

The Journal of Egyptological Studies

---

**IV (2015)**

Editor in Chief: **Prof. Sergei Ignatov**

Editorial Board and Secretary: **Prof. Sergei Ignatov, Assoc. Prof. Teodor Lekov, Assist. Prof. Emil Buzov**

All communications to the Journal should be send to:

Prof. Sergei Ignatov

e-mail: [bie@nbu.bg](mailto:bie@nbu.bg)

or e-mail: [signatov@nbu.bg](mailto:signatov@nbu.bg)

### **Guidelines for Contributors**

#### **All authors must submit to the publisher:**

- ◇ Manuscripts should be sent in printed form and in diskettes to:  
Montevideo 21, New Bulgarian University,  
Department for Mediterranean and Eastern Studies,  
Sofia, Bulgaria or to e-mail: [bie@nbu.bg](mailto:bie@nbu.bg)
- ◇ The standards of printed form are:  
The text should be written on MS Word for Windows, font *Times New Roman* and should be justified. The size of characters should be 12 pt for main text and 9 pt for footnotes.
- ◇ If using photographs, they should be supplied on separate sheet. Drawings , hieroglyphs and figures could be included in the text. Maps and line drawings are to be submitted in computerized form scanned at min. 600 dpi; for b/w photos computerized with 300 dpi scanning.
- ◇ Contributors will receive 10 offprints

## CONTENTS

*Sergei Ignatov*

**“THE DESERTED KING...”**

**IN EGYPTIAN LITERATURE..... 5**

*Teodor Lekov, Emil Buzov*

**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
OF THEBAN TOMB NO. 263 BY THE BULGARIAN INSTITUTE OF  
EGYPTOLOGY, SEASONS 2012–2013..... 14**

*Teodor Lekov*

**THE ROLE OF THE KA IN THE PROCESS OF CREATION AND BIRTH ..... 31**

*Emil Buzov*

**NOTES ON EGYPTIAN WISDOM TEXTS ..... 49**

*Yordan Chobanov*

**A NEW INTERPRETATION OF “THE DIALOGUE OF A MAN AND HIS BA” ..... 84**

*Svetla Ilieva*

**THE RITUAL OF THE FOUR TORCHES AND FOUR BRICKS**

**ACCORDING TO BD CHAPTER 137A FROM PAPYRUS OF NU..... 98**

*Silviya Kremenska*

**THE EGYPTIAN GOD SETH IN HIS ROLE**

**AS A FIGHTER AND PROTECTOR OF THE SOLAR BARK..... 126**

*Mladen Tomorad*

**THE TWO UNPUBLISHED SHABTIS FROM KRK (CROATIA) ..... 141**

*Mladen Tomorad*

**THE END OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION:**

**THE PROHIBITION OF PAGANISM IN EGYPT FROM THE MIDDLE**

**OF THE 4TH TO THE MIDDLE OF THE 6TH CENTURY A.D..... 147**

## THE EGYPTIAN GOD SETH IN HIS ROLE AS A FIGHTER AND PROTECTOR OF THE SOLAR BARK

*Silviya Kremenska*

The Egyptian god Seth has always had a more different role than the other deities. That's why it is important to examine his role, not only as a god of confusion and a trickster, but also as a fighter and protector of the solar bark. Although there are plenty of studies for him, with the most important that of H. te Velde<sup>1</sup>, there are a few examinations of Seth in this role of his. In the following article I have tried to gather as many references of him as a mighty god, staying on the prow of the solar bark killing Apophis. There are also examples of him helping the Egyptian king, mostly in battle. The paper makes no claim to be completely comprehensive.

The most accurate description of a god is the one that he gives for himself:

*Ink Sth šd hnnw krj  
m hnw 3ht n.t pt*<sup>2</sup>

„I am Seth making tumult and storm  
in the midst of the Akhet of the sky.“

The first thing that comes in mind with the mentioning of the name of Seth is that he is the murderer of his brother Osiris. On account of all that has been written about that matter and the fact that it is not connected directly to the subject of this work I shall not deal with that here.

As is well known Seth is identified with the foreign lands, chaos, aggression and destruction. In his monograph H. te Velde chooses for a most appropriate description of him “god of confusion” (*sh*<sup>3</sup>). His color is red – the color of the desert and everything non-Egyptian, the planet connected to him is Mercury (in the tomb of Ramesses IV it is called Seth during the night and god in the morning). According

---

<sup>1</sup> Velde, Herman te. *Seth god of confusion. A study of his role in Egyptian mythology and religion*. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Budge, E. A. Wallis. *The book of the dead*. 1895, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> FD. 237.

to Plutarch<sup>4</sup>the Egyptians call the iron “the bones of Seth”. In Pyramid Texts (§14) it is also mentioned that *bi3* comes from him.

