determined by a genius with the head of a dog, and believes this to be indicative that the role of imparting disease had been assumed by the *h3.tyw* at this time.⁸ Furthermore, Vandier clearly indicates that the *h3.tyw* were capable of performing roles that were not explicitly concerned with the spread of disease but also operated as slaughters or executioners.⁹ Not only does this discussion introduce previously unconsidered evidence to the discourse on the *h3.tyw*, this illustration of the varied roles that could be performed by the *h3.tyw* is inimical for the hypothesis that distinct roles should be assigned to separate beings.¹⁰

⁴ J. Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris, 1969), 4.

⁵ Vandier, *Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203.

⁶ A correlation that was first recognised by Breasted who rendered *h3y.ty* as 'Disease-demon' in his translation of the Edwin Smith surgical papyrus, *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus* (Chicago, 1930), 472-487.

⁷ Vandier, *Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203.

⁸ The reading of this sign is considered uncertain see R. Anthes, *Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub* (Leipzig, 1928), 28-31.

⁹ Vandier, *Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203.

¹⁰ Vandier, *Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203.

2.4 H. Altenmüller (1965)

Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens: eine typologische und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der sogenannten "Zaubermesser" des Mittleren Reichs (München).

Altenmüller is the first scholar to acknowledge the dualistic nature of the *h3.tyw* beings, noting from an examination of textual sources that they possess an ambivalent powerfulness. This is an extremely important observation as scholars have previously only conveyed the negative attributes and functions of these beings as represented in particular performative contexts.

Altenmüller characterises them as combatant gods who come to the aid of the sun god and wreak carnage among his enemies, illustrating the enactment of this role against Apophis in a spell inscribed on a 'healing statue' of the New Kingdom and recorded in Papyrus Bremner-Rhind.¹¹ Furthermore, Altenmüller demonstrates the protective capability of the *h3.tyw* against injustice, a notion that is present in texts that convey a petitioner's wish to be saved from the *h3.tyw* because they have done right for the Lord of righteousness. From these texts, it can also be inferred that the *h3.tyw* pose a danger to those who have or wish to do wrong.¹² The importance of the *h3.tyw* at the end of the year when powers of darkness attempt to overthrow the rule of the sun god is also recognised, a role that Altenmüller shows was conceptualised at least from the Middle Kingdom.¹³

¹¹ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens*, 143.

¹² Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens*, 144.

¹³ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens*, 145.

2.5 D. Meeks (1971)

‘Génies, anges, démons en Égypte’, in P. Garelli (ed.) *Génies Anges et Démons: Egypt - Babylone - Israël - Islam - Peuples altaïques - Inde - Birmanie - Asie du Sud-Est - Tibet – Chine*, Sources Orientales 8 (Paris), 17-84.

A number of fundamental concepts concerning the *ḥ3.tyw* are introduced by Meeks in his publication on genies, angels and demons in ancient Egypt that expands the discourse on this particular divine being significantly. However, it must be noted that this paper is of a generalised nature and only a limited amount of evidence is cited to support the arguments made. While Meeks does not provide the ancient Egyptian designation for *ḥ3.tyw*, it is clear, based on the evidence incorporated into the body of his discussion, that he considers them to belong to a particular class of demons known as ‘emissary genii’ who acted to spread disease and cause death.¹⁴ The fact that Meeks does not mention the individual designations of these beings is obviously due to his belief that there is no fundamental distinction between them and it is with difficulty that this category is linked to a particular deity.¹⁵ Meeks is the first scholar to explicitly emphasise the subordinate role of the emissary genii, which he believes is indicative of a decisive shift in religious mentality, where the greater gods separated by too many barriers have confined themselves to relative inactivity and leave direct action and contact with humans to dangerous cohorts, who execute their will obediently and without mercy.¹⁶ He also makes the valuable observation that these beings tend to operate in groups or multiples of seven.¹⁷ Most importantly, Meeks builds upon the dualistic concept of these beings that was initially introduced into the scholarship by Altenmüller, where he argues that in instances outside the moments during which the universal disequilibrium delivered these beings, they could be used as instruments of punishment against the wicked, were able to save the righteous and help

¹⁴ D. Meeks, ‘Génies, anges, démons en Égypte’, in P. Garelli (ed.), *Génies Anges et Démons: Egypt - Babylone - Israël - Islam - Peuples altaïques - Inde - Birmanie - Asie du Sud-Est - Tibet – Chine*, Sources Orientales 8 (Paris), 44.

¹⁵ Meeks, in *Génies Anges et Démons*, 47.

¹⁶ Meeks, in *Génies Anges et Démons*, 44-45.

¹⁷ Meeks, in *Génies Anges et Démons*, 46.

against impure forces, where for example the arrows of Sekhmet turn against the evil eye and a cohort under the direction of Osiris protects the solar barque during its course.¹⁸

2. 6 C. Leitz (1994)

Tagewählerei: das Buch ḥ3t nhḥ ph.wy dt und verwandte Texte (Wiesbaden).

Within Leitz's treatment on the calendar texts of the New Kingdom, otherwise identified as the Tagewählkalender, or the calendar of good and bad days, is a digression on the ḥ3.tyw beings that are recorded within this corpus as operating on four separate days.¹⁹ The brief description of these gods is based on Leitz's collection of an additional fifty texts, which he believes demonstrates, in accordance with Meeks and Altenmüller, that the designation of ḥ3.tyw was a common specification for a group of demons that assist the sun god.²⁰ This digression is of relevance to the present study as it introduces a number of new concepts to the discourse and identifies a vast body of evidence that pertains both directly and indirectly to the ḥ3.tyw beings. Leitz supports the idea that these demons could merge into a pantheistic deity, first introduced into the literature by Guéraud,²¹ where their presence is recognised from the representation of multiple heads, and also identifies a number of positive secondary roles that these beings were capable of fulfilling, such as the protection of Osiris and the retrieval of the sun god's eye.²² Additionally, the compilation of this textual corpus allowed Leitz to establish a number of localities with which the ḥ3.tyw were associated, including Letopolis-Ausim, Pharbaethos-Horbeit, Heliopolis and the sky where they were also known under the designation of the seven stars.²³ The syncretistic approach to the study of these beings that features prominently within this work and the aforementioned publication of Meeks is, as stressed by Bommas (1999), an

¹⁸ Meeks, in *Génies Anges et Démons*, 47-48.

¹⁹ C. Leitz, *Tagewählerei: das Buch ḥ3t nhḥ ph.wy dt und verwandte Texte* (Wiesbaden, 1994), 156-7, 238, 356.

²⁰ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 244-245.

²¹ O. Guéraud, 'Notes Gréco-Romaines 2: Sphinx composites au Musée du Caire', *ASAE* 35 (1935), 4-24.

²² Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 245.

²³ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 246.

obvious limitation, a much more extensive analysis of the evidence is necessary to validate the theory of interchangeable designations.

2. 7 M. Bommas (1999)

Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346 (Wiesbaden).

Bommas remarks on the nature of the *h3.tyw* within a commentary on the two books of ancient Egyptian intercalary days that are recorded in magical Papyrus Leiden I 346. The *h3.tyw* are attested in part two of column one, which is a section of the text that introduces a number of adverse beings and provides a description of their subjugation achieved through magical means.²⁴ Following the Wörterbuch, Bommas translates *h3.tyw* as ‘slaughtering gods’ before considering various textual sources to illustrate their nature. Bommas importantly creates awareness of a characteristic possessed by the *h3.tyw* that has not been previously recognised in the literature. In variant S1C^a of Coffin Text spell 256, the *h3.tyw* demons are to be ‘wiped off’, as opposed to other variants of the spell where they are shot down.²⁵ Bommas believes, following Wörterbuch IV.295.4, that *šsr* in this case relates to the action of siphoning off poison, in which the saliva of the demon is most probably meant.²⁶ Spit (*gmḥ*) has a destructive power and Bommas illustrates clearly that it was a potency associated with the *h3.tyw*, for in the great war report of Ramses III from Medinet Habu it is stated that warriors spit ‘like the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet’.²⁷ Furthermore, Bommas argues against the idea that the *h3.tyw* of papyrus Leiden are manifestations of decan stars, a notion that has previously been addressed

²⁴ M. Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 8.

²⁵ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 35.

²⁶ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 35.

²⁷ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 35. In the volume of Edgerton and Wilson this section of text has been translated as: ‘it goes ill with them when they see their slayers like the slaughterers of Sekhmet who were in pursuit of them’, *Historical Records of Ramses III. The Texts in Medinet Habu*, (Chicago, 1936), 27.

only in passing by Meeks, Favard-Meeks and Quack,²⁸ on the basis that the extracts of this text which appear in Esna inscriptions 400 and 406 are secondary and probably no more than the handing down of a scene.²⁹ Bommas' remonstrance of the syncretistic methodological approach of previous scholars in studying these beings is justified, as such an approach detracts from the significance of the differentiation and expansion of the meaning of *h3.tyw* over time, while the available evidence clearly supports the separate consideration of these beings.³⁰

2. 8 A. von Lieven (2000)

Der Himmel über Esna: eine Fallstudie zur religiösen Astronomie in Ägypten am Beispiel der kosmologischen Decken- und Architravinschriften im Tempel von Esna (Wiesbaden, 2000).

The most comprehensive treatment on the *h3.tyw* to date is found within von Lieven's publication on religious astronomy as exemplified through the cosmological ceilings and architrave inscriptions of the Esna temple. The value of this publication for the present study lies in the substantial amount of evidence listed by von Lieven to support and expand upon a number of previously established concepts. With particular regard to the idea that the *h3.tyw* were executors of divine punishment, von Lieven importantly demonstrates, from an assessment of the *Myth of the Eye of the Sun* and the *Tale of Setna Khaemuas*, that it was possible for a singular *h3.ty* to be dispatched, whereas in previous scholarship focus has primarily centred on these beings acting in troops or cohorts. Additionally, von Lieven provides further supporting documentation for positive connotations of the *h3.tyw* beings, where in Papyrus Louvre N 2420c the deceased wishes to be included among them.³¹ Most significantly von Lieven builds on the proposal that the *h3.tyw* were deceased decans of the underworld, and

²⁸ D. Meeks & C. Favard-Meeks, *Daily life of the Egyptian gods* (London, 1997), 77; J. F. Quack, 'Book review: C. Leitz, Tagewählerei: das Buch *h3t nhh ph.wy dt* und verwandte Texte. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 55, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1994', *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 284.

²⁹ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 37.

³⁰ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 37.

³¹ A. von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna: eine Fallstudie zur religiösen Astronomie in Ägypten am Beispiel der kosmologischen Decken- und Architravinschriften im Tempel von Esna* (Wiesbaden, 2000), 55.

introduces additional textual evidence to the discourse in support of this theory. Von Lieven argues, in opposition to Bommas, that the direct correlation between the description of the *h3.tyw* and star names that occur in Esna inscriptions 406, 436, 441, 442, and in the Pyramid and Coffin Texts, is indicative of their decan character.³² Von Lieven substantiates this claim through the provision of further evidence in which there is a clear association between decan stars and the *h3.tyw*, where for example in the *‘Buch vom Durchwandeln der Ewigkeit’* the *h3.tyw* are directly connected with Haroeris of Letopolis who is a divine manifestation of the decan star Kenmet.³³ Furthermore, von Lieven believes that a petition to be saved from the *h3.tyw* ‘who are in this place’ recorded in the cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos is unequivocally correlated to the decan list of the Book of Nut inscribed on the walls,³⁴ and finds further confirmation in a apocryphal text where Egyptian decans, specifically the *h3.tyw*, are recognisable under the Christian-Coptic guise of illness and death-bringing demons.³⁵ Von Lieven, has convincingly demonstrated that the *h3.tyw* were associated with the decan stars in particular contexts, however it is clear that further investigation is necessary to establish whether this was merely an association or whether the *h3.tyw* were in fact manifestations of these decan deities.

2.9 G. Meuer (2002)

Die Feinde des Königs in den Pyramidentexten (Freiburg).

Meuer translates *h3.tyw* as ‘slaughterers’ and classifies them as secondary gods. Unlike Zandee, Meuer importantly acknowledges that the nature of these dangerous slaughterers towards the deceased cannot be inferred from funerary texts alone; in the Pyramid Texts this enmity is only disclosed in spell 543 in which the *h3.tyw* occur alongside other deities who consistently belong to the Osirian cycle.³⁶ Within the particular performative environment of the Pyramid Texts

³² von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 136.

³³ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 51.

³⁴ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 51.

³⁵ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 54.

³⁶ G. Meuer, *Die Feinde des Königs in den Pyramidentexten* (Freiburg, 2002), 76-78.

Meuer illustrates that the slaughterers ‘as a rule’ respect and submit to the deceased, and are mentioned together with the imperishable stars, serving in this context as armed gatekeepers of the sky.³⁷ Meuer strengthens the argument for the celestial association of the *h3.tyw* through orthographical considerations; the shared designation with the imperishable stars and the spelling of *h3.tyw* in Pyramid Text 1726 with three grains of sand used to determine hostile beings, suggests that the Egyptians considered these beings as stars in the sky.³⁸ Meuer refers to evidence outside of the funerary sphere in order to illustrate the dualistic nature of the *h3.tyw* and their association with Sekhmet, Hathor, Nekhbet, Osiris and the Sun god.³⁹ Additionally, Meuer importantly recognises the *h3.tyw*, *wpw.tyw* and *šm3.yw* as three distinct categories of emissaries due to their listing alongside each other in an inscription in the temple of Edfu.⁴⁰

2.10 B. Schipper (2007)

‘Angels or Demons? Divine Messengers in Ancient Egypt’, in F. Reiterer, T. Nicklas & K. Schöpflin (eds.), *Angels: The concept of celestial beings: Origins, Development and Reception* (New York), 1-19.

Schipper in this article aims to address the complexity of the concept of divine messengers in Egypt, which is linked with a hierarchical world of gods and a distinction between different functions.⁴¹ The concept of *h3.tyw* as divine messengers was first introduced into the discourse by Suys in 1939 and has since found resonance in the publications of subsequent scholars working on the demonic in Egyptian religion. Schipper is the first to expand significantly on this topic, stressing that the subordinate role associated with divine messengers is one of the contributing factors for scholars classifying the *h3.tyw* as demons, along with their primarily negative function in this role.⁴² Schipper demonstrates their subjection in a number of texts

³⁷ Meuer, *Die Feinde des Königs*, 77-78.

³⁸ Meuer, *Die Feinde des Königs*, 78.

³⁹ Meuer, *Die Feinde des Königs*, 78.

⁴⁰ Meuer, *Die Feinde des Königs*, 78.

⁴¹ B. Schipper, ‘Angels or Demons? Divine Messengers in Ancient Egypt’, in F. Reiterer, T. Nicklas & K. Schöpflin (eds.), *Angels: The concept of celestial beings: Origins, Development and Reception* (New York, 2007), 4.

⁴² Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 7.

including Papyrus Edwin Smith where the adverse power of the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet could be neutralised with the support of greater, more powerful deities, in Papyrus Krall where they are sent by Osiris to start a battle, and in the Leiden myth where a *h3.ty* is sent by Re to punish a vulture whose young was taken by a cat.⁴³ Schipper importantly creates awareness of the fact that a distinction must be made between divine messengers who are independent gods such as Hathor and Thoth, who are recorded in a number of texts as subordinate envoys under Re or Amun, and those who are ‘dependant subordinated beings’ like the *h3.tyw* who solely function as divine messengers and have an entirely negative function that is limited to the duty they are carrying out, be it killing, punishing, bringing illness or causing harm.⁴⁴ The observation that the power of the *h3.tyw* is limited to the specific task being undertaken is a significant contribution to the discourse, however, to assert that the *h3.tyw* have an entirely negative function is unwarranted, as their positive role has been clearly demonstrated in previous literature.

2.11 R. Lucarelli (2009)

‘Popular belief in demons in the Libyan Period: The Evidence of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees’, in G.P.F. Broeknab, R.J. Demarée & O.E. Kaper (eds.), *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), 231-240.

Lucarelli briefly addresses the *h3.tyw* in regard to their appearance in the Oracular Amuletic Decrees, which are one of the few sources that exhibit the role of these beings in the Libyan Period.⁴⁵ Following Meeks and Leitz, Lucarelli also believes that the designation *h3.tyw* is interchangeable with *šm3.yw* and *wpw.tyw*, but concedes that the individual bands of these beings do possess a number of distinct traits that differentiate them; however, she does not

⁴³ Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 8-9.

⁴⁴ Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 14-15.

⁴⁵ R. Lucarelli, ‘Popular belief in demons in the Libyan Period: The Evidence of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees’, in G.P.F. Broeknab, R. J. Demarée & O. E. Kaper (eds.), *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), 237.

elaborate on what these distinguishing traits are.⁴⁶ Further affirmation of the celestial origin of the *ḥ3.tyw* and their association with the decan stars is illustrated in this textual corpus where Horus-Sopdu, the primary god of the decans, is designated as their leader.⁴⁷ Lucarelli also demonstrates that within the context of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees the *ḥ3.tyw* were usually manifested as a collective group and functioned as executors of divine will in the secular realm, primarily in association with the goddess Sekhmet.⁴⁸ Most importantly, Lucarelli creates awareness of the role the *ḥ3.tyw* played in protecting the sacred precincts of temples against evil forces, a role in which epithets such as strong and powerful were attached to their names at Esna and Dendera, providing further confirmation for the dualistic nature of these beings.

This review of the eleven most significant studies in which the *ḥ3.tyw* are addressed demonstrates clearly the secondary focus that these divine beings have received from scholars in the published literature. While the brevity and generalised nature of many of the sources outlined above limits the value of their contribution to the discourse, they do introduce a number of significant concepts concerning the nature and agency of these beings, and provide references to relevant primary source material that this research project can utilise to construct a study that is both systematic and comprehensive.

2.12 A transferral of terms – ‘Demon’ and ‘Demonology’ in Egyptological Literature

The supposition that the *ḥ3.tyw* are demons is a notion that has always been prevalent within the scholarship. While there is no term in the native language of ancient Egypt that corresponds to the word ‘demon’,⁴⁹ this designation and the term ‘Demonology’, which is assigned to the study of these beings, is a field of research that has been transferred to the discipline of Egyptology, and which has recently come to the forefront of academic interest. The term demon, as it is used in modern contexts, is defined by the Collins English dictionary firstly as an evil spirit or devil

⁴⁶ Lucarelli, in *The Libyan Period in Egypt*, 237.

⁴⁷ Lucarelli, in *The Libyan Period in Egypt*, 237.

⁴⁸ Lucarelli, in *The Libyan Period in Egypt*, 237.

