Demon Things
Swansea 21 – 24 March 2016

The Conference
Demon Things

International Conference on Ancient Egyptian
Manifestations of Liminal Entities

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

by Prof Martin Stringer

Pro-Vice Chancellor of Swansea University

PAPER ABSTRACTS

WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE “DEMONBASE”

by Kasia Szpakowska

Director of “The Ancient Egyptian Demonology Project: 2K BCE”
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Underworld Demons in the Decoration of the Large Late Period Shaft Tombs at Abusir

In the decoration of the large shaft tombs at Abusir, dated to late Dyn. 26/early Dyn. 27, several series of the underworld demons can be found. They appear in different positions – either separately as on the inner sarcophagus of Iufaa and on the outer wooden coffin of Nekau (buried in one of the lesser burial chambers in the tomb of Iufaa), or as part of the Book of the Dead chapter 144 on the side of the burial chamber of Menekhibnekau (see also the paper by J. Janák and R. Landgráfová). Another series of demons – for technical reasons mostly inaccessible – seems to exist on the inner sarcophagus of Menekhibnekau. In this paper, each of those series of demons is treated in respect to its position in the decoration of the entire burial chamber. In addition to that, several question connected to their position and use in the tombs are discussed.
The demon Sāmānu is attested by numerous magical and medical sources in the ancient Near East and Egypt from the 3rd millennium to the 2nd century B.C. In Mesopotamia, Sāmānu is known as a widespread evil seizing gods, men, animals, plants, as well as rivers. In Egypt, Sāmānu is described only as illness of humankinds. It is notable that both cultures had distinct conceptions about demons. Therefore, the talk highlights the similarities and differences between Egyptian and Mesopotamian demon's depictions in general, and more specific Sāmānu’s.

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Image provided by S. Beck
Zuzanna Bennett

Anatomy of a Coffin Text Demon

In the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts, demonic entities are vividly described and sometimes intricately illustrated. These descriptions and depictions are of a network of supernatural beings consisting of individuals with distinct characters, attributes and forms. Demonic appearances can vary substantially, ranging in size from small to gigantic, in structure from anthropomorphic to zoomorphic, and in anatomy from bovine-headed to long-nailed entities. The most frequent forms of these demons will be figuratively dissected and each component examined to identify which animal species are utilised. The anatomy of demons can also be linked to their other attributes, assisting, enabling or inspiring them to perform particular functions or behaviours. The variety and complexity of the physical appearances of Coffin Text demons not only demonstrates their importance as manifestations of the Ancient Egyptian hopes and fears, but could also be a key to understanding the functions of funerary demons.

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Photo: Coffin of Gua, BM EA 30839, courtesy of The British Museum, London
Liminal Deities in the Borderlands: Bes and Pataikos in Ancient Nubia

During the New Kingdom Period (1550–1069 BC) and extending into the Napatan Period (750–332 BC), apotropaic deities were especially popular in the household, and—when represented in the form of amulets—became fixtures in the daily lives of women and children. This paper examines amulets in the forms of the liminal gods Bes and Pataikos, as represented in the archaeological assemblage from the site of Tombos, which is located at the 3rd Cataract in Upper Nubia. Bes and Pataikos occupy an interesting space within the scope of Ancient Egyptian and Nubian household religion, given their highly protective dispositions, liminal natures, and consistently grotesque representations. When we examine these amulets under anthropological and archaeological conceptions of materiality, we are not only able to link these objects to the individuals that would have come in contact with and used them, but we are also able to connect both object and individual back into the larger contemporary social sphere of which they would have been an active part. Tombos provides the primary case study examining these amuletic forms, and examples from this site will be compared to others from sites in both Egypt and Nubia. This paper aims to examine similarities and differences in iconographic representations of Bes/et and Pataikos in conjunction with the respective archeological context of each. Particular attention will be paid toward variations in the iconography of these deities, as well as the presence of these daily life objects within funerary contexts where they often made the transition into death with their owners. This paper exemplifies the utility of materiality studies as applied to archaeological investigations of the daily lives and deaths of individuals in Ancient Egyptian society and hopes to foster further discussion of amuletic forms that made the transition from life into death.

