



THE IMPACT OF THE MANIFESTATION OF DEMONIAL WINDS ON TERRESTRIAL LIFE: THE ROLE OF DEMON GANGS IN DISPERSING THE *ḥdt-rnpt*

El Zahraa Megahed
Fayoum University, Egypt

ABSTRACT

ḥdt-rnpt is the most recurrent impact upon people on earth that is identified with the role of demon gangs of Sekhmet. The manifestation of demons to spread the *ḥdt-rnpt* is remarkably associated with the blowing of pathogenic air, an argument that raises the hypothesis of a miasmatic role of demons as manifested winds. This article enlightens some aspects of the relation between the manifestation of demons and the blowing of winds carrying disease. These aspects are principally entailed in a selection of texts from the Edwin Smith Papyrus and Papyrus Leiden I 346, and in the Calendars of Lucky and Unlucky Days.

INTRODUCTION

From the Middle Kingdom, demon gangs of Sekhmet manifest in texts as the messengers of Sekhmet, harbingers of the *ḥdt-rnpt*.¹ *ḥdt-rnpt* has a very broad sense as a generic term of “annual pestilence, misery, woes, calamity, and/or dire affliction.”² As a demonic impact, *ḥdt-rnpt* is a typical role that demon gangs exercise on mortals in everyday life.³ It is defined in this article as a personified harmful force that is capable of performing any disaster or series of disasters, of which the epidemic or incurable diseases are the most notable.⁴

Identified as harbingers of the *ḥdt-rnpt*, demon gangs of Sekhmet are known as sickness-demons where morbid winds are attributed to them.⁵ It is not strange that demons are identified with winds. Winds have some characteristics that can be classified as demonic because of their close resemblance to the nature of demons.⁶ Similar to demons, winds

represent an invisible phenomenon, but there are several indications to their existence. They can be felt through their warmth or coldness. They can be heard, and the voice may be frightening. Sometimes they had an odor that can be easily smelled. Their course can be easily realized in the movement of treetops and other things.⁷ Another common aspect between winds and demons is their relationship to the Sun-god. As the sun moves accompanied by winds, the Sun-god comes and goes with demons who secure his night journey. In mythology, the wind bears the Sun-god and opens his way in the sky.⁸ As messengers of the Sun-god, demons are *wpwtw ḥḥw sinw shs.sn mi šwt nt ht* “swift, nimble messengers that they may run like a body’s shadow.”⁹ Winds are also strong and fast, and their strength has destructive effects that can be recognized with the falling or scattering of things and with striking passengers.¹⁰ Considering their effects, they are both

associated with bringing diseases.¹¹ As winds can cause fires to flame,¹² demons are also known as agents of Sekhmet who destroy her enemies by burning them by her flames.¹³

This paper highlights a selection of texts to explain the possible hypotheses about the correlation between demons gangs of Sekhmet and the winds bearing the *i3dt-rnpt*. The oldest of our sources is the Edwin Smith Papyrus from the 2nd Intermediate Period, where we find a text from a medical case on the recto that contains surgical treatise. It corresponds to the directions that the physician should consider during his diagnosis of diseases caused by demoniactal winds. From the same papyrus, we present other texts from the magical incantations against the annual threat of the *i3dt-rnpt* preserved on the verso. Another source is the Book of the Festival of the Last Day of the Year in the Papyrus Leiden I 346, a magical text from the Nineteenth Dynasty. The text of this book serves as a magical protection against the threat of demon gangs of Sekhmet as bringers of the *i3dt-rnpt*. The main third source is the Calendars¹⁴ either in version C or in version S,¹⁵ dating back to the Ramesside era. In Calendars, the omens are foretold by comparing cosmological phenomena to the occurrence of some mythological events. In this context, the manifestation of winds, either to disturb navigation in the Nile, to spread diseases, to cause foul weather, or even to circulate refreshing winds, are related to a coinciding activity of demons. As the days of the year are all precisely declared in the calendars, the wind that is supposed to blow on the cited day is easily identified. This identification is helpful to understand the disease that the winds/demons may cause on the identified days.

DEMONS INTERMINGLE IN THE SKY WITH WINDS CAUSING *I3DT-RNPT* AS AN INCURABLE DISEASE

In Calendars, I prt 19 (15 Hathor), winds spread the *i3dt-rnpt* where diseases of an irremediable nature are expected. The winds on this day are suggested to refer to the manifestation of demons. In S, rt. 14, 9-15, 1:

*iw t3w m pt m hrw pn šbnw n sw i3dt-rnpt mwtw š3w
hbsw m-hnw n.f ir sw3.f hr irt nb nn snb.f m h3yt
imyw.f*

