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A Guardian Snake Deity Called Heneb Revealed*

Amr Gaber

(Taf. 6)

Abstract

One of the male snake deities, worshipped in ancient Egypt, is called Heneb. According to the textual evidence, he has a benevolent role in the Netherworld where he protects the deceased. Additionally, he guards the body of Osiris during the Mysteries of Khoiak. Moreover, he vanquishes the malevolent Apep who jeopardises the harmony of the universe, cuts off Seth's head and eliminates turmoil. He is the agathodemon of the twentieth nome of Upper Egypt where a temple was dedicated to his cult and he possessed his own clergy. Due to the similarity in writing with other snakes, the identity of the snake being discussed is often confused with others.

1 Introduction


The present article investigates a male snake deity from ancient Egypt, *hnb*, Heneb¹ who frequently appears since the Saitic Period. However, based on orthography and his connection with a specific location Herakleopolis² it seems that this snake was attested much earlier and his name was written as *hnbꜣꜣ*, Heneba during the Middle Kingdom. In the Graeco-Roman Period, he is mentioned in the texts of the temples of Edfu and Dendera. Thus, the aims of this article are to study the textual and iconographic evidence of this snake deity, to examine his functions and to find out whether there are different snakes mainly due to orthographic reasons or only one so that the confusion can be eliminated.

2 Documents

(a) The oldest attestation of the Heneb-snake (table I: 1) so far is from the tomb of Ibi (TT 36) dating to the Saitic Period.³ A text reads: *rdi n.f ntr hnb m-sꜣ.f hsf sbiw*, “the god⁴ gave him (the deceased) the Heneb-snake to protect him and who overthrows enemies”.⁵

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¹ Wb III, 113, 5; LGG V, 220a–b.

² P. Montet, *Géographie de l'Égypte ancienne*, Deuxième partie . . .  Tꜣ šmꜥ To-chemâ, La Haute Égypte, Paris 1961, 189.

³ For a preliminary report about this tomb, see K. P. Kuhlmann/W. Schenkel, *Vorbericht über die Aufnahmearbeiten im Grab des Jbj (Theben Nr. 36)*, in: MDAIK 28, 1972, 201–11.

⁴ The word *ntr* does not refer to a particular god. For the usage of the word *ntr* with no apparent relationship to a particular god, see Wb II, 358, 1. Thanks are due to Wolfgang Schenkel of Tübingen University for pointing this out. For a discussion about *ntr* and *pꜣ ntr* in the instructions of Ani, see J. F. Quack *Die Lehren des Ani: Ein neuägyptischer Weisheitstext in seinem kulturellen Umfeld*, OBO 141, Freiburg/Göttingen 1994, 72–4. For the usage of *pꜣ ntr* in the instructions of Amenemope, it is not an evidence of monotheism as the author of the instructions clearly possesses polytheism, see V. Pierre-Michel Laisney, *L'Enseignement d'Aménémopé*, *Studia pohl: Series Maior* 19, Rome 2007, 247–9.

⁵ K. P. Kuhlmann/W. Schenkel, *Das Grab des Ibi, Obergutsverwalters der Gottesgemahlin des Amun: (Thebanisches Grab Nr. 36), I: Beschreibung der unterirdischen Kult- und Bestattungsanlage*, AV 15, Mainz 1983, 72, text 98, Tafel 23, lines 16–17; id., *Eine Beschreibung der Grabdekoration mit der Aufforderung zu kopieren und zum Hinterlassen von Besucherinschriften aus saitischer Zeit*, in: MDAIK 29, 1973, 207, line. 17, 210.

(b) In the demotic papyrus of Manchester, John Rylands Library 9 (513 BC),⁶ the snake deity in question (table I: 2) is mentioned twice in the hieratic section of the papyrus in two identical passages. They state (col. 22, 6 and col. 23, 8):⁷ *iw.f n ds n hnb hry-ib n3rf*, “he is for the knife of the Heneb-snake who resides in Naref”.⁸ This passage is part of a threatening text aimed at warning anyone who attacks the tablet of the god (Amun-Re) to be under the control of Heneb’s knife which is one of other threats mentioned to prevent this attack. Griffith,⁹ and following him Vittmann,¹⁰ translated *hnb* as “the Heneb-snake” while Morschauser,¹¹ reads *hnbw* and translates it as “the slaughterers” a rendering most probably influenced by the knife mentioned in the text. It is worthy to note that according to this text Heneb is not feared for its bites or venom but for his knife.¹²

(c) An inscription on a statue, which belongs to a princess called Mereyt-nebes, dating to the reign of king Apris or king Amasis of the Saitic Period (Private Collection, Alsace), reads: *hnb ir.f dw r it(ty).fy r.i*, “Heneb, he will harm the one who works against me”.¹³ The text implies that the princess is under the protection of the Heneb-snake (table I: 3) deity and threatens anyone who tries to hurt her that Heneb will act against him.

(d) In another inscription, which runs on the dorsal pillar of a statue (Louvre A88) dating from the Late Period/Early Ptolemaic Period, the Heneb-snake is mentioned (table I: 4). Among the activities, which the owner of the statue, Hor, did, including the building of a temple for Heryshef, was presenting gardens to Heneb. The reason of the donation was to secure daily offerings for the temple and the owners of the land were compensated with goods from Hor’s own estate.¹⁴ This text reflects the primeval aspect of the snake deity:

⁶ It is also known as Petition of Peteese, see TM 47388.

⁷ F. L. Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester: with facsimiles and complete translations, II: Hand-Copies of the Earlier Documents (Nos. I–IX)*, Hildesheim/New York 1972, pl. 39 (col. 22, 6); pl. 40 (col. 23, 8).

⁸ See F. L. Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester: with facsimiles and complete translations, III: Key-List, Translations, Commentaries and Indices*, Hildesheim/New York 1972, 108; G. Vittmann, *Der demotische Papyrus Rylands 9, I: Text und Übersetzung*, ÄUAT 38, Wiesbaden 1998, 110; L. Díaz-Iglesias Llanos, *El ciclo mítico de Heracleópolis Magna: continuidad y reelaboración a partir de las fuentes funerarias y culturales*, Aula Ægyptiaca - Studia 7, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona 2014, 294.

⁹ Griffith, *Catalogue of the Demotic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester: with facsimiles and complete translations, III*, 110.

¹⁰ G. Vittmann, *Der demotische Papyrus Rylands 9, II: Kommentare und Indizes*, ÄAT 38, Wiesbaden 1998, 581–2.

¹¹ S. Morschauser, *Threat-formulae in Ancient Egypt: A Study of the History, Structure and Use of Threats and Curses in Ancient Egypt*, Baltimore 1990, 109.

¹² For knife-wielding snakes depicted on magical wand dating to the Twelfth Dynasty (BM EA 18175), see J. Robertson, *The Early History of “New Kingdom” Netherworld Iconography: A Late Middle Kingdom Apotropaic Wand Reconsidered*, in: D. P. Silverman/W. K. Simpson/J. Wegner (eds), *Archaism and Innovation: Studies in the Culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, New Haven/Philadelphia 2009, 438–42, fig. 7. Also for a human-headed cobra holding a knife on a magical wand dating to the Middle Kingdom (MAA 15.3.197), see H. Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens. Eine typologische und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der sog. “Zaubermesser” des Mittleren Reichs, II*, Munich 1965, 50–2, 119, Abt. 13; J. H. Taylor, *Journey through the afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, London 2010, 38, no.6.