Seth is the main deity in the Eastern Delta. He is the master of Avaris, Ombos, Sepermeru, the oases in the West Dessert. He is also the master of Per-Ramesses. The greatest influence of the cult he has in the time of the New Kingdom when three kings are named after him – Sety, Setnakht and Sety II.

During the II dynasty he takes an important place in the titular of Peribsen – instead of a Horus name he has a Sethian name. The last ruler of the dynasty has a Horus name at first and later he adds a sethian one. That is due to the fact that *ntr: wjim.f* – both gods are in him.

For the better understanding of the nature of Seth and the role that I am trying to examine in this paper I could not continue without quoting Erik Hornung: “The gods of Egypt can be terrifying, dangerous, and unpredictable, but they cannot be evil”<sup>5</sup>. The understanding of the ancient Egyptians for evil is mirrored in the term *isft*. People are the only creatures who are capable of making *isft*. Gods, even Seth himself, who goes beyond all standards of behaviour, can never be connected to evil. It is even on the contrary – he is the one who cares the most for the order in the divineworld, because he is the slayer of Apophis.

One of the most characteristic features of Seth is definitely the necessity of restraining his powers. In pap. Leiden<sup>6</sup> it is explained how a sick person can be healed when given beer to drink, so the demons in him are intoxicated:

*nndnit Sthir: fib r h3k(3) m*  
*rn.fpwj n hnkt*  
*ttf[.f] ib r h3k(3) h3tj n hft*

„There is no restraining of Seth, when he makes the heart to be captured in his name of beer, he confuses the heart in order to capture the heart of the enemy“.

There are some late Egyptian texts<sup>7</sup>, including the Jumilhac papyrus, from where we know that Seth was imprisoned at the north celestial pole. This way he could not enter *dw3t*. This shows the necessity of restraining his great power.

In connection with his role of a protector, who repels Apophis an example can be pointed out concerning the possibility that the discussed god is immortal. For none of the other deities there is even a possibility of being immortal. Once again Seth is an exception of the rule. In Pyramid texts (§1453) the king wants to evade the day of his death as Seth did:

<sup>4</sup> Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, §62.

<sup>5</sup> Hornung, Erik. *Conceptions of god in Ancient Egypt. The one and the many*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1996. p. 213.

<sup>6</sup> Leiden I 348, Recto XIII.4.

<sup>7</sup> Neugebauer, Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts* III, pp. 190–191.

*nh.n N pnhrw.fhr m(w)t mi r nh.t Stš*  
*nh.n N nt<sup>8</sup> (?) hr.t m(w)t mi r nh.t*  
*Stšnt (?) .t.fhrt m(w)t*  
*nh.n N 3bd.w.fhrw m(w)t mi r nh.t*  
*Stš3bd.w.fhr.w m(w)t*  
*nh.n N pn rnp.t hr m(w)t mi r nh.t*  
*Stšrnp.t.f m(w)t<sup>9</sup>*

„The king escaped his days of death like Seth did,  
 The king escaped his half months (?) of death  
 like Seth did,  
 The king escaped his months of death  
 like Seth did,  
 The king escaped his years of death  
 like Seth did.“

Different scholars read this passage differently, but as Bonnet<sup>10</sup> claims this does not really mean immortality. Most probably this has something to do with the wish for millions and millions of years of life (or sed festivals). Never the less, it must to be noted that Seth, not anyone else, is the god in question. In his efforts to kill Apophis he really needs it mostly, being the strongest of them all Seth may actually be capable of defeating even death. After all, he deserves it for his daily slaying of the evil serpent and this way letting Re unobstructed to rise in his *3ht*.

There is another similar example of a wish towards Hatshepsut:

*di.n.(j) n.kn.spsšt Hr m ʕnh* „I give you the part of Horus like life,  
*rnp.wt Stḥ m w3s<sup>11</sup>* the years of Seth like power.“

Westendorf<sup>12</sup> and te Velde share the opinion that Seth is mortal, just like the other gods. H. te Velde<sup>13</sup> describes images of Seth as a mummy from the time of XIX dy. and later, which show that even this contradictory god is mortal. Similar to the fact that he rules over the boundaries of Egypt and beyond them, Seth is in a position between the transient and the eternal. He divides the order from the chaos and stands in the border of the existing and the non-existing.

God Seth shows himself as a fighter in two ways: as a slayer of Apophis, being part of the crew of the solar bark and as giving strength to the king during battle. His basic role is to destroy the enemies of the Creator, and this way to keep the order in the world. The most commonly used epithet of his is *ʕ3phḥtj* and it is the reason why Seth has taken the responsibility of this task. For the first time the word

<sup>8</sup> WB II, 198, 2; WB IV, 147, I.

<sup>9</sup> PT Utterance 570, §1453.

<sup>10</sup> Bonnet, Hans. *Lexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin, 1952.

<sup>11</sup> Urk.IV, 244, 16.