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Image provided by E. Bornemann and S. Smith
This work is concerned with a demon, i.e. Meneh who is attested in Ancient Egypt since the Middle Kingdom until the Graeco-Roman Period according to the epigraphic and iconographic evidence. Despite his aggressiveness, fierceness and violence, he uses his forces only against enemies showing a benevolent temper. Being mentioned in religious texts dealing with the afterlife and subsequently not only had his cult in the Graeco-Roman temples, but having his own son as well. Hence, this work studies his different aspects in extenso. Additionally his connection to the butcher demons is established via a new proposed reading of two his epithets.
The Clay Balls of Ancient Egypt: A Symbolic Defence against Apophis?

The “striking of the ball” ritual, dated from the New Kingdom to the Late Period, is depicted on a number of temple walls. The scene depicts the Pharaoh, armed with a club or stick, hitting balls before a deity or a group of deities. The inscriptions which accompany these scenes suggest that they represent the “evil eye of Apophis”, and that they are destroyed to protect the sun god Re. It has been suggested that these balls may have been made from clay, and this paper will discuss why this theory is supportable and will discuss the possibility that the clay balls were used as a form of weapon against Apophis and the evil he represented.

Clay balls have been excavated from homes and burials, and are decorated with inscriptions, seal impressions, or painted designs. The fact that these artefacts have been found in houses does not entirely rule it out as being an accompaniment to the “striking of the ball” ritual, because it is possible that ancient Egyptian royal rituals adopted domestic rituals and vice versa. In a day to day setting Apophis could have represented the very real threat of snakes to the average Egyptian and it is possible that the “striking of the ball ritual” had its origins in the home. Similarly, equipping one’s tomb with clay balls could have provided a form of defence in the afterlife.

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Image: Temple of Luxor, reproduced from Gayet (1894), pl. LXXIV
Guardians of Gates: An Unusual Assemblage of Demons in Menekhibnekau’s Book of the Dead Chapter 144

The Saite-Persian shaft tomb necropolis at Abusir is a rich source of texts and images attesting to the continuity and change of Egyptian funerary beliefs. While the textually richest of these tombs is that of Iufaa, the burial chamber of the roughly contemporary tomb of the high dignitary Menekhibnekau is literally filled with texts and representations, and includes, on its southern wall, a representation of the seven gates of Book of the Dead 144 with a group of three named demons pertaining to each. The text of the chapter then follows in columns underneath these representations, which fill two large registers of the arch of the wall. The aim of this paper is to investigate the nature of these demons and the reasons for their inclusion in Book of the Dead 144, the vignette of which usually includes gates with one or two generic demon figures, and not the highly differentiated and individualistic, as well as named, demons that appear in Menekhibnekau. In this connection, it is important to note that the sarcophagus of Psusennes provides a link between Menekhibnekau’s gate guardians and demon processions of Late Period sarcophagi (such as the one appearing on the inner basalt sarcophagus of Iufaa, which will be presented by L. Bareš), as his demons bear names known from Book of the Dead 144. Thus, also the connections between Book of the Dead Chapter 144 and guardian demon processions will be investigated in order to interpret Menekhibnekau’s unusual demon triplets.

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Photo: Demons of the Second Gate from Chapter 144 of the Book of the Dead of Menekhibnekau; provided by J. Janák and R Landgráfová
Panagiotis Kousoulis

Rebellious Identities and Demonic Diversity: Name vs. Function of the msw-bdšw and the Apophian Associates