¹³ O. Perdu, *Hommage d’une princesse saïte à son précepteur*, in: BIFAO 105, 2005, 216, figs. 2, 6, 7; Llanos, *El ciclo mítico de Heracleópolis Magna*, 430, note 444.

¹⁴ D. Klotz, *The Statue of the dioikêtês Harchebi/Archibios* Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art 47–12, in: BIFAO 109, 2009, 297; N. Spencer, *Sustaining Egyptian culture? Non-royal initiatives in Late Period temple building*, in: L. Bareš/F. Coppens/K. Smoláriková (eds), *Egypt in Transition: Social and Religious Development*

rdi.n.i hsp sn m-b3h ntr b3 3 m sp tpy¹⁵ hnb b3 3nh n r^c,¹⁶ “I gave two gardens before the god, the great *ba* since the first time, the Heneb-snake, the living *ba* of Re”.¹⁷

(e) According to “the Book of the Victory over Seth”, found in P. Louvre N 3129 (350–250 BC; col. C4–7)¹⁸ and P. BM EA 10252 (307–306 BC; col. 14, 4–10),¹⁹ the Heneb-snake (table I: 5) is mentioned not only as protector of cities, i.e., Naref and Herakleopolis from the foes but also as vanquisher of Seth by bringing Seth’s head. Moreover, a passage provides a description of a personified snake as he has two hands. It reads: ... *hwt-nny-nsw m ndm-ib n3rf mn.w rwd.w hnb hr s3w imyw.f 3wy.f(y) rwd r shr sbiw in.n.f tp n pfy whi-sp.f*, “... Herakleopolis is in joy, Naref is durable and strong, the Heneb-snake protects what is inside it; his hands are strong to overthrow the foes, he brought the head of that, the one who failed at his time (Seth)”.²⁰

(f) In “the Book of Overthrowing Apep” attested in P. Bremner-Rhind (P. BM EA 10188; 305 BC),²¹ a passage mentions the Heneb-snake to stop Apep (table I: 6). It reads (col. 27, 24):²² *dm sw sp-sn hr sw sp-sn 3pp hr sw n ht hr sw n hnb nn h3rw.f sp-sn nn dpi.f 33w sp-sn*, “Annihilate him, annihilate him. Fell him, fell him, (even) Apep fell him into the fire. Fell him because of the Heneb-snake. He shall not rage, not rage. He shall not inhale the wind, the wind”.²³

(g) In the ritual called “Revelations of the Mysteries of the Four Balls” found in the P. MMA New York 35.9.21 (332–50 BC),²⁴ the Heneb-snake (table I: 7) was called upon among other deities by the deceased to hear the demands of the deceased. A passage reads (col. 28, 7): ... *i inpw i hnb i r3p ntr 3 ... mi.n sdm.tn mdw.i*, “... O Anubis, O Heneb, O

of Egypt in the First Millennium BCE, Proceedings of an International Conference Prague, September 1–4, 2009, Prague 2010, 462.

¹⁵ LGG II, 667b.

¹⁶ LGG II, 671c–672a.

¹⁷ J. Vercoutter, Les statues du général Hor, gouverneur d’Hérakléopolis, de Busiris et d’Héliopolis (Louvre A. 88, Alexandrie, s. n.), in: BIFAO 49, 1950, 89. See also G. Gorre, Les relations du clergé Égyptien et des lagides d’après les sources privées, *Studia Hellenistica* 45, Leuven 2009, 201; J.H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt, IV: The Twentieth to the Twenty-sixth Dynasties*, Chicago 1906, § 972. For a comprehensive study of the statue including a commentary and bibliography, see O. Perdu, *Les statues privées de la fin de l’Égypte pharaonique* (1069 av. J.-C. –395 apr. J.-C.), I: hommes, Paris 2012, 356–65.

¹⁸ TM 56940.

¹⁹ TM 57226.

²⁰ Urk. VI, 15, 5; DZA 26.969.660; A. Kucharek, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien. Band 4: die Klagelieder von Isis und Nephthys in Texten der Griechisch-Römischen Zeit, Supplemente zu den Schriften der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 22*, Heidelberg 2010, 145–6; N. Fiedler, *Sprüche gegen Seth: Bemerkungen zu drei späten Tempelritualen*, PhD thesis, University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg 2011, 123–4; Llanos, *El ciclo mítico de Heracleópolis Magna*, 428–9.

²¹ TM 48496.

²² DZA 26.969.710.

²³ R. O. Faulkner, *The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: III: D. The Book of Overthrowing ‘Apep*, in: *JEA* 23, 1937, 173; id., *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind* (British Museum No. 10188), *BaE* 3, Brussels 1933, 27, 24.

²⁴ TM 57080. For an earlier date, see J.-C. Goyon, *Le papyrus d’Imouthès Fils de Psintaès au Metropolitan Museum of Art de New-York* (Papyrus MMA 35.9.21), *New York* 1999, 3–7. For the rejection of this earlier date, see J.F. Quack, *Der pränatale Geschlechtsverkehr von Isis und Osiris sowie eine Notiz zum Alter des Osiris*, in: *SAK* 32, 2004, 331, note 20; see also M. Smith, *The Great Decree Issued to the Nome of the Silent Land*, in: *RdE* 57, 2006, 217, note 3.

Reshep, the great god ... come and may you hear my words”.²⁵ Another passage from the same ritual shows that the Heneb-snake is summoned among other deities to vanquish Seth. It reads (col. 30, 7): *ir iw.k m rsy shr twk n3y ntrw rsyw imn mntw nhbt hnb shmt b3stt ir.sn ntf.sn im.k*, “if you (Seth) come from the south, the southern gods will overthrow you. Amun, Monthu, Nekhbet, the Heneb-snake, Sekhmet and Bastet fulfill their office on you”.²⁶

(h) The name of the deity in question is written in demotic as *hb* with a prominent snake determinative on a quartz pebble stone which was a part of fifteen pebbles found around the head of a mummy buried without a coffin in the tomb of Pa-di-kem at Tuna el-Gebel which is a secondary burial.²⁷ This tomb is from a time prior to the dating of the tomb of Petosiris²⁸ or during the third century BC.²⁹ Heneb is probably associated with another protective snake deity called Hemi who appears on the pebbles.³⁰

(i) According to P. Tebtunis (second century AD)³¹ (Copenhagen, Carlsberg Papyrus Collection P. 182 Ro + Florence, Istituto Papirologico ‘G. Vitelli’ PSI inv. I 77 Ro),³² in addition to the texts accompanying the fecundity figures of the twentieth nome of Upper Egypt, Herakleopolis in the temples of Horus at Edfu³³ and Isis on the island of Philae,³⁴ the correlation between the twentieth nome of Upper Egypt and the Heneb-snake as the sacred snake of the nome in question is established (table I: 20). On another occasion, the plural form of his name (table I: 9) is used to refer to male divine snakes³⁵ at Edfu, *s3k-hrw*³⁶ and

²⁵ J.-C. Goyon, *Textes mythologiques II. «Les révélations du mystère des Quatre Boules»*, in: BIFAO 75, 1975, 374–375; id., *Le papyrus d’Imouthès Fils de Psintaès au Metropolitan Museum of Art de New-York* (Papyrus MMA 35.9.21), 68; Fiedler, *Sprüche gegen Seth*, 376.

²⁶ See Goyon, in: BIFAO 75, 386–387[222]; id., *Le papyrus d’Imouthès Fils de Psintaès au Metropolitan Museum of Art de New-York*, 70; Fiedler, *Sprüche gegen Seth*, 383.