⁴⁹ D. Meeks, ‘Demons’, in D. B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1 (New York, 2001), 375; R. H. Wilkinson, ‘Demons’, in *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt* (London, 2003), 81.

and secondly as a person, habit, obsession that is thought of as evil, cruel, or persistently tormenting.⁵⁰ As is evident from this definition, the term is imbued with extremely negative connotations and associated with beings and actions that are in purpose and character wholly evil.

Prevalent in the published literature is a consensus among scholars regarding the unsuitability of the transferral of the terms demon and demonology to studies concerning religion in the Pharaonic and Late Period of Egyptian history. The problem lies within the semantic value of the term which has changed and evolved over time, determined by the different cultural and temporal contexts in which it has been used. Demon as a part of the European languages evolved from the ancient Greek term 'daimon', whose etymology and historical development from antiquity to early Christianity has recently been documented in depth by Hailey M. Fuller.⁵¹ Initially, the word daimon denoted actions, forces or a state that was intermediary in nature, it was not until the works of Hesiod that daimon designated a being, to which an intermediary agency between the secular and sacred realms was still attached.⁵² From this time it could also encompass a sense of emotion or a personification of emotion as demonstrated in Plato's Symposium.⁵³ Further developments are apparent in the late third to fourth centuries B.C. where these beings assumed a guardian-like form and when Xenocrates provided them with the dualistic human qualities of being able to experience pain and pleasure.⁵⁴ The use of the term daimon in these contexts is not permeated with negative connotations, the daimon is ambivalent in nature⁵⁵ and, as illustrated by Fuller, it was not until Augustine's City of God that the neutrality of the daimon was wholly and undeniably

⁵⁰ Collins Dictionary, 'demon', (updated 2014) on *Collins English Dictionary*, <www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/demon>, (viewed 2.6.14).

⁵¹ H. Fuller, *From Daimon to Demon: The Evolution of the Demon from Antiquity to Early Christianity*, Masters thesis, University of Nevada (Las Vegas, 2013).

⁵² Fuller, *From Daimon to Demon*, 17-18.

⁵³ Fuller, *From Daimon to Demon*, 18-20.

⁵⁴ Fuller, *From Daimon to Demon*, 22.

⁵⁵ M. H. Bonn, 'Demons and benevolent spirits in the Ancient Near East: a phenomenological overview', in F. V. Reiterer, T. Nicklas & K. Schöpfung (eds.), *Angels: the concept of celestial beings* (New York, 2007), 21.

removed.⁵⁶ Following the Christian reception of the term in Late Antiquity, the concept of ‘demon’ is pejorative, inserted into a dualistic explanatory model of the world where demons embody evil in opposition to the good embodied by angels.⁵⁷

Thus the transference of the word demon into modes of Egyptological discourse is justified by some scholars as a convention devised to ‘*fill the gap existing in ancient Egyptian, which does not have a collective term that corresponds to the Greek daimon nor to the English pejorative term “demon”*’,⁵⁸ in which the application of the term demon ‘*drawing on our own cultural heritage, is not seen as a negative aspect of cultural praxis, but rather as a centralised concept of Egyptian understanding of the workings of the world from the very continuation of the cosmos itself down to the vicissitudes of existence faced by individuals*’.⁵⁹ In the writer’s opinion, introducing concepts that are foreign to the vocabulary of the ancient Egyptian language and Egyptian society as a whole is not an advisable practice, the pejorative connotations are too firmly imbedded within the modern use of the term demon for it not to be misleading and introduce presuppositions that are inappropriate in particular contexts and cultural environments.⁶⁰ As demonstrated in ethnographic and anthropological studies, demonic beings are still considered a reality in modern religious contexts, where, for example, neurophysiological and psychological symptoms such as insomnia, fever, agitation, roaming, trembling, rigidity of muscles, screaming fits, superhuman strength, forms of aggression, and violent aversion to sacred objects are considered as indicators of demonic possession in

⁵⁶ Fuller, *From Daimon to Demon*, 72.

⁵⁷ G. Ahn, ‘Grenzgängerkonzepte in der Religionsgeschichte. Von Engeln, Dämonen, Götterboten und anderen Mittlerwesen’, in G. Ahn & M. Dietrich (eds.), *Engel und Dämonen. Theologische, Anthropologische und Religionsgeschichtliche Aspekte des Guten und Bösen* (Münster, 1997), 2; G. Ahn, ‘Demon/ Demonology’, in K. von Stuckrad (ed.), *The Brill dictionary of religion* (Boston, 2006), 504.

⁵⁸ R. Lucarelli, ‘Demonology during the Late Pharaonic and Greco-Roman Periods in Egypt’, *JANER* 11 (2011), 110.

⁵⁹ P. Kousoulis, ‘Egyptian Demonology within the Phylogenetic and Polymorphic environment of the Late period and Ptolemaic Egypt: Searching for modes of demonic conception, progression and praxis’, *JAIE* 5, no. 4 (2013), 20.

⁶⁰ P. Kousoulis, ‘The Demonic Lore of Ancient Egypt: Questions on Definition’, in P. Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian demonology: studies on the boundaries between the demonic and the divine in Egyptian magic* (Leuven, 2011), XIV.

Eurasian cases, requiring an exorcism to take place.⁶¹ In Egyptian contexts, A.W. Blackman has documented the continued belief amongst the fellahin that an organised society of afarits, made of fire and ruled by a king, occupied dwellings under the earth and haunted springs and wells in the uninhabited regions of the desert and the narrow paths that lead through the areas of cultivation.⁶² Multiple cases of possession caused by these beings have also been recorded, while in other cases some believe that the malevolent beings of ancient Egypt still haunt temples in the present day.⁶³ Demonic beings also feature frequently in popular culture, for example J.R.R Tolkien's demons of the ancient world manifested in the form of Balrogs shrouded in fire, darkness and shadow; the evil beings hunted by the nephilim of Cassandra Claire's best-selling *Mortal Instruments* novels and the vast array of demonic beings faced by Sam and Dean Winchester in the popular television series *Supernatural*. What is clearly illustrated from these brief examples is that the term demon conveys a negatively charged concept that is specific to our own cultural and temporal heritage, and something that is distinctly separate from that of the sphere of ancient Egyptian religion.

Dieter Kurth correctly asserts in his paper titled '*Suum cuique: Zum Verhältnis von Dämonen und Göttern im alten Ägypten*' that 'there are no beginnings of a demonology' present in our historical records of ancient Egypt, with the beings that scholars would classify as demons or demon groups simply occurring in the epigraphic material under their respective names.⁶⁴ It is highly possible that scholars are creating an additional class or category of beings that, in fact, did not exist. A number of scholars have placed an emphasis on the study of these beings as a separate ontological category from gods, for example Rita Lucarelli highlights the existence of terms in the Egyptian language for the categories of humans (*rmt*), spirits of deceased humans (*3h*) and deities (*ntr*), but points out the lack of a proper term for a fourth class

⁶¹ F. D. Goodman, *How about demons? Possession and Exorcism in the Modern World* (Bloomington, 1988), 95-96.

⁶² W. S. Blackman, *The fellahin of Upper Egypt. Their religious, social and industrial life to-day with special reference to survivals from ancient times* (London, 1927), 178-182, 227-229.

⁶³ Blackman, *The fellahin of Upper Egypt*, 178-182, 227-229.

⁶⁴ D. Kurth, '*Suum cuique: Zum Verhältnis von Dämonen und Göttern im alten Ägypten*', in A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger & D. Römhild (eds.), *Die Dämonen: Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt* (Tübingen, 2003), 34.

of supernatural beings whose identities are not precisely defined.⁶⁵ The recognition of the existence of these beings, and the tendency in scribal practices to use red ink and employ determinatives such as the evil or slain enemy to write the names of these hostile beings, are factors that Lucarelli believes are indicative that the Egyptians considered ‘malevolent demons’ to belong to their own ontological category.⁶⁶ However, it was also possible for these beings to be determined by the hawk on the standard, the *ntr* character or the seated figure wearing a wig and divine curved beard, the three general hieroglyphs used to denote a god.⁶⁷ While one also encounters these beings with determinatives with negative connotations such as the knife, enemy or bad bundle, no systematic use is discernible, merely a preference that requires further scholarly investigation.⁶⁸ Paul Frandsen’s analysis of epigraphic material in his study on the reversal theme in relation to demonic roles also indicates that determinatives are less useful indicators for distinguishing between deities and demons than first thought.⁶⁹ Furthermore, Frandsen is undoubtedly correct when he states that: ‘*it is possible that the reason for the lack of a general term for what apparently is a class of demons is due to the simple fact that no such class actually exists. Attempting to identify a class may entail attributing to the category of god something that was alien to the Egyptians*’.⁷⁰ This point is exemplified by textual evidence contained within the Onomastikon of Amenimopet I, which is a document that is attested from multiple sources dating from the Ramesside to late Third Intermediate Period.⁷¹ The order and selection of words that form the list of this document provides a guide to the categories into which the Egyptians divided and how they perceived the world.⁷² Within this list is a section of six categories of supernatural beings: god (*ntr*), goddess (*ntr.t*), transfigured man/blessed dead

⁶⁵ R. Lucarelli, ‘Demons (benevolent and malevolent)’, in J. Dieleman & W. Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, (Los Angeles, 2010), 1.

⁶⁶ Lucarelli, in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 2.

⁶⁷ Kurth, in *Die Dämonen*, 54; E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt. The One and the Many* (London, 1983), 33-42.

⁶⁸ Kurth, in *Die Dämonen*, 54.

⁶⁹ 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* (Leuven, 2011), 60.

⁷⁰ Frandsen, in *Ancient Egyptian demonology*, 56.

⁷¹ University College London, ‘The Onomasticon of Amenemipet’, (updated 2000) on *Digital Egypt for Universities*, <www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/literature/onomastica.html>, (viewed 17.6.14).

⁷² University College London, *The Onomasticon of Amenemipet*.

(*3h*), transfigured woman/blessed dead (*3h*), king (*nsw.t*) and goddess of kingship (*nsy.t*).⁷³

Scholars such as Szpakowska believe demonic entities were excluded from this conceptualisation of beings as they did not belong to the ordered world and were beings of chaos.⁷⁴ However, as these beings were dualistic in nature, embodying the concepts of both *ma'at* and *isfet* that constitute the ancient Egyptian world-view, their exclusion from these categories based on only one aspect of their nature is not justified. Thus it can be postulated with a high level of certainty that these beings can be ontologically classified as gods and belong to the category of *ntr*.

On account of these factors I would argue against the use of the word demon in Egyptological discourse, and advocate instead for the use of the individual names that these beings are assigned in the native Egyptian language. The term demon will thus not be used as a designator or descriptor in this thesis, with the divine beings around which the work is focused being referred to primarily as the *h3.tyw*, or under the corresponding English translations of this native Egyptian term.

⁷³ A. H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1947), 13.

⁷⁴ K. Szpakowska, 'Demons in Ancient Egypt', *Religion Compass* 3/5 (2009), 799.

Chapter 3

Orthography, Etymology, Iconography and Subordinancy

3.1 The orthography of *h3.tyw*

The orthography of the term *ḥ3.tyw* exhibits numerous variations; while it is attested in the singular on a number of occasions, the plural form of the term is much more common. The following is a list of the primary designations of these beings and the associated orthography according to Leitz's *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*:¹

Designation	Orthography
<i>ḥ3.ty</i> (singular)	
<i>ḥ3.ty-n.y-mwt.w</i> : “The <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> of the dead”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw</i> (plural)	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-n.w-3ḫ.t</i> : “The <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> of the horizon”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-n.w-im.yw-ḥt-rnp.t</i> : “The <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> of the entourage of the year”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-wr.w</i> : “The great <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> ”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-Bʿs.tt</i> : “The <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> of Bastet”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-n.w-nb.t-Iwn.t</i> : “The <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> of the Lady of Dendera”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-nḥt.w</i> : “The strong <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> ”	
<i>ḥ3.tyw-n.w-Rʿ.w</i> : “The <i>ḥ3.tyw</i> of Re”	


¹ C. Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, Band 5 (Leuven, 2002), 635-638.

<i>h3.tyw-rsy.w</i> : “The southern <i>h3.tyw</i> ”	
<i>h3.tyw-n.w-hm.t=s</i> : “The <i>h3.tyw</i> of her majesty”	
<i>h3.tyw-nw-Hr.w-3hty</i> : “The <i>h3.tyw</i> of Harachte”	
<i>h3.tyw-hryw-b-n-3d.t-rnp.t</i> : “The <i>h3.tyw</i> that bring the disaster of the epidemic of the year with them”	
<i>h3.tyw-hr-st-r3.f</i> : “The one under whose command the <i>h3.tyw</i> are”	
<i>h3.tyw-sfh</i> : “The seven <i>h3.tyw</i> ”	
<i>h3.tyw-Shmt</i> : “The <i>h3.tyw</i> of Sekhmet”	
<i>h3.tyw-knw</i> : “The powerful <i>h3.tyw</i> ”	
<i>h3.tyw-knw-nw-hnwt Fcg</i> : “The courageous <i>h3.tyw</i> of the Lady of Fcg”	
<i>h3t.tyw-Ksrt</i> : “The <i>h3.tyw</i> of Ksrt” *Ksrt may be an incorrect spelling for <i>srkt</i> “Selqet”	
<i>h3.tyw-nw-Itm.w</i> : “The <i>h3.tyw</i> of Atum”	

An ideographic spelling is assumed for the designation in the Late Period where or a similar variant is used to directly represent the *h3.tyw* beings rather than the word itself. This has proved to be quite problematic for, as Blackman and Fairman have demonstrated from their study of the Edfu temple inscriptions, a number of designations of similar beings are in fact assigned this determinative: *hb.yw* (), *hnt.tyw* (), *wpw.tyw* (), *kdf.tyw* (),² and *mnh.wy* (, ,).³ This problem can be further demonstrated from the use of the

² Blackman and Fairman have proposed that the reading of this designation is *is.t* ‘crew’ or ‘company’, however Sauneron has convincingly demonstrated from further attestations of the term that it is *kdf.tyw*. S. Sauneron, ‘Remarques de philologie et d’etymologie’, *BIFAO* 64 (1966), 5-7.

³ A. M. Blackman & H. W. Fairman, ‘The Myth of Horus at Edfu: II. C. The Triumph of Horus over His Enemies a Sacred Drama’, *JEA* 29 (1943), 21, no. 6.

determinative C22H, a canine-headed deity holding knives in the orthography of *h3.tyw* at El-Kab, which is also used as an ideogram for the designation *šm3.yw* on a naos of Nectanebo II.⁴ It appears that the names of the various emissaries are indicated by alliteration in the Late Period temple inscriptions,⁵ so that Blackman and Fairman believe that  in Edfu VI, 17, 1 is to be read as *h3.tyw*, because the *hb.yw* of the lord of Pe are cited immediately thereafter, in Edfu III, 33, 11 so that the text would read *h3.tyw 3h.ty hbhb hft.yw=f*, and in Edfu III, 35, 5 as the ideogram is directly preceded by *ht.t* 'I inscribe'.⁶ Leitz has even listed *h3.ty* as one of the values of this glyph in his sign-list of *Quellentexte zur ägyptischen Religion*,⁷ however a number of the listed attestations of *h3.tyw* with an ideographic spelling in his *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen* are in fact identified as different types of emissary beings in the translations of other scholars. In Philae inscription I, 13, 11 Junker believes that the alliteration of the text suggests that the value of the ideogram is *hb.yw*;⁸ for Dendera inscriptions X, 357, 3 and 357, 16 Cauville has given the translation of *šm3.yw* instead of *h3.tyw*;⁹ this is also the case for the attestation of the ideograph on the gate of Isis at Dendera,¹⁰ while Kurth in Edfu VII, 284, 2-3 has provided the translation *hb.yw* and in VII 12, 5-6 has taken the the sign as a determinative of the seven arrows (*šsr.w*).¹¹ These discrepancies in the identification of the value of ideographic sign usages in the the Late Period temple inscriptions indicates that further research is necessary before we can definitively establish the correct identity of a specific emissary being in these contexts.

⁴ J. Capart, 'Les sept paroles de Nekhabit', *CdE* 15 (1940), 22; V. Rondot, 'Une monographie bubastite', *BIFAO* 89 (1989), 263.

⁵ A. Gutbub, *Textes fondamentaux de la théologie de Kom Ombo* (Cairo, 1973), 243.

⁶ Blackman & Fairman, *JEA* 29 (1943), 21, no. 6.


⁷ Two other values are listed: *mnḥ* and *h3-di*. C. Leitz, *Quellentexte zur ägyptischen Religion I. Die Tempelinschriften der griechisch-römischen Zeit* (Berlin, 2009), 155.

⁸ H. Junker, *Der große Pylon des Tempels der Isis in Philä* (Wien, 1958), 13, no. 3.

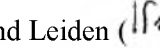
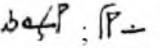

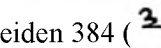
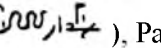



⁹ S. Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes* (Cairo, 1997), 192, 194.

¹⁰ S. Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: la porte d'Isis* (Cairo, 1999), 5-7.



¹¹ In Edfou VII 12, 5-6 *šsr.w* is clearly determined by I14C and A199A is clearly an separate ideogram:

 . E. Chassinat, *Le Temple d'Edfou*. Tome 7 (Cairo, 1932), 12; D. Kurth, *Edfou VII*, band 2 (Wiesbaden, 2004), 15, 535.

3.2 The demotic orthography of *h3.tyw*: *ht.w* or *(n)ht.w*

The Chicago Demotic Dictionary lists *(n)hṯ* for the singular demotic spelling of “combatant demon” which is a derivative of *h3.tyw*.¹² It appears in the textual record as a compound, *(n)hṯ n ntr*; as a component of phrases found for example within the Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden ( ; ), Papyrus Bilbliothèque Nationale 149 (), Papyrus Leiden 384 (), Papyrus Krall ( ; ), graffito 45 at Medinet Habu (); and as an element of numerous personal names.¹³ A number of problems have arisen in the rendering of this word due to the orthographical similarities exhibited by the first two signs and the writing of *nḥt* ‘to be(come) strong; strength’, this has resulted in a number of scholars reading the word as ‘divine power’ instead of recognising the *h3.tyw* beings.¹⁴ This concept of ‘divine power’ has been studied by Griffith who believes that the ‘divine powers’ addressed collectively or singularly in demotic seem to correspond to ‘angels’ and is related to the Gnostic *δυνάμεις*.¹⁵ Spiegelberg considers *nḥt* to be an abstract god similar to Ma’at and Sia, with its conception as a personal deity indicated by the orthography of the hieroglyphic name *Pn-p3-nḥt.w* () where a figure armed with a knife is used to denote the ‘divine power’.¹⁶ While Vittmann has identified the *h3.tyw* and *nḥt.w* as two separate beings that can be connected,¹⁷ and de Meulenaere has proposed that the *h3.tyw* are merged in late onomastics with the ‘divine powers’ based on the personal names

and

 and ,¹⁸ Quaegebeur has conclusively demonstrated that there is in fact little evidence for *nht.w* being divine entities in their own right.¹⁹ For example, the

¹² J. H. Johnson (ed.), *The Demotic Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. H 06.1 (Chicago, 2006), 167.