<sup>12</sup> Westendorf, Worfhart. “Beiträge aus und zu den medizinischen Texten”, *ZÄS* 92 (1966), pp.128–154.

<sup>13</sup> Velde, Herman te. *Seth god of confusion*. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1977, p. 104.

combination  $\epsilon_3 p h t j$ <sup>14</sup> is found in Pyramid texts 1145.<sup>15</sup> It is mostly used for Apophis, but can also be found in the battle between Horus and his uncle Seth (The contending of Horus and Seth).

Most of the scholars define him only as a deity connected to evil and causing disorder. Very few of them realize that to fulfil this duty he needs to precisely like that. No other Egyptian god would be able to play Seth's allotted part, as he does.

The acts which caused the death of Osiris are not to be considered bad at all costs. This, probably, is one of the ways for the ancient Egyptians to explain death and to put Osiris on the place he is supposed to be – as master of the Underworld. For Death to be defeated Osiris had to die. After all, Seth is the strongest of all the gods and it is normal for him to be the killer of Osiris. If his actions were so wrong and bad he would have been found guilty on the gods' court. He would have been destroyed, but that did not happen.

Seth is only one of the gods who protect the sun bark. Texts mention most of the times Re himself to repel Apophis. Sometimes other deities do the job: Montu, Onuris, Sopdu, Shu, and Baba. According to te Velde in the solar boat he can be interpreted as the aggressive aspect of Re.

During the reign of Setnacht<sup>16</sup> it is said that after he suppresses a rebel he is called "like Hepri-Seth when he becomes aggressive". In the geographical list of Medinet Habu there is also a god Seth-Re. The connection between those two gods is strong even outside the bark. In his role of a slayer of Apophis Seth is mostly called *stp n R*<sup>17</sup> and *s3 R*<sup>18</sup>.

In Book of the Dead Spell 137 B *shmw Stš* is used for his powers. In Pyramid texts Spell 511 (§1149–50) the roaring of Seth is described: *nhmhm N m Stš*. His fearsome roar inspires horror in the hearts of the enemies. There is even a title of a Seth's priest *šd-hrw*, (raising the voice). The spear of Seth *mt3jtm* made of *bi3* is used for repelling Apophis<sup>19</sup>. The word *nbd*<sup>20</sup> is being used for Seth when he repels Apophis, but also when he kills Osiris.<sup>21</sup>

Other texts will also be used, not necessarily in chronological order. In Spell (Utterance) 242 of Pyramid texts the fear that Seth inspires is portrayed:

*"Ho, Neith! You shall emerge with your face that of the Seth-animal, and*

<sup>14</sup> WB I, 539, 20

<sup>15</sup> Westendorf, Worfhart. "Beiträge aus und zu den medizinischen Texten", ZÄS 92 (1966), p. 142.

<sup>16</sup> pap. Harris 75, 8.

<sup>17</sup> pap. Beatty IX vs. B 9, 3; pap. Vatican I, II;

<sup>18</sup> Marriage stela I. 16.

<sup>19</sup> Wainwright, G. A. "Iron in Egypt", JEA 18, (1932), p. 13.

<sup>20</sup> WB II, 247.

<sup>21</sup> Te Velde, Herman. *Seth god of confusion*. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1977. p. 101.

*sit at the fore of those older than you. The sky shall become disheveled because of you, the earth shall shake because of you, and the Imperishable Stars shall be afraid of you.*"<sup>22</sup>

His might is so tremendous that when the king transforms as his animal he has no match. For a first time Seth is mentioned on the prow of the boat of Re in Coffin texts (Spell 160). There he is named *nb<sup>c</sup>nh*. Before that in Spell 16 we find a mention of his great powers:

*iwph<sup>r</sup>.n.f sh<sup>m</sup>.w Sth m-h3w* "He (Horus) controls the powers of Seth with his own".<sup>28</sup>  
*sh<sup>m</sup>.w.f*

In the current paper I am using the main corpuses of ancient Egyptian texts to illustrate the great powers of the god Seth, his power and endurance. For most of the given translations the work of R. O. Faulkner is being used. Other texts will also be used, not necessarily in chronological order.

Coffin Texts Spell 50 "*See, Seth has come in his own shape and has said: I will cause the god's body to fear, I will inflict injury on him, I will slaughter him.*" This is one of the most threatening and powerful examples of the uncontrollable might of Seth. He openly threatens the god with fear, injury and even death.

CT Spell 160 "*I know the name of this serpent that is upon the mountain, its name is Whn.f. Now at eventide he will turn his eye against Re, and a stoppage will occur in the crew and a great astonishment (?) in the voyage, and Seth will bend him with his hand. Spell, which he utters as magic: I rise up against you and the voyage is directed aright...*" This is another example, where the deceased is identified with the powerful Seth in order to help Re in his voyage.