²⁷ For this pebble and the other pebbles inscribed with the names of the deities and a profound analysis of their symbolism, see M. Minas-Nerpel, *Pebbles inscribed in Demotic from a burial in the tomb of Padikem at Tuna el-Gebel*, in: *Enchoria* 33, 2012–2013, 65–89, fig. 17.

²⁸ S. Gabra/É. Drioton/P. Perdrizet/W.G. Waddell, *Rapport sur les fouilles d’Hermoupolis Ouest (Touna el-Gebel)*, Cairo 1941, 11.

²⁹ G. Gorre, *Les relations du clergé Égyptien et des lagides d’après les sources privées*, *Studia Hellenistica* 45, Leuven 2009, 194.

³⁰ M. Minas-Nerpel, in: *Enchoria* 33, 2012–2013, 74.

³¹ For 1–199 AD, see TM 56093. See also <http://pcarlsberg.ku.dk/publishedtexts/#PC182>.

³² J. Osing, *The Carlsberg Papyri 2: Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis I*, CNI Publications 17, Copenhagen 1998, 237, 269, pl. 24, fragment L16, line 21.

³³ E I³, 343, 7; DZA 26.969.670; C. Leitz, *Die Gaumonographien in Edfu und ihre Papyrusvarianten: ein überregionaler Kanon im spätzeitlichen Ägypten. Soubassementstudien III, I: Text, Studien zur spätägyptischen Religion* 9, Wiesbaden 2014, 163, Tafeln 41, 42; W. Waitkus, *Edfu: die kulttopographische Inschrift am Sanktuar des Tempels von Edfu, Die Inschriften des Tempels von Edfu: Begleitheft 7*, Gladbeck 2014, 129.

³⁴ Bénédite, *Le temple de Philae*, MMAF 13, Paris 1893, 93, 14–15. C. Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis: Soubassementstudien II, Studien zur spätägyptischen Religion* 8, Wiesbaden 2012, 236.

³⁵ For these two snakes, see W. Waitkus, *Die Heiligen Schlangen von Edfu*, in W. Waitkus (ed.), *Festschrift für Dieter Kurth zum 65. Geburtstag, Aegyptiaca Hamburgensia 1*, Gladbeck 2008, 265–88; A. Gaber, *Some Snake Deities from the Temple of Edfu*, in P.I. Kousoulis/N. Lazaridis (eds), *Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Egyptologists, University of the Aegean, Rhodes 22–29 May 2008*, OLA 241, I, Leuven 2015, 1093–1114. This text accompanies an offering scene depicted on the second register of the western section of the northern wall of the Naos, see E IV, 98, 11–12.

³⁶ LGG VI, 159b–c.

iry-dndn.³⁷ These beneficent snakes protect the temple of Edfu and prevent disorder as a text, inscribed on the third register of the north exterior wall of the western section of the naos, reads: *hnpw hnt hwt-hrw ... hr hnp h3^cty*, “the Heneb-snakes³⁸ in the House of Horuses³⁹ ... to drive away turmoil”.⁴⁰ In this text, the change of the orthography from ‘b’ into ‘p’ can be due to alliteration so as to fit with the verb *hnp*. The *hnbw*-snakes name (table I: 21) is inscribed accompanying a snake with seven heads depicted resting on a canopic chest only once in the temple of Hibis at Khargeh Oasis on the northern wall of Sanctuary (A).⁴¹ In contrast Quaegebeur⁴² and following him Cruz-Urbe,⁴³ and Egberts,⁴⁴ suggested that they are seven snakes. Egbert postulates that they represent the hypostases of the Heneb-snake⁴⁵ and not one snake with seven heads.⁴⁶ The scene is now in a very bad state of preservation being broken in several parts; hence, it is inconclusive to decide which opinion is valid.⁴⁷

The Heneb-snake (table I: 10) is also used as an epithet of the king at Edfu *hwnw n hnb wd sdbw n 3pp*, “child of the Heneb-snake, who kills the allies of Apep”.⁴⁸ Moreover, in a text accompanying Heryshef in an offering scene of the *atef*-crown depicted in the *Mammisi* of Edfu, the king is also described as the son of the Heneb-snake (table I: 12): *hrd n hnb*, “child of the Heneb-snake”.⁴⁹ A third text, accompanying the king while slaughtering Apep in the *Mammisi* of Edfu, mentions the Heneb-snake (table I: 11):⁵⁰ *wnn s3-r^c ... hr hdm.f hr*

³⁷ LGG I, 413b.

³⁸ LGG V, 220c–221a.

³⁹ The name of the temple of Horus at Edfu, see H. Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques*, IV, Le Caire 1927, 113.

⁴⁰ E IV, 98, 15; E X/I, pl. 88; SERaT 900695.

⁴¹ For a snake with seven heads resting on a pedestal, see N. De Garis Davies, *The Temple of Hibis in El Khargeh Oasis*, III, PMMA 17, New York 1953, pl. 3, II; H. Sternberg-el Hotabi, *Die ‘Götterliste’ des Sanktuars im Hibis-Tempel von El-Chargeh: Überlegungen zur Tradierung und Kodifizierung religiösen und kulttopographischen Gedankengutes*, in: M. Minas/J. Zeidler (eds), *Aspekte spätägyptischer Kultur: Festschrift für Erich Winter zum 65. Geburtstag*, Aegyptiaca Treverensia 7, Mainz 1994, 243. For the Heneb-snake with seven heads on a canopic chest in the temple of Hibis, see Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis: Soubassementstudien II*, 247, Abb. 43.

⁴² For the reading as *hnbw* as the name of seven snakes, see J. Quaegebeur, *Le dieu égyptien Shaï dans la religion et l’onomastique*, OLA 2, Leuven 1975, 164.

⁴³ For seven snakes see E. Cruz-Urbe, *Hibis Temple Project, Volume I: Translations, Commentary, Discussions and Sign List*, San Antonio 1988, 9.

⁴⁴ For the *hnbw*-snakes as seven snakes and not one snake with seven heads, see A. Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning: A Study of the Ancient Egyptian Rites of Consecrating the Meret-chests and Driving the Calves*. Volume I: Text, *Egyptologische Uitgaven 8*, Leiden 1995, 320.

⁴⁵ Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 320.

⁴⁶ For a doubtful snake with seven heads, see also W. Waitkus, *Die Beziehung der Heiligen Schlangen zur Urgötternekropole (j3t ntrjt) und zu den verstorbenen Urgöttern*, in: D. Kurth/W. Waitkus (eds), *Edfu: Materialien und Studien, Die Inschriften des Tempels von Edfu: Begleitheft 6*, Gladbeck 2010, 148. I am grateful to W. Waitkus for providing me with a pdf copy of his article.

⁴⁷ Special thanks to Ali Kebesh, Inspector of Antiquities at Khargeh Oasis for providing me with up to date photos for this scene.

⁴⁸ E IV, 237, 8; A. M. Blackman/A. H. Fairman, *The Significance of the Ceremony HWT BHSW in the Temple of Horus at Edfu*, in: *JEA 36*, 1950, 68; Kousoulis, *Magic and Religion as a Performative Theological Unity*, 78; A. Block, *Der verborgene Königsmythos von Edfu: Wiederentdeckung eines Konzepts dreidimensionaler Literatur*, *Aegyptiaca Hamburgensia 4*, Gladbeck 2014, 272.

⁴⁹ Mam. E. 80, 13–14; SERaT 920077; DZA 26.969.630.

