

Chapter III

Imntet and *Tbtet* in the Ancient Egyptian Art

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3.4. The personification of *Imntet* and *Tbtet*

3.1. Duality in the Ancient Egyptian Art

The phenomenon of duality pervades the Ancient Egyptian culture and is at the heart of the Egyptian concept of the universe itself. But rather than focusing on the essential differences between the two parts of a given pair, Egyptian thought may stress their complementary nature as a way of expressing the essential unity of existence through the alignment and harmonization of opposites - just as we today might use men and women, old and young, or great and small to mean (all) or "everyone", Heaven and earth, light and dark, day and night, the sun and moon (for the Egyptians, the two eyes of the god of heaven), or the sun and stars swallowed in turn by the sky goddess Nut are only the most obvious examples of this dichotic unity seen at the cosmic level. The same dualism is found in north and south, east and west (*Ibttet* and *Imntet*), the geographic reality of the red land of the desert in juxtaposition with the fertile black land of the Nile Valley, and in pairs of gods and goddesses which represented these and many other binary aspects of the world.

Underlying duality may also be seen in the concept of body and spirit, the dichotomy may be expressed by male and female elements, as in the personified figures of "eternity" in its two forms of (*dt*) -Eternal Sameness- and (*nḥḥ*) – Eternal.¹

3.2. Personification in the Ancient Egyptian Art

Personification existed as one of the main concepts of the Ancient Egyptian art. Moreover, the Ancient Egyptian Artist differentiated between two different types of personifications (Formal and Analytical personification).

- Analytical personification deals with giving an iconographic approach to the analysis of names, titles and epithets.
- Formal personification which is the personification in form alone that can be referred to as well as "emblematic personification" by giving human attributes to the emblem of an idea.

Dealing with the personification of the two emblems of the east and the west means to deal with the second type which is the "emblematic personification" as the two goddesses (*Imntet* and *Iabtet*) bore the names of the geographical meaning they represent or personify which is the east and west (Two cardinal points).²

¹ Wilkinson, H. R. *Symbol and Magic in Ancient Egypt*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1999, p. 129

² Baines, J. *Fecundity Figures: Egyptian personification and the Iconology of Genre*, England, 1985, p. 19 ff.

Analyzing the samples of personifications of goddess (Hathor - Imntet) in (fig.s 71 - 73) it can be assumed that the deity with the sign () and rarely with () is most often called “Hathor” in the accompanying texts so that when texts are lacking it is difficult to know which of several possible names is the correct one. In this case it can be argued that the personification is taken to be the entire extent of the major goddess’s role so we argue that “Hathor” stands for the west.

Evidences for the view that the personification’s function is explicatory may be found in the fact that syncretistic groupings of the various figures that occur in this context are unknown (as there is no Hathor - Imntet).

When a goddess with () on her head is called “Hathor”, she is usually (*hnwt imntt*) “Mistress of the west”, here “*hnwt*” means not so much “Mistress” but something like “Lady of” which is a word used to link between Hathor and Imntet.

It is likely that in such case Hathor and the west are linked as closely as congruity will allow so that “Imntet” describes Hathor’s role as an analytic personification, this produces a close analogy between analytic personification and syncretism.

The main difference involves groupings with superior or parallel being, which is the second element in the syncretistic pair while personification occurs usually with an inferior one.

The analytic personification is also one for which native Egyptian evidence can be found in alternative names so that it is on occasion a formal personification too while cases with epithets come midway between the other two.

We should not understand the goddess’s role in these contexts simply as an analytic personification since it is unlikely that an Egyptian would consider that they were ever completely absorbed by it. The appearance with personifications or personifying epithets, here explains and limits but doesn’t exhaust the goddesses’ role, so (*hwt hrw hnwt Imntt*) would mean Hathor in her role as personification of the west.

So it can be thought that syncretism is only restricted to major deities such as “Hathor”, Mistress of the west.

However, the juxtaposition of the names of two deities in itself constitutes some sort of claim whether emotional or intellectual that the two are equivalent or that the lesser has taken some of the attributes of the greater.

Some scholars argued that substitution of one figure for another or the addition of a figure may act as an elucidation of a scene’s content.

The occurrence of Hathor in alternation with Imntet and the further occurrence of Imntet linked with other personifications of lesser order such as (Iabtet – the east), poses some problems of classification.