CT Spell 407 "*O Seth, possessed of your power, great Longhorn dwelling in the northern sky give me air among the wtnw who give rest to the celestial kine. O you who are loud-voiced, greatly majestic, sitting in the midst of darkness, give me air among the wtnw who give rest to the celestial kine.*"

CT Spell 564 "*...for I am Seth who is among the gods, and I will not perish.*" Seth is the one, who would best protect the sun god and here, once more he is said to be unperishable.

CT Spell 568 "*Stand up, O Power, and meet Geb, for your faces are spirits, and the power of Seth is brought to naught.*" The great power of Seth must be restrained and reduced for it is so great. The next three examples are also for his strength:

<sup>22</sup> Allen, J. *Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 2005. p. 324.

<sup>23</sup> de Buck, 1935, pp. 48d-49a, Faulkner 1973, p. 10 translates: "...the powers of Seth served him and above his own powers..." All the other translations of Coffin texts utterances used here are by Faulkner.

CT Spell857 „*You have the soul of Horus, you have the strength of Seth...*“

CT Spell 945 „*My strength is Seth*“. Here after the enumeration of parts, connected with gods, Seth is once again given power.

CT Spell 956 „*and Horus is content [...] the powers of Seth are sealed off(?)*“.

The name of the power of this god's *hemu* is *ḥrw ḳrj*: „*Then I heard ḥrw ḳrj, the voice of thunder*“. O. Berlev, who analyses p. Rhind, 87, c, 1–2 thinks that the thunder-clap is the power of Seth and this power is expressed through *ḥmw* of this god.<sup>24</sup> Year 11, the first month of *3ḥt*, day three – the birth of Seth – his *ḥmw* makes itself be heard. Also the rough and restless see in though by the ancient Egyptians to be a manifestation of Seth.<sup>25</sup> There are a great number of examples to support the thesis for the unparalleled power of this divinity.

When the king fights beyond the borders of Egypt this was a symbolical gesture, similar to the fight between Seth and Apophis.<sup>26</sup>

Seth and Horus are supporters of the kingship; they stand under the throne of the ruler or in his both sides. When Egypt has no king Seth cannot be restrained and he shows his destructive powers. Both divinities must always be in peace.

<i>iw:fr šps ḥd</i>	„He (Amenemhat) shall receive the white crown,
<i>iw:fr wtsdšrt</i>	he shall lift up the red crown,
<i>iw:fr sm3 šhm.tj</i>	he shall unite both crowns,
<i>iw:fr šhtphr stḥ m mr.t.sn</i> <sup>27</sup>	he shall appease Horus and Seth through that, which they love.“

„That, which they love“ is exactly what Egypt needs – to have a king. But that is not the only condition, this king must be strong enough to cope with *isft*, the way Seth does – with his powerful hand.

The slaying of Apophis is mentioned in many places in the ancient Egyptian monuments, but has rarely been described in detail. The fact that this happens daily is sufficient enough and this action is accepted as something completely normal and is taken for granted, despite its great importance.<sup>28</sup> Later in the paper an excellent example will be made.

<sup>24</sup> See Ignatov, Sergei. “The name of the serpent in the Ancient Egyptian story of the Shipwrecked sailor”, *GM* 2005, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.* p. 36.

<sup>26</sup> Bonnet, Hans. *Lexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*. Berlin, 1952, p. 708.

<sup>27</sup> Helck, W. *Die Prophezeiung des Nfr.tj*, In: *KÄT. Harrassowitz*, Wiesbaden, 1970, XIII c – XIII e.

<sup>28</sup> Frankfort, H. *Ancient Egyptian religion: An Interpretation*. Columbia university press, New York. 1948, p. 132.

In pap. Chester Beatty<sup>29</sup> we read: “that’s why said Seth, ꜥꜣ *pḥtj*, the son of Nut: I am Seth, ꜥꜣ *pḥtj*, friend of Re, who helps in the fight with Apophis.” The evil serpent is outside of the created world. Only in the temple of Esna his origin is described.<sup>30</sup> He is said to be „one who was spit out“ (*pꜥt*) – a product of Neith’s saliva in the primeval ocean.<sup>31</sup> This substance, which was spit out had to be guarded and turned into a snake, 120 elbows long, and rebelled against Re. It must be noted that Apophis exists as a part of the body of the Creator, just like the created world. In other words, he also is a part of the creation. The origin of evil and its indestructibility are a subject, which goes beyond the framework of the present study and can be a subject of another paper.

Similar is the birth of Seth himself. In Pyramid Texts (utterance 222, §205) it is explained that he was spat out of the pregnant Nut. This similar way of birth of both of them is probably one of the reasons why they were later identified. In a similar way Seth’s saliva in its essence also serves him in the solar boat as a weapon against Apophis.