The wind in the sky in this day is mixed with the *i3dt-rnpt*, many dead are hidden within it. If

it passes by anyone, he will not recover from the disease which is in him.¹⁶

On this day of the year, November 22nd, the country is expected to be completely free of the water of the flood.¹⁷ Exhalations carrying plague are suggested to come out from carcasses of animals drowned during the Nile flood. A hypothesis interprets the incurable nature of the disease. The manifestation of winds in such an environment will evidently spread the contagion. It is of interest here to note that the action of the wind is determined by the verb *sw3* "to pass by."¹⁸ This verb is known in a variety of texts as an act that describes the motion of demon gangs, especially their movement in winds to spread the threat of the *i3dt-rnpt*.¹⁹ Thus, it would not be strange to suggest that the blowing of the wind in the text describes the proceeding of demons to disperse the *i3dt-rnpt*. On the same day, I prt 19, in the second almost identical version of Calendars in C,²⁰ *ntrw* "great gods" are mentioned instead of *t3w* "winds" while they do the same role. Both *t3w* and *ntrw* suggest an implied reference to demons. In Calendars, demons, especially *hnntyw* "butchers" and *hrytyw* "those who cause terror," are commonly designated as *ntrw*²¹ and *t3w*.²²

Another similar content is attested in Calendars, C, vs. 4, 5 (II *šmw* 20, 16 Paremoude). In this text, the coming of the dead bearing disease is accompanied, like the previous text, with the coming of winds/demons:

*iw mwtw š3w iit.sn m sbyt t3w imi.k pri m t3w nb m
hrw pn*

Dead are numerous, they come in headwinds.
You shall not go out in any wind on this day.²³

The prohibition against going out in winds refers apparently to the threat of disease.²⁴ It can be suggested that the *sbyt t3w* refer to the manifestation of demons. This assumption considers that the term *sbyt* may also refer to a hostile action of an opposite wind.²⁵ It is noteworthy here that the gang *hnntyw* is mentioned on another day in Calendars (I *3ht* 4) to go in *šbiw t3w* "headwind".²⁶

A similar text to the previous text of Calendars, I prt 19 is attested in the prognosis of a medical case from the recto of P. Edwin Smith where diseases are caused by demonic winds. According to the prognosis, physicians "should distinguish him (the

patient) from the one afflicted because of something that has entered from outside.”²⁷ By the end of the spell, the things entering from outside are defined in a gloss (rt. 4, 16–17):

*ir ʿkt m-rwty tʿw pw n ntr n rwty m(w)t rʿ-pw in sʿkt
n kmʿmt hʿw.f*


As for “something that enters from outside”: it is the wind of a god (i.e., demon) of the outside, or a dead man by making entry, not something that his body creates.²⁸

Like the text of the Calendars, I prt 19, winds are attributed here to demons, designated also as *ntr(w)*, and to the dead.²⁹ The winds cause similarly an irremediable disease that should be distinguished from other types of disease that may be cured by normal medical intervention. The *rwty* “outside” can be then assimilated to the “sky” mentioned in I prt 19 as the source from which the winds carrying demons come. *rwty* is the chaotic area outside the two-horizon-lion,³⁰ the non-human sphere from which gods and demons interact with people. The *rwty* is supposed to be inhabited by demon gangs as the area between the mortals and the beyond.³¹ In P. Leiden I 346, I, 14–II, 1, demons are also suggested to intermingle with *ḫdt-rnpt* in the sky to spread the contagion:

*šmʿyw sbyw m-m [iʿ]d[t] rnpt Wʿdyt šhtp.ti swʿw
[r]w n imyw šmʿyw [iry]yw-spw n imn-rn.f*

.... the wanderers who go amidst *ḫdt-rnpt*!
Wadjet is pacified! (O) *swʿw* who mount up to those-who-are-in-wanderers! The breaths (lit. [Those-who-cr]eate-feat) are in the air (lit. whose-name-is hidden)!

Although the text does not explicitly mention the identification of demons as winds, we suggest the existence of this relation. The motion of the *šmʿyw* to *sbyw* “go amidst” the *ḫdt-rnpt* can be suggested to evoke the action of the demonic winds to intermingle with the *ḫdt-rnpt* in the sky as mentioned above in the text of Calendars I prt 19. In this regard, *imyw-šmʿyw* “those who are in *šmʿyw*” can be assumed to designate the *ḫdt-rnpt*. The term *r* is then used to describe the movement of *swʿw* to “to mount up (to the sky)”³² full of the *ḫdt-rnpt* to propagate it.³³

The role of the pathogenic air in this etiological process is evident in the text. *Imn-rn.f* refers to the hidden nature of the air.³⁴ As the explicit pronouncing of the name of the air may convey the influence of its essence, it seems that the nomination *imn-rn.f* is intended to keep it inactive.³⁵ The term *imn* is written here with a tired man with his arms sinking to ground from exhaustion  (Gardiner Sign List A7). This determinative, commonly used in the sense “weary, weak, tire, faint, or to be soft,”³⁶ describes the tiredness character of pathogenic air to the hidden potentialities of winds.³⁷

Iryw spw and *imn-rn.f* can be translated in light of the just following text of P. Edwin Smith, vs. 18, 11–14, as puns that designate respectively pathogenic breaths and winds bearing demons. Accordingly, it can be suggested that *iryw spw* and *imn rn.f* correspond respectively in their connotations to *nfw* and *nšny*. This proposition can explain the nature of the breaths of demons as a feat that they create to transmit disease to people.³⁸

The following part will present more texts to explain how demons/winds proceed to disperse the contagion until arriving to people on earth.