⁵⁰ Mam. E. 77, 18; SERaT 920072; DZA 26.969.620.

npd nk m ḥc sw mi ḥd-ntr(?)⁵¹ ḥwn n ḥnb db3 tmsw nw smsty⁵², “the son of Re ... is upon his throne while slaughtering the Nek-snake at midday. He is like the slaughter god (?), the child of the Heneb-snake, who punishes the crimes of Semsty-snake”.⁵³ Another inscription, accompanying a fecundity figure (Hapy) in the ambulatory around the sanctuary of the temple of Edfu, mentions how the king offers to the Heneb-snake (table I: 8): *swr.f ḥtpw n ḥnb*, “He (the king) makes great the offerings to the Heneb-snake”.⁵⁴

(j) In the temple of Hathor at Dendera, a text, accompanying the title of an offering scene representing the king while offering the *atef*-crown to Heryshef, reflects another protective role of the Heneb-snake (table I: 17). It reads:⁵⁵ *ḥnb ḥr ḥn ḥc.w.k*, “the Heneb-snake protects your body”.⁵⁶ The same function, i.e., protection of the body but this time for Osiris during the Mysteries of Khoiak by the Heneb-snake (table I: 15), is stated again in a text accompanying a scene of the resurrection of Osiris in the presence of Isis and Nephthys, attested in the Osirian chapel, west no. 1: *in iw.k m nn-nswt-t3wy m itrty-t3-šmḥ wts.n tp.k 3tf ḥw.tw sḥ.k m ḥbs-b3g ḥnb ḥr ḥn ḥc.k*, “Are you (Osiris) in Herakleopolis in the two shrines of Upper Egypt? Your head is crowned by the *atef*-crown, your mummy is protected in the necropolis,⁵⁷ the Heneb-snake protects your body”.⁵⁸ A text accompanying Heryshef of the Herakleopolite nome, inscribed on the dado of the eastern wall of the Osirian chapel, west no. 1, reads: *di.i n.k it.k ḥn[b] m s3.k*, “I give to you your father, Hen-[eb] (table I: 14) as your protection”.⁵⁹ Another text accompanying Heryshef in a procession⁶⁰ in the Osirian chapel, east no. 2, shows how the Heneb-snake is connected to a lake in the nome (table I: 13):⁶¹ *ḥnp m ḥtp (?) [...] ḥr ḥc.f m-k3b (?) š-m3ḥ ḥr sm3 iht r [...]f*, “the Heneb-snake is sat-

⁵¹ TLA identifies this word as *ḥd*, “an epithet for the Sun”, see DZA 21.889.790, Lemma no. 41900; Wb I, 238, 13. See also LGG II 176a. The *ntr* sign could be a determinative.

⁵² For Semsty as the snake form of Apep, see P. Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon: A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*, OLA 79, Leuven 1997, 850; P.I. Kousoulis, *Magic and Religion as a Performative Theological Unity: The Apotropaic “Ritual of Overthrowing Apophis”*, PhD Thesis, Liverpool University, Liverpool 1999, 254–5.

⁵³ Kousoulis, *Magic and Religion*, 78, note 444, 99–100.

⁵⁴ E I³, 343, 7; DZA 26.969.670; Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 247; id., *Die Gaumonographien in Edfu und ihre Papyrusvarianten: ein überregionaler Kanon im spätzeitlichen Ägypten. Soubassementstudien III, I: Text*, 163, Tafel 42; Waitkus, *Edfu: die kulttopographische Inschrift am Sanktuar des Tempels von Edfu*, 129.

⁵⁵ D XI/I, 179, 3; SERaT 111741; DZA 26.969.680. See also W. Waitkus, *Die Beziehung der Heiligen Schlangen zur Urgötternekropole (jAt nTrjt) und zu den verstorbenen Urgöttern*, in: D. Kurth/W. Waitkus (eds), *Edfu: Materialien und Studien. Die Inschriften des Tempels von Edfu: Begleitheft 6*, Gladbeck 2010, 147.

⁵⁶ Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 24.

⁵⁷ For *ḥbs-b3g*, “the one who clothed the weary one” as one of the doorkeepers, see LGG V, 112a.

⁵⁸ D XI/I, 284, 5; S. Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes [I]*. Transcription et traduction, BdE 117, Le Caire 1997, 152; A. Mariette, *Dendérah: Description générale du grand temple de cette ville*, IV, Paris 1873, pl. 73 (col. 25); Llanos, *El ciclo mítico de Heracleópolis Magna*, 432; Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 247.

⁵⁹ D XI/I, 276, 7–8; Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes [I]*. Transcription et traduction, 148; Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 247.

⁶⁰ For the jars in the Canopic procession containing water and not parts of the body of Osiris each pouring from the representative of a certain nome. The pouring of water on the figure of the so-called corn-Osiris symbolises the gradual reintegration of the body of Osiris, see H. Beinlich, *Die “Osirisreliquien”: zum Motiv der Körperzergliederung in der altägyptischen Religion*, ÄA 42, Wiesbaden 1984, 80–207.

⁶¹ D XI/I, 80, 6.

isfied [...] his body is in the Lake of Maet⁶² to unite with the offerings for his [...]”.⁶³ A fourth text, inscribed in the Osirian chapel west no. 2, stresses on the same function which is carried out by the Heneb-snake (table I: 16), i.e., protecting Osiris: *hnb m s3.k*, “the Heneb-snake is your protection (Osiris)”.⁶⁴ In an offering scene of the *atef*-crown, the text accompanying the Roman Emperor Augustus describes him as: *sw mi hnb bs3 m n3rf*, “you are like the Heneb-snake (table I: 18), the protector of Naref”.⁶⁵

(k) On the dado of the external east wall of the naos of the temple of Isis at Philae a text accompanying a fecundity figure executed during the reign of the Roman Emperor, Augustus, reads: *h[nb] m s3.k hr hsf ndbw*, “the Heneb-snake (table I: 19) is your protection, to drive away the evil ones”.⁶⁶

3 Resolving the Conflict with Other Snakes

There are other snakes which are similar to the Heneb-snake in writing,⁶⁷ i.e., Heneba, mentioned in the *Coffin Texts* and in P. Louvre N 3129. Additionally, several Henepe(t)-snakes are attested in the temple of Edfu and in P. Brooklyn 47.218.48+85 (Saitic Period),⁶⁸ known as Brooklyn Medical Papyrus, which contains descriptions of different snakes and treatments from snake bites, spiders and scorpions.⁶⁹

During the Middle Kingdom, a snake called Heneba, whose name can be rendered as “the wriggler” and might have been derived from the verb *hnb3b3*, “writhe, undulate or throb”,⁷⁰ is attested twice in the *Coffin Texts*.⁷¹ Firstly, in Spell 336 (table II: 1), he is con-

⁶² It is the name of a big lake located in Herkleopolis Magna, see H. Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques*, V, Le Caire 1928, 120. It is mentioned in Chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead of the papyrus of Nebseny dating to late Eighteenth Dynasty (London, BM EA 9900). It is also mentioned in Chapter 181 of the Book of the Dead in the papyrus of Gautseshen (Cairo, JE 95838) dating to the late Twenty-first Dynasty, see S. Quirke, *Going out in Daylight - prt m hrw: The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead: Translation, Sources, Meaning*, GHP Egyptology 20, London 2013, 55. For *wdb n m3't*, “the Shore of Maet” in Chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead which is most probably the Lake of Maet, see H. Brunner, *Osiris in Byblos*, in: *RdE* 27, 1975, 38–9.

⁶³ Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes* [I], 44; Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 247; Llanos, *El ciclo mítico de Heracleópolis Magna*, 113–4.

⁶⁴ D X/I, 329, 7; DZA 26.969.690; Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes* [I], 177.

⁶⁵ D XII/I, 115, 15–16; Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 247.