¹³ Johnson, *The Demotic Dictionary*. H 06.1, 168-169.

¹⁴ See for example the entry in W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar* (Copenhagen, 1954), 226; Johnson, *The Demotic Dictionary*. H 06.1, 167.
















¹⁵ F. L. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis: The Sethon of Herodotus and The Demotic Tale of Khamuas* (Oxford, 1900), 26.

¹⁶ W. Spiegelberg, 'Die ägyptische Gottheit der "Gotteskraft"', *ZAS* 57 (1922), 148.

¹⁷ G. Vittman, *Der demotische Papyrus Rylands* 9, 2 (Wiesbaden, 1998), 612.

¹⁸ H. de Meulenaere, 'Notes d'Onomastique Tardive (troisième série)', *RdÉ* 14 (1962), 46.

¹⁹ This does not exclude the possible personification of *nht* as a divine quality. J. Quaegebeur, 'La situle décorée de Nesnakhetiou I au Musée Royal de Mariemont', *CdÉ* 54 (1979), 45.

original transcription of *nht* in particular passages of the Setna novel²⁰ has been convincingly shown by Zauzich to correctly read *mh-ntr* ‘divine cubit’;²¹ this is also the case for section XII, 14 of the *Myth of the Eye of the Sun* which was originally transcribed by de Cenival as ‘divine powers’,²² but subsequently shown by Quack to be *mh-ntr*.²³ For section IV, 7-8 of the Setna novel, Quaegebeur’s suggestion that *w^c ht.w* could be understood as a *h3.tyw* being is certainly valid, as is his preference for *n3-ht.w* to be read in section II, 8 of funerary papyrus of Pamont, in IX, 3, 5 in the *Myth of the Eye of the Sun* and in XI, 14-15 of the London-Leiden Magical Papyrus.²⁴ Leahy’s study of the orthographic elements of a door surround from Abydos (Louvre C. 107) has also proved that the original value of this element in personal names was *ht.w* not *nht.w*.²⁵ The original significance can be determined from the use of  in the concise spelling of *P3-(n)-n3-h3.tiw*, ‘He who belongs to the *h3.tyw*’ (  );²⁶ the spelling of *h3.tyw* using only the knife determinative is also attested in the personal name *B3k-(n)-n3-ht.w* ‘Servant of the *h3.tyw*’ (   ), the omission of the genitive *n* is common practice in the orthography of personal names in the first millennium B.C. due to its assimilation with the definite article *n3*.²⁷ One should perhaps read *nht* in the corresponding hieroglyphic form of the demotic names as a derivative from *n3-ht.w*,²⁸ as Quaegebeur has shown *n* in the examples   and   can be considered as the article *n3*, based on the practice in late onomastics to use this article in references to groups of gods and other beings.²⁹ Spellings such as    where the *n* is present after the full writing of *n3* are considered by Pestman to be the result of a play on words, for it was quite possible that the words *ht* and *nht* were

²⁰ Sections III, 37; IV, 3; IV, 9/10; IV, 14/15.

²¹ K-T. Zauzich, ‘Gottesellen statt Gotteskraft’, *Enchoria* I (1971), 83-86.

²² F. de Cenival, *Le mythe de l'oeil du soleil* (Sommerhausen, 1988), 36-37.

²³ J. F. Quack, ‘Korrekturvorschläge zu einigen Demotischen Literarischen Texten’, *Enchoria* 21 (1994), 69.

²⁴ Compare *p3-ht* = *Πεχτης*. Quaegebeur, *CdÉ* 54 (1979), 45.

²⁵ A. Leahy, ‘*htw*-demons in Late Period Onomastica’, *GM* 87 (1985), 49-50.

²⁶ The falcon hieroglyph is also used in other parts of the inscription as part of the definite article *t3*. Leahy, *GM* 87 (1985), 49.

²⁷ See for example the Greek form *πανεχας*. Leahy, *GM* 87 (1985), 50.

²⁸ Johnson, *The Demotic Dictionary*. H 06.1, 167.

²⁹ Quaegebeur, *CdÉ* 54 (1979), 44.

substituted for each other.³⁰ Vittman also agrees that it is certainly the *h3.tyw* that are meant in late onomastics, although he suggests that the use of the *nht* group in demotic spellings of *h3.tyw* may not only be based on phonetic similarity but, as Devauchelle proposes, is possibly a non-etymological spelling that may have resulted from ignorance of its original meaning.³¹ In these cases the retention of the translation (*n*)*ht.w* is justified.

3.3 The etymology of *h3.tyw*

Because the orthography of *h3.tyw* exhibits similar characteristic to a number of terms, the etymology of the designation is highly contested in the Egyptological literature and has resulted in significant variations in its translation, for example ‘slaughterers’,³² ‘demons of disease’,³³ ‘murderers’,³⁴ ‘knife-bearers’,³⁵ and ‘night demons’.³⁶ Hannig and Eschweiler have both proposed an etymological connection between *h3.tyw* and the term for night or evening, *h3wy* (𐩢𐩣𐩠𐩢𐩣).³⁷ Eschweiler believes that this derivation, in conjunction with the connection between the *h3.tyw* and circumpolar stars, suggests they have the character of dreaded nocturnal ghosts.³⁸ Scholars such as Edwards and Breasted³⁹ have also suggested that the designation

³⁰ P. W. Pestman, ‘Jeux de déterminatifs en démotique’, *RdÉ* 25 (1973), 33; *Recueil de textes démotiques et bilingues I* (Leiden, 1997), 99, no. 16.

³¹ D. Devauchelle, ‘Book review: S. Grunert, Thebanische Kaufverträge des 3. und 2. Jahrhunderts v.u.z.’, *Enchoria* 12 (1984), 199.

³² M. Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 35; Meurer, G., *Die Feinde des Königs in den Pyramidentexten* (Freiburg, 2002), 78; J. Zandee, *Death as an enemy according to ancient Egyptian conceptions* (Leiden, 1960), 205; R. Lucarelli, ‘Popular belief in demons in the Libyan Period: The Evidence of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees’, in G. P. F. Broeknab, R. J. Demarée & O. E. Kaper (eds.), *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), 236.

³³ J. H. Breasted, *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus* (Chicago, 1930), 475.

³⁴ J. F. Bourghouts, *Ancient Egyptian magical texts* (Leiden, 1978), 12.



³⁵ B. Stricker, ‘Spreuken tot beveiliging gedurende de schrikeldagen naar Pap. I 346’, *OMRO* 29 (1948), 66; W. Westendorf, *Papyrus Edwin Smith: ein medizinisches Lehrbuch aus dem alten Ägypten: Wund- und Unfallchirurgie, Zaubersprüche gegen Seuchen, verschiedene Rezepte* (Bern, 1966), 92.

³⁶ J. P. Allen, *The Art of Medicine in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 2005), 107.

³⁷ R. Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Deutsch-Ägyptisch: (2800-950 v. Chr.): die Sprache der Pharaonen* (Mainz, 2006), 263-264; P. Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten: die Verwendung von Bildern und Gegenständen in magischen Handlungen nach den Texten des Mittleren und Neuen Reiches* (Freiburg, 1994), 213.

³⁸ Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten*, 213.

³⁹ Breasted, *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus*, 475; I. E. S. Edwards, *Hieratic papyri in the British museum. Fourth series. Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 2 vols. (London, 1960), 5-6, no. 36.

h3.tyw is a derivative of *h3y.t* () ‘disease’; this proposed etymological connection is based primarily on the association of the *h3.tyw* with the *bd.t rnp.t* in the invocations against disease in Papyrus Edwin Smith and the petitions of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees. However, as the role of the *h3.tyw* as disease bringers is not attested securely in the written record until the Second Intermediate Period it is unlikely that the designation *h3.tyw* was originally derived from *h3.yt*, the development leading to the beings taking on this role is more likely to have resulted from the phonetic similarities between the two terms. Instead, the term *h3.yt* (), translated as ‘slaughter’ or ‘massacre’, appears to be the most plausible etymological origin of the designation *h3.tyw*. Faulkner believes that the specific usage of determinatives such as a monkey wielding knives attested in the Cenotaph of Seti I, in conjunction with the context of Papyrus Bremner-Rhind where the *h3.tyw* slay Apophis, cut out his intestines, fill their mouths with his flesh and squirt out his blood, suggests a connection to the word massacre.⁴⁰ The earliest role of the *h3.tyw* as armed celestial gate-keepers in the Pyramid Texts also supports this etymological connection, as does the petition to be saved from the *h3.tyw* and their sharp knives in a sun litany of the New Kingdom.⁴¹

3.4 *H3.tyw as an interchangeable designation*

There is a consensus within the literature that the designation *h3.tyw* was synonymous or interchangeable with other denominations of emissary beings, primarily the *šm3.yw* and *wpw.tyw*. Meeks is persuaded that, apart from their names, there is no fundamental distinction between these beings; however, in divergent traditions each cohort is assigned different activities and roles.⁴² Lucarelli holds a very similar position, stating that their names seem to be interchangeable with the order in which they appear in the textual sources (*h3.tyw*, *šm3.yw*,

⁴⁰ R. O. Faulkner, 'The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: IV: D. The Book of Overthrowing Apep (concluded)', *JEA* 24, No. 1 (1938), 49; *The papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum No. 10188)* (Bruxelles, 1933), 75.

⁴¹ E. Hornung, *Das buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen (Sonnenlitanei): nach den Versionen des Neuen Reiches*, Teil I: Text (Geneva, 1975), 79.

⁴² D. Meeks, 'Génies, anges, démons en Égypte', in P. Garelli, *Génies Anges et Démons: Egypt - Babylone - Israël - Islam - Peuples altaïques - Inde - Birmanie - Asie du Sud-Est - Tibet - Chine*, *Sources Orientales* 8 (Paris, 1971), 48.

wpw.tyw) consistently maintained, she also notes that these cohorts possess distinguishing traits.⁴³ Schipper believes that the *h3.tyw* could be combined with other divine messengers;⁴⁴ Leitz proposes that *h3.tyw* is one of the more common names for the assistants of the sun god which also included the *šm3.yw*, *wpw.tyw* and the seventy-seven gods of *snd.w*;⁴⁵ while Raven believes that the apposition of the *h3.tyw* and *wpw.tyw* in Papyrus Leiden I 346 suggests the terms were synonymous.⁴⁶ Von Lieven has even suggested that the designation *wpw.tyw* seems to be a generic term for dangerous ‘demonic’ beings in general.⁴⁷ However, as Bommas has importantly illustrated, there is an inherent danger in using this syncretistic approach for the study of these beings, which detracts from the importance of the history of the *h3.tyw* as individual entities.⁴⁸ His observation that the available evidence up until the composition of Papyrus Leiden I 346 advocates for the separate consideration of these beings is certainly valid. The fact that these beings were listed in apposition should not necessarily be taken as an indicator that they were synonymous, for as Valloggia has demonstrated, the distinction drawn in Papyrus Leiden I 346 and Papyrus Edwin Smith between these designations suggests the term *wpw.tyw* specifies divine envoys who, unlike the *h3.tyw*, were ‘*qualifiait non pas un specialiste determine*’.⁴⁹ That the textual record distinguishes between different types of emissary beings who are assigned distinct roles should be taken as a clear indicator that these beings were considered as autonomous. Germond has suggested that the *wpw.tyw* were initially the messengers acting as representatives for a deity of elevated hierarchical status; the *h3.tyw* as the true executioners, armed with knives and responsible for carrying out the lethal orders; and the *šm3.yw* as a manifestation of the omnipotence of the threat posed by Sekhmet rather than the

⁴³ Lucarelli, in *The Libyan Period in Egypt*, 236.

⁴⁴ B. Schipper, ‘Angels or Demons? Divine Messengers in Ancient Egypt’, in F. Reiterer, T. Nicklas & K. Schöpfung (eds.), *Angels: The concept of celestial beings: Origins, Development and Reception* (New York, 2007), 8.

⁴⁵ C. Leitz, *Tagewählerei: das Buch h3t nh3 ph.wy dt und verwandte Texte* (Wiesbaden, 1994), 244.

⁴⁶ M. J. Raven, ‘Charms for Protection during the Epagomenal Days’, in J. van Dijk (ed.), *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde* (Groningen, 1997), 283.

⁴⁷ A. von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna: eine Fallstudie zur religiösen Astronomie in Ägypten am Beispiel der kosmologischen Decken- und Architravinschriften im Tempel von Esna* (Wiesbaden, 2000), 53.

⁴⁸ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 37.

⁴⁹ M. Valloggia, *Recherche sur les “Messagers” (wpwtyw) dans les sources Égyptiennes profanes* (Paris, 1976), 55-56.

implementation of the threat itself.⁵⁰ Germond argues that this distinction disappeared in the Ptolemaic period with all of the emissary beings directed by Sekhmet becoming charged with the task of bringing disease and causing a violent or premature death.⁵¹ The distinction between these beings does appear to become blurred in the temple texts of the Greco-Roman period, however, as previously indicated in this chapter, the identification of specific emissary beings in these inscriptions has been hindered by the use of ideographic spelling variations. This problem requires resolution before definitive conclusions can be made; furthermore, in order to establish the point at which this possible assimilation occurred, the composition date of the texts must also be considered.⁵² Finally, it should be noted that the term *šsr.w* ‘arrows’ has also been suggested to be a generic group designation for the *h3.tyw*, *šm3.yw* and *wpw.tyw*.⁵³ For example, Rondot has interpreted the listing in apposition of the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet, the *šm3.yw* of Bastet and *wpw.tyw* of Atum on the Naos of Domitian as a reference to the troop of seven arrows, a designation he believes is also indicated by the dual expression ‘the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet, the *šm3.yw* of Bastet’.⁵⁴ The connection between the *h3.tyw* and the seven arrows appears to be confirmed in Papyrus Krall where the name of one of the seven arrows *ms-hnyn* ‘riot-birther’ is listed as one of the *ht.w* that are sent out by Osiris,⁵⁵ however this is also an area that requires further investigation.

3.5 Iconography of the *h3.tyw*

There are very few iconographic representations that can be identified definitively as depicting the *h3.tyw* beings. A possible representation can be found accompanying a text on a hieratic papyrus from Deir el Medina, which states: ‘To recite [before the image of Re]-

⁵⁰ P. Germond, ‘En marge des litanies de Sekhmet à Edfou: flèches et messagers’, *BSEG* 2 (1979), 28-29, no. 18.

⁵¹ Germond, *BSEG* 2 (1979), 29.

⁵² See for example the discussion on dating texts in A. von Lieven, *Grundriss des laufes der Sterne. Das sogenannte Nutbuch. Text* (Copenhagen, 2007).

⁵³ D. Meeks, ‘Demons’, in D. B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1 (New York, 2001), 377.

⁵⁴ V. Rondot, ‘Le Naos de Domitien, Toutou et les sept fleches’, *BIFAO* 90 (1990), 331.

⁵⁵ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 52; F. Hoffman, *Der Kampf um den Panzer des Inaros. Studien zum P. Krall und seiner Stellung innerhalb des Inaros-Petubastis-Zyklus*, *MPER* 26 (Wien, 1996), 131-143.

Har[akhte], Atum, Khepri, Chou, Etfênet, Hor Sêtek, Isis, Nephthys, Wepwawet, the two gods of *Imt* and *Stnt* ... the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet, [the two] solar barques, the eye ... unique (?) and noble Sekhmet, while the Ennead of the gods is therein'.⁵⁶ A line of figures that appears to correspond to this enumeration of deities has been inserted directly below this section of the text; the majority of figures are easily identifiable, however, the two groups of four deities either side of the *wadjet* eyes have posed some problems.⁵⁷ The latter group are presumably related to the serpent goddesses *Imt* and *Stnt*, while Černý has proposed that the crocodile-headed deities are likely to be the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet.⁵⁸ As the rest of the enumerated deities are represented pictorially it is justified to identify the crocodile headed deities as the *h3.tyw*. It is interesting that the first of the seven arrows *3 ph.ty* 'great of strength' is also primarily represented with the head of a crocodile.⁵⁹



Figure 1. Papyrus DeM. I, vso.

Raven has questioned the extent to which the *h3.tyw* can be equated with the representation of twelve seated deities that are preserved at the end of column III of Papyrus Leiden I 346.⁶⁰ Stricker has recognised that the vignette corresponds to the deities invoked in column I who are identified in adjacent hieratic captions as Sekhmet, Shentit, Re, Shesemtet, Horus, Sobek, the Eye of Asheru, the Eye of Re, Horus of the spirits of Ipet, Who is under his moringa tree, lord of Shenet, the brilliant Eye of Horus and Khnum.⁶¹

⁵⁶ J. Černý, *Papyrus hiératiques de Deir el-Medineh* (Cairo, 1978-1986), 10-11.

⁵⁷ Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten*, 213.

⁵⁸ Černý, *Papyrus hiératiques de Deir el-Medineh*, 11.

⁵⁹ R. Lucarelli, 'Demonology during the Late Pharaonic and Greco-Roman Periods in Egypt', *JANER* 11 (2011), 123.

⁶⁰ Raven, in *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, 276-277.

⁶¹ Stricker, *OMRO* 29 (1948), 70; Raven, in *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, 276-277.

According to Raven, the opening lines of the papyrus suggest that the twelve gods who are invoked are synonymous with the *h3.tyw* who are cited immediately afterwards;⁶² this is certainly debatable and it is highly unlikely that the figures represented in this vignette are the *h3.tyw* beings who are attested in the written record as operating in groups of seven, not twelve.⁶³ Furthermore, the fact that the magician pronouncing this charm equates himself with the twelve deities in column I makes it even more unlikely that they are equated with the *h3.tyw*, for the charm is intended in its effectiveness to avert the actions of these beings.⁶⁴ Raven's counter proposal that the deities of the vignette represent stages of the ritual pacification of Sekhmet is more plausible; this is based on the fact that most are connected with the Epagomenal days, are hypostasis of the goddess Sekhmet and are connected to specific offerings.⁶⁵



Figure 2. Papyrus Leiden I 346, recto.