DEMONS SPREAD WINDS WIDELY, CAUSE STORMS TO RAGE, AND DISPERSE CONTAGIOUS BREATHS

In the second spell of P. Edwin Smith, vs. 18, 11–14, demons provoke *tʿw* “winds,” *nšny* “storms,” and *nfw* “breaths” as a sequence of tasks in a process of etiology:

*ky (rʿ) n hsf tʿw n dhrt hʿtyw ndstyw wpwtyw-Šhmt
ihtw hʿtyw nn ph wi nfw r swʿ swʿw r nšny r hr.ḫ*

Another (spell) for opposing wind of malady of slaughterers, the minor gods, the messengers of Sekhmet. Retreat slaughters! The breaths shall not reach me until the passersby pass by at the storm (far) from me (lit. my face).³⁹

The reading of the text assumes that the three terms *tʿw*, *nšny*, and *nfw* define three different aspects of air as a pathogenic medium. It is implied that the real impact is expected to affect people through the *nfw*, following to the coming of *hʿtyw* in *tʿw* and *swʿw* in *nšny*. For this reason, the aim of the protection is to prevent the *nfw* from touching the man. It may be of interest here to observe that the occurrence of the breaths is negated in a future tense, while the storms

are mentioned in a present tense. It can be then assumed that the threat of the epidemic affects people through the *nfw* as the air of the winds or the breath of demons.⁴⁰ Thus, the *sw³w* are charmed to pass in the *nšny* without letting the *nfw* reach people, while the *h³tyw* are addressed to retreat, most probably to evoke the recession of winds. The contagion will then transmit to people causing the state of malady *dhrt*.⁴¹ A similar idea is mentioned in the first spell of P. Edwin Smith, vs. 18, 8–9, where the pathogenic agent *dhrt* is transmitted to people in the *nfw* “breath” of *t³w* “winds (of demons)”: “you have saved me from every *dhrt*, etc. of this year in the *nfw* of every evil *t³w*.” *dhrt*, known also as “(the plague)-bitterness,” defines the morbid state of the person infected by an etiological wind.⁴² *dhrt* is known to be controlled by the *w³b* priest of Sekhmet;⁴³ the role of this priest in purification is typical to expel the miasma.⁴⁴

The text reveals another aspect concerning the significant association between *nšny* “storms”⁴⁵ and the *sw³w*. It is interesting to note that the threat of the *i³dt-rnpt* is launched by the *t³w* “winds” of the *h³tyw*. Subsequent to the latter, the *sw³w* gang comes to agitate the wind by raging *nšny* in roads and passages. It can be established that the role of *sw³w* in the process of proceeding the winds comes consequent to other gangs, namely *h³tyw* in P. Edwin Smith, vs. 18, 8–9, 12, and *šm³yw* in P. Leiden I 346, I, 14. In these two spells, *h³tyw* and *šm³yw* are implied to start the threat of the *i³dt-rnpt*, while the *sw³w* sweep it in roads and junctions nearby people.⁴⁶ This assumption could be linked with the sense of the name of *sw³w* as “passers-by.”⁴⁷ Another derivative from the same root may refer to the nature of *sw³w* to exist in the surroundings: *sww* “entourage (of someone), vicinity.”⁴⁸ This proposition can find its justification in P. Edwin Smith, vs. 19 (1–2) in an incantation for the protection against the *i³dt-rnpt*. In this spell, the *sw³w* are cited as propagators of *nšny* in the roads

*ink wd³ m w³t sw³w hwi.tw.i irf wd³.kwi iw m³³.n.i
nšny ³ nsrt twy m wdi m.i ink pri m nšny hr.ti r.i*

I am the healthy one in the way of the passers-by. So shall I be smitten, while I am healthy? I have seen the great storm. You flame, do not shoot in me! I am the one who has come forth out from the storm. Be far from me!

Like the previous of P. Edwin Smith, vs. 18, 11–14, this text correlates also between *sw³w* and *nšny* “storms.” Herein, the connotations of the term *hwi* can help in revealing some of the mystery about the relation between demons and winds. It can be suggested that demons use winds as their tool by which they strike the passengers.⁴⁹

Nsrt “The Flame-goddess”⁵⁰ as one of the manifestations of Sekhmet may suggest *nšny* as hot desert winds or igniting ones.⁵¹ However, it is more convincing that the aspect *Nsrt* is evoked to describe the figure of burling inflammation. Regarding this hypothesis, Leitz assimilated the symptoms of being hurt by arrows, especially the traces left on the skin, to those caused by the bubonic plague.⁵² *wdi* can refer then to the inflammation caused by the bubonic plague⁵³ as a probable equivalent of the *i³dt-rnpt*. In this context, the connotations of the verb *wdi* “to shoot (arrows)”⁵⁴ are significant. *wdi* describes the action of Sekhmet to send her demons as if arrows⁵⁵ are shot.⁵⁶