⁶⁶ Bénédite, *Le temple de Philæ*, 93, 14–15; Leitz, *Geographisch-osirianische Prozessionen aus Philae, Dendara und Athribis*, 236. See also C. Leitz/D. Mendel/M. el-Bialy, *Die Außenwände und westlichen Seitenkapellen des Tempels von Athribis, II: Tafeln und Textsynopsen*, Cairo 2015, 212. Special thanks to Bassem Helmy for providing me with up to date photos of the text.

⁶⁷ Not to be confused with a deity called Henby (*hnby*), “the traveler” who appears in Chapter 180 of the *Book of the Dead* and the *Litany of Re*, see E. Hornung, *Das Buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen (Sonnenlitanei): nach den Versionen des Neuen Reiches*, 1: Text, *Aegyptiaca Helvetica* 2, Genève 1975, 246; G. Lapp, *The Papyrus of Nebseni (BM EA 9900): The Texts of Chapter 180 with New Kingdom Parallels*, *British Museum Occasional Paper* 139, London 2002, 46; LGG V, 219a.

⁶⁸ For the dating of the second half of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty based on paleographic study, see U. Verhoeven, *Untersuchungen zur späthieratischen Buchschrift*, OLA 88, Leuven 2001, 306.

⁶⁹ S. Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d'ophiologie: Papyrus du Brooklyn Museum No. 47.218.48 et .85*, *Bibliothèque Générale* 11, Le Caire 1989, 17 (§ 24), 27 (§ 31), 108 (§ 80a). For the dating of this papyrus as 450–300 BC, see TM 58496.

⁷⁰ W. Ward, *The Four Egyptian Homographic Roots B-3. Etymological and Egypto-Semitic Studies*, *Studia Phol: Series Major* 6, Rome 1978, 29; Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 320, no. 6.

nected to Herakleopolis as the text reads: *ink hnb33 hry-ib nny-nsw*, “I am Heneba who is in the heart of Herakleopolis”.⁷² Secondly, in Spell 436 (table II: 2–3), which is a spell to drive away a snake and destroy its venom, he is a protector snake that helps Osiris in the realm of the dead where his duties include: *hsf rrk sm3 mtwt.f hsf rrk hd k3w i sc-tp inn-nhbt hmt nw hftyw nw wsir i hnb33 iwtv* “*wy.f rdwy.f in 33 ib.k hr nw tpy r3.k rdw.n n.k mwt.k srkt pr mwt.k r.k hm n m33t n.k hs*”,⁷³ “driving off the Rerek-snake, destroying its venom, driving off the Rerek-snake, destroying the Kaou-snake.⁷⁴ O who cuts off the head, who removes the neck, who harms the foes of Osiris. O Heneba, who is without arms or legs.⁷⁵ Are you arrogant because of what is in your mouth? (and) what your mother Serket gave you? Your mother comes forth against you. Retreat before the One who sees you, weak one”.⁷⁶ From the sheer weight of evidence presented, it is apparent that Heneba (table II: 1–4) is identical to the Heneb-snake⁷⁷ (table I: 1–21) based on his connection to Herakleopolis and his benevolent role. Moreover, another passage from “the Book of Averting the Evil”, found in P. Louvre N 3129 (table II: 4), where different parts of the body of Seth are given to various deities, reads (g52): *rdi.tw g3h*⁷⁸ *.k n hnb3*, “your belly (Seth) is given to the Heneba-snake”.⁷⁹ This passage links between the Heneb-snake and the Heneba-snake as both are mentioned in the same papyrus. Borghouts sees that Heneb in Spell 436 is a denomination of the dangerous snake i.e., Rerek-snake.⁸⁰ Several points should be highlighted regarding the previous opinion. Firstly, the Rerek-snake is a malevolent snake and its name is used to refer to Apep⁸¹ while Heneb is the one who fells Apep. Secondly, another malicious snake

⁷¹ D. van der Plas/J. F. Borghouts, *Coffin Texts Word Index*, Publications Interuniversitaires de Recherches Égyptologiques Informatisées 6, Utrecht/Paris 1988, 205; R. van der Molen, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, *Probleme der Ägyptologie* 15, Leiden 2000, 338.

⁷² CT IV, 330t; Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 320, no. 6. Sarcophagus B1L, see C. Carrier, *Textes des sarcophages du moyen empire égyptien*, I: spells [1] à [354], Monaco 2004, 840–1.

⁷³ For “the weak one” as an epithet for the Heneba-snake, see LGG VI, 54b.

⁷⁴ Faulkner translated the second type of snakes as the Kaou-snake and Carrier followed him, see R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, II: Spells 355–787, Oxford 2005, 75; C. Carrier, *Textes des sarcophages du moyen empire égyptien*, II: spells [355] à [787], Monaco 2004, 1052–3. Leitz reads it as the Kaou-snakes “the bull-snakes”. For the bull-snakes which are mentioned only in the spells of the *Coffin Texts* three times, see LGG V, 276 b–c.

⁷⁵ See also J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy According to Ancient Egyptian Conceptions*, *Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to Numen)* V, Leiden 1960, 102; Nyord, *Breathing Flesh*, 263. For *iwtv wy.fy iwtv rdwy.fy* as an epithet for a guardian deity called Nekhet, see E VI, 159, 3; LGG I, 158b.

⁷⁶ CT V, 287a–c; CT V, 288a–c; LGG V, 220a–b; Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, II, 75; Carrier, *Textes des sarcophages du moyen empire égyptien*, II, 1052–3.

⁷⁷ Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 320, no. 6. For *hnb* as a shortened form of *hnb33*, see Ward, *The Four Egyptian Homographic Roots B-3*, 29.

⁷⁸ For *g3h* as shoulder (?), see D. Meeks, *Année lexicographique: Égypte ancienne*, 1 (1977, 2^{ème} édition, Paris 1988, 77.4614; TLA lemma-no. 166490. For another word meaning shoulder or arm called *k3h*, see Wb V, 19, 6–14; TLA lemma-no. 159830; R. Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, CNI Publications 37, Copenhagen 2009, 245. For *g3h* as belly (?), see J.H. Walker, *Studies in Ancient Egyptian Anatomical Terminology*, Australian Centre for Egyptology Studies 4, Warminster 1996, 277.

⁷⁹ Urk VI, 83, 11; DZA 26.969.650.

⁸⁰ F.J. Borghouts, *An early Book of Gates: Coffin Texts*, spell 336, in: J.H. Kamstra/H. Milde/K. Wagten-donk (eds), *Funerary Symbols and Religion: Essays dedicated to Professor M. S. H. G. Heerma van Voss on the occasion of his retirement from the Chair of the History of Ancient Religions at the University of Amsterdam*, Kampen 1988, 22, note 71.