In both of the western oases – Kharga and Dakhla there are multiple interesting images of Seth. One example is the so-called „rock of Seth“, north of Kharga<sup>32</sup>. It has been found by Salima Ikram and Corina Rossi, who worked there as a part of the North Kharga Oasis Survey Project.



Fig. 1 Seth kills Apophis in the temple of Amun in the Kharga Oasis (Velde, Herman te. *Seth god of confusion*. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1977, Plate IX)

<sup>29</sup> Chester Betty I, XVI, 3–4

<sup>30</sup> Hornung, Erik. *Conceptions of god in Ancient Egypt. The one and the many*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1996. p. 158

<sup>31</sup> see S. Sauneron в *Mélanges Mariette* (IFAO BE 32, 1961) 235–36.

<sup>32</sup> Cruz-Uribe, Eugene. “*Sḥ ꜥꜣ pḥty*, Seth, God of power and might”, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 45 (2009).

Since I haven't been able to find recent publications on the subject I could not give better details on the subject.

There is another image of Seth in the hypostyle hall of the temple of Amun in Hibis, Kharga oasis (Fig. 1). He is depicted standing with a falcon head, wings and spearing Apophis<sup>33</sup>. It is dated to the time of Darius (XXVII dynasty). The interesting thing here is the fact that during that time Seth was no longer venerated as he used to be in the New Kingdom and a little after that. Then, he should have already been considered to a negative character in the ancient Egyptian concept. All of this is probably due to the fact that he has always had an important place in the religious life in the oases – after all Seth is the ruler of the desert.

Seth in his role of a fighter has a connection with Geb – in images on the ceiling of the tomb of Ramesses VI (KV9). They are situated on the ceiling of corridors C, D and E and on the ceiling of the burial chamber<sup>34</sup> and represent 20 figures of a standing man, and on 18 of them he is standing on the prow of the solar bark and holds a spear. All images have the head of a donkey, most commonly connected with Seth. It is interesting that the deity here is Geb. There are no other examples, where he is on the prow of the solar boat.<sup>35</sup>

The next corpus of texts is the Book of the Dead. Most of the examples given here are again from the translation of R.O. Faulkner<sup>36</sup>.

#### BD Spell 39

*“... for I am Seth, who can raise a tumult of storm  
in the horizon of the sky  
like one whose will is destruction – so says Atum.”*

Seth raises a tumult of storm and his will is destruction – these only give as a hint about his uncontrollable side, which could be unleashed and could destroy everything on his way. This power must be channelized only against the enemies of the Creator.

<sup>33</sup> For more information see Davies, N. de Garis. *The temple of Hibis in el Khargeh Oasis. Part III. The decoration*, ed. L. Bull and L. Hall, New York, 1953.

<sup>34</sup> See Piankoff, A. Rambova, I. *The tomb of Ramesses VI*. Princeton, 1954, vol. 2 pls. 152–57, 187–91.

<sup>35</sup> Cruz-Uribe, Eugene. “*stḥꜣpḥty*, Seth, God of power and might”, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 45 (2009), pp. 205.

<sup>36</sup> Faulkner, R. O. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. University of Texas Press. Reprint edition. 1990.

## BD Spell 17

*“What does it mean? It means the day when Horus fought with Seth when he inflicted injury on Horus’s face and when Horus took away Seth’s testicles.”*

This example is given only to show a part of the battle between Horus and Seth. In none of the examples of the fight between them, in spite of Seth’s bigger power, he does not win. This is because Horus is the king of Egypt; he must take the place, which was intended for him. After their struggle Seth takes the role of a giver of strength to the next kings of Egypt. As a matter of fact it must be noted that their battle could be perceived as verification for the powers of the god with Horus. Seth fights with him but he does not defeat him, which means that Horus has enough powers to be the ruler of Egypt. The aim of the battle is not to distinguish a winner, but to prove that both deities possess incredible powers, but the king of Kemet is only one – Horus.

## BD Spell 54

*bk3.j n 3t hrphtj Šwtj*

*„... the morning belongs to the moment of Horus and the strength of Seth.“<sup>37</sup>*

Here I have used the transliteration and translation of prof. Teodor Lekov. In his book he gives transliteration and translation to Bulgarian. The translation into English, of this and further examples, was made with his permission. The word *phjtj* is once again used for him.

## BD Spell 62

*ddsh̄mim mw mj̄c̄.wt Stš*

*„who gives power to the water, like the flesh of Seth.“<sup>38</sup>*

This is another example from T. Lekov. The term, used here for Seth’s strength is *sh̄m*.

## BD Spell 108

*“Seth will project a lance of iron against him*

*and will make him vomit up all that he has swallowed.*

*Seth will place him before him and will say to him with magic power:*

*“Get back at the sharp knife which is in my hand!*

*I stand before you, navigating aright and seeing afar.*

<sup>37</sup> Леков, Т. Книга на мъртвите. Изток-Запад, София, 2013. стр. 139.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, стр. 149.