Concerning the way of shooting the arrows, its source is most probably associated with the mouth of Sekhmet by means of her word. It has been suggested that the notion of winds in ancient Egypt is similar to the *logos* of the Greeks.⁵⁷ However, it can be suggested that Sekhmet shoot demons as if arrows from her mouth through her fiery breath.⁵⁸ In the Book of the Festival of the Last Day of the Year in P. Leiden I 346, I, 3–6, *h³tyw* are designated as *styw šsrw.sn m r³.sn* “Those who shoot their arrows from their mouths.”⁵⁹ The dispersal of disease from the mouths of demons in the form of arrows may describe how the breath of demons is affected by their identity as pathogenic arrows of Sekhmet.⁶⁰ In this text, the impact of demons to spread their pathogenic breaths is also correlated to the manifestation of winds. There is a series of designations that implicitly qualify the notion of demons as winds.⁶¹ They are *wpwttyw m-ht sp³wt* “the messengers who are everywhere in the provinces.”⁶² The last epithet describes the nature of winds to surround people far and wide. Another designation is *šhs w t³* “who hurry through the land,”⁶³ where the rapidity of demons qualifies the ubiquitous nature of winds and their capacity to exist everywhere in the provinces. In this respect, the role of demons can be interpreted in the light of the Galen’s theory of miasma.⁶⁴ This concept connected epidemics with miasma and corrupted air where demons generate

pestilence through exhalations of their pernicious effluvia into the atmosphere.

CONCLUSION

The texts, discussed in this paper, emphasize the link between demons, winds, and the *ḥ3dt-rnpt*. The threat of the last, identified as irremediable disease, is dispersed by demons when winds are active in the sky. In other words, winds laden with epidemic represent an exhorting environment that agitates demon gangs of Sekhmet. The argument that can be established from the ensemble of texts suggests that demons and pathogenic winds superimpose with each other in the sky. The role of demons is then to manifest as the blowing of winds to spread them on a large scale everywhere around people. While passing in winds, demons transmit the contagion and the pathogens from their mouths through their morbid breaths. It seems that the role of demon gangs has a complementary nature in which each of them is entrusted with achieving a certain task. It seems that *ḥ3tyw* "Executioners" and *šm3yw* "Wanderers" spread the winds, while *sw3w* "Passers-by" cause the storms to rage.

As propagators of morbid winds and exhalations,⁶⁵ the role of demon gangs of Sekhmet is interpreted as referring to a miasmatic theory of disease in which the practice of magical treatment is gathered with an anticipated recognition of infection.⁶⁶ The theory is held in a context that considers the physical impact of miasma on people. The role of demons serves, then, to justify the incurable nature of the epidemic by attributing it to mythological causes, as the work of demons.

In this context, demon gangs of Sekhmet are identified as the mythical-religious explanation of the *ḥ3dt-rnpt*. The interpretation of the role of demons of Sekhmet to bring disease is evident in religion where demons, *ḥ3dt-rnpt*, winds, and diseases are all sent and controlled by Sekhmet and her priest.⁶⁷ It is of interest to note that morbid winds are described as arrows bearing diseases when they are sent by Sekhmet or by her demons. As messengers of Sekhmet, demons acquire the attributes of their mistress, behaving as she does to spread diseases through winds.⁶⁸ Winds and diseases are thus not only sent by Sekhmet, they are also the work of her demons.

A BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE FOR SOURCES OF TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATION

The transliteration and the translation of texts are made by the author; otherwise, the reference is mentioned in a footnote.

ABBREVIATIONS:

- CT de Buck, Adriaan. 1935–1961. *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 7 vols.. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
LGG Leitz 2002a–f.
Wb Erman and Grapow 1926–1930.

REFERENCES

- Allen, James. 2005. *The Art of Medicine in Ancient Egypt*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Aufrère, Sydney. 1985. "Le cœur, l'annulaire gauche, Sekhmet et les maladies cardiaques." *Revue d'égyptologie* 36: 21–43.
Bardinet, Thierry. 1995. *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique*. Paris: Fayard.
Blumenthal, Elke. 1970. *Untersuchungen zum ägyptischen Königtum des Mittleren Reiches. I: Die Phraseologie*. Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Band 61, Heft 1. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.
Bommas, Martin. 1999. *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346*. Gottinger Orientalforschungen IV/37. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
Borghouts, Joris F. 1971. *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*. Oudheidkd Meded Rijksmus Oudheiden 51. Leiden: Brill.
Breasted, James H. 1930. *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus. Volume 1: Hieroglyphic Transliteration with Translations and Commentary*. Oriental Institute Publications 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Reissued 1991 with a foreword by T. A. Holland.
Caminos, Ricardo A. 1954. *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies II*. London: Oxford University Press.
Edwards, Iorwerth E. S. 1960. *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum, 4th Series. Oracular Amuletic Decrees of the late New Kingdom*. London: British Museum.
Erman, Adolf and Hermann Grapow (eds.). 1926–1930. *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache*. Berlin—Leipzig: Von Quelle & Meyer.