⁸¹ For this snake, see LGG IV, 701c–702a; J.F. Borghouts, *Book of the Dead [39]: From Shouting to Structure*, *Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch* 10, Wiesbaden 2007; id., *The Victorious Eyes: A Structural Anal-*

is being destroyed by the spell and is mentioned right after the Rerek-snake, i.e., Kaou-snake. Thirdly, additional evidence that the Rerek-snake and the Heneb-snake are two different snakes is that the former's mother is Nut, as mentioned in Spell 885 of the *Coffin Texts*,⁸² while the latter's mother is Serket according to Spell 436 of the *Coffin Texts*. Fourthly, in contrast to the useful tasks which the Heneb-snake undertakes as harming the enemies of Osiris it seems that it can be a threat to the deceased. This is the only time when the Heneb-snake is mentioned in a negative role that is why he was asked in the spell to move back. Last but not least, it is worthy to note that the Heneb-snake appears in this spell on two coffins from the Middle Kingdom.⁸³

A malevolent female snake called *hnp(t)*, "Henepe(t)",⁸⁴ is mentioned only once (table III: 2) in the temple of Edfu as the king declares that: *hnp.(t) hnp(t) dn tpt.s*, "I have (*hnp*) driven away the Henepe(t)-snake (and) I have cut off her head".⁸⁵ Wilson recognises this snake as a different one but ascribes the change of the name of the snake to alliteration invented by scribes in the temple of Edfu.⁸⁶ As for Leitz, he identifies this snake with the beneficial Henepet-snake of the Edfu temple and that one which appears in P. Brooklyn 47.218.48+85.⁸⁷ Kousoulis suggests that based on the similarity in writing to the Heneb-snake, it can be postulated that both names are for one snake having good and bad aspects.⁸⁸ The last suggestion contradicts with the good aspects previously mentioned for the Heneb-snake in the temple of Edfu. Furthermore, the king is called "child of the Heneb-snake"⁸⁹ so it would be very unlikely that the king kills his father. Besides, the suffix pronoun shows that it refers to a feminine substantive where as the Heneb-snake of Edfu is male. In another text in Edfu (table III: 1), the Henepet-snake is mentioned among a group of divine snakes and states that the Henepet-snake gets rid of Seth and the name is used as an epithet to refer to Renenet.⁹⁰ This substantive is also feminine as it ends with 't'. It reads: *hnpt hnp hmty*, "the Henepet-snake"⁹¹ drives away Hemety (Seth)".⁹² Egberts argues that *hnpt* is a worm and not a snake,⁹³ while the LGG groups this snake with the Henepe(t)-snake of P. Brooklyn 47.218.48+85.⁹⁴

The Henepe(t)-snake (table III: 3–4) is mentioned in P. Brooklyn 47.218.48+85 together with another snake called *hnp(t) dšrt*, "the red Henepe(t)-snake" (table III: 5).⁹⁵ The for-

ysis of two Egyptian Mythologizing Texts of the Middle Kingdom, in F. Junge (ed.), *Studien zu Sprache und Religion Ägyptens: zu Ehren von Wolfhart Westendorf II*, Göttingen 1984: 703–16.

⁸² He is described as the blind one, see CT VII, 95u; Borghouts, *The Victorious Eyes*, 707, note 34.

⁸³ The two Middle Kingdom coffins are: MFA 21.962–63 and MFA 21.969.

⁸⁴ LGG V, 221a.

⁸⁵ E V, 87, 2; SERaT 900944. For *hnpt* as an unidentified animal probably a worm "I pierce the *hnpt*-animal, I sever its head", see Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 341.

⁸⁶ Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, 654.

⁸⁷ LGG V, 221a.

⁸⁸ Kousoulis, *Magic and Religion as a Performative Theological Unity*, 78.

⁸⁹ E IV, 237, 8; Mam. E. 80, 13–14.

⁹⁰ Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 343.

⁹¹ LGG V, 221a.

⁹² See E IV, 284, 5; SERaT 900562; see also Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, 655.

⁹³ In the same text, Renenet has the epithet of *inrt* which resembles a word which means a worm eating wood, see Egberts, *In Quest of Meaning*, 343.

⁹⁴ LGG V, 221a.

⁹⁵ LGG V, 221a.

mer is mentioned in a passage to be associated with Serket. The passage reads (col. 1, 25): *ḥ^c.s n srkt*,⁹⁶ “she is a manifestation of Serket”.⁹⁷ Judging from the suffix pronoun third person singular feminine, it is a female snake. The danger of this female snake is reflected through a text mentioning (col. 5, 12): *rdit.n.i pr mtwt.s hr t3*, “I caused that her venom comes forth on earth”.⁹⁸ Another passage gives the colour of this snake as the white Henepe(t).⁹⁹ The latter, i.e., the red Henepe(t)-snake,¹⁰⁰ is stated to be a Sethian product as the text mentions (col. 1, 25): *pr.s m ḥnp n stš*, “she comes forth from the phallus of Seth”.¹⁰¹ According to the physical description provided from each of them, they are dissimilar.¹⁰² Moreover, the Henepe(t)-snake is referred to by another name which appears only in this papyrus, i.e., *btt* which is mentioned preceding Henepe(t)’s name or mentioned alone.¹⁰³ According to a passage (col. 5, 9): *btt iwty ḥnhwy.f(y)*, “Betjet, who has no ears”,¹⁰⁴ it is a male snake as it is referred to him with a masculine suffix pronoun. This could be either a scribal mistake, perhaps due to the confusion with the Heneba-snake which is also the son of Serket or probably the gender of this snake is uncertain. Furthermore, this could establish a connection between the Heneba-snake and the Henepe(t)-snake as both of them have the same mother, i.e., Serket, the former is benevolent and male, however, the latter is malevolent and female. It should be noted that Serket is known to have other children,¹⁰⁵ including the Khesbdw-snakes.¹⁰⁶

4 Iconography

The Heneb-snake which is described as a snake having a knife¹⁰⁷ was barely depicted; however, a few representations have been ascribed to him. A figure of a snake-headed male deity, standing on a pedestal is depicted wearing a tripartite wig while holding the *ḥnh*-sign

⁹⁶ For *ḥ^c* + Suffix Pronoun + n + name of a deity meaning “manifestation of a deity”, see J. Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, Paris 1961, 81–3; Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 222; TLA: lemma-no. 861042.

⁹⁷ Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 17 (§ 23); Osing, *The Carlsberg Papyri 2: Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis I*, 173.

⁹⁸ Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 108–9 (§ 80b).

⁹⁹ Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 153. For *ḥnpt wḥt*, see C. Leitz, *Die Schlangennamen in den ägyptischen und griechischen Giftbüchern*, *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz, Geistes- und sozialwissenschaftliche Klasse*, Jahrgang 1997, Nr. 6, Mainz 1997, 45.

¹⁰⁰ Leitz, *Die Schlangennamen*, 42–5.

¹⁰¹ Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 4, 16–17 (§ 23–§ 24), 108 (§ 80b).

¹⁰² Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 4, 19–20 (§ 24), 16 (§ 22), 27 (§ 31), 108 (§ 80a).

¹⁰³ Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 108–9.

¹⁰⁴ Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie*, 108 (§ 80b).

¹⁰⁵ For *msw srkt*, “children of Serket”, see LGG III, 427c.

¹⁰⁶ For the *ḥsbdw*-snakes, “the Lapis-lazuli-colored snakes”, see LGG V, 953a. It is mentioned in a spell in the Leiden Papyrus I 348 (rt. 5.7) where the fingers of the deceased are described as “His fingers are the lapis-lazuli-colored snakes, the children of Serket”, see J.F. Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts: Translated*, Nisaba 9, Leiden 1978, 20. For the children of Serket in magical spells mentioned on the statue of Djed-hor and P. BM EA 9907, see E. Jelinkova-Reymond, *Les inscriptions de la statue guérisseuse de Djed-her-le-Sauveur*, BdE 23, Cairo 1956, 73, 77; C. Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri of the New Kingdom*, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* 7, London 1999, 15, 17. For the children of Serket in the temple of Esna, see Esna II, no. 55, 2; Esna V, 12 (i). For Nehb-kau as a child of Serket, see Utterance 308 § 489 of the Pyramid Texts.

¹⁰⁷ According to Papyrus Rylands Library 9.