*Cover your face, for I ferry across; get back because of me,  
for I am the Male! Cover your head, cleanse the palm of your hand;  
I am hale and I remain hale,  
for I am the great magician, the son of Nut,  
and power against you has been granted to me.  
Who is that spirit who goes on his belly, his tail and his spine?  
See, I have gone against you, and your tail is in my hand,  
for I am one who exhibits strength.  
I have come that I may rescue the earth-gods for Re  
so that he may go to rest for me in the evening.  
I go round about the sky, but you are in the fetters, which were decreed for  
you in the Presence, and Re will go to rest alive in his horizon.  
I know those who govern the matter by reason of which Apep is repelled..."*

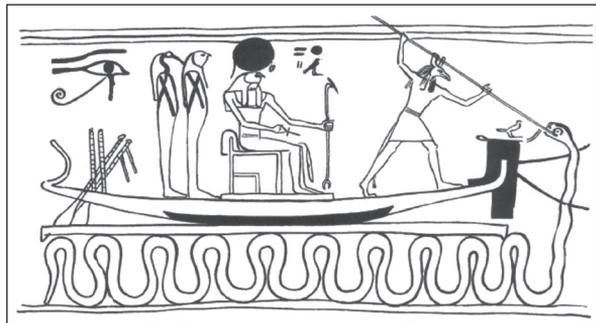
This is the only and extremely detailed description of the battle between Seth and Apophis – not only in the Book of the Dead, but outside of it, too.<sup>39</sup>

#### BD Spell 175

*grth3bb3 n Stštnw r ntr.wnb.w  
iwrđj.n.js3wtb3.fimjwj3  
nmr.fsnd ḥw-ntr*

*"But Ba of Seth is sent further than all the gods,  
And I gave his Ba to be restrained in the bark,  
Because he does not want the flesh of the god to be afraid".<sup>40</sup>*

Fig. 2. Seth defeats Apophis, a vignette from pap. Her-Uben (Cairo Museum) (copy from Nagel, Georges. "Set dans la barque solaire", BIFAO 28 (1929))



<sup>39</sup> for a transliteration see Леков, Т.Книга на мъртвите. Изток-Запад, София, 2013. стр. 275. (see also p. Bremner Rhind 23,22)

<sup>40</sup> Леков, Т.Книга на мъртвите. Изток-Запад, София, 2013. стр. 569

Ba of Seth is being sent, because he was meant to do more. He has more power than any other god, for he is the one protecting the boat of Re and repelling Apophis. Despite the fact that he is on the side of Re and he is good, his Ba must be restrained (*s3wt*)<sup>41</sup>. Precisely because of the fact that he is the strongest divinity and he has a double-sided nature, he is unpredictable.

Here are more examples of Seth in the boat of millions:

Ramesseum, Litany of Re:

*Swtjnb<sup>c</sup>nh m-h<sup>c</sup>t wi3 R<sup>c</sup>* 42      „Seth, lord of life, at the head of the boat of Re.“

A stone block from Aswan:

... *k Sthtnj m wi3 R<sup>c</sup> n*      „...Seth is the one, who is in the boat of Re of millions of the  
*h<sup>h</sup>wniswt-bitj Wser-m3<sup>c</sup>t-R<sup>c</sup>-*      king Wser-maat-Re Setep-en-Re.“  
*stp-n-R<sup>c</sup>* 43

*St m wi3 R<sup>c</sup>* – “Seth in the boat of Re” is the name of one of the sons of Ramesses II. The king is known to be devoted to Seth, that’s why it is not a surprise that he named one of his children way he did.

A calendar of the extra days from pap. Leiden:

*j St nb<sup>c</sup>nhimj-h3t w[j]3 R<sup>c</sup>*      „Ho, Seth, lord of life, who is in the boat of Re, I summon you  
*nhm.kwj m-<sup>c</sup> hrwnbdw n*      through the voice of the lord of evil in the year of Re.“  
*rnpt n.t R<sup>c</sup>* 44      It is important to see that Seth is named *nb<sup>c</sup>dw*, an  
epithet, which is rarely found, but must be  
differentiated from *isft*.

An inscription on a statue of the god:

*h<sup>h</sup>tp di niswthtp di St 3ph<sup>h</sup>tj*      „Offerings, given by the king to give Seth, great of power in the  
*m wi3 R<sup>c</sup>* 45      boat of Re.“

<sup>41</sup> FD. 208 – ‘watch and ward’; ‘ward off evil’.

<sup>42</sup> Champollion, *Notices descriptives*, I, p. 906.

<sup>43</sup> De Morgan, *Catalogue des Monuments et Inscriptions de l’Égypte antique*, I, p. 117, l.5.

<sup>44</sup> Leiden, Pap. I. 346, p. II.

<sup>45</sup> Pleyte, *Lettre à M. Th. Devéria*, pl. II, 3.