‘Pantheistic’ or ‘polymorphic’ iconographic representations of gods are also believed by a number of scholars to incorporate in part images of the *h3.tyw* or other similar beings.⁶⁶ In Leitz's excursus on the *h3.tyw* beings he states: “[d]iese Dämonen können nicht nur als Göttergruppe auftreten, sondern sich auch zu einem Einzelwesen zusammenschließen. Ein

⁶² Raven, in *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, 283.

⁶³ On the significance of the number seven see M. Rochholz, *Schöpfung, Feindvernichtung, Regeneration. Untersuchung zum Symbolgehalt der machtgeladenen Zahl 7 im alten Ägypten* (München, 2002), 108; R. H. Wilkinson, ‘Meaning in Many, the symbolism of numbers’, in *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art* (London, 1994), 126-147.

⁶⁴ Raven, in *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, 283.

⁶⁵ Raven, in *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, 283.

⁶⁶ V. Dassen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* (Oxford, 1993), 67; Goyon, J. Cl., *Les dieux-gardiens et la genèse des temples (d'après les textes égyptiens l'époque gréco-romaine): Les soixante d'Edfou et les soixante-dix-sept dieux de Pharbaethos* (Cairo, 1985), 184-188; J. Quaegebeur, ‘Divinités égyptiennes sur des animaux dangereux’, in P. Borgeaud, C. Yves & U. Ivanka (eds.), *L'animal, l'homme, le Dieu dans le Proche-Orient ancien, actes du Colloque de Cartigny 1981* (Leuven, 1985), 131-143; L. Kakosy, ‘Der Gott Bes in einer koptischen Legende’, *Studia Aegyptiaca* 7 (1981), 119-130; Lucarelli, *JANER* 11 (2011), 122-123; Rochholz, *Schöpfung, Feindvernichtung, Regeneration*, 108.

*solcher "dieu panthee" wird Tithoes oder Bes genannt. Charakteristikum dieses "dieu panthee" ist, daß er entweder als Anführer einer Göttergruppe stehen kann oder daß diese Götter, repräsentiert durch ihre (Tier) Köpfe, in seine Darstellung mit hineinfließen können".*⁶⁷ This idea seems to have been originally introduced into the literature by Guéraud in 1935⁶⁸ and developed by Sauneron in 1960, who explains the composite figure of the god Tutu as a symbolic image representing the commanding deity and the emissary beings as an amalgam.⁶⁹ The magical Papyrus Brooklyn 47.218 explicitly states that the pantheistic deities accompanying the text were representations of the *b3.w* of the god; Sauneron thus proposes that the destructive power of the *b3.w* could be manifested as independent beings, which the emissaries or divine messengers of the god personified.⁷⁰ These 'geniuses', seven or nine in number, that constitute the divine force were usually represented as heads positioned in a column above the head of the primary deity (figure 3) or represented in a procession as independent deities accompanying their leader.⁷¹



Figure 3. Ägyptisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin no. 20914.

⁶⁷ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 244-245.

⁶⁸ O. Guéraud, 'Notes Gréco-Romaines 2: Sphinx composites au Musée du Caire', *ASAE* 35 (1935), 4-24.

⁶⁹ S. Sauneron, 'Le nouveau sphinx composite du Brooklyn Museum et le rôle du dieu Toutou-Tithoès', *JNES* 19, no. 4 (1960), 283.

⁷⁰ S. Sauneron, *Le papyrus magique illustré de Brooklyn* (Brooklyn, 1970), 13-14.

⁷¹ Sauneron, *Le papyrus magique illustré de Brooklyn*, 14.

Based on the more recent contribution to the discussion made by Kaper in 2003, in which he argues that the representation of additional heads on pantheistic figures bears no relation to the ‘seven demons’ or emissary beings, the position advanced by Sauneron, Lucarelli, Dassen and Quaegebeuer among others does not appear to be favourable.⁷² Significantly, Kaper has demonstrated from the collection and study of an extensive corpus of monuments relating to Tutu that the number of additional heads represented is never seven, but could range from four to eight. This, in conjunction with the lack of standardisation displayed by these images, eliminates the possibility that the heads represented a divine group of a specific composition.⁷³ Based on the dual meaning attributed to the term *b3*, denoting either the ‘hidden power which gives life to elements of the created world’ or the ‘manifestations of the god in the physical world’, Kaper has demonstrated that these pantheistic images are not representations of the emissary beings but actually an attempt to portray the multiple attributes of the sun god in a single image.⁷⁴

While there are numerous attestations of the *h3.tyw* in the written record, it is striking that there appears in the iconographic repertoire almost no securely identifiable examples of these beings. The absence of pictorial representations, particularly in contexts where the *h3.tyw* are performing roles that are malevolent in nature, is explicable in terms of the Egyptian concept of empowered images.⁷⁵ Images of the *h3.tyw* and other similar beings could pose a danger to the living, as the image acted as a point of contact with the being represented and also ensured its continued existence.⁷⁶ The potency of this danger is illustrated clearly through iconoclastic practices where images or characters that represent potentially dangerous animals

⁷² J. F. Quack, ‘The so-called Pantheos. On polymorphic deities in late-Egyptian religion’, in H. Györi, (ed.), *Aegyptus et Pannonia III. Acta Symposii Anno 2004* (Budapest, 2006), 177.

⁷³ O. Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu. A study of the Sphinx-God and Master of Demons with a Corpus of Monuments* (Leuven, 2003), 98.

⁷⁴ Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 99.

⁷⁵ R. Ritner, ‘Killing the Image, killing the Essence: the destruction of text and figures in Ancient Egyptian Thought, Ritual and ‘Ritualised history’’, in N. May, *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction in the Ancient Near East and Beyond* (Chicago, 2012), 398.

⁷⁶ Meeks, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, 377; Ritner, in *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, 395.

are incomplete or have been mutilated.⁷⁷ The idea of empowered images also relates to orthographical conventions due to the pictorial nature of the hieroglyphic writing system, the name itself continuing ‘for the Egyptians an image in which a spirit might reside’;⁷⁸ this may account for the use of ideographic spellings variations for the *ḥ3.tyw*, *šm3.yw*, *wpw.tyw* and a number of other similar beings in the Greco-Roman temple inscriptions. It is significant that the possible representation of the *ḥ3.tyw* as crocodile-headed deities in the hieratic papyrus from Deir el Medina is related to a context where the *ḥ3.tyw* have a clear positive role and are invoked alongside a number of other deities in order to achieve the expulsion of a male and female opponent from <N>.⁷⁹

3.6 The position of the *ḥ3.tyw* in the hierarchy of the Egyptian pantheon

Within the hierarchy of the Egyptian pantheon the *ḥ3.tyw* can be considered to occupy a subordinate position when enacting the commands issued by a deity of an elevated status. This concept of intermediaries and subordination is the result of the ancient Egyptians transposing secular structures of hierarchical organisation onto the world of the divine.⁸⁰ That the deities of the Egyptian pantheon were not equal in status can be determined from iconographical practices where the most significant deity in a scene is depicted as enthroned and holding the symbols for power and life.⁸¹ Epigraphically, the designations *wr.w* ‘great’ and *nds.w* ‘small’ were used to distinguish between deities, while *nsw.t-ntr.w* ‘king of gods’ was a title attributed to the leading god of the pantheon such as Horus, Amun and Amun-Re.⁸² From the Pyramid Texts,

⁷⁷ Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten*, 213; B. Bryan, 'Episodes of Iconoclasm in the Egyptian New Kingdom', in N. May, *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction in the Ancient Near East and Beyond* (Chicago, 2012), 377.

⁷⁸ Ritner, in *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, 396.

⁷⁹ Černý, *Papyrus hiératiques de Deir el-Medineh*, 10.

⁸⁰ A. Roccati, 'Demons as a reflection of human society', in P. Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian demonology: studies on the boundaries between the demonic and the divine in Egyptian magic* (Leuven, 2011), 89; D. Kurth, 'Suum cuique: Zum Verhältnis von Dämonen und Göttern im alten Ägypten' in A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger & D. Römhild (eds.), *Die Dämonen: Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt* (Tübingen, 2003), 50; P. Kousoulis, 'The Demonic Lore of Ancient Egypt: Questions on Definition', in P. Kousoulis (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian demonology: studies on the boundaries between the demonic and the divine in Egyptian magic* (Leuven, 2011), XII.

⁸¹ E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt. The One and the Many* (London, 1983), 231-232.

⁸² Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt*, 231-232.

descriptions of the solar god Re indicate that he was considered as king of the divine world, while the god Thoth assumed the role of vizier, often acting as a representative (*stj*) of Re from the New Kingdom onwards.⁸³ An example of this can be found in the *Myth of the Eye of the Sun* where Thoth under the direction of Re is charged with the task of appeasing Tefnut and convincing her to return to Egypt from Nubia.⁸⁴ Hathor is another deity of elevated hierarchical status who functions as a messenger of Re in the text of the *Destruction of Mankind* where she is sent to punish humanity; both of these examples demonstrate that divine messengers were determined by functionality, and that the subordinate role could be undertaken by non-intermediary beings who held elevated positions within the hierarchy.⁸⁵

There is a need, however, to distinguish between independent deities such as Thoth and Hathor who in particular contexts can assume a subordinate role and act on the orders of another god, and those that can be defined as dependent deities who functioned solely as divine messengers.⁸⁶ The *h3.tyw* are usually assigned by scholars to the latter category, understood as minor divinities who acted as assistants to superior forces.⁸⁷ Disregarding Kurth's use of the term 'demon', his classification of beings like the *h3.tyw* as '*zweckgebunden handelnde Teilkräfte*' is certainly valid in contexts where they are part of a cause-effect pair, in service of a higher force who is '*die eine wirkende unergründliche Kraft hinter allem Sein*'.⁸⁸

The subordinancy of the *h3.tyw* is expressly denoted in text passages that show that their actions could be averted or counteracted through the support of more powerful and elevated deities.⁸⁹ In section VIII, 13-15 of Papyrus Edwin Smith, the actor will not die due to his or her equation with Horus the son of Sekhmet and Mahes the son of Bastet, two deities who

⁸³ Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt*, 232.

⁸⁴ B. Schipper, 'Angels or Demons? Divine Messengers in Ancient Egypt', in F. Reiterer, T. Nicklas & K. Schöpflin (eds.), *Angels: The concept of celestial beings: Origins, Development and Reception* (New York, 2007), 14.

⁸⁵ Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 3-4.

⁸⁶ Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 9.

⁸⁷ Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 9; Kousoulis, in *Ancient Egyptian demonology*, XII.

⁸⁸ Kurth, in *Die Dämonen*, 49.

⁸⁹ Schipper, in *Angels: The concept of celestial beings*, 7.

could control the emissary cohorts directed by their mothers.⁹⁰ The neutralization of the *h3.tyw* through higher forces is also attested in *The confirmation of power in the New Year* preserved in Brooklyn Papyrus 47.2183.50 where it is stated: ‘When he is crowned pharaoh *LPH*, for his flesh, he is crowned Nerfertum. The exterminators (*sk*) of Sekhmet cannot get a grip on him nor the *h3.tyw* of Bastet. He is the flame of Re for this reason, the image of the great god’.⁹¹ Another example is found in the New Kingdom version of the *Buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen* where the actor petitions ‘May you save me from your *h3.tyw* with sharp knives, the bloody (*snfyw*) which tear out the heart. They should not perform their work against me. They should not throw me into their ovens for I am Re and vice versa’.⁹²

Furthermore, the powers possessed by the *h3.tyw* can be considered as limited to the tasks they are directed to execute, unlike the ‘universal’ powers attributed to greater deities.⁹³ As Meeks states: ‘*Les génies émissaires étaient la forme que revêtait cette Puissance pour intervenir dans le monde des humains. Ils étaient par conséquent complètement assujettis au dieu qui les envoyait, n’agissant que sur son ordre, exécutant sa volonté docilement et sans pitié*’.⁹⁴ The *h3.tyw* are attested in the written record as being under the direction of a variety of greater deities with an elevated hierarchical position in the pantheon. While von Lieven has proposed that the assumption of the commanding role by deities such as Neith, Nekhbet, Hathor and Mut was in high probability only for local adaptations,⁹⁵ the variances in the chain of command are likely the result of the universal applicability of the *h3.tyw* and emissary beings who able to perform a diverse number of tasks in different contexts. The primary leader of the

⁹⁰ Breasted, *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus*, 477; Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 61.

⁹¹ J. Cl. Goyon, *Confirmation du pouvoir royal au nouvel an: Brooklyn Museum Papyrus 47.218.50*, BdÉ 52 (Cairo, 1972), 56-57.

⁹² Hornung, *Das buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen*, 80. The theft of the heart by the *h3.tyw* is one of the earliest roles assigned to these beings in Pyramid Text §748, R. O Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Warminster, 1969), 138; on preventing the theft of the heart by the messengers of Sekhmet see S. Aufrère, ‘Le coeur, thé annulaire gauche, Sekhmet et les maladies cardiaques’, *RdÉ* 36 (1985), 21-34; a pictorial representation of an individual protecting his heart against theft can be found in S. Ratie, *Le papyrus de Neferoubenef (Louvre III 93)* (Cairo, 1968), pl. XIII.

⁹³ R. Lucarelli, ‘Demons (benevolent and malevolent)’, in J. Dieleman & W. Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, (Los Angeles, 2010), 2; *JANER* 11 (2011), 110.

⁹⁴ Meeks, in *Génies Anges et Démons*, 45.

⁹⁵ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 53.

h3.tyw cohort was the goddess Sekhmet, who is frequently designated at the head of these beings in petitions where the actor expresses the wish to be saved from their influence or actions.⁹⁶ The *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet are also recorded as being praised in the House of the Elders and the temple of Neith,⁹⁷ as involved in the pacification rites of Sekhmet,⁹⁸ tasked with slaying Apophis in Papyrus Bremner-Rhind,⁹⁹ released in conjunction with the departure of Sekhmet from *Rhs.t* on the *II prt 13*,¹⁰⁰ charged with locating the eye of the sun on the *II prt 18*,¹⁰¹ and are compared to those who slay the enemies in the great war report of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu.¹⁰² In other contexts the *h3.tyw* are under the command of Re, who is recorded in the *Myth of the Eye of the Sun* to have dispatched a *h3.ty* to deliver punishment after a female vulture was robbed of her young by a cat.¹⁰³ In the *Book of victory over Seth*, it is Re who sees the *h3.tyw* put their arms about his enemy;¹⁰⁴ in the sun hymn of stele Chicago OIM 6898 the *h3.tyw* are among the beings that Re has the power to ward off,¹⁰⁵ while in Papyrus Bremner-Rhind Apophis is given into the hands of the *h3.tyw* of Re.¹⁰⁶ The *h3.tyw* are also connected to the god Osiris and are recorded in the tomb of Ramesses IX as being in his slaughter-house,¹⁰⁷ while in Papyrus Krall, Osiris dispatches two *ht.w* to go to Heliopolis and create strife in the heart of Pimay the younger against Wertiamonniut.¹⁰⁸ The two *ht.w* are stated to enter into Pimay and it was at that very moment that his heart forgot the festival and wished to fight.¹⁰⁹ The titles of the

⁹⁶ Edfu VI, 264, 8-9, 265, 14, 265, 16-266, 1, (trans. P. Germond), *BSEG* 2 (1979), 25-26 Papyrus Edwin Smith XIX 19, (trans. J. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus*, 484; L.2 rt. 62, NY rt.33 (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of Late New Kingdom*, 16, 104; Capart, *CdE* 15 (1940), 22.

⁹⁷ R. Lepsius, *Das Tottenbuch der Ägypter nach dem hieroglyphischen Papyrus in Turin* (Leipzig, 1842), Tf. 65, Z1.82, 86; U. Verhoeven, *Das saïtische Totenbuch der Iahtesnacht: P. Colon. Aeg. 10207* (Bonn, 1993), column 93, 19.

⁹⁸ F. R. Herbin, *Le livre de parcourir l'éternité*, OLA 58 (Leuven 1994), 57.

⁹⁹ Faulkner, *JEA* 24, No. 1 (1938), 42.

¹⁰⁰ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 238.

¹⁰¹ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 243.

¹⁰² W. F. Edgerton & J. A. Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramses III. The Texts in Medinet Habu* (Chicago, 1936), 27, no. 43b.

¹⁰³ F. de Cenival, *Le mythe de l'oeil du soleil* (Sommerhausen, 1988), 25.

¹⁰⁴ S. Schott, *Urkunden mythologischen Inhalts* (Leipzig, 1915-17), 12-13.

¹⁰⁵ T. G. Allen, 'Some Egyptian Sun Hymns', *JNES* 8 (1949), 351-352.

¹⁰⁶ Faulkner, *JEA* 24, No. 1 (1938), 42.

¹⁰⁷ A. Piankoff, *Le Livre des Querets* (Cairo, 1946), 25; F. Guilmant, *Le tombeau de Ramsès IX*, MIFAO 15 (Cairo, 1907), pl. LVII-LVIII.

¹⁰⁸ Papyrus Krall, Z1. 1.4-2.4, (trans. F. Hoffman), *Der Kampf um den Panzer des Inaros*, 132-143.

¹⁰⁹ Černý has suggested that there is an etymological connection between the term *ḥꜣt* 'be inspired, possessed' and the *h3.tyw*. J. Černý, *Coptic etymological dictionary* (Cambridge, 1976), 253; see also R. K. Ritner, 'An eternal curse upon the reader of these lines (with apologies to M. Puig)', in P. Kousoulis

god Tutu illustrate that he too could exert control over the *h3.tyw* beings; at Esna he is assigned the designation ‘Master of the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet and *šm3.yw* of Bastet’, and the *h3.tyw* are said to encircle the earth at his command.¹¹⁰ In Tutu’s protective role he could cause respect to be in the hearts of the *h3.tyw* in fear of the petitioner and was able to ward off the *h3.tyw*, dispel the *šm3.yw* and overthrow the *wpw.tyw*.¹¹¹ Under *Ksr.t* the *h3.tyw* are recorded as killing the *hft.y* of Seth;¹¹² on the orders of Anubis the *h3.tyw* circulate everywhere if the ceremonies of Osiris are not carried out;¹¹³ and they are connected to Hareoris who directs the misfortunes on the day of the release of the *h3.tyw*.¹¹⁴ Mahes is also appointed ruler of the *h3.tyw* in the *Myth of the Eye of the Sun*,¹¹⁵ while in *The confirmation of power in the New Year* the *h3.tyw* are commanded by his mother Bastet,¹¹⁶ in the Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden the *h3.tyw* are said to rest in Bubastis and are connected to the ‘Mistress of protection, who binds with leather thongs’;¹¹⁷ and finally we also encounter the *h3.tyw* under the direction of Atum and Harachte in the texts of the temple of Edfu.¹¹⁸

Within the textual record are a number of instances where the *h3.tyw* are not expressly denoted as being under the command of another deity.¹¹⁹ The similarities exhibited between these performative environments, where for example ‘the *h3.tyw* are not to attack at the moment of

(ed.), *Ancient Egyptian demonology: studies on the boundaries between the demonic and the divine in Egyptian magic* (Leuven, 2011), 3-24.