A central issue in the study of the Ancient Egyptian demonic discourse is the variety of forms and names in which the unseen intervenes and is recognized. These manifestations range from positive to negative and vice versa. This is especially true for collective groups of enemies which are categorised under the generic term msw-bdš(t) or msw-bšt. In the mythological discourse, msw-bdšt are regarded as a comparative body of liminal hostile entities, which usually refer to Apep and his off spring or associates, or to any group of rebels. Thus, it can be translated as “children of rebellion”, “children of impotence”, “children of the feeble”, or “children of the rebellious one”. The term may also be viewed as denoting a single serpentine being, as in the spell 17 from the Book of the Dead, in the scene 69 from the Book of Gates, or in Late Period material. The scope of this presentation is to present and exemplify the formative axioms and Apophian attributes of this collective group of hostile entities. At the core of this research lies the very complicated issue of the function vs. representation vs. name/function name in the ontological and performative conception of the demonic in Ancient Egyptian thought. Does identity of the various Apophian names identify the archenemy of the sun god par excellence, when the functions are different? Does identity of the multiple Apophian functions identify the same malevolent entity, when the names are different? How could the polarity and conceptual development of a “demonic” or “anti-god” entity be framed and defined in the Egyptian belief system and discourse?

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Photo: The First Recording of Apep’s Name, Tomb of Ankhtifi, Mo’alla, ca. 2100 BCE; by P. Kousoulis
Liminal Sources of Dangerous Powers: A Case of the Black Ram. A comparative analysis of demonological representations

The Coffin Text captures a developed system of ideas about the dangerous inhabitants of the Netherworld manifested mainly in their names and iconography. An essential contact with chaos and border between chaos and cosmos has a decisive influence on the nature and behaviour of demons of the coffins. This connection is distinctly reflected in the image of the two roads of the Book of Two Ways and their dangerous environment of fire and water represented by the guards. In the pyramids such depictions are quite rare but it is intriguing that a Pharaoh himself could be regarded as a dangerous inhabitant of the Netherworld, threatening the cosmic order. The source of his destructive power is also the liminal state, in this case expressed as damage to the Eye.

An example of the intersection of these two “demonic systems” is the image of the “Lord-of-Power” represented in both Pyramid Text and Coffin Text. On the vignettes of the Book of Two Ways he is shown in the form of a Black Ram in the “chamber of judges”. The situation of a trial when the deceased claims a place in the Netherworld and the gods satisfy this demand apparently is one of the ways to appease the dangerous energy. Thus in the Pyramid Text, Pharaoh threatens to destroy the existing cosmos by the power of his damaged Eye if he is not granted a place in another world. The successful integration of the deceased in the Netherworld is, therefore, a mean to appease him and to restore the cosmic balance.
What is the Evil within Demons? Exploring the Egyptian Semantic Field of Evil

Throughout all periods of Ancient Egyptian history liminal entities, or demons, played a significant role in cultural life. They can be regarded as concrete manifestations of universal forces such as good and evil. Analogously to their liminal nature, demons can possess either benevolent or malevolent powers, or in some cases both. Appearing in various forms and on a wide range of different sources demons convey the vivid discourses about good and evil. Repelling and overcoming demonic evil forces was fundamental, as it was often expressed in both literary and figurative form. Quite frequently, indeed, the principle of good was virtually defined through the renunciation and rejection of evil.

Looking into particular cases of demons and their actions, several words describing evil have been attributed to them. Yet their very nature and purpose are not always obvious since there is no single and simple definition of evil. As part of a broader study on the semantic fields of evil, this paper will analyse the meaning of evil in the context of demons by comparing attributes of evil within a larger scope of different genres. The focus will be on the semantic fields of words also appearing as abstracta, hence these bear a higher significance in regard to a comprehension of diachronic and inter-generic discourses.

This approach aims for a more distinct understanding of the evil ascribed to demons and for shedding light on the nature of those liminal entities, whose character is not immediately evident from their context.

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Photo: P. Cairo S.R. VII 10249, TM 134481, courtesy of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo
Although never depicted, a few texts suggest that this god manifests himself as a baboon with a rather dangerous and dreadful character and function towards other gods and humankind; however, Baba’s whereabouts in relation to his baboon manifestation have not been thoroughly investigated yet. This paper will review the existing sources on baboons with demonic aspects attested in magical and mortuary texts and illustrations of Pharaonic and Graeco-Roman Egypt, at the same time attempting to better define the role of Baba within the Ancient Egyptian pantheon.
El Zahraa Megahed and Laure Pantalacci

The Demoniacal Manifestations of Winds in Calendars of Lucky and Unlucky Days

Calendars of Lucky and unlucky days in pCairo JE no. 86637 and pSallier IV (pBM 10184) include clear indications to the role of winds as bearers of demons and demoniacal diseases.