- Faulkner, Raymond. 1962. *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Oxford: Griffith Institute.
- Flessa, Nicolas. 2006. "(Gott) schütze das Fleisch des Pharaos." *Untersuchungen zum magischen Handbuch pWien Aeg 8426*. Corpus Papyrorum Raineri Archeducis Austriae 27. München: K. G. Saur.
- Germond, Philippe. 1981. *Sekhmet et la protection du monde*. Aegyptiaca helvetica 9. Geneva: Éditions de Belles-Lettres.
- Ghalioungui, Paul. 1968. "La notion de maladie dans les textes égyptiens et ses rapports avec la théorie humorale." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 66: 37-48.
- Goyon, Jean-Claude. 2006. *Le Rituel du sḥtp Šhmt au changement du cycle annuel. D'après les architraves du temple d'Edfou et textes parallèles, du Nouvel Empire à l'époque ptolémaïque et romaine*. Bibliothèque d'étude 141. Le Caire: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale.
- Gutbub, Adolphe. 1977. "Die Vier Winde im Tempel von Kom Ombo (Oberägypten), Mit einem Beitrag von A. Gutbub über die vier Winde in Ägypten." In O. Keel (ed.), *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst: eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4*. Stuttgart Bibelstudien 84/85, 328–353. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk.
- Hannig, Rainer. 2006. *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II. Mittleres Reich und Zweite Zwischenzeit*. Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 112. Mainz am Rhein: Philip von Zabern.
- Herbin, François. 2004. "Un texte de glorification." *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 32: 171–204.
- Hornung, Erik. 1991. *Der Ägyptische Mythos von der Himmelskuh: Eine Ätiologie des Unvollkommen*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 46. 2nd edition. Freiburg—Schweiz: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Koenig, Yvan. 1979. "Un revenant inconvenant? (Papyrus Deir el-Medineh 37)." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 79: 103–119 (with 2 plates).
- Kuhlmann, Klaus. 1976. "Göttereigenschaften." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 2, 679–683. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Kurth, Dieter. 1975. *Den Himmel Stützen, die "ṯwṣ pt" Szenen in den ägyptischen Tempeln der griechisch-römischen Epoche*. Rites Egyptiens II. Bruxelles: Fondation égyptologique Reine Élisabeth.
- . 1980. "Luft (Luftgott)." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 3: 1098–1102. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- . 1986. "Wind." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 6: 1266–1272.
- Leitz, Christian. 1994. *Tagewählerei. Das Buch ḥṣ.t nḥḥ ph.wy dt und verwandte Texte*. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 55. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- . 1999. *Magical and Medical Papyri in the New Kingdom Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, 7th series. London: British Museum Press.
- . 2002a–f. *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, 6 vols. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 110–115. Leuven, Dudley, MA: Peeters.
- Lichtheim, Miriam. 1973. *Ancient Egyptian Literature I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms*. Berkeley—Los Angeles—London: University of California Press.
- Lopez, Jesús. 1972. "Naufragé, col. 36–37 et 105–106." *Revue d'égyptologie* 24: 111–115.
- Loprieno, Antonio. 1984. "Sprachtabu." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 5: 1211–1214. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Lorton, David. 1993. "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton 125." *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 20: 125–155.
- Lucarelli, Rita. 2010. "Demons (Benevolent and Malevolent)." In Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. Los Angeles: eScholarship. <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1r72q9vv>>.
- . 2011. "Demonology during the Late Pharaonic and Graeco-Roman Periods in Egypt." *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 11: 109–125.
- Meeks, Dimitri. 1977. *Année lexicographique Egypte Ancienne 1*. Paris: Cybèle.
- . 1978. *Année lexicographique Egypte Ancienne 2*. Paris: Cybèle.
- . 1979. *Année lexicographique Egypte Ancienne 3*. Paris: Cybèle.
- . 2011. "Demons." In Donald B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Megahed, Elzahraa. 2016. *The Role of Malevolent Demon Troops with the Livings in Ancient Egypt*. PhD dissertation, Lyon 2 University.
- Guglielmi, Waltraud. 1976. "Flachs." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 2: 256–257. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