¹¹⁰ Esna 107, 490, 622, (trans. O. E. Kaper), *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 235, 239-240.

¹¹¹ Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 232, 341.

¹¹² *Ksrt* is thought to be a misspelling for *Srkt* ‘Selkis’. Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 156-157.

¹¹³ Papyrus Jumilhac, XVIII, 7-8, (trans. J. Vandier), *Le Papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris, 1961), 130.

¹¹⁴ Herbin, *Le livre de parcourir l'éternité*, 67.

¹¹⁵ de Cenival, *Le mythe de l'oeil du soleil*, 5.

¹¹⁶ Goyon, *Confirmation du pouvoir royal au nouvel an*, 56-57.

¹¹⁷ H. D. Betz (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (London 1986), 213-215.

¹¹⁸ C. Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, 637-638.

¹¹⁹ L. I, rt. 48 n; L. 2, rt. 62; L. 5, vs 9; L. 6, rt. 48-49; T. I, vs. 6; T. 2, rt. 43, 77; P. 2, rt. 15; P. 3, rt. 99; P. 4, 19-20; P. 5, 24; C. 1, 23, 41; C. 2, rt. 17; N.Y. rt. 28; Ch. 23; Ph. B 3, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of Late New Kingdom*, 5, 31, 38, 57, 64-65, 82, 87, 90, 93, 95-96, 99, 104, 108, 111; Papyrus Cleveland 14.723, (trans. B. Bohleke), ‘An Oracular Amuletic Decree of Khonsu in the Cleveland Museum of Art’, *JEA* 83 (1997), 158; Papyrus Edwin Smith, XVIII, 6, 12-13, XIX 8, (trans. J. H. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus*, 474-475, 480; S. Sauneron, *Le papyrus magique illustré de Brooklyn* (Brooklyn, 1970), 19. K. Jansen-Winkeln, ‘Neue biographische Texte der 22./23. Dynastie’, *SAK* 22 (1995), 187; G. Lapp, *The papyrus of Nu (BM EA 10477)* (London, 1997), sheet 29. 20; Verhoeven, *Das saïtische Totenbuch der Iahtesnacht*, column 125, 14-15.

your destiny'¹²⁰ or are designated as 'carrying the [contagion] of the pestilence of the year',¹²¹ and those where the designation is qualified by the name of a greater god, indicates that the term *h3.tyw* likely acquired a specialised usage where it was not necessary to supplement its meaning through further additions.¹²² The absence of a commanding deity in contexts such as the Cenotaph of Seti I, where the *h3.tyw* are said to be 'in this place',¹²³ and where the *h3.tyw* function as armed celestial gatekeepers in the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts and Papyrus Jumilhac,¹²⁴ probably relates to the fact that their action is defined topographically and circumscribed to the location they are guarding.¹²⁵ It is unclear whether the *h3.tyw* are acting in a subordinate role in these contexts, and it should also be noted that during the Ptolemaic period the *h3.tyw* were promoted to a higher hierarchical status within the pantheon and received their own cult based on the attestation of the title 'Prophet of the *ht.w* who are guests at Thebes' in a demotic graffito at Medinet Habu.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ H. Fischer-Elfert, *Die satirische Streitschrift des Papyrus Anastasi I: Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Wiesbaden, 1986), 35; *Die satirische Streitschrift des Papyrus Anastasi I: Textzusammenstellung* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 39.

¹²¹ J. Osing & G. Rosati, *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis* (Firenze, 1998), 198.

¹²² Edwards, *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of Late New Kingdom*, 5-6, no. 36.

¹²³ B. Gunn, 'The graffiti and ostraka', in H. Frankfort, *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos* (London, 1933), 88, no. 2.

¹²⁴ Papyrus Jumilhac XVII, 11, (trans. J. Vandier), *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, 129.

¹²⁵ R. Lucarelli, 'The guardian-demons of the Book of the Dead', *BMSAES* 15 (2010), 86; *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 4; *JANER* 11 (2011), 116.

¹²⁶ H. J. Thissen, *Die demotischen Graffiti von Medinet Habu. Zeugnisse zu Tempel und Kult in ptolemäischen Ägypten*, *Demotische Studien* 10 (Sommerhausen, 1989), 30-31.

Chapter 4

The Celestial Nature of the *h3.tyw*

Epigraphic evidence clearly indicates that the *h3.tyw* beings were attributed with celestial connotations. This has led to a number of proposals within the scholarship that assert that the *h3.tyw* were manifestations of the imperishable stars (*ihm.w-sk*), or those termed in the Egyptological literature as decans, which could be denoted by a number of terms including *ihm.w-wrḏ* (unwearying stars), *wnw.t* (hour-stars), *b3k.w* (the working ones), *ntr.w im.yw p.t* (gods who are in the sky) and *b3.w ʕnh* (living souls);¹ both of which are two significantly different stellar bodies in terms of their observable movement in the sky. The designation *ihm.w-sk* ‘the ones not knowing destruction’ attributed to the circumpolar stars is indicative that the ancient Egyptians recognised that this group of stars did not set below the horizon and thus did not enter into the netherworld,² that they are perpetually visible in the sky is on account of their close proximity to a celestial pole. Decans conversely, are stars situated in a belt south of the ecliptic that rise and set in relation to the horizon;³ the observation of such heliacal risings and transits was used to indicate the hours of the night.⁴ The decans correlate to the thirty-six decades, periods of ten day intervals which comprise the Egyptian civil calendar, and as Neugebauer and Parker demonstrate, they are most likely individual stars which denoted the closing of one hour and the beginning of the next through their appearance on the horizon.⁵ This interpretation is confirmed by the cosmological texts in the cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos, the

¹ P. Wallin, *Celestial Cycles. Astronomical Concepts of Regeneration in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Uppsala, 2002), 96-97; J. von Beckerath, ‘Dekane’, in W. Helck & E. Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band I (Wiesbaden, 1975), 1036.

² R. A. Wells, ‘Astronomy’, in D. B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (New York, 2001), 147.

³ I. Shaw & P. Nicholson, ‘Astronomy and Astrology’, in *The British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (London, 2008), 46.

⁴ O. Neugebauer & R. A. Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts. I. The Early Decans* (London, 1960), 95-96.

⁵ Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 96.

tomb of Ramses IV and Papyrus Carlsberg I in which there are thirty-six individual stars, of which twenty-nine are situated in various localities of the sky and seven in the netherworld.⁶

4.1 Celestial character of the *h3.tyw* in the Old Kingdom – Middle Kingdom

The earliest evidence for a celestial connection to the *h3.tyw* that can be identified, derives from the corpus of Pyramid texts (PT) and subsequently the Coffin texts (CT) where the *h3.tyw* are mentioned in conjunction with the imperishable stars. In this particular environment the *h3.tyw* are undeniably associated with celestial beings and hence a number of scholars have taken this conjunction as definitive evidence that the *h3.tyw* are stellar manifestations. However, at no point within this body of evidence is this explicit and it is a notion that is obtained from inference, when in fact only very tentative conclusions can or should be drawn as to whether the *h3.tyw* were in fact assimilated with certain stars at this point in time.

In PT §1535b-c it is stated that ‘the *h3.tyw* are in front of you on their faces, the imperishable stars kneel before you’,⁷ similarly in PT §1726c the wish is expressed that the deceased may number the *h3.tyw* and take the hands of the imperishable stars.⁸ PT §1915b and §2223 also contain the same sentiment, however, an additional line of text stating, ‘may you control the nine bows’, has been inserted between these two statements.⁹ This connection is also homogenously expressed in CT I §290h-291b¹⁰ which follows PT 1535b-c almost verbatim and in CT IV 107e-f where it is stated ‘you shall call upon the *h3.tyw* and rule the imperishable stars’.¹¹ Schipper believes this conjunction is an obvious indication that the *h3.tyw* are combined

⁶ Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 96.

⁷ PT 1535b-c: *ih3r.n=k h3.tyw hr-h3r(.w)=sn m3s.n=k ihm.w-sk.w*, (trans. P. Eschweiler), *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten: die Verwendung von Bildern und Gegenständen in magischen Handlungen nach den Texten des Mittleren und Neuen Reiches* (Freiburg, 1994), 212.




⁸ PT 1726c: *i:tnw=k h3w.tw szp=k [ʔ] [n(.i)] [ih][m].w-sk*, (trans. D. Topmann), *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (October, 2012).

⁹ PT 1915b, 2223, (trans. R. O. Faulkner), *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Warminster, 1969), 279, 308.

¹⁰ CT I, 290h-291b: *hr(.w) n=k h3ty.w hr hr=sn ksy n=k ihm.w-sk.w* ‘The *h3.tyw* fall before you on their faces, the circumpolar stars bow down to you’, (trans. C. Carrier), *Textes Des Sarcophages du Moyen Empire Égyptien* (Monaco, 2004), 164.

¹¹ CT IV, 107e-f: *nis(.w)=k h3(y)ty.w hpr(w)=k ih[m].w-sk* (trans. C. Carrier), *Textes Des Sarcophages du Moyen Empire Égyptien*, 1252.

with the decan stars who together with the *ihm.w-sk* fall down before the god Sopdu,¹² a notion that is also shared by Quack who asserts that the occurrence of the *h3.tyw* in a position normally occupied by the *ihm.w-wrd* stars is positive for their identification with decans.¹³

The imperishable stars are not the only celestial beings with which the *h3.tyw* are associated in the Pyramid Texts; in invocation §1265c and §1274a they are also mentioned in concurrence with the *imi.w-i3w* ‘The Old Ones’.¹⁴ Weill proposes that the *imi.w-i3w* could mean ‘those of coloured dust’ and designate stars in accordance with the usage of N33 (◉) in the words for sand, metals and minerals including gold (*nbw*), black eye paint (*msdm.t*), medicaments and incense.¹⁵ The determinative N33 used in *imi.w-i3w* is also an orthographical component of *h3.tyw* in §1265 , §1274  and §1726 , a correlation that is considered significant by scholars such as Meurer who believes that it could suggest that the ancient Egyptians considered the *h3.tyw* as stars.¹⁶ Meurer’s proposal focuses particularly on invocation §1726 which, instead of the usual spelling variants of *h3.tyw*, contains the designation *h3*, which the Wörterbuch indicates as something the deceased count upon entry to the sky.¹⁷ However, it is quite certain that it is the *h3.tyw* which are meant here, on the basis of the similarity exhibited in the formulas of the aforementioned texts in which the *h3.tyw* are cited in this same parallel position to the imperishable stars.¹⁸ Furthermore, Weill asserts that *imi.w i3w* is a binomial synonymous with the designation of *h3.tyw* (transcribed by the author as

¹² B. Schipper, ‘Angels or Demons? Divine Messengers in Ancient Egypt’, in F. Reiterer, T. Nicklas & K. Schöpfung (eds.), *Angels: The concept of celestial beings: Origins, Development and Reception* (New York, 2007), 8.

¹³ J. F. Quack, ‘Book review: C. Leitz, Tagewählerei: das Buch *h3t nhh ph.wy dt* und verwandte Texte. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 55, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1994’, *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 283.

¹⁴ PT 1265c: ‘May there be benefited(?) the tomb of whom the *h3.tyw* protect and those who are among the old ones protect’; PT 1274a ‘if the *h3.tyw* come with those who are among the old ones(?)’, (trans. R. O. Faulkner) *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 200-203.


¹⁵ R. Weill, ‘L’incantation anti-Osiriennne insérée dans La composition du Chapitre Pyramids 1264-1279’, *BIFAO* 46, (1947), 180.

¹⁶ G. Meurer, *Die Feinde des Königs in den Pyramidentexten* (Freiburg, 2002), 78.

¹⁷ A. Erman & H. Grapow (eds.), *Wörterbuch der Aegyptische Sprach*, III (Berlin, 1971), 221, 17.

¹⁸ H. Kees, ‘Ein Herrschaftsspruch aus den Pyramidentexten des AR und Sopdu der Smsrw’, *ZÄS* 79 (1954), 37.

h33.w) in §1265, exactly as this term and *ihm.w-sk* seem to be synonymous in the formulas of §1535 and §1726.¹⁹

If one is relying on the usage of this particular determinative to demonstrate the celestial character of the *h3.tyw*, a number of problems immediately arise. Firstly, there is no congruency exhibited in the use of determinatives for the orthography of *h3.tyw* in the texts in which they are directly associated with the imperishable stars; in §1535 no determinative has been attached to the designation and conversely in §1915b and §2223 the plural is written with D94 .²⁰ Furthermore, a sign of similar appearance to N33 can be employed in the place of dangerous signs that designate an enemy, and may also be utilised as a substitute for the plural strokes,²¹ both of which are plausible explanations for the use of N33 in the orthography of *h3.tyw* in these texts.

As illustrated, there is an undeniable celestial connection ascribed to the *h3.tyw* in this corpus of funerary texts, however, a close association between the *h3.tyw* and the imperishable stars does not necessarily mean that the two were assimilated or binomial terms. Conversely, the connection could be explained by locality, the placement of the *h3.tyw* among the stars in a number of these texts²² is obviously related to their role in the hereafter as gate-keepers armed with knives.²³ PT §1726 (utterance 611) and §2223 (utterance 716) speak of the double Ram-gate that keeps out the common folk immediately preceding the reference to the *h3.tyw* and imperishable stars; this gate is a celestial portal that is bolted, as demonstrated in the later papyrus of Nefer-renpet in which it is represented positioned on the horizon, constructed with two doors and surmounted by the *pt* hieroglyph for sky.²⁴ This celestial ram gate is also explicitly mentioned at the beginning of CT I, 290 (spell 68) while PT §1915 (utterance 665C)

¹⁹ Weill, *BIFAO* (1947), 180.

²⁰ K. Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexte: nach den Papierabdrücken und Photographien des Berliner Museums*, zweiter band (Leipzig, 1910), 327; R. O. Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian pyramid texts: supplement of hieroglyphic texts* (Oxford, 1969), 31, 63.

²¹ A. H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford, 1927), 478.

²² J. Zandee, *Death as an enemy according to ancient Egyptian conceptions* (Leiden, 1960), 205.

²³ Kees, *ZÄS* 79 (1954) 37; Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 255 no.5.

²⁴ W. M. Davis, 'The Ascension-Myth in the Pyramid Texts', *JNES* 36, no. 3 (1977), 172.

contains a reference to a gate with six bolts that keeps Libya out, therefore it is reasonable to suggest that the *h3.tyw* act as gate-keepers in these contexts.²⁵ As illustrated by Bommas the connection with the circumpolar stars in texts where the gate-keeping role of the *h3.tyw* is not evident such as in PT §1535b can be contextualised as a liturgy for the dead in which the eternal participation of the transfigured deceased in the cycle of the imperishable stars guaranteed freedom of movement and participation in the community of gods in the afterlife.²⁶ In this sense Bommas believes that the overcoming of the *h3.tyw* is in loose connection of an enumeration,²⁷ the practice of counting the *h3.tyw* can be similarly interpreted as an expression of control exerted by the deceased over otherworldly beings;²⁸ as indicated by CT 107e this ability was possessed by the deceased after ascension to the sky, it is in this position on the iron throne that he may call upon the *h3.tyw* and rule the imperishable stars.²⁹

4.2 Celestial character of the *h3.tyw* in the New Kingdom – Third Intermediate Period

There is a small corpus of textual material dating to the late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period that provides a more substantive indication that the *h3.tyw* became equated with or were manifestations of stars. The first to be considered is Cairo Museum Papyrus 58035, which derives from a collection of homogenous texts designated as the Oracular Amuletic Decrees, dating approximately from the 21st-23rd dynasty.³⁰ These texts comprise proclamations made by a god or number of gods that ensure that the oracle formulated to protect the owner of the amuletic decree from numerous dangers will be effected.³¹ What is significant about the papyrus of Nesankhefenmaet is that it records the desire to be protected

²⁵ R. O. Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian coffin texts*, vol. I (Warminster, 1973), 65; *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 276-277.

²⁶ M. Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 36.



²⁷ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 36.

²⁸ Meurer, *Die Feinde des Königs in den Pyramidentexten*, 78.

²⁹ CT 107e-f, (trans. C. Carrier), *Textes Des Sarcophages du Moyen Empire Égyptien*, 1252.

³⁰ Edwards has assigned a 22nd-23rd dynasty date for this corpus based on the inclusion of the name of Oskoron in L7, however Bohleke believes some orthographical elements indicate a 21st dynasty date for some of these documents. I. E. S. Edwards, *Hieratic papyri in the British museum. Fourth series. Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, vol. 1 (London, 1960), xiii; Bohleke, *JEA* 83 (1997), 155

³¹ Bohleke, *JEA* 83 (1997), 155.

from Sothis-Horus of the East who is foremost of the *h3y.ty* of the Ennead.³² Scholars such as Lucarelli believe that because a primary decanal god is indicated at their head, the celestial origin of the *h3.tyw* is confirmed.³³ This is certainly a valid postulation, and is an idea that could be strengthened if this connection was attested in more than a single source from the Oracular Amuletic Decrees. Three other documents from this corpus, British Museum 10308, Turin Museum 1984 and Berlin Museum 10482 contain similar formulaic statements which relate, as translated by Edwards, that Sothis-Horus of the East and West are the ‘lords of slaughter of the Ennead’.³⁴ The orthography exhibited in British Museum 10308 (),³⁵ and Turin Museum 1984 ()³⁶ of the word that Edwards has translated as slaughter is in fact identical to that exhibited in other decrees where the *h3.tyw* beings are undoubtedly the correct translation, a fact that can be determined from the parallel occurrence of the designation *šm3.yw*.³⁷ Unfortunately, the writing of this term in the Berlin document is too poorly preserved for comparative analysis to be conducted.³⁸ The *h3.tyw* beings are cited in sixteen separate Oracular Amuletic Decrees, which exhibit significant orthographical variations both in the singular and plural,³⁹ and it is reasonable to suggest that in British Museum 10308, Turin Museum 1984 and Berlin Museum 10482, the correct translation is Sothis-Horus who is

³² C.1, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 96.

³³ R. Lucarelli, ‘Popular belief in demons in the Libyan Period: The Evidence of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees’, in G. P. F. Broeknab, R. J. Demarée, O. E. Kaper (eds.), *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), 237.

³⁴ L.3; T.2; B., (trans. I. E. S. Edwards) *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 23-26, 63-72, 113-118.

³⁵ L.3 20-25, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards) *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 24, pl. VIIA.