The two troops Ḥntyw and Ḥntyw appear as personified winds on 1 ḫt 4, II ḫt 24, II ḫt 25 and III ṣmw 24. In those four days, demonic personified winds manifest to affect the lives of people on earth; they cause disease and perturb navigation in the Nile stream. Parallel days in Coptic and Arabic almanacs include clear citations for similar effects. Diseases spread by winds at the present time are also similar to those in the calendars.

The role of demons as personified winds in the former days regards them as emanations or reflections to the conflict between Re and Apophis in the Netherworld. Demons are associated in calendars with the northern winds. The northern winds are dominant during most of the year; they are also the strongest and the most dangerous. The strength of northern winds, which is compatible with the east, agrees with the supernatural power of the agents of Re who reside in the East ready to attack the enemies of Re in the west.

On another day (I Prt 19), winds (tḥw) figure as embodied demons (ntrw ṣḥw) to spread demonical inflictions (ḥḏrt ṣḥpt). Apart from calendars, the Prt season is connected in other texts with dangerous exhalations of the soil. During those days, exhalations are implied to come from carcasses of animals that drown by the Nile flood. In that context, the question of Ḥntyw as equivalent to the miasmas of Galen or accurately as exhalations or gaseous emanations from cadavers (ḥḥţ) affected by sepsis (ḥḥyṯ) is answered. Apart from calendars, it is certain that winds, breaths, exhalations and even the spit that goes out from mouths of demons by spitting are all pathogenic.

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Symbolae Sacrae – Symbolic Formulae for Protection and Adoration within the Sandstone Quarries of Gebel el Silsila

Within the grand sandstone quarries of Gebel el Silsila is a vast amount of unique symbolic representations; stylized iconographic and pseudo-scripted signs and marks that to some extent signify deities and their protection against demons, evil and mishaps. Like written protective formulae, these marks were placed within the quarries to symbolically safe-keep the quarry workers, and for expressing gratefulness once the work had been completed. For such reason a single quarry face/wall could be incised with more than 300 marks with no apparent order of distribution; some carved immediately adjacent adoration texts or dedications. In total, thus far, some 5000 quarry marks have been documented and analysed by the current archaeological concession (Lund University).

This paper aims to present a selection of quarry marks that can be associated with the metaphorical world of the ancients (chiefly early Roman) with focus on assigned protective deities (eg. Bes, Min, Horus, Amun, but especially the local Agathodaimon Pachimesen); the ever assimilating daemon Shai; apotropaic figures (anguipedes, akephaloi, Harpocrates, Tutu); and marks used for protection, adoration, respect and gratefulness. It is an attempt to broaden the perspective of traditionally accepted ancient apotropaia, and incorporate superstitious representations communicated by a group of hard working men within the quarries of Gebel el Silsila. The material presented is based on preliminary conclusions.

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Photo: “A Guardian of the Quarrymen” by M. Nilsson, courtesy of the Gebel el Silsila Project
Anubis as a Demon?

The gates of the Underworld are watched over by what we call "demons". These guardians, who can prove to be aggressive or protective, are often armed with knives. In general, they are only known for this specific purpose and it is relatively rare to find them in a function outside the realm of the dead – though some exceptions can be noted in the Oracular Amuletic Decrees. If it is recognised that demons have limited power and can’t act as a deity, can the reverse be acknowledged? Can a god act as a demon?

Anubis, due to his role as tomb keeper, is the first deity to be represented in the mastabas of the Old Kingdom, whilst the other gods are left out. Indeed, it is not uncommon to find a representation of this god’s name at the entrance to the chapel, on the jamb of the central door. It then presents a canid image -surpassing other hieroglyphics in size- that plays both the role of determinative in the inscription and incarnation of the divine entity.