- Meyrat, Pierre. 2012. *Les papyrus magiques du Ramesseum: Recherches sur une bibliothèque privée de la fin du Moyen Empire*. PhD dissertation, Genève University.
- Nunn, John. 1996. *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Nyord, Rune. 2009. *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum.
- Parkinson, Richard. 2009. *Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry: Among Other Histories: From 1850 BC to the Present*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rondot, Vincent. 1989. "Une Monographie Bubastite." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 89: 249–270.
- Roquet, Gérard. 1973. "Espace et lexique du sacré : autour du nom du 'ciel' en vieux nubien." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 73: 158–159.
- Steuer, Robert O. and John B. de C. M. Saunders. 1959. *Ancient Egyptian and Cnidian Medicine: The Relationship of Their Aetiological Concepts of Disease*. Berkeley—Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Strawn, Brent A. 2005. *What is Stronger than a Lion? Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Orbis Biblicus Orientalis 212. Fribourg: Academic Press—Göttingen: Vandenhoeck.
- Szpakowska, Kasia. 2009. "Demons in Ancient Egypt." *Religion Compass* 3(5): 799–805.
- te Velde, Henk. 1967. *Seth: God of Confusion: A Study of His Role in Egyptian Mythology and Religion*. Leiden: Brill.
- . 1975. "Dämonen." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 1: 980–984. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Thomas, Elizabeth. 1959. "Ramesses III: Notes and Queries." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 45: 101–102.
- von Bomhard, Anne-Sophie. 2008. *The Naos of the Decades: From the Observation of the Sky to Mythology and Astrology*. Oxford: Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology.
- von Deines, Hildegard and Wolfhart Westendorf. 1961. *Wörterbuch der Medizinischen Texte, Grundriß der Medizin der Alten Ägypter VII-1*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.
- von Lieven, Alexandra. 2002. *Der Himmel über Esna. Eine Fallstudie zur Religiösen Astronomie in Ägypten, Eine Fallstudie zur Religiösen Astronomie in Ägypten*. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 64. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Vernus, Pascal. 1981. "Omina calendériques et comptabilité d'offrandes sur une tablette hiératique de la 18^e dynastie." *Revue d'égyptologie* 33: 94–95.
- . 1982–1983. "Etudes de philologie et linguistique (II)." *Revue d'égyptologie* 34: 115–128.
- Valloggia, Michel. 1976. *Recherche sur les "messagers" (wpwtyw) dans les sources égyptiennes profanes*. Geneva—Paris: Librairie Droz.
- Verhoeven-van, Ursula. 1984. *Grillen, Kochen, Backen im Alltag und im Ritual Altägyptens: ein lexikographischer Beitrag*. Rites Egyptiens IV. Bruxelles.
- Westendorf, Wolfhart. 1966. *Papyrus Edwin Smith: Ein medizinisches Lehrbuch aus dem alten Ägypten: Wund- und Unfallchirurgie Zaubersprüche gegen Seuchen, verschiedene Rezepte*. Bern—Stuttgart: Hanz Huber.
- . 1975. "Atem." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 1, 517–518. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- . 1999. *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*. HdO 36/1. Leiden—Boston—Köln: Brill.
- Wilkinson, Richard. 2003. *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Wilson, Penelope. 1991. *A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*. PhD dissertation. Liverpool University.
- Yoyotte, Jean. 1968. "Une théorie étiologique des médecins égyptiens." *Kêmi: Revue de philologie et d'archéologie égyptienne et coptes* 18: 79–84.
- . 1980–1981. "Héra d'Héliopolis et le sacrifice humain." *Annuaire de l'École pratique des hautes-études, 5^e section—sciences religieuses* 89: 31–102.
- Zandee, Jan. 1960. *Death as an Enemy*. Leiden: Brill.
- . 1963. "Seth als Sturmgott." *Zeitschrift der Ägyptischen Sprache* 90: 144–156.
- Zivie, Alain-Pierre. 1984. "Regen." In Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band 5: 201–206. Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

NOTES

- ¹ The oldest source that cites the role of gangs of Sekhmet as heralds of the *ḥꜣdt-rnpt* is the Papyrus Ramesseum XVII (pBM EA10770), a priestly text to conjure the dangers of the year. Its content is similar to the famous P. Leiden I 346: Meyrat

- 2012, s.v. P. Ramesseum XVII, frame III: fragment A, x+7; frame III: fragment B/2, x+5; frame III: fragment C+D, 6. Another source from the same period is the story of the Eloquent Peasant in P. Berlin 3023, B1, 149-150, in which the threat of the messengers is cited in a metaphor: Lichtheim 1973, 169ff; Parkinson 2009, 302.
- ² Erman and Grapow 1926 (= *Wb* 1), 35 (16-18); Faulkner 1962, 9; Hannig 2006, 81c; Wilson 1991, 73-74, s.v. *i3dt-rnpt*.
- ³ There is no fear of the threat of *i3dt-rnpt* in the hereafter; for more about the dangers in the hereafter: Zandee 1960, *passim*, esp. ix-xvii.
- ⁴ Yoyotte 1968, 83; Germond 1981, 291-292; Megahed 2016, 442; 446ff.
- ⁵ Westendorf 1999, 373-374.
- ⁶ In this article, the term "demons" is used to refer to "demons gangs of Sekhmet."
- ⁷ Kurth 1986, 1266(B).
- ⁸ Kurth 1975, 70f.; for the eastern winds and its role with the Sun: Gutbub 1977, 340.
- ⁹ Hornung 1991, 16.
- ¹⁰ Kurth 1986, 1266(B).
- ¹¹ Kurth 1986, 1267(D); von Deines 1961, 965; Meeks 1977, 77.4893.
- ¹² Kurth 1986, 1266(B); Verhoeven 1984, 187-188.
- ¹³ Goyon 2006, 63; 67; 89; 95(14); Yoyotte 1980-1981, 43-44.
- ¹⁴ "Calendars" is used in this article as an abbreviation to refer to Calendars of Lucky and Unlucky Days.
- ¹⁵ "C" and "S" refer respectively to the two versions of Calendars of Lucky and Lucky Days: Papyrus Cairo JE n° 86637 and the Papyrus Salier IV (BM 10184).
- ¹⁶ The translation is made after the reading of Leitz 1994, 212-3.
- ¹⁷ Leitz 1994, 134, 212.
- ¹⁸ Erman and Grapow 1930 (= *Wb* 5), 60(8)-61(20); Faulkner 1962, 216; Hannig 2006, 675.
- ¹⁹ For details about the demonic connotations of the verb *sw3* "als tätigkeit von krankheits-dämonen": Leitz 1994, 213(d); Megahed 2016, 352 cites: "In the corpora [P. Edwin Smith, vs.18, 13; vs. 19, 20; Calendars, P. C, rt. 22; Calendars, P. S, vs. 15, 1], the term *sw3* figures as a hostile action of demons, it qualifies their movement in winds to spread the threat of the *i3dt-rnpt*." *sw3* is also mentioned in P. Wien Aeg 8426: Flessa 2006, 42; 49 (= 2nd spell, lines 9).
- ²⁰ Rt. 22, 3-4.
- ²¹ Calendars, I *3ht* 4, II *3ht* 25 and II *prt* 24: Leitz 1994, 96 (n° 4); 364. The term *ntrw* designates demons in Calendars as a kind of linguistic taboo: Loprieno 1984, 1214; von Deines & Westendorf 1961, 491. *Ntrw* identifies the very nature of demons as minor divinities: te Velde 1975, 981; Meeks, 2001, 375.
- ²² In Calendars, winds upon earth are regarded as emanations or reflections to the conflict between Re and Apophis in which demon gangs acting as the agents of Re, especially *hnrtw* and *hrytyw*, are identified with the east winds that prevail over the west winds that are identified with the *msw-bdšt* as the agents of Apophis: Leitz 1994, 96-97.
- ²³ The translation is made after the reading of the text by Leitz 1994, 364.
- ²⁴ See the argument about the mention of disease on the same day in Coptic and Arabic almanacs: Leitz 1994, 364.
- ²⁵ From the same root is *sbyt* "headwind": Erman and Grapow 1929 (= *Wb* 4), 89.1; Bommas 1999, 59(n° 69).
- ²⁶ Leitz 1994, 17.
- ²⁷ Allen 2005, 79.
- ²⁸ For similar translation: Vernus 1982-1983, 123, fn. 54; compare also Allen 2005, 79.
- ²⁹ The *i3dt-rnpt* is commonly cited in texts in a comprehensive view of animism where it is attributed not only to demon gangs but also to several malevolent divinities, disembodied dead of humans and animals from the two genders, malignant beings, etc. Breasted 1930, 376; von Deines 1961, 21-22; Westendorf 1999, 375.
- ³⁰ Westendorf 1966, 45, n° 17.
- ³¹ Szpakowska 2009, 799. Distinguished by their very nature as "wanderers," demons gangs are assumed to wander between the beyond and the earth: Lucarelli 2010, 3.