³⁶ T. 2 rt. 43-44, 77-78, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards) *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 64, pl. XXIIA.

³⁷ See for example C.1 23-24; L.1 rt. 48-49; Ph B. 3-4, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards) *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 64-65, 95, 111.

³⁸ B rt.20-21, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards) *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 114, pl. XLVA.

³⁹ L. I, rt. 48 n; L. 2, rt. 62; L. 5, vs 9; L. 6, rt. 48-49; T. I, vs. 6; T. 2, rt. 43, 77; P. 2, rt. 15; P. 3, rt. 99; P. 4, 19-20; P. 5, 24; C. 1, 23, 41; C. 2, rt. 17; N.Y. rt. 28, 33; Ch. 23; Ph. B 3, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of Late New Kingdom*, 5, 16, 31, 38, 57, 64-65, 82, 87, 90, 93, 95-96, 99, 104, 108, 111; Papyrus Cleveland 14.723, (trans. B. Bohleke), *JEA* 83 (1997), 158.

foremost or lord of the *h3.tyw*, providing further confirmation that these beings were connected with a decanal god.

A further source that attests to the celestial character of the *h3.tyw* in the Third Intermediate Period is a hieratic graffito located in the cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos, dating approximately to the 22nd dynasty.⁴⁰ The text reads: ‘Adoration of Re-Harakhte, Lord of the Two Lands ... The Great God, King of the Gods, Lord of Horns with pointed Atef-crown ... King ... May he save the scribe ... from the *h3y.ty* that are in this place. May he save the scribe Pedamun from the *h3y.ty* that are in this place’.⁴¹ A second graffito on this wall also contains a possible mention of the *h3.tyw*, only the forepart of the word can be recognised, with the line after reconstruction reading: ‘I (?) am (?) strong of arm, a *h3y[.ty]* who has power over in his time’.⁴² Frankfort believes that the designation *h3y.ty* determined by a monkey carrying a knife evidently refers to the representations on the wall.⁴³ Von Lieven provides a valid clarification of this statement, in which she believes that the line *n.ti m s.t tn* ‘that are in this place’ can only refer to the decan list of the book of Nut, with the *h3.tyw* themselves being decans.⁴⁴ The decan list and cosmographical texts, comprising of a large figure of Nut on which the names of the decans are written, is located on the western side of the roof,⁴⁵ correlating to the position of the graffito on the western wall. As von Lieven convincingly asserts, even though the decan list is in what can be considered an inaccessible space, this does not mean that its existence was unknown;⁴⁶ from the extensive number of graffiti preserved in the cenotaph it is clear that it was often visited by individuals who were members of the scribal and priestly professions,⁴⁷ and one can justifiably make the assumption that these people were aware of such details.

⁴⁰ B. Gunn, ‘The graffiti and ostraka’, in H. Frankfort, *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos* (London, 1933), 88.

⁴¹ Gunn, in *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos*, 88, pl. LXXXVIII.

⁴² Gunn, in *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos*, 88, pl. LXXXVIII.

⁴³ Gunn, in *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos*, 88.

⁴⁴ A. von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna: eine Fallstudie zur religiösen Astronomie in Ägypten am Beispiel der kosmologischen Decken- und Architravinschriften im Tempel von Esna* (Wiesbaden, 2000), 51.

⁴⁵ H. Frankfort, *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos* (London, 1933), 72.

⁴⁶ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 51.

⁴⁷ Gunn, in *The cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos*, 87.

From the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period the evidence for the decanal cult expands significantly, associations between decans and various gods develop, while objects such as bracelets, statues and amulets are decorated with their images and iconography.⁴⁸ The association of decans with the goddess Sekhmet and, at a later stage, Tutu, is particularly significant as both of these deities, as previously demonstrated are indicated as directing the *ḥ3.tyw* beings. One of the first securely dated pieces of this nature are the bracelets of Prince Hornakht (22nd dynasty) which provide evidence that the *šsr.w* of Sekhmet, a designation that is believed to be a generic term that encompassed the *ḥ3.tyw*, *wpw.tyw* and *šm3.yw*, were assimilated or closely connected with decans.⁴⁹ On the larger of the two bracelets is inscribed: ‘Said by the gods and goddesses of heaven, the earth and the netherworld: what we are making is protection over you. The arrows are defending your body in life and rule...’, the arrows as guardian divinities in this context are in all likelihood decans who are subordinate to the represented gods, both of which extend their protection over the wearer.⁵⁰ A number of astral statuettes of Sekhmet, Bastet and Mut, whose thrones are decorated with decan figures, are also attested from this period onwards in the archaeological record.⁵¹ The decans and the goddess herself are believed to represent the strength and power of celestial forces.⁵² Furthermore, the combined power possessed by Sekhmet-Bastet and Mut was united by a goddess who was also a decan and was possibly thought to converge the power of the decans represented on these thrones.⁵³ Like Sekhmet, Tutu, as leader of the *ḥ3.tyw*, was also associated with decans in the Late Period and warrants a brief mention.⁵⁴ The astral significance of Tutu appears to be quite prevalent with this deity often represented among groups of astral beings in temple scenes; his

⁴⁸ L. Kakosy, ‘Decans in Late Egyptian Religion’, *Oikumene* 3 (1982), 164.

⁴⁹ The word *šsr.w* was also determined by a star in the Greco-Roman period, Erman & Grapow (eds.), *Wörterbuch der Aegyptische Sprach*, IV (Berlin, 1971), 547; J. Yoyotte, ‘Une monumentale litanie de granit: les Sekhmet d’Amónophis III et la conjuration permanente de la déesse dangereuse’, *BSFE* 87-88 (1980), 67.

⁵⁰ Kakosy, *Oikumene* 3 (1982), 164.

⁵¹ Yoyotte, *BSFE* 87-88 (1980), 67-68.

⁵² L. Kakosy, ‘Amulette avec Représentations de Décans au Musée des Beaux-Arts’, *Bulletin der Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 52 (1979), 7.

⁵³ Kakosy, *Oikumene* 3 (1982), 168.

⁵⁴ For a detailed study on the astral role of Tutu see O. Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu. A study of the Sphinx-God and Master of Demons with a Corpus of Monuments* (Leuven, 2003), 67-74.

relationship to stars and a number of decans was conveyed via supremacy, for example a number of inscriptions record that he was leader of the decan *h3w*.⁵⁵ This is the first decan of Taurus, which was likely made up by a group of seven stars located around the brightest star of Orion.⁵⁶ In the Late Antique period this decan was known as ‘death’ which is a significant parallel to Tutu’s connection with the death-bringing *h3.tyw* and as Lord of the *Book of Life and Death* which contained instructions for death-bringing beings to take away particular human lives.⁵⁷ Also significant is the fact that Tutu could be manifested in the astral form of the decan *ipds*,⁵⁸ which is another determinant that strengthens the connection between the *h3.tyw* and decanal deities.

4.3 Celestial character of the *h3.tyw* in the Greco-Roman Period

The epigraphic evidence of the Greco-Roman period conclusively indicates that the *h3.tyw* became equated with or were manifestations of certain stars. In *le livre de parcourir l'éternité* of Papyrus Leiden T 32 the *h3.tyw* are directly associated with Haroeris: ‘You appease Haroeris when he directs the misfortune, on the day of the release of the *h3.tyw*’.⁵⁹ Haroeris is not only the consort of Sekhmet to whom the *h3.tyw* are most frequently attributed, but is importantly a decan often represented at the head of other decanal figures participating in the pacification rites of Sekhmet.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Haroeris of Letopolis is a manifestation of *Knmt*,⁶¹ who is present in every decanal group and family and identified as the leader of these particular stars.⁶² *Knmt* is attributed with varied iconography, appearing either as a falcon-headed god or as an erect serpent whose body is crossed with three smaller serpents, the latter form of which is

⁵⁵ Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 28-29.

⁵⁶ Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 72.

⁵⁷ Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 63, 72.

⁵⁸ Kaper, *The Egyptian God Tutu*, 30.



⁵⁹ Papyrus Leiden, T 32 VII, 5: *shtp.n=k hr-wr hrp.n=f tmsw hrw pfy pr h3.tyw* (trans. F. R. Herbin), *Le livre de parcourir l'éternité*, OLA 58 (Leuven, 1994), 67, 237.

⁶⁰ An example of decans aiding the king in the pacification rites of Sekhmet can be found on the frieze of the treasury of Dendera. Herbin, *Le livre de parcourir l'éternité*, 237; A. Gutbub, *Textes fondamentaux de la théologie de Kom Ombo* (Cairo, 1973), 243; Yoyotte, *BSFE* 87-88 (1980), 67-68.

⁶¹ S. Chantal & C. Jean-François, ‘Une porte de fête-sed de Ptolémée II remployée dans le temple de Montou à Médamoud’, *BIFAO* 95 (1995), 422.

⁶² Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 159.

found on numerous decanal amulets and gems that fulfilled the same protective function as the bracelets of Hornahkt and the astral Sekhmet-Bastet statuettes.⁶³

In Papyrus Tebt H further evidence is found to affirm that the *h3.tyw* became manifestations of stars. Fragment C 2.16 – 3.3 concerns what Osing has denoted as *Verderbenbringende Wesen* which through the signs  ‘ditto’ and  ‘variant’ are indicated as designations that are interconnected or synonymous.⁶⁴ The term *h3ydw.w*, i.e. the *h3.tyw* beings, is used as a further explanative of the section heading [*ir*] *sdm.w* ‘interrogators’.⁶⁵ Two listed variations that are interconnected to these initial terms indicate that the *h3.tyw* were manifestations of celestial beings, the first is *ntr.w* *nh.w* ‘the living gods’ which in Esna inscription 406 are determined as decans,⁶⁶ and the second variant is a star which occurs a number of times.⁶⁷

In Papyrus Jumilhac the *h3.tyw* are associated with *msht.yw*, which is a constellation of the northern sky: ‘After he (Horus) cut off his (Seth’s) foreleg, he raised it to the middle of the sky, *h3.tyw* being there to guard it, the foreleg of the northern sky, and the Great Hippopotamus holds it so it cannot travel among the gods’.⁶⁸ While the precise identification of stars that constituted the ancient constellations is inherent with serious difficulties, the identification of *msht.yw* as Ursa Major (the Great Bear) within which is a group of seven stars, is one of the only ancient Egyptian constellations that has been recognised with any certainty.⁶⁹ Leitz has proposed that this text indicates that the *h3.tyw* are the seven stars of the Great Bear, a notion he supports by the explicit fear of these stars expressed within the Oracular Amuletic Decrees.⁷⁰ Quack, however, rejects this proposal, stating ‘daß die *h3.tiw*-Dämonen vielmehr eine

⁶³ Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 159-160.

⁶⁴ J. Osing, *Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis* (Copenhagen, 1998), 285.

⁶⁵ Osing, *Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis*, 285, pl. 29A

⁶⁶ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 51.

⁶⁷ Osing, *Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis*, 285, pl. 29A.

⁶⁸ Papyrus Jumilhac XVII, 11-12 (trans. Neugebauer & Parker) *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 190-191; J. Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris, 1961), 108, 129.

⁶⁹ Wallin, *Celestial Cycles*, 94.

⁷⁰ C. Leitz, *Tagewählerei: das Buch h3t nh3 ph.wy dt und verwandte Texte* (Wiesbaden, 1994), 246.

Ausdeutung der Dekane sind’,⁷¹ thus indicating that the seven stars of this constellation are of a different type than those usually associated with the *h3.tyw* beings. The seven stars of the Great Bear which form the shape of a bull’s foreleg were in fact circumpolar during the Pharaonic period, confirmation of which can be found in Pyramid Text §458 that identifies the constellation as belonging to the imperishable stars.⁷² That this group of stars did not set below the horizon can also be inferred from a number of Greco-Roman texts that relate that the foreleg, i.e. *msht.yw*, did not enter (set) into the Duat, due to preventative action taken by Isis as a hippopotamus, as in Esna 400, and by Sothis, as in Esna 450,⁷³ in order to stop Seth from reaching Osiris.⁷⁴ It should be noted that in Esna 450 it is the *h3b3s.w* stars that hold the foreleg; von Lieven, referring to Papyrus Jumilhac, thus states one would have to assume ‘*eine Identifikation der h3b3s.w-Sterne mit den h3.tiw und damit mit den Dekanen oder einer bestimmten Dekangruppe*’.⁷⁵ A further text preserved on a sarcophagus lid from Abû Yâsîn also confirms that the stars of *msht.yw* are circumpolar in nature: ‘The stars of the northern sky, they are your Foreleg. They never set in the west of the sky like the decanal stars but they travel going upside down in the night as in the day. They are in the following of the Great Hippopotamus of the northern sky as your Foreleg, when it goes to the southern sky near the souls of the gods who are in Orion...’.⁷⁶ The fear of the seven stars of the Great Bear that is expressed in the Oracular Amuletic Decrees⁷⁷ does not appear directly connected to the *h3.tyw*, as Kakosy states, the fear most likely stemmed from mythical connotations due to the Great Bear being the heavenly manifestation of Seth,⁷⁸ the fact that the *h3.tyw* are listed separately in these decrees also speaks for the independent identification of these threatening forces.

⁷¹ Quack, *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 283.

⁷² PT 458: ‘the Two Enneads have cleansed themselves for me in Ursa Major, the imperishable’, (trans. R. O. Faulkner), *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 91; Wallin, *Celestial Cycles*, 94.

⁷³ Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 191.

⁷⁴ H. te Velde, *Seth, God of confusion: A study of his role in Egyptian mythology and religion* (Leiden, 1977), 86-87.

⁷⁵ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 166.

⁷⁶ In this particular text the foreleg is identified with Osiris. Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 191.

⁷⁷ L.1, 13; L.3 A3; L.6, 60-61, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Oracular Amuletic Decrees of Late New Kingdom*, 2, 23, 38.

⁷⁸ Kakosy, *Oikumene* 3 (1982), 190.

Moreover, this guardian role was not exclusively held by the *h3.tyw* but could also be fulfilled by the four sons of Horus as illustrated in chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead.⁷⁹ The appearance of the *h3.tyw* who are clearly related to decanal stars normally located in the southern sky, in conjunction with a constellation of the northern sky can be easily accounted for. In the aforementioned Pyramid and Coffin Texts the *h3.tyw* are similarly associated with the *ihm.w-sk* in contexts where they act as armed gate-keepers of the sky performing a similar custodian function to that exhibited in Papyrus Jumilhac. Additionally, the juxtaposition of stars that in reality occupy distinctly separate localities in the sky was not unusual in mythological texts, a factor that adds to the complexities of identifying ancient constellations, for example a text from the temple of Deir Chelouit also connects the *ihm.w-wrd* with beings in the northern sky, however the name of these beings is unfortunately unreadable.⁸⁰

A number of Greco-Roman inscriptions from the temple of Esna also support the synonymous identification of the *h3.tyw* beings with decanal stars. Significantly, in Esna 400 and 406 the description given of the decans is reiterated almost verbatim from the text of Papyrus Leiden I 346 in which the *h3.tyw* and *wpw.tyw* are described: ‘Greetings, these Gods! *h3.tyw*, in the vanguard of Sekhmet, those who come forth from the eye of the sun, the *wpw.tyw*, which are everywhere in the districts, the creators of carnage, the producers of disorder, those who hasten through the country, those who shoot their arrows from their mouth, to scout at a distance’.⁸¹ While Bommas acknowledges that the stars featured in these two temple inscriptions are decanal deities with the ability to bring death throughout the country during their decade, he does not support the identification of the *h3.tyw* with decan stars on the basis that the use of extracts from Papyrus Leiden in the temple texts of the Greco-Roman period is secondary and no more than the handing down of a scene.⁸² However, in concurrence

⁷⁹ te Velde, *Seth, God of confusion*, 86.

⁸⁰ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 137; Neugebauer & Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, 191.

⁸¹ Papyrus Leiden I 346, (trans. M. Bommas), *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 34; for further translations and commentary on this papyrus see J. F. Bourghouts, J. F., *Ancient Egyptian magical texts* (Leiden, 1978) and B. Stricker, ‘Spreuken tot beveiliging gedurende de schrikkeldagen naar Pap. I 346’, *OMRO* 29 (1948), 55-70.

⁸² Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 36.

with Quack,⁸³ it is clear, in conjunction with the aforementioned textual sources that connect the *h3.tyw* and decanal stars, that more importance should be placed on the similarities expressed in these inscriptions. What can be observed from these texts is that both decans and the *h3.tyw* possessed the same ability to bring death throughout the land and were perceived as forces of fate over the individual,⁸⁴ and the fact that other textual sources also attribute a similar disease bringing role to decans⁸⁵ is a substantive indicator for the assimilation of their identities. In Esna texts 436, 441 and 442 the *h3.tyw* are also mentioned in direct association with a number of star names, while in 436 and 441 they are also explicitly cited as being in the wake of the sun god.⁸⁶ This position held by the *h3.tyw* is particularly significant and provides confirmation of their synonymous identification with decanal stars, for in Papyrus Carlsberg I it is recorded that there are seven decans (the same number that comprise the *h3.tyw* troop) who wander through heaven in the retinue of the sun.⁸⁷ Quack believes that it is this position in the retinue of the sun that would make the *h3.tyw* particularly suitable to prevent an encroachment of the *msht.yw*, the Great Bear, into the underworld.⁸⁸

The inscription concerning *i3t-nbs* and the decans on a naos from Saft el- Henna dating to the reign of Nectanebo I and dedicated to the god Sopdu also provides evidence for the celestial nature of the *h3.tyw*.⁸⁹ In this text the effect of decans as stellar deities is illustrated, in which the thirty-six stars have power over the inundation, the wind and clouds. Importantly, it is stated that these stars rise and set, refreshing themselves near the lake of the north which is the

⁸³ Quack, *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 284.

⁸⁴ S. Schott, 'Die Altägyptischen Dekane', in W. Gundel, *Dekane und Dekansterbilder. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Sternbilder der Kulturvölker* (Hamburg, 1936), 16-17.

⁸⁵ R. Lucarelli, 'Demons (benevolent and malevolent)', in J. Dieleman & W. Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, (Los Angeles, 2010), 3.

⁸⁶ Note that the architrave inscription of 442 is situated in close proximity to a representation primarily concerned with decans and zodiac signs. Quack, *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 284; Esna 436, 441 & 442, (trans. A. von Lieven), *Der Himmel über Esna*, 134-136, 140-148.

⁸⁷ Lange, H. O. & Neugebauer, O., *Papyrus Carlsberg No. I. Ein Hieratisch-Demotischer Kosmologischer Text* (Munksgaard, 1940); D. Meeks & C. Favard-Meeks, *Daily life of the Egyptian gods* (London, 1997), 77; Quack, *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 284; von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 51.