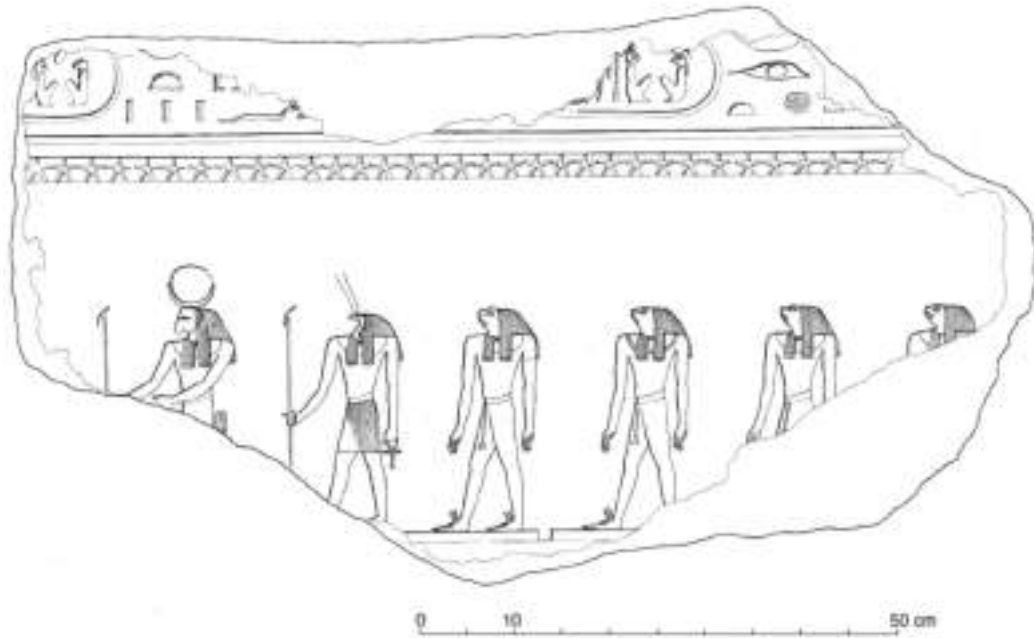


Fig. 1: BM EA 1079 Drawing by Claire Thorne

and the *w3s*-sceptre on a naos dating to the Thirtieth Dynasty, is housed in the British Museum (see fig. 1).¹⁰⁸ Spencer attributes this figure to the Heneb-snake which is not accompanied by any text.¹⁰⁹ A bronze statuette of a snake-headed male deity dating to the Late Period (eighth–fourth century BC) is housed in the Cinquantenaire Museum, Royal Museums of Arts and History at Brussels (see Taf. 6). He is depicted standing in a striding position with right hand clenched beside his body while his left arm is raised up as if he holds something. He has protruding eyes and his head, which is elevated by the swollen and curved neck, is surmounted by a tripartite wig with long parallel ridges. The deity wears a short pleated kilt which is tied in the middle by a narrow belt.¹¹⁰ Another bronze statuette appeared at Sotheby’s, which was dedicated by a person called Pa-di-Amun, and dating to the Saitic Period, looks the same as the Brussels statuette but the only difference is that

¹⁰⁸ I am grateful to Claire Thorne and Neal Spencer for giving me permission to publish this drawing.

¹⁰⁹ BM EA 1079, see N. Spencer, *A Naos of Nekhtorheh from Bubastis: Religious Iconography and Temple Building in the 30th Dynasty*, London 2006, 10, fig. 7a.

¹¹⁰ KMKG-MRAH E. 8974, see L. Limme, *Egypte-Égypte*, in: *BMRAH 59*, 1988, 23–4 et fig. 5; F. Lefebvre/B. Van Rinsveld, *L’Égypte: des pharaons aux Coptes*, Bruxelles 1990, 187; M. Massiera, *Les divinités ophiennes Nâou, Néhebkaou et le fonctionnement des “kaou” d’après les premiers corpus funéraires de l’Égypte ancienne*, *Archaeology and Prehistory*, Université Paul Valéry-Montpellier III, Montpellier 2013, 32. For this statuette, see <http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=1492>. For another bronze statuette attributed to Heneb and coming from Saqqara housed in the Ashmolean Museum (1989.56), see J. Bourriau, *Museum acquisitions, 1989: Egyptian antiquities acquired in 1989 by museums in the United Kingdom*, in: *JEA 77*, 1991, 162, no. 333. For other statuettes, see Perdu, in: *BIFAO 105*, 2005, 220 (p). I am grateful to L. Limme for providing me with a pdf copy of his article.

human ears flank the snake's neck.¹¹¹ Moreover, the base of the statuette bears an inscription which reads: "Heneb, (he) gives life (to) Pa-di-Amun".¹¹²

5 Concluding Remarks

The Heneb-snake deity was connected to Herakleopolis as the protector of the city where he had a temple and clergy. He had a benevolent aspect as he drives away evil in addition to Seth and Apep. Among his other functions is the protection of the body of Osiris in the Mysteries of Khoiak. Additionally, he guarded the deceased in the Netherworld. Furthermore, he was used in the threat formulae to warn anyone who commits evil or wrongdoing. His cult was prevalent not only among the grassroots of the society but also among the members of the royal families. With regard to the appearance of his name in theophoric names during the Saitic/Persian Period and the Ptolemaic Period such as Heneb-sai,¹¹³ Nekhet-Heneb,¹¹⁴ and Pa-di-He(n)eb,¹¹⁵ it is apparent that his cult gained popularity during these periods.¹¹⁶ The existence of a priest called Semen-qed is an additional testament that his own cult flourished during the Ptolemaic Period.¹¹⁷ His appearance in texts of the temples of Dendera and Philae during the Roman Period proves that his cult was still practiced.

¹¹¹ 14.XI I.1981, see Egyptian, Western Asiatic, Greek, Etruscan and Roman antiquities, ancient glass and art reference books, including an over life-size bronze male head circa 1./2. Century A.D. – Monday, 14 December 1981 and Tuesday, 15 December 1981, Sotheby Parke Bernet & Co., London 1981, 60–1, number 161.

¹¹² J.F. Aubert/L. Aubert, Bronzes et or égyptiens, Contributions à l'Égyptologie 11, Paris 2001, 206. For another bronze statuette of a snake-headed deity wearing *atef*-crown, a tripartite wig, shown in a seated position and the front of the pedestal is inscribed with a hieroglyphic text, found in the Serapeum at Saqqara and now housed in the Cairo Museum (CG 38692), JdE 147, see G. Daressy, Statues de divinités, Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, I, Cairo 1906, 177, pl. XXXVI. I would like to thank A. Zivie for his help to track down this statuette and to thank Ms. Aubert for her time and effort to locate this statuette.

¹¹³ The name appears on unpublished coffin in the Hague Museum, see Egberts, In Quest of Meaning, 320, no. 98; Perdu, in: BIFAO 105, 2005, 220 (p).

¹¹⁴ PN I, 211, 2. For the meaning as "strong is the (protector god) Heneb", see, PN II, 371. M. Thiron, Notes d'onomastique: contribution à une révision du Ranke *PN* [septième série], in: RdE 42, 1991, 230, note 60. For a stele dating to the Thirtieth Dynasty or Ptolemaic Period with the same name, see D. Delavenne/D. Lafarge, Exceptionnelle vente d'archéologie: égyptienne, gréco-romaine, phénicienne, salle 1, 10 décembre 1990, Paris 1990. For *nht-hnb* inscribed on a bronze votive statue of Somtus from the Late Period, see The Palace of Versailles Presents, Thrones in Majesty: An Exhibition from the 1 March till 19 June 2011, 18, no.16. For *nht-hnb*, see B. Backes/G. Dresbach, Index zu Michelle Thiron, Notes d'onomastique. Contribution à une révision du Ranke PN, 1–14e série, in: BMSAES 8, 2007, 27.