An inscription from the temple of MedinetHabu:

...p3km3.fhftnšnjhr dh sbj r  
h3t.ssktt<sup>46</sup>

„He tosses against neshen (storm) so the enemies in front of  
the boat’s prow are knocked down.“

Neshen is a manifestation of Seth. The storm is among the elements, which helps him express his strikingpower.

An image of Seth, killing Apophis is found on the stela from Taqayna<sup>47</sup> in Leiden museum (Fig. 3). It is made of limestone, 41.5 cm high and 29 cm.wide. In 1828 it was donated to the museum from the collection of the Greek diplomat Giovanni d’Anastasi. Seth is depicted with a human head and is killing Apophis – with the body of a serpent and a human head. Here he is called *nwbtrjandntr*<sup>48</sup>.

The second aspect of god Seth as a fighter is in his role of a giver of strength to the Egyptian king and a supporter of his hand in battle. We find examples of this for the first time from New Kingdom – the rule of Thutmose III. He desired to conquer the northern land Syria and Palestine, which are under Seth’s control. That’s why the necessity of his help appeared. It is strange that Thutmose I, who was the first to look in that direction, did not seek Seth’s help. Such examples have not yet been found, but are possible to exist.

According to Pyramid Texts (PT 1459 b, 2047 d) the uraeus, which the Egyptian king wears on his forehead comes forth from Seth. This way he is always capable of repelling the enemies of Egypt with the might of this deity. In some cases, however, only the uraeus is not enough – stronger support of the God of power is needed.

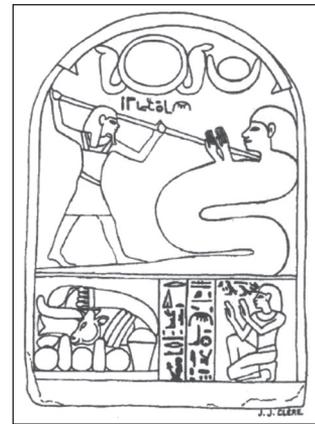


Fig. 3 Copy of the stela from Taqayna

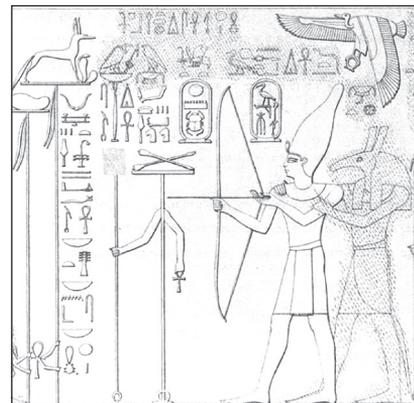


Fig. 4 Seth supports the hand of Thutmose (Lepsius Denkmaler Abth.III.Bl.36, b)

<sup>46</sup> Champollion, *Moments de l’Egypteei de la Nubie*, pl. CCXX

<sup>47</sup> RIJKSMUSEUM VAN OUDHEDEN [06/001], inventory number AP 60, International Inventory number 06/001/14069.

All the examples of a king, who relies on the power of Seth, are from the New Kingdom. This was a time when he was in his zenith and his help was demanded not only from the heavenly king, but also from the terrestrial one.

A relief of Thutmose III in the inner, south wall of a hall in his temple in Karnak<sup>48</sup>:

In Thutmose III's annals (part of the account of the king's battle of Meggido) in Karnak we read:

*Imn m s3h<sup>c</sup>w.fr-d3w  
phtj St hth<sup>c</sup>.w.f<sup>49</sup>*

“Amun protects his flesh in the battle,  
Seth's power fills his body”.

It is clear that Amun is the one protecting the king – a role, which is particularly typical for this deity. Seth also fulfils his task – he gives strength to the king and supports his hand in battle.

In Medinet Habu<sup>50</sup> for Ramesses III it is said that he is „like Seth, chosen of Re, his roaring is being heard like that of <sup>c</sup>h<sup>h</sup>(griffon) “. The epithet, used in this example if mostly found for Seth when he is in his role of a protector of the solar boat.

In the Kadesh inscriptions of Ramesses II we find another comparison of the king with Seth in battle. This one is more detailed, because these annals are longer than those of Thutmose III.

*bnrmt<sup>c</sup>wp<sup>c</sup>3ntihnw.n Swth-  
<sup>c</sup>3phtjb<sup>c</sup>r3 m h<sup>c</sup>w.f<sup>51</sup>*

„There is no man, who is among us (besides) Seth – great with his power or Baal in his flesh.“

*Swthb<sup>c</sup>r3 m h<sup>c</sup>w.ft3j.khrjt m  
tk3 m p3t3 n htj<sup>52</sup>*

„Seth-Baal is in his flesh (king's), the fear of you (Seth) is like a torch in the land of the Hittites.“

*iwhm.fmj Sth<sup>c</sup>3phtj mi Shmt  
m 3t nšni.s<sup>53</sup>*

„His majesty is like Seth, great with power, like Sekhmet in her moment of rage.“

Here the Egyptian ruler is personified with Seth, just like the tradition from the time of Thutmose III, but the goddess Sekhmet is added because of her rage in the myth of the destruction of mankind. It is interesting to be noted that, she has many of his epithets.