⁸⁸ Quack, *Lingua Aegyptia* 5 (1997), 284, no.25.

⁸⁹ C. Leitz, 'Der Naos mit den Dekanen aus Saft el-Henna', in C. Leitz & H. Thissen, *Altägyptische Sternuhren* (Leuven, 1995), 3-4; L. Habachi & B. Habachi, 'The Naos with the Decades (Louvre D 37) and the Discovery of Another Fragment', *JNES* 11, no.4 (1952), 261-262.

Duat of the abode of the *h3.tyw*.⁹⁰ The fact that the *h3.tyw* are not only mentioned in conjunction with decanal stars but on a monument that is dedicated to a specific decan who received a decade cult⁹¹ is particularly significant for establishing the identification of decanal stars and the *h3.tyw* beings. The following line which states: '[t]he way of the gods to heaven is through this door, when they come to the necropolis in the Duat',⁹² also indicates that the *h3.tyw* still fulfilled their role as armed gate-keepers of the sky which was initially attested in the Pyramid Texts.

Through the positive identification of the *h3.tyw* with decanal stars, new meaning can be attributed to a rather enigmatic funerary text preserved in Papyrus dem. Louvre N2420c of the Roman Period. The last two lines of the composition are particularly unusual, stating that antelopes, gazelle, deer, and the beasts of the desert visit the deceased upon her funerary bed and call her their mother; following this, the deceased wishes to meet with the *h3.tyw*.⁹³ This desire to meet with the *h3.tyw* is undoubtedly founded upon their assimilation with the decan stars, a notion that can be determined from the fact that life in the netherworld was closely associated with decans who assisted with the ascension of the *ba*.⁹⁴ This is illustrated in a number of passages from the ritual of embalming: 'you will do in the heaven whatever you wish, being together with the stars, your *ba* belongs to the thirty-six stars' while another section which contains instructions for the bandaging of the left hand states that thirty-six knots are to be made in the linen because there are thirty-six gods with whom the *ba* goes to heaven.⁹⁵ As previously indicated in chapter 3.4 the *wpw.tyw*, another troop of beings under the direction of Sekhmet whose designation possibly became equated with *h3.tyw* in the Greco-Roman period,

⁹⁰ Habachi & Habachi, *JNES* 11, no.4 (1952), 255.

⁹¹ Schott, in *Dekane und Dekansternebilder*, 16.

⁹² Habachi & Habachi, *JNES* 11, no.4 (1952), 255.

⁹³ M. Chauveau, 'Glorification d'une morte anonyme', *RdÉ* 41 (1990), 4, 8.

⁹⁴ Kakosy, *Oikumene* 3 (1982), 187.

⁹⁵ Kakosy, *Oikumene* 3 (1982), 187; see also J. Cl. Goyon, *Rituels funéraires de l'ancienne Egypte* (Paris, 1972) and S. Sauneron, *Rituel de l'embaumement, Pap. Boulaq III. Pap. Louvre 5.158* (Cairo, 1952).




are also connected with ascension in the afterlife, and in the demotic opening of the mouth liturgy it is stipulated that the deceased would ascend to heaven among them.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ von Lieven, *Der Himmel über Esna*, 136.

Chapter 5

The *h3.tyw* as Plague-bringers

5.1 The *h3.tyw* and disease

The role of the *h3.tyw* as disease bringers is only attested securely in the written record from the Second Intermediate Period. The development of this role possibly arose from the etymological connection between the designation *h3.tyw* and the word *h3y.t* for disease,¹ and also from the close association of these beings with the goddess Sekhmet who was the mistress of plague, war and death.² Vandier has proposed an earlier date for the acquisition of this role, based on orthographical elements exhibited in the spelling of *h3y.t* in a rock inscription in the Alabaster quarry of Hatnub that dates to the 13th year of the nomarch *h3-nht*.³ The basis for Vandier's argument lies in the use of the determinative C6 (), a deity with the head of a dog; however, apart from noting the curiosity that the *sm3.yw* who were also charged with the spread of epidemics were represented by a dog-headed figure in the Late Period,⁴ this proposal appears enigmatic and obscure. The identification of this determinative as a dog-headed deity also seems to be insecure; Anthes has provided in the transcription of *h3y.t* the determinative C7 (), a deity with the head of the Seth animal; however, he is unsure if, instead of the god Seth, the dog-headed deity Anubis should be read, but he is not otherwise aware of this determinative having being used in this context.⁵ The earliest attestation of the term for pestilence or plague (*id.w* ) occurs in conjunction with the goddess Sekhmet in the

¹ J. Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris, 1961), 203; J. H. Breasted, *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus* (Chicago, 1930), 474-475; A. Erman & H. Grapow (eds.), *Wörterbuch der Aegyptische Sprach*, III (Berlin, 1971), 224.

² Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203; W. Westendorf, 'Seuchen im Alten Ägypten', in A. Karenberg & C. Leitz, *Heilkunde und Hochkultur* (Münster, 2000), 56.

³ Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203; R. Anthes, *Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub* (Leipzig, 1928), 28-31.

⁴ Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, 203.

⁵ Anthes, *Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub*, 31.

Middle Kingdom text of the Tale of Sinuhe,⁶ where the king is described as moving through the foreign countries as ‘Sekhmet in a year of pestilence’.⁷ Two other texts from this period also contain this connection; in the Tale of the Eloquent Peasant it is said of the Chief Steward Rensi: ‘you exceed (even) the Lady of Pestilence (*nb.t id.w*)’,⁸ while in the Hathoric hymn of the harpist Dedu, Sekhmet mistress of the universe and the uraeus on the head of her father is hailed as the Mistress of Pestilence.⁹

The plague with which the *h3.tyw* are associated, is primarily denoted by the term *bd.t*. As Vandier illustrates it is difficult to separate this feminine word in use from approximately the New Kingdom, and the male variant of the term *id.w*¹⁰ attested in the Middle Kingdom texts listed above. The transition between these two forms can be traced via orthographical elements that are present in texts from the reigns of Mentuhotep V and Thutmosis IV in which the feminine ending or an aleph have been incorporated into the word.¹¹ In texts that connect the *h3.tyw* to this disease, *bd.t* can be cited independently or qualified by the term *rnp.t* and translated as disease of the year, for example in Papyrus Edwin Smith which contains eight incantations against disease¹² it is stated: ‘the plague (*bd.t*) will be exorcised, (and) the passage of the *h3.tyw* by everything that is eaten, likewise by the beds will be prevented’.¹³ In a number of the Oracular Amuletic Decrees the petitioner expresses the wish to be saved from every action of the *bd.t rnp.t* in conjunction with the *h3.tyw* and *šm3.yw*,¹⁴ while in Papyrus Jumilhac it is stated that ‘[i]f you do not perform all the ceremonies of Osiris in their time, the *bd.t rnp.t*

⁶ Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 58; A. H. Gardiner, *Notes on the Story of Sinuhe* (Paris, 1916), 32.

⁷ The Story of Sinuhe, 45-46, (trans. W. K. Simpson), in R. Ritner, et al., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt. An Anthology of Stories, Instructions and Poetry* (2003), 57.

⁸ S. Hoernes, *Untersuchungen zu Wesen und Kult der Göttin Sachmet* (Bonn, 1976), 42.

⁹ S. Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches* (Berlin, 1963), 139.

¹⁰ J. Vandier, *La famine dans l’Égypte ancienne* (Cairo, 1936), 80.

¹¹ Vandier, *La famine dans l’Égypte ancienne*, 81.

¹² The *h3.tyw* are mentioned multiple times in these incantations: XVIII, 6, 12-13; XIX 8, 20 and XX 7, (trans. trans. J. H. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus* (Chicago, 1930), 474, 476-477, 480, 484.

¹³ Papyrus Edwin Smith, XX 5-8, (trans. J. H. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*, 485.

¹⁴ L.5 vs.9-11; NY rt. 28-30; P.5 24-26; T1 vs. 6-8, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Hieratic papyri in the British museum. Fourth series. Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 2 vols. (London, 1960), 31, 57, 93, 104.

will be in the South and in the North; the *h3.tyw* will prevail over everything that exists in Egypt...'.¹⁵ The fragmentary text preserved in PSI inv. I 73 which contains a manual of the Priests of Sekhmet is particularly interesting as it not only explicitly attributes the plague of the year to the *h3.tyw*,¹⁶ but also includes details on the pathological symptoms that result from the divine plague, demonstrates that practices of disinfection and possibly solitary confinement of patients were carried out, and that investigations of cities and the countryside were undertaken to identify the presence of the disease.¹⁷

The duration for which the *i3d.t rnp.t* was effective can be determined from the *Tagewählerei* of the New Kingdom which contains two references to this disease. On the *III 3ht* 20, it is recorded that '[e]veryone who is born on this day, dies from the plague of the year', while on the *I prt* 19 it is documented that '[t]he wind is in the sky that day, being mixed with the plague of the year, and many diseases are in him. If he sweeps past anyone, he will not be healthy for the diseases that are in him'.¹⁸ As Leitz demonstrates, this period corresponds to the sixty-day decline of the Nile flood, and in keeping with the usual characteristics of Egyptian texts, the *Tagewählerei* contains references to the start and end point of this event.¹⁹ Not only does this text reveal that the plague of the year was a result of the annual inundation, the damming and reduced flow rate of the water along with the increased level of drowned animal carcasses created an ideal environment for the development of pathogens,²⁰ the text importantly identifies the *i3d.t rnp.t* as airborne and spread by the wind.

The *h3.tyw* are also associated with a further pathogen, designated by the term *dhṛ.t* 'bitter', which is considered to be an analogy used to express the physical pain and fever

¹⁵ Papyrus Jumilhac XVIII, 7-8 (trans. J. Vandier), *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, 130.

¹⁶ PSI inv. I 73, fr. B: '...expel the *h3.tyw*, that carry [the contagion] of the plague of the year with them', (trans. J. Osing & G. Rosati), *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis* (Firenze, 1998), 198.

¹⁷ Osing & Rosati, *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis*, 195.

¹⁸ Parallel versions contain the variant 'the great gods in the sky'. C. Leitz, *Tagewählerei: das Buch h3t nhḥ ph.wy dt und verwandte Texte* (Wiesbaden, 1994), 134, 213.

¹⁹ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 135.

²⁰ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 135; Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 57; Osing & Rosati, *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis*, 190.

experienced by the sufferer.²¹ It is believed that *dhr.t* as a specific pathogen can be encompassed by the term *i3d.t rnp.t* which appears to be a more vague and broader in character.²² Due to the metonymical nature of this term, it also came to mean ‘disease’ in a number of contexts,²³ and is clearly an air-borne pathogen as demonstrated in the second invocation of Papyrus Edwin Smith intended for exorcising the plague-bearing wind (*t3w n dhr.t*) of the *h3.tyw*, the *nds.tyw* and *wpw.tyw* of Sekhmet.²⁴ In this particular spell the *h3.tyw* are appealed to withdraw so that the wind shall not reach the petitioner and that those who pass by do not work disaster against him.²⁵ Breasted has correctly interpreted the designation ‘those who pass by’ as referring to all hostile disease-bearing beings encountered in this papyrus who ‘appear to pass by on the wind as if borne by it’.²⁶ This particular invocation appears to be a precursor of the ritual of protecting the house that takes place as part of the ceremonies of the year in the Ptolemaic period;²⁷ this is indicated by the directions for its pronunciation: ‘let the words be spoken by a man having a stick of *des*-wood in his hand, while he comes forth into the open and goes around his house. He cannot die by the plague of the year’.²⁸ Similar protection is evident in the fifth incantation which closes with the statement: ‘Bastet is repelled from the house of a man. A man shall say (it) at the life of the year’.²⁹ The *Book of the Epagomenal Days* of Papyrus Leiden I 346 confirms the importance of protecting the house against the turn of the year and agents of disease.³⁰ The creation of a boundary between the inside and outside creates a micro-cosmos that ensures the welfare of the occupants,³¹ whereby the actors are protected ‘from the robbers of what is in the year’ and in conjunction with knowing the names of the intercalary days do not ‘fall prey to the followers of Sekhmet, and the fever of the bad influence

²¹ P. Vernus, ‘Études de Philologie et de Linguistique (II)’, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 121.

²² Osing & Rosati, *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis*, 197; Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 125.

²³ Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 121.

²⁴ Papyrus Edwin Smith, XVIII, 12, (trans. Vernus) *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 123.

²⁵ Breasted, *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*, 477.

²⁶ Breasted, *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*, 477.

²⁷ For a detailed study on this topic see D. Jankuhn, *Das Buch "Schutz des Hauses" (s3-pr)* (Habelt, 1972); Bommas, M., *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 112.

²⁸ Papyrus Edwin Smith XIX 19- XX 5, (trans. J. H. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*, 484.

²⁹ Papyrus Edwin Smith XIX 13-17, (trans. J. H. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*, 482.

³⁰ Jankuhn, *Das Buch "Schutz des Hauses"*, 7.

³¹ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 112-113.

of the year'.³² Other means of warding the house against agents of disease are attested in Papyrus Cairo 58027 and Papyrus Berlin 3038 where a number of ingredients such as ground *nj3j3*-plant and fresh oil were used to anoint the windows of dwellings.³³

That diseases associated with the *h3.tyw* stem from the introduction of a pathogen into the body by a breath or wind³⁴ is also confirmed in a number of other textual sources. In the seventh incantation for cleansing everything from plague in Papyrus Edwin Smith it is stated: 'O Sekhmet, thy *h3.tyw* retreat, O Bastet, the year does not pass by to work disaster against me'.³⁵ Thy breath (*nfw.t*) does not reach me'.³⁶ In the temple of Edfu a text relates: 'O mistress of his eye... may you protect him from the *h3.tyw* in your following, your henchmen, no bad breath (*t3w*) will come against him, no fever (*šmmt*), no disease (*dhr.t*) will destroy him this year'.³⁷ Furthermore Vernus has suggested that the epithet 'those who shoot arrows from their mouths' attributed to the *h3.tyw* and *wpw.tyw* in Papyrus Leiden I 346 obviously refers to the emission of harmful breaths or possibly words, since to speak is to basically emit a breath from the mouth.³⁸ This appears to be a valid proposal, especially in light of the fact that the effects of the plague brought to earth by the *h3.tyw*, *wpw.tyw* and *šm3.yw* were personalized as the seven arrows (*šsr*);³⁹ an example of this can be found on the Naos of Domitian where Rondot has demonstrated that the apposition of these three deities in succession refers to the troop of seven arrows.⁴⁰ Detailed studies of this text and parallels located at El-Kab, Dendera, Edfu and Philae which clearly concern the emissaries of Sekhmet as agents of disease have revealed that 'arrow' and 'word' are both viable translations of *šsr*; as Sauneron states: '[e]n fait, c'est à la fois l'un

³² Papyrus Leiden I 346, III 4-6, (trans. Bommas), *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 112-113, 115.

³³ Jankuhn, *Das Buch "Schutz des Hauses"*, 7.

³⁴ Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 125.

³⁵ Signifying the *h3d.t rnp.t*.

³⁶ Papyrus Edwin Smith XIX 19 – XX 1, (trans. J. H. Breasted), *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*, 484.

³⁷ Edfu VI, 302, 10-303, 12-13 (trans. Vernus), *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 124.

³⁸ Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 124.

³⁹ M. J. Raven, 'Charms for Protection during the Epagomenal Days', in J. van Dijk (ed.), *Essays on Ancient Egypt in Honour of Herman Te Velde* (Groningen, 1997), 283; S. Aufrère, 'Le coeur, thé annulaire gauche, Sekhmet et les maladies cardiaques', *RdÉ* 36 (1985), 28, no. 68.

⁴⁰ According to Rondot the Seven Arrows can also be indicated by the double expression 'the *h3.tyw* of Sekhmet, the *šm3.yw* of Bastet'. V. Rondot, 'Le Naos de Domitien, Toutou et les sept fleches', *BIFAO* 90 (1990), 331.

et l'autre: c'est le verbe de déesse, tout autant que ses flèches, éléments tangibles de son intervention sur terre, qui apportent aux humains leurs maux'.⁴¹ The connection between arrows and plague is also attested in a number of other written sources, a religious text on the coffin of Ankhnesneferibre is particularly important for it records that if the hostile beings enumerated do not shoot arrows at the property of the actor, the disease (*dhr.t*) that they cause will not occur in it.⁴² It is also significant that the deity representing the sixth arrow of Sekhmet is designated in the temple of Dendera as the one 'who moves as breath',⁴³ while a number of texts from Edfu demonstrate that the harmful action of the arrows can be considered as equivalent to a contagion or dangerous fever.⁴⁴ "[p]rotect him (= the image of the Living-king of Egypt) from any arrows (and) any impurity of this year...' and 'Come to the Living Image, the Living Falcon, I make him go away from contagion, from any adverse arrow, from any malignant fever ...'.⁴⁵

5.2 The *isd.t rnp.t*: an evil force or a tangible disease?

The *isd.t rnp.t* has primarily been evaluated in the scholarly literature as a negative force of evil origins opposed to being a real disease.⁴⁶ Gardiner and Gunn rendered the word *isd.t* as 'dire affliction,' associated with the notion of a malign influence of a supernatural kind;⁴⁷ Gardiner in his translation of Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage states that *isd.t* is 'apparently a term of opprobrium for all malign influences';⁴⁸ Germond asserts that *isd.t rnp.t* appears most often as a menacing expression that is a negative force in opposition to universal order;⁴⁹ Bommas

⁴¹ S. Sauneron, 'Le nouveau sphinx composite du Brooklyn Museum et le rôle du dieu Toutou-Tithoès', *JNES* 19, no. 4 (1960), 282, no.82; See also J. Capart, 'Les sept paroles de Nekhabit', *CdE* 15 (1940), 21-29.

⁴² Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 123; C. E. Sander-Hansen, *Die religiösen Texte auf dem Sarg der Ankhnesneferibre* (Kopenhagen, 1937), 61.

⁴³ Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 124.

⁴⁴ P. Germond, 'En marge des litanies de Sekhmet à Edfou: flèches et messagers', *BSEG* 2 (1979), 24; see also P. Germond, *Sekhmet et la protection du monde* (Genève, 1982), 298-304.

⁴⁵ Edfu VI, 264, 2; E. VI, 266, 5-6, (trans. Germond), *Sekhmet et la protection du monde*, 299.

⁴⁶ Osing & Rosati, *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis*, 192.

⁴⁷ A. H. Gardiner & B. Gunn, 'New Renderings of Egyptian Texts: II. The Expulsion of the Hyksos', *JEA* 5 (1918), 40, no.2.

⁴⁸ A. H. Gardiner, *The admonitions of an Egyptian sage from a hieratic papyrus in Leiden* (Leipzig, 1909), 25.