It is most likely this particular function of guardian, keeper of the tomb and of the deceased’s body, which explains the particular iconography of Anubis that can be found in Nakhtamun’s tomb (TT 335). Over the door of room B are two representations of the god easily identifiable by Anubis’ traditional epithets. Located beneath a canopy, he is featured in both figurations as a demon with a human body and canine head, in a seated position and armed with a knife. They seem to watch over Osiris’ name. Could this iconography be an emphasis on the role of guardian of the Underworld and of Osiris’ body? Can this be sufficient as to explain this god’s particular form?

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Photo: TT 335; provided by A. Quertinmont
Danielle Sass

Slaughterers, Knife-Bearers and Plague-Bringers: A Study of the Role and Significance of the $\text{h3.tyw}$ in Ancient Egyptian Thought

This paper will present the findings of a study focused on a particular group of liminal 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 $\text{h3.tyw}$ in the first three phases of the Egyptian Language or as $\text{ht.w}$ in the fourth stage (Demotic). The $\text{h3.tyw}$ are manifested primarily through textual sources, with the corpus in terms of date, context, media, language phase and script being extensively varied in nature. While the documentation spans a large time-frame of Egyptian history from the Old Kingdom to the end of the Greco-Roman Period, only a very limited data set can be derived from the historical periods before the beginning of the New Kingdom. The increased level of attestation for the $\text{h3.tyw}$ from the New Kingdom onwards is most likely the result of a change in religious 'decorum'; with the disintegration of barriers between individual and deity from this period onwards, we 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. This paper aims to provide an overview of the orthography and etymology of the designation $\text{h3.tyw}$, the form and appearance of the $\text{h3.tyw}$, the position and subordination of the $\text{h3.tyw}$ within the hierarchy of the pantheon, the celestial nature of the $\text{h3.tyw}$, and finally the role of the $\text{h3.tyw}$ as bearers of disease. An examination of this material will contribute to a greater understanding of the agency of this type of divine being who operated at both state and personal levels of religion, and further scholars’ understanding of Egyptian world-view and society as a whole on account of the dualistic nature of the $\text{h3.tyw}$ that encompasses components of both ma’at and isfet.

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Image: Papyrus DeM. I, vso, reproduced from J. Cerny, Papyrus hiératiques de Deir el-Medineh (Cairo, 1978-1986), pl. 15
Ghost and Ancestors in a Gender Perspective

In an impressive number of apotropaic documents, male and female deceased are often associated. In fact, they are listed in pairs (3ḫ/3ḫ.t, mwt/mwt.t, etc.) in order to strike as many preternatural enemies as possible. Thus, at first sight, it could seem that a distinction based on gender did not play an active role in religious beliefs related to ghosts and ancestors. However, an in-depth analysis of the so-called letters to the dead could highlight some interesting aspects. These peculiar documents were mainly written to obtain the help of the ancestors in order to solve existential crises. However, a restricted number of letters were written to appease the anger of malevolent spirits, and it is surely significant that in most cases this latter type of document was sent to female deceased. The transformation of an ancestor into a malevolent spirit could be related to several causes, predominantly the transgression of a complex pact of mutual aid between the living and the dead. For the "male-sphere", the rules of this alliance were strongly influenced by a specific code of conduct with clear connections with the Loyalist Instructions, whereas, for the relationship between the living and the female deceased other factors, which played a relevant role, may be recognized; most importantly, the connection of women within the sphere of procreation and her social role as wife and mother.