<sup>48</sup> Now the image is in the open museum in Karnak, Luxor.

<sup>49</sup> Urk. IV 657, 14

<sup>50</sup> Medinet Habu I, pl. 27, 22

<sup>51</sup> Poem, line 41.

<sup>52</sup> Poem, line 72.

<sup>53</sup> Report, line 23.

A few conclusions can be made from all the examples. The first and basic one is that Seth is not an evil deity, in spite the statements of some scholars. He is a complex figure, which combines good and evil and manages to manifest whatever is necessary for his purposes. His might is so great that sometimes he must be restrained and hold back. The only ones capable of doing this are the Creator and the Egyptian king.

In all the given material, as incomplete as it may be, it is perceptible that Seth's strength is enormous and he has the power to overcome every enemy, who stands on his way – including those who threaten Re in his boat.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Леков, Теодор. Скритото знание. Свещените книги на Древен Египет. Издателство Изток-Запад, София, 2004.
- Леков, Теодор. Религията на Древен Египет. Издателство Изток-Запад, София, 2007.
- Леков, Теодор. Книга на мъртвите. Издателство Изток-Запад, София, 2013.
- Conman, Joanne. "It's about time: Ancient Egyptian Cosmology", *Studien zur Altaegyptischen Kultur*, BD 31 (2003), pp. 38–71.
- Cruz-Uribe, Eugene. "stḥ ʿ3 pḥty, Seth, God of power and might", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 45 (2009), pp. 201–226.
- Ignatov, Sergei. "The name of the serpent in the Ancient Egyptian story of the Shipwrecked sailor", *Göttingen Miszellen* 2005, pp. 33–37.
- Faulkner, R. O. *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts. Vol. I-III*. Aris & Phillips. 2004.
- Faulkner, R. O. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. University of Texas Press. Reprint edition. 1990.
- Frandsen, Paul John. "On the origin of the notion of evil in Ancient Egypt", *Göttingen Miszellen* 179 (2000), pp. 9–34.
- Frankfort, H. *Ancient Egyptian Religion. An interpretation*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1949.
- Goedicke, Hans. "Seth as a fool", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 47 (1961), p. 154.
- Griffiths, J. Gwyn. Barb, A. A. "Seth or Anubis", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 22, No. 3/4 (1959), pp. 367–371.
- Gunn, Battiscombe. Gardiner, Alan H., "New Renderings of Egyptian Texts: II. The Expulsion of the Hyksos", *JEA* 5 (1918), pp. 36–56.
- Habachi, Labib. "Sethos I's devotion to Seth and Avaris", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache*, 1974, pp. 95–102.

- Hornung, Erik. *Conceptions of god in Ancient Egypt. The one and the many*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1996.
- Nagel, Georges. "Set dans la barque solaire", *BIFAO* 28 (1929), pp. 33–39.
- Newberry, P. E. "The pig and the Cult-animal of Set", *The Journal of Egyptian Archeology*, Vol. 14 (1928), pp. 211–225.
- Petrie, Flinders, W. M., Quibell, J. E. *Naqada and Ballas 1895*. London, 1896.
- Robert, A. Oden, Jr. "The Contendings of Horus and Seth (Chester Beatty Papyrus No. 1): A structural interpretation", *History of Religions*, Vol. 18 No. 4 (1979), pp. 352–369.
- Simpson, William Kelly. "A statuette of a devotee of Seth", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 62 (1976), pp. 41–44.
- Schorsch, Deborah. Wypyski, Mark T. "Seth, figure of Mystery", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 45 (2009), pp. 176–199.
- Sweeney, Deborah. "Gender and conversational tactics in the Contendings of Horus and Seth", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. 88 (2002), pp. 141–162.
- te Velde, Herman. *Seth god of confusion*. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1977.
- te Velde, Herman. "The Egyptian god Seth as a trickster", *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, Vol. 7 (1968), pp. 37–40.
- Wainwright, G. A. "The origin of storm-gods in Egypt", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 49 (1963), pp. 13–20.
- Wainwright, G. A. "Iron in Egypt", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 18, (1932), pp. 3–15.
- Ward, William A. "The hiw-ass, the hiw-serpent, and the god Seth", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 37 No. 1 (1961), pp. 23–34.
- Westendorf, Worfhart. "Beiträge aus und zu den medizinischen Texten", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 92 (1966), pp. 128–154.
- Zandee, J. "Seth als Sturmgott", *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 90 (1963), pp. 144–156.