- 32 Wilson 1991, 304, s.v. *ʿr*.
- 33 For the verb *ʿr* as the action of the disease to penetrate the body of the patient: Bommas 1999, 59–60, footnote 148.
- 34 For the play on words between the hidden nature of the air and the name *imn rn.f*: Erman and Grapow 1926 (= *Wb* 1), 84(2); Kuhlmann 1977, 680; Nyord 2009, 400; Caminos 1954, 49; 153.
- 35 Nyord 2009, 399.
- 36 Gardiner Sign List A7.
- 37 Bommas 1999, 61(n° 75).
- 38 For the verb *ir* as the demonic action of the *hry-tyw* identified as demonic winds: Calendars, C, vs. VI, 13; as the action of the *h³tyw*: von Bomhard 2008, 46. Demons are designated as *iryw-št* “Those-who-carry-out-massacre”: Leitz 2002a (=LGG 1), 511c, s.v. *irw-št* [1]. Demons are gods of the Book of *irw(t)* “Duties”: Edwards 1960, 96(14).
- 39 For a similar translation of the text: Allen 2005, 107.
- 40 Vernus 1982–1983, 121, 123. For *nfw* “breath of air” or “wind”: Erman and Grapow 1927 (= *Wb* 2), 250 (15–18); Hannig 2006, 407; Westendorf 1975, 517(A). *nfw* as a variant of *t³w*: Kurth 1980, 1098. For the interpretation of *nfw* as exhalations: Bommas 1999, 60, footnote 150. *nfw* “souffle miasmatique”: Germond 1981, 44–45 (n° 26); 76; 219; Goyon 2006, 88(12). *nfw* appears in CT VII, spell 1141g as a personified demon “Les démons des miasmes”: Meeks 1978, 78.2084.
- 41 In the Naos of Decades, *dhrt* is associated with breathing air while the sky is full of winds: von Bomhard 2008, 149.
- 42 Westendorf 1999, 387; 388; Vernus 1981, 94–95; Vernus 1982–1983, 121–122.
- 43 Vernus 1982–1983, 121. *dhrt* as a demonical effect is translated “morbific air”: von Bomhard 2008, 103; 288.
- 44 Germond 1981, 304–309.
- 45 For the meteorological sense of *nšny* to denote the raging of foul weather in storms: Faulkner 1962, 140. *nšny* as storms and thunders: Kurth 1986, 1266ff; te Velde 1967, 25; Lorton 1993, 126 (fn. 6); Leitz 1999, 37. *nšny* “The raging one” as a Sethian epithet of meteorological connotations: Zandee 1963, 147; Leitz 1994, 273; 346; 368; 384.
- 46 Lucarelli 2010, 4.
- 47 Hannig 2006, 675; Bardinet 1995, 518.
- 48 Erman and Grapow 1929 (= *Wb* 4), 62 (4–9); Wilson 1991, 1436, s.v. *sww*; Meeks 1979, 79.2464.
- 49 Meyer 1977, 256. *hwi* as the action of weapons: Wilson 1991, 1120–1121, s.v. *hwi*. The variants *hwi* and *hwt* identify the action of rain to hit passengers: Roquet 1973, 158–159; Zivie 1984, 202 (3). The waves of sea also *hwi* “strike”: Erman and Grapow 1928 (= *Wb* 3), 48–49; Lopez 1972, 111.
- 50 Leitz 2002d (= LGG 4), 353–354 [28].
- 51 Brent 2005, 260; Wilkinson 2003, 181. Sekhmet as a desert goddess who send epidemics with winds: Blumenthal 1970, 98 (B 6.13). *t³w* is interpreted to evoke the fire sent by Sekhmet in the Book of Glorifying the Dead: Herbin 2004, 193 (II, 4–6).
- 52 Bommas 1999, 40; Leitz 1994, 207–208, n°2(3) evokes the sense of the Arabic term for the “plague”: *taʿūn* (طاعون) as a derivative from the Arabic verb *taʿana* (طعن) “to stab.”
- 53 Nunn 1996, 59–60.
- 54 Faulkner 1962, 72; Thomas 1959, 102.
- 55 In CT II, spell 149, 237b, demons of Sekhmet are designated as arrows: Bommas 1990, 40, note 31; cf. pLeiden I 347, V, 2: “Sekhmet didn’t shoot her Arrows against me.” Meanwhile, the Twenty-second Dynasty at Bubastis, the form of a troop of “Seven Arrows”: Rondot 1989, 249ff., esp. 264–267; Lucarelli 2011, 121–122.
- 56 In the *shṭp Shmt* ritual, *wdi* describes the action of sending miasmatic breaths: Goyon 2006, 86 (text 9, lines 13–14); 88(n°12). For the connotations of *wdi nfw*: Rondot 1989, 256 (n. f); *wdi* is the inimical action of demonic entities to put disease or any kind of evil into the person: Borghouts 1971, n° 2 (fn. 5); Koenig 1979, 110 (g; e).
- 57 Ghalioungui 1968, 40; for details about this argument and their evidence in texts: Megahed 2016, 177, s.v. *mdwt*; 235, s.v. *šsrw*.
- 58 For the fiery breath of Sekhmet, Wilson cites that the *shṃ* scepter is “offered to Nephthys in her