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Image provided by R. Schiavo
Between Texts and Images: Representations of the Supernatural Entities in the so-called Book of Two Ways

Although textual descriptions of all sorts of supernatural entities are attested in the religious texts as early as the Pyramid Texts (if not earlier), the visual expressions about these entities are scarce in the documents bearing religious texts antedating the elaborate representations from the New Kingdom onwards (such as the Book of the Dead, the Amduat...etc). A great deal of the iconographic information attested within the Coffin Texts proper on the insides of the decorated Middle Kingdom coffins was deemed secondary by the editors of the celebrated Coffin Texts Project of the Oriental Institute (-The University of Chicago). This textually biased approach resulted in omitting several iconographic details. Since almost all of these coffins were never scientifically published as archaeological objects, only the published texts as appeared in The Egyptian Coffin Texts formed the basis for all the subsequent studies. The composition of the so-called Book of Two Ways offers the best examples of highly elaborate representations of supernatural entities introduced into the corpus of the Coffin Texts.

During my intensive research on the composition of the so-called Book of Two Ways which has been going on for the past seventeen years, I discovered, to my surprise, a large number of iconographic details in the supposedly-published material that were simply skipped by the Coffin Texts editors. These include inter alia a number of new pictorial renderings of various supernatural entities. In my paper a brief reference will be made to images of the supernatural entities I discovered on the oldest surviving leather roll from Ancient Egypt (2300-2000 B.C.), the discovery of which I announced in the last International Congress of Egyptologists in Florence.

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The Ancient Egyptian Demonology Project: 2K BCE
"DemonBase" Launch

In both the modern and ancient world, intangible entities embody and are blamed for a host of physical and psychological afflictions, as well as being called upon to aid the sufferer. These beings are known in many cultures by many names. A sample of terms includes: gremlins, imps, faeries, ghosts, daemons, genies, Mischwesen, monsters, small gods, angels, and invisibilia. Although the Ancient Egyptians themselves had no specific all-encompassing generic label for this large category of beings, they were described in texts and imagery. For the ordinary person, they played vital roles as mechanisms for coping with and manifesting abstract stress, afflictions, and fears.

While liminal entities were familiar to the Ancient Egyptians, finding information on them today is difficult. There is currently no single source for the scholar or interested person to consult for further information on them. A number of general encyclopaedias of gods exist, as well as specialized resources on divine names and epithets, but not for "demons". To remedy this gap, our project has created a database of these entities.

Our approach combines philological, iconographic, and archaeological analysis of Coffin Texts, early Book of the Dead manuscripts, ivory wands (apotropaia), and decorated headrests. We include texts and images in a single database. The focus is on each individual being, categorized by its structural, functional, and essential characteristics. Two databases have been created: one for researchers that can be augmented and expanded by other scholars, and one that serves as an interactive portal for the public to learn about these entities. The former will be formally launched at the conference.

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Photo: File view from the DemonBase by K. Szpakowska
Following Seth’s Path? The Ambivalent Nature of Ancient Egyptian Donkey-Headed Deities

Egyptian gods are well known for their ability to take various shapes, in particular animal forms. Most animals living in Egypt are involved in these transformations. Amongst them, the donkey is often associated with the god Seth, known for his malevolent and ambivalent nature. This association is most apparent during the Ptolemaic Period, when Seth in the shape of a donkey is shown being killed in numerous temple reliefs, especially in Edfou. This connection is already clear earlier, especially during the New Kingdom, when donkey-headed gods seen at the prow of the solar bark defend it from attackers. These scenes associate the donkey with Seth, who is also known for his protective role in the solar journey. However, not all of the representations of donkey-headed gods are clearly linked to Seth, nor do they necessarily present evil qualities.

This talk will present the various functions of the donkey-headed figures in religious text and imagery, which populate the funerary world, from their first appearance to the Graeco-Roman Period. It will show that whilst the assumption that the donkey is equivalent to Seth is often true, there are some significant exceptions, which show the ambiguity and the richness of the Egyptian religious world.

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Photo: Shrine of Tutankhamun; reproduced from Piankoff, pl. 39
Akephalos: A Demon’s Origins and Transformation into ‘the Headless One’

The aim of this paper is to explore the possible origins and later adaptations of the Ancient Egyptian Akephalos, a demon also known as ‘the Headless One’. Its characteristics, attributes and functions are primarily portrayed within the Magical Papyrus PGM V.96-172, and later became subject within various modern magical formulae.