¹¹⁵ For Pa-di-He(n)eb mentioned on the demotic stela Louvre MI 4157, see D. Devauchelle, Notes et documents pour servir à l'histoire du Sérapéum de Memphis (VI–X), in: RdE 51, 2000, 29–31.


¹¹⁶ A person called Nakht-Heneb is mentioned in the stele of Sematawy-Tefnakht, also known as the "Naples Stela" (National Museum of Naples, No. 1035). It dates to 341–323 BC, see TM 48488; Urk, II, 4, 2; M. Monaco/E.N. Rolfe, A Complete Handbook to the National Museum in Naples, London 1883, 33; F. von Känel, Les prêtres-ouâb de Sekhmet et les conjurateurs de Serket, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Section des sciences religieuses 87, Paris 1984, 120–5; O. Perdu, Le monument de Samtoutefnakht à Naples [première partie], in: RdE 36, 1985, 106 (L). For more examples, see J.F. Aubert/L. Aubert, Bronzes et or égyptiens, contributions à l'Égyptologie 11, Paris 2001, 206. For a complete study and bibliography on this stela, see P. Tresson, La Stèle de Naples, in: BIFAO 30, 1931, 369–91, pls. I–III.

¹¹⁷ M. Thiron, Notes d'onomastique: contribution à une révision du Ranke *PN* [cinquième série], in: RdE 37, 1986, 136–7; id., Notes d'onomastique: contribution à une révision du Ranke *PN* [septième série], in: RdE 42, 1991, 230. Decker reads sm as the "sem-priest" and believes that the owner's name is Heneb-Heneb, see S. Decker, Uschebti: ägyptische Dienerfiguren einer deutschen Privatsammlung, Kempen 2005, 81–2. For other ushabtis for the same person, see Christie's 02.04.2014 n° 50; Christie's 20.10.1999 n° 77; Sotheby's 10.12.1984 n° 166, 168. I would like to thank Jean-Luc Chappaz for all his help to track these ushabtis and for providing me with a copy of the relevant pages of Decker's book.


In the ritual scenes of cutting off the head of the Apep-snake, the king assumed the role of the Heneb-snake through assimilation as the Heneb-snake is qualified to carry out this task. It is evident that the Heneb-snake (table I: 1–21) and Heneba-snake (table II: 1–4) are referring to the same snake. It is also apparent that there are two female Henepet-snakes in the temple of Edfu, one is beneficent (table III: 1) while the other is maleficent (table III: 2). The question, which remains, is whether the maleficent Henepet-snake (table III: 2) of Edfu is the same as the one mentioned in P. Brooklyn 47.218.48+85 (table III: 3–5). The unique appearance so far of Heneb's name is on a pebble placed among other fifteen pebbles around the head of a mummy so as to eliminate the evil from around the deceased's head and probably symbolises the protective function of the funerary mask. As for the negative role mentioned in Spell 436 of the *Coffin Texts*, it denotes a malevolent aspect as he can be a threat to the deceased as well.

Table I: The Orthography of Heneb-snake¹¹⁸

No.	Writing	Dating	Source	Publication
1		Saitic Period	Tomb of Ibi (TT 36)	Kuhlmann/Schenkel, <i>Das Grab des Ibi</i> , Text 98, tafel 23, l. 16–17.
2		513 BC	P. John Rylands Library no. 9	Vitmann, <i>Der demotische P. Rylands 9</i> , 105, 108.
3		Saitic Period	Statue of Princess Meresy-nebes Alsace Private Collection	Perdu, in: BIFAO 105, 216, figs. 2, 6, 7.
4		Saitic / Early Ptolemaic Period	Statue A 88 (Louvre Museum)	Vercoutter, in: BIFAO 49, 89.
5		350–250 BC	P. Louvre N 3129	Urk VI, 15, 5.
		307–306 BC	P. BM EA 10252	
6		305 BC	P. Bremner-Rhind (BM EA 10188)	Faulkner, <i>The P. Bremner-Rhind</i> , col. 27, 24.

¹¹⁸ For a doubtful reading of the Heneb-snake at Edfu , see E III, 29, 9; LGG V, 220b. It should be read as *nnp*-snake, see Kousoulis, *Magic and Religion as a Performative Theological Unity*, 67. Judging from the snake's head stabbed with a knife and the context where other maleficent snakes are mentioned, this is a malevolent snake.

No.	Writing	Dating	Source	Publication
7		332–50 BC	P. MMA New York 35.9.21	Goyon, in: BIFAO 75, 384, 386.
8		Ptolemy IV	Edfu Temple	E I, 343, 7.
9		Ptolemy VIII	Edfu Temple	E IV, 98, 15.
10		Ptolemy VIII	Edfu Temple	E IV, 237, 8.
11		Ptolemy VIII	Edfu <i>Mammisi</i>	E Mam., 77, 18.
12		Ptolemy IX	Edfu <i>Mammisi</i>	E. Mam., 80, 13–14.
13		Late Ptolemaic	Dendera Temple	D X/I, 80, 6.
14		Late Ptolemaic	Dendera Temple	D X/I, 276, 8.
15		Late Ptolemaic	Dendera Temple	D X/I, 284, 5.
16		Late Ptolemaic	Dendera Temple	D X/I, 329, 7.
17		Late Ptolemaic	Dendera Temple	D XI/I, 179, 3.
18		Late Ptolemaic	Dendera Temple	D XII/I, 15, 15.
19		Roman Period	Philae Temple	Bénédite, Philae, 93, 14– 15.
20		Second Century AD	P. Tebtunis H	Osing, Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis I. II, pl. 24, line 21.
21		Twenty-seventh Dynasty	Hibis Temple	Davies, Hibis, pl. 3, register II.

¹¹⁹ Leitz's version shows the Heneb-snake determinative with three coils and not two as shown in Cauville's version , see E I³, 343, 7; C. Leitz, Die Gaumonographien in Edfu und ihre Papyrusvarianten: ein überregionaler Kanon im spätzeitlichen Ägypten, Soubassementstudien III, II: Tafeln, Studien zur spät-ägyptischen Religion 9, Wiesbaden 2014, Tafeln 41, 42.


¹²⁰ It is a mistake for , see Egberts, In Quest of Meaning, 320, no. 98; LGG V, 220b.

Table II: The Orthography of the Heneba-snake

No.	Writing	Dating	Source	Publication
1		Twelfth Dynasty Middle Kingdom	Coffin B1L from Bersheh (BM EA 30840)	CT IV, 330t.
2		Eleventh Dynasty Middle Kingdom	Coffin B2Bo from Bersheh (MFA 21.962-63)	CT V, 288a.
3		Twelfth Dynasty Middle Kingdom	Coffin B7Bo from Bersheh (MFA 21.969)	
4		350-250 BC	P. Louvre N 3129	Urk VI, 83, 11.
		307-306 BC	P. BM EA 10252	

Table III: The Orthography of the Henep(t)-snake and the red Henep(t)-snake

No.	Writing	Dating	Source	Publication
1		Ptolemy VIII	Edfu Temple	E IV, 284, 5.
2		Ptolemy IX (?)	Edfu Temple	E V, 87, 2.
3		Saitic Period	P. Brooklyn 47.218.48-85	Sauneron, Un traité égyptien d'ophilologie, § 80b.
4				Sauneron, Un traité égyptien d'ophilologie, § 22, § 23.
5				Sauneron, Un traité égyptien d'ophilologie, § 24, § 31, § 80a.



Statue E, 8974

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