⁴⁹ Germond, *Sekhmet et la protection du monde*, 298.

believes that it is no more than a generic term that is an ‘expression of contempt for adverse effects’;⁵⁰ while Yoyotte concludes that *ḥd.t* is a further designation of the emissaries of Sekhmet themselves.⁵¹ These viewpoints are valid, for it is clear that the ancient Egyptians, in accordance with their world-view, attributed suffering and illness to appropriate root causes, in this case to Sekhmet, her emissaries and a number of other hostile beings.⁵² *Rnp.t* is even personified as a deity in Papyrus Edwin Smith with the term assigned the determinative G7, the hawk on a standard,⁵³ while in the Oracular Amuletic Decrees the *ḥd.t rnp.t* is designated as capable of performing actions.⁵⁴ However, this should not eliminate the possibility that what appears in these texts as a malign force, was in fact a real disease that had serious consequences for the Egyptian population.

The *ḥd.t rnp.t* does not necessarily refer to a single disease, but it is likely that the term encompassed a number of contagions, that occurred simultaneously as the result of the Nile flood,⁵⁵ the attempt to establish a retrospective diagnosis is particularly problematic not only due to the multiplicity of diseases embodied under a single term but also due to the inexplicit nature of the epigraphic and corresponding archaeological evidence.⁵⁶ Leitz has suggested that one of the primary contagions of the *ḥd.t rnp.t* was the Bubonic plague (*Yersinia pestis*); the existence of this disease in Egypt during the pharaonic period is highly contested with the majority of Egyptological scholars, excepting Goedicke, Kozloff, Leitz and Westendorf, arguing against its existence.⁵⁷ Scientists who have devoted their studies wholly to investigating Bubonic plague, however, believe that the disease was present in the Nile Valley in all

⁵⁰ Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit*, 59.

⁵¹ J. Yoyotte, ‘Une théorie étiologique des Médecins Égyptiens’, *Kémi* XVIII (1968), 82-83.

⁵² Vernus, *RdÉ* 34 (1982-1983), 125.

⁵³ Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 78.

⁵⁴ L.5 vs.9-11; NY rt. 28-30; P.5 24-26; T1 vs. 6-8, (trans. I. E. S. Edwards), *Hieratic papyri in the British museum. Fourth series. Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the Late New Kingdom*, 2 vols. (London, 1960), 31, 57, 93, 104.

⁵⁵ Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 60; Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 135.

⁵⁶ S. Herrmann, ‘*ḥd.t* und *di'u*. Die “Seuche des Jahres”’, *GM* 219 (2008), 37.

⁵⁷ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 205; Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 61; H. Goedicke, ‘The Canaanite Illness’, *SAK* 11 (1984), 92; A. Kozloff, ‘Bubonic Plague in the reign of Amenhotep III? Evidence of Less than Idyllic Time’, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 36-46.

likelihood prior to the onset of Egyptian civilisation.⁵⁸ The realistic estimate for the age of the species *Yersinia pestis* which emerged from *Yersinia Pseudotuberculosis* has been demonstrated to be between 1 500 to 20 000 years,⁵⁹ further substantiating the possibility that the disease was present throughout the Nile Valley and Egypt during the Pharaonic period.⁶⁰ *Yersinia pestis* is often a fatal disease that affects rodents or other wild mammals with transmission occurring via fleas, the conveyance of this disease to the human population occurred through direct contact with either of these vectors.⁶¹ Among the many dangers resulting from the annual inundation in Egypt would have been the displacement of rodents that inhabited areas close to the waterline, while many would have drowned and their carcasses added to the rising floodwaters, survivors would have been driven towards settlement areas.⁶² The flea *Xenopsylla cheopis* as a vector of Bubonic plague has been suggested to be endemic to the Nile Valley and can survive on a number of rodents and lagomorphs including the Nile rat (*Arvicanthis niloticus*) who exhibits a high level of immunity to the disease and the Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*) which was introduced to Egypt via ship trade with the Near East and suffered a high mortality rate from the disease, forcing the flea to search for another host.⁶³ Carnivorous animals that consumed rats could also possibly become infected and play a role in transmission to human populations, for example cats were highly susceptible and could infect humans through scratching, biting and sneezing.⁶⁴ It should also be noted that in settlement areas the human flea *Pulex irritans* and the cat flea *Ctenocephalides felis*, both of which have been found at Amarna, can also act as carriers of the disease.⁶⁵ Investigations have demonstrated that as few as twenty infected animals can generate a plague in a human population,⁶⁶ furthermore, when

⁵⁸ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 45.

⁵⁹ M. Achtman, et al., 'Yersinia pestis, the cause of plague, is a recently emerged clone of Yersinia pseudotuberculosis', *PNAS* 96, no. 24 (1999), 14046.

⁶⁰ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 45.

⁶¹ Achtman, *PNAS* 96, no. 24 (1999), 14043.

⁶² Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 60; Herrmann, *GM* 219 (2008), 39.

⁶³ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 45; E. Panagiotakopulu, 'Pharaonic Egypt and the origins of plague', *Journal of Biogeography* 31 (2004), 270-272.

⁶⁴ Panagiotakopulu, *Journal of Biogeography* 31 (2004), 270-272.

⁶⁵ D. Dennis & G. Campbell, 'Plague and other Yersinia Infections', in D. Kasper (ed.), et.al, *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, 16th Edition (New York, 2004), 922; Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 46.

⁶⁶ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 45.

the primary form of this disease develops into secondary pneumonic plague, transmission between humans may occur via the inhalation of the infectious bacteria in droplets.⁶⁷

Leitz's proposal for a positive identification of the *ibd.t rnp.t* with the Bubonic plague is founded on three primary factors; firstly in the *Tagewählerei* the goddess Sekhmet, who along with the *h3.tyw* and other emissaries is charged with the distribution of the plague of the year, is mentioned in a context where there is an explicit prohibition against coming in close proximity with rats; secondly the transfer of the *ibd.t rnp.t* by the arrows corresponds to the feeling of being stabbed or shot that is characteristic of the Bubonic plague and thirdly that the date of the *ibd.t rnp.t* in the *Tagewählerei* corresponds to observations of plague in Egypt made in the late 16th century by *Prosper Alpinus*.⁶⁸ Osing and Rosati are justified in outlining the caution that should be exercised in the acceptance of these arguments, particularly in regard to the appearance of rats in conjunction with Sekhmet; while the negative connotations of this context are evident there is nothing however to specify a relationship between rats and plague.⁶⁹

While it is true that we lack direct evidence to support the identification of the Bubonic plague as the primary contagion of the *ibd.t rnp.t*, the proposal is still favourable and should be given due consideration. The absence of textual records which explicitly document an epidemic is explicable in terms of the Egyptian world view; as the occurrence of such an event would have been deemed as an incursion of chaos and an upheaval of the world order of *ma'at*, there would have been little inclination for its documentation.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the immediacy of death faced by those infected with the Bubonic plague means that the disease may not have left any physical traces on the bones,⁷¹ some sufferers may not have even reached the stages where

⁶⁷ E. Tikhomirov, 'Epidemiology and Distribution of Plague', in World Health Organization, *Plague manual: epidemiology, distribution, surveillance and control* (1999), 12; M. B. Prentice, 'Plague and other Yersinia Infections', in D. Longo, et al., *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, 18th Edition (New York, 2012), <<http://accessmedicine.mhmedical.com.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/content.aspx?bookid=331&Sectionid=40726909>> (viewed 1.10.14).

⁶⁸ Leitz, *Tagewählerei*, 205-207.

⁶⁹ Osing & Rosati, *Papiri geroglifici e ieratici da Tebtynis*, 193-194, no. 20.

⁷⁰ Goedicke, *SAK* 11 (1984), 92; Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 56.

⁷¹ J. Filer, *Disease* (London, 1995), 17.

buboes developed and died from coughing up blood from the lungs, moreover the preservation of buboes on the body may have been compromised in the mummification process or decomposed over time.⁷²

Scientific investigations that have indicated that the disease ‘likely predated the onset of Egyptian civilisation’⁷³ in conjunction with archaeological and epigraphic evidence for known vectors should be taken as a strong indicator for the positive identification of the Bubonic plague in Egypt. The presence of rodents and fleas in settlement sites has been well attested in the archaeological record from the existence of mouse and rat holes, the use of ceramic rat traps at Kahun⁷⁴ and the identification of ecto-parasitic infestations at Amarna.⁷⁵ The fact that Papyrus Ebers contains spells intended to eliminate fleas from the house and another for preventing mice from approaching is also significant.⁷⁶ From the New Kingdom onwards a number of allusions to bubonic-like symptoms are attested in the written record. In Papyrus Ebers, upon the examination of a man who exhibits weakness and shivering it is stated ‘[t]his is a blockage of the accumulation, it cannot (the accumulation) be brought up (broken); the heart is not friendly because of the severe case; it has produced a lump (*hsd*); there are decay products of the pus; the disease (*h3j.t*) has exerted pressure’.⁷⁷ Other possible mentions of the distinctive buboes of the disease can be found in the Hearst Medical Papyrus and London Medical Papyrus which describe the body as blackened with charcoal and with water (urine) as red liquid.⁷⁸ Goedicke believes that this is conclusive evidence of the existence of the Bubonic plague, asserting that the prepositional *m dʿbt* ‘with charcoal’ is meant metaphorically as a descriptor of the black buboes that characterise this disease.⁷⁹

⁷² Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 46.

⁷³ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 83, no.72.

⁷⁴ H. Wilson, *Egyptian Food and Drink* (Buckinghamshire, 2001), 58; Filer, *Disease*, 17.

⁷⁵ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 45.

⁷⁶ Westendorf, in *Heilkunde und Hochkultur*, 61.

⁷⁷ Papyrus Ebers, 196 (39, 2-7), (trans. W. Westendorf), *Handbuch der Altägyptischen Medizin*, 2. Band (Leiden, 1999), 581.

⁷⁸ Goedicke, *SAK* 11 (1984), 94-95

⁷⁹ Goedicke, *SAK* 11 (1984), 94-95.

Furthermore, the severity of the Bubonic plague with a fatality rate of 90% of those infected would account for a number of cultural phenomenon recorded in the New Kingdom period.⁸⁰ The rise to prominence of the goddess Sekhmet, whose cult was founded in the New Kingdom and fully established under Amenhotep III, is particularly significant.⁸¹ Prior to Amenhotep's reign, Sekhmet although regarded as important for military endeavours, remained a relatively minor deity, and as military expansion in the reign of this pharaoh was minimal, the commissioning of hundreds of monumental statues of this goddess can only be related to her role as Mistress of Plague.⁸² The seven-hundred plus statues appear to have been divided into two sets; one where Sekhmet appears seated, crowned with the uraeus and disc, and clutching the *ankh* symbol in the left hand, the other where Sekhmet is shown standing, also crowned, holding the *ankh* sign in her right hand and with *udjat* in the left.⁸³ Each statue was engraved with a short inscription that designated Amenhotep as 'beloved of Sekhmet', and the presumed length of the entire litany which the texts on these statues record, comprises some hundreds of verses, which is astounding and unprecedented.⁸⁴ The statues form what Aldred has termed a 'double prophylactic spell' to ensure the goddess's protection of the entire land every day of the year, similar to the litanies found in the temples of Kom Ombo, Edfu and Dendera, and may be considered as an attempt to protect the nation against disease.⁸⁵ This introduction of a new cult in conjunction with the decreased exportation of gold possibly resulting from processing sites becoming targets and vectors of disease due to their location on a high-traffic trade route; multiple interments and non-traditional burial practices; changes in artistic traditions and the relocation to Amarna itself interpreted as an attempt to find an epidemic free area, are all factors considered as circumstantial evidence for the positive identification of plague in Egypt. Furthermore, the Amarna letters and a number of Near Eastern texts not only provide evidence

⁸⁰ Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 45.

⁸¹ A. Sadek, *Popular Religion in Egypt during the New Kingdom* (Hildesheim, 1987), 29-30.

⁸² Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 36-37.

⁸³ J. Yoyotte, 'Une monumentale litanie de granit: les Sekhmet d'Amónophis III et la conjuration permanente de la deesse dangereuse', *BSFE* 87-88 (1980), 47.

⁸⁴ Yoyotte, *BSFE* 87-88 (1980), 52.

⁸⁵ C. Aldred, *Akenaten King of Egypt* (London, 1988), 149, 283.

that one of the wives of Amenhotep III died in a plague,⁸⁶ but attest to the fact that plague was rampant among Egypt's neighbours and trading partners at this time.⁸⁷

While the corpus of evidence to support the identification of the *ḳd.t rnp.t* with the Bubonic plague is primarily indirect and circumstantial in nature, the scientific confirmation of the age of the disease species, the presence of multiple known endemic vectors, possible allusions in a number of medical texts to the characteristic buboes exhibited by those infected by the pathogen, the rise of the plague goddess Sekhmet to prominence in conjunction with the development of number of other cultural phenomena is enough to substantiate the positive identification of *Yersinia pestis* as one of the primary pathogens of the *ḳd.t rnp.t*, believed to be distributed by the *ḥ3.tyw*. That the occurrence of petitions to be saved from the *ḥ3.tyw* beings significantly increases in correlation with these events, suggests beyond doubt that the Egyptian population was subject to and suffered severely from calamitous diseases from at least the New Kingdom period onwards.

⁸⁶ Amarna letter EA 11 is a response from Burnaburiyas King of Babylon to a report from Amenhotep IV that one of his father's wives had died in a plague. Kozloff, *KMT* 17, no. 3 (2006), 37; W. L. Moran (ed.), *The Amarna Letters* (London, 1992), 21-23.

⁸⁷ In Amarna letter EA 35 the King of Cyprus relates that the hand of Negral had slain all the men of his country, his wife and a high proportion of his copper workers succumbed to the disease. In a number of Near Eastern texts the Hittites are also revealed to have been affected by plague with King Suppiliumas losing his life. Goedicke, *SAK* 11 (1984), 92; Aldred, *Akenaten King of Egypt*, 283; Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 107-109.

Conclusion

The systematic collection and analysis of a specialised corpus of evidence pertaining to the *h3.tyw* has resulted in the expansion of disciplinary knowledge within the context of ancient Egyptian religion. A greater understanding of the agency of the *h3.tyw* who were conceptualised in ancient Egyptian thought as belonging to the world of the divine, reveals a considerable amount about Egyptian world view and Egyptian society as a whole. While the existence of a ‘decorum’ that defined what was allowed to be expressed in image and writing in particular contexts has resulted in an inability to determine the prevalency of the *h3.tyw* at levels of both state and personal religious experience prior to the New Kingdom, the subsequent proliferation of source material indicates that the actions of these beings, malevolent or benevolent, were thought to seriously affect not only the life of the individual citizen, but that of the king as well.

The term *h3.yt* translated as ‘massacre’ or ‘slaughter’, which is the most plausible etymological origin of the designation *h3.tyw*, is highly indicative of the nature of these particular beings. Ultimately, the *h3.tyw* possessed an ‘ambivalent powerfulness’ which could be channelled towards a variety of tasks when they assumed a subordinate position, enacting the commands issued by a greater deity. Thus we see the *h3.tyw* charged with slaying Apophis, guarding Seth, locating the eye of the sun god, and assuming an apotropaic role for those with affiliated theophoric personal names. These roles can be considered to have positive connotations in relation to the notion of *ma'at*, which was the ethical conception that encompassed ‘truth’, ‘order’ and ‘cosmic balance’. Conversely, in a number of roles the *h3.tyw* embodied the notion of *isfet*, where for example they are dispatched by Osiris to create battle between Pimay the Younger and Wertiamonniut, pose a danger to the living and deceased with their sharp knives, threatened to steal a person’s heart, and when they created carnage and disorder whilst moving through the country shooting arrows from their mouths. It is important to note that in these contexts where the *h3.tyw* are subordinates to greater deities, the powers they possess are limited to the tasks they were directed to carry out, and their actions could be

averted or neutralised through the assistance of deities of an elevated hierarchical status. This idea of subordination within the pantheon can be considered as a reflection of the ancient Egyptians transposing secular hierarchical structures onto the world of the divine.

The original role of the *h3.tyw* as armed celestial gatekeepers initially attested in the Pyramid Texts appears to have been maintained throughout the Pharaonic Period up until Greco-Roman times. The locality of these beings within the celestial realm was probably the reason for their equation with decanal stars, a development which is securely attested in the written record from the Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate period onwards. The role of *h3.tyw* as disease bringers probably developed from the phonetic similarity between their name and the term *h3y.t* ‘disease’. They are primarily connected to the *bd.t rnp.t*, which in the textual record has the character of a malign force. The attribution of disease and suffering to the *h3.tyw* and similar beings can be understood in terms of Egyptian world view, with goddesses such as Sekhmet and the emissaries under her command seen as appropriate root causes. In reality, the *bd.t rnp.t* was undoubtedly a real disease that had serious consequences for the Egyptian population, the term probably encompasses several diseases but the primary contagion appears to be the Bubonic plague. The fact that there are no pictorial representations of the *h3.tyw* beings related to contexts where they are performing negative roles is particularly significant. Their absence in the iconographic record is explicable in terms of the Egyptian concept of ‘empowered images’, any pictorial representation of the *h3.tyw* would have acted as a point of contact and ensured their continued existence, thus amplifying the danger they posed to the individual. It is notable that the only securely identified depiction of the *h3.tyw* beings occurs in a hieratic papyrus from Deir el Medina in which they are invoked in a positive context.

Finally, it should also be noted that this investigation has revealed a number of avenues for further research. The discrepancies in scholarly translations of the temple texts of the Greco-Roman period have demonstrated that there are serious problems involved in identifying the value of ideographic sign usages that are employed to denote the *h3.tyw* or other similar emissary beings. Further research in this area would not only result in a more in-depth

understanding of the roles assigned to and enacted by individual emissary beings, but also significantly expand the corpus of evidence for the *h3.tyw* and allow for the extent of their agency and development of their role to be properly documented for this time period. Another area that requires further investigation is the proposed use of synonymous or interchangeable designations for emissary beings. As demonstrated in this study, the term *h3.tyw* is commonly regarded in the scholarly literature as equivalent to the designations *šm3.yw* and *wpw.tyw*. The epigraphic evidence suggests that at their initial conception these beings were considered as autonomous, however, the distinction between them appears to have become blurred in the temple texts of the Greco-Roman period. In order for definitive conclusions to be made, a comparative study of the *h3.tyw*, *šm3.yw* and *wpw.tyw* needs to be conducted, that will also address the composition dates of the textual material of the Greco-Roman temples to establish the point at when this assimilation possibly occurred. Such an investigation would make a significant contribution to a relatively new field of research in the discipline of Egyptology, which has recently come to the forefront of academic interest.

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