- capacity as a fire breathing goddess who is thus equated with Sakhmet": Wilson 1991, 1600, s.v. *shmt*; cf. a dangerous place in CT IV, 329k is called "The fiery breath from the mouth of *Shmt*": Zandee 1960, 214.
- ⁵⁹ Leitz 2002f (= LGG 6), 681c, s.v. *stw-šsrw.sn-m-r³.sn*[1].
- ⁶⁰ For the dispersal of diseases through the mouths of demons: Aufrère 1985, 29. Demonic entities cause death through their morbid breaths identified with verb *tpi* "to breathe," a term that is also related to actions done by the mouth, such as "to spew out" or "to be spat upon": Erman and Grapow 1930 (= *Wb* 5), 296 (3–4); Faulkner 1962, 298. Gods seize people in the act of taking a breath: Edwards 1960, 54 (39).
- ⁶¹ Von Lieven 2000, 24 (fn. 82); Bommas 1999, 36; 41.
- ⁶² Leitz 2002b (= LGG 2), 366b. *wpwtyw-m-ht-sp³wt* as an indication for the astral manifestation of demons who would be seen in the sky from different locations on earth: von Lieven 2000, texts 400 and 406; Valloggia 1976, 56 (§108.4). The expression *m-ht sp³wt* explains the sense of spreading effects everywhere: Herbin 2004, 186 (footnote 63).
- ⁶³ Leitz 2002f (= LGG 6), 588c, s.v. *shsw-ht-t³*.
- ⁶⁴ It is held that Galen's concept built upon the knowledge of the ancient Egyptian medical school: Steuer and Saunders 1959, 68f.
- ⁶⁵ For the role of disease carried by breaths in the ancient Egyptian etiological theory: Yoyotte 1968, 79ff, esp. 82; Vernus 1982–1983, 121ff.; cf. the argument about the similarity of the impact of winds in ancient Egypt to the "pneuma" of the Greeks: Ghalioungui 1968, 40. The belief of the ability of winds and breaths to cause disease is strikingly still kept in nowadays Egyptian popular heritage; the expressions "لفحة هوا" in the sense of "blight of air" and "أخذ هوا" in the sense of "he took air" are common to express that someone is ill because of being exposed to air. The verb "انتفس" "a breath affected him" and the term "منفوس" "being affected by a breath" are used to describe the condition of someone suffering from troubles that are commonly understood as the effect of an evil being: Ghalioungui 1968, 40.2; 41.1.
- ⁶⁶ Nunn 1996, 49.
- ⁶⁷ Germond 1981, 290–291. Cf. in the ritual of *shtp Shmt*, Sekhmet launches the threat of the *ḥdt-rnpt* by sending winds, Germond 1981, 289.
- ⁶⁸ Vernus 1981, 94 (fn. 16).