Since the translation of a Graeco-Egyptian papyrus fragment in the British Museum by Charles Wycliffe Goodwin in 1852, the Headless One has been amalgamated into various late 19th and early 20th centuries’ magical formulae. This adaptation of an ancient demon or protective deity is at the heart of this discussion. What was the intended role or function of the Headless One during the ancient period? How widespread was its appeal within superstitious communities of the Graeco Roman Period? Was this apparent religious identification utilized outside of the Ancient Egyptian borders?

This paper further aims to discuss the seeming inclusion of a headless deity – Ab Tuat – and his counterpart – Ap Tuat – within the 4th Division of the Duat, as described by Sir E.A. Wallis Budge in The Egyptian Heaven & Hell, and whether this widely acclaimed material had any bearing or influence on the re-interpretation of the original Akephalos as a demon called upon to assist the exorcism of a possessed person (as described in PGM V.96-172). Was the work of Budge instrumental to contemporaneous occultists’ appeal or were there other defining catalysts or components for its widespread usage?

Concluding with an exploration of how the Headless One has become entrenched within modern day spiritual movements (Golden Dawn, Theosophy, practitioners of Thelma, etc.) this paper will explore if the original function of the Akephalos remained unchanged or if it was adjusted in the multitude of translations and interpretations to fit the modern call upon ancient spirits in time of need.

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Image provided by J. R. Ward
Book of the Dead manuscripts form one of the largest corpora of funerary literature from Ancient Egypt and hence provide a unique insight into diversified private personal beliefs. Research on selected New Kingdom manuscripts builds the fundament to analyze the role of demonic entities within the divine context which the deceased encounters after death. It is not only of interest how the latter approaches them, but also how they interact with each other, since the entities not only have an impact on the deceased, but the deceased himself or herself also affects the demonic beings when confronted with them. Furthermore, this paper will illuminate the characteristics, qualifications and functions liminal entities are assigned to, what powers they can exercise to what extent, and what exceeds their abilities.

The attention will be turned in particular to the diegetic information that can be extracted from the composition of each individual entity and also from the compilation of grouped arrangements and lists. Gathered together, demons often generate a completely new level of potency which can differ considerably from sole appearances. When an entity is included into the Book of the Dead-“narrative” it adds individual characteristics to it by displaying certain information such as name, function or appearance. A gang of demons, however, might channel this diegetic information into a totally different and new direction covering aspects, due to the liaison, that could not have been touched by a single being. The thorough study of Book of the Dead- manuscripts in regard to demonic entities and diegetic lists allows a concentrated view not only on the nature of Ancient Egyptian demons but also on their universal importance.

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*Drawing: from P. Paris Louvre N. 3073, TM 134306, by F. Weber*
A Demonic and Angelic Bestiary?

On-going zoological research into the various animal species depicted in/on tombs, coffins, head rests, wands and Books of the Dead for a Demon/Angel Bestiary is presently raising more questions than answers. Most demons have both aggressive and protective functions suggesting that attack is the best form of defence. How does this relate to why particular species were chosen for depiction? What are those animals and does accurate identification of them down to species level actually matter or, as for many hieroglyphs, is it a particular feature or aspect of familial behaviour which is of more importance? The three small desert foxes of Ancient Egypt - Fennec, African Sand (now Pale) and Ruppell's - are strictly nocturnal and similar in breeding behaviour. Any one would have been equally suitable to appear on a head rest, so why was only one of them apparently used? Why do some selected species, for example mice, apparently occur nowhere else in Egyptian art? And, where they do, as with the crocodile, why is the depiction sometimes subtly different? The Crocodile hieroglyph shows a female cradling her "nest" while the demonic version is full head-up assault. Are there also any subtle nuances in the depictions of the same god/goddess and his/her demonic entity when used in the different contexts, for example those of Bes and Tawaret? This paper begins to examine each of these questions and to put forward some interim suggestions.

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Photo: Magic Wand, MMA 30.8.218, courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
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