With Imntet, the majority of examples may be simply variants of Hathor in which a contextual meaning has been made explicit.

The implications of the relationship between these major figures especially Imntet and emblematic personification should be considered. If it is correct to assume that emblematic personification is the type closest to the texts, it should follow that the name of the sign personified is indeed the name of the resulting figure, and therefore the emblematic personification could be analytic only if it were subject to a secondary allegorisation – the figures could not be thought to be mythical in origin. The sole evidence relevant to such a question is the variation from major deity to emblematic personification.

Major deities in the context may be taken as analytic personification and instances of anthropomorphic figures named Imntet as analytic personification but both Imntet and the emblematic figure may be taken as formal personifications.¹

¹ Baines, J. *Op Cit*, p.p. 27 – 30

3.3. Hieroglyphs associated with the east and the west

3.3.1. The sign (*dw*)

The hieroglyph for (mountain) that showed two rounded hills (or peaks) with a valley (or strip) of earth between them.

This sign could depict the mountain ranges which rose on either side of the Nile Valley that had a cosmic significance; these two peaks were referred to as *Manu* (the western peak) and *Bakhu* (the eastern peak).

The Egyptians visualized a universal mountain split into a western peak (*Manu*) and an eastern peak (*Bakhu*) which served as the supports for heaven.

The ends of this great earth mountain were guarded by lion deities  who protected the rising and setting sun and were sometimes portrayed as part of the cosmic mountain itself. The relation with the solar cycle is seen in the closely related akhet sign  which shows the sun rising above the mountain horizon in some representations for the figure of a god lifting the solar disk above the mountain sign.¹



Fig. 78

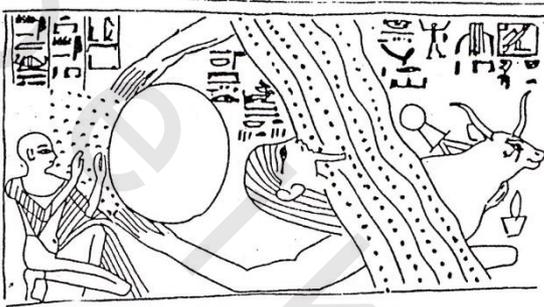
A God lifting the solar disk above the mountains

After,

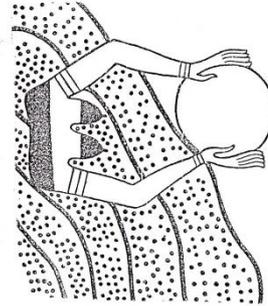
Wilkinson. R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 132, ill. 1

¹ Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, P. 133

Because the Egyptian necropolis was usually located in the mountainous wasteland bordering the cultivation, the mountain was also closely related to the concept of the tomb and the afterlife. It may be in this context that the sacred symbol of Abydos is to be interpreted, where the plumed cult symbol stands on a pole which is set upon the mountain sign and texts referring to the mortuary deity Anubis as "He who is upon his mountain".



(A)



(B)

Fig. 79

(A) Sun setting in the western mountain.

After,

Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 147, fig. 21

(B) The sun disk in the western mountain from a Theban tomb

After,

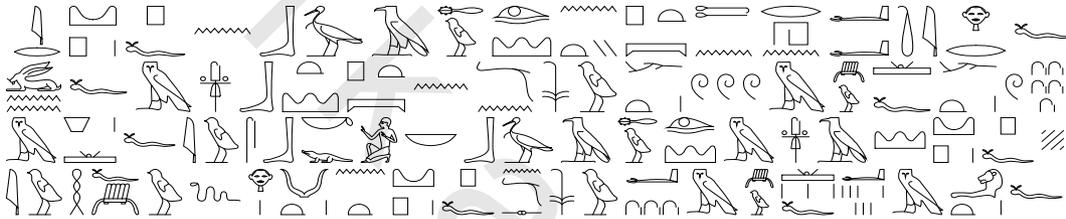
Piankoff, A. *Op Cit*, p. 41, fig. 25

The twin-peaked mountain is the form usually used in representations with cosmic and afterlife significance and in the same time the form of the mountain represents in one of her aspects the duality in the Ancient Egyptian thoughts that could be reflected on this study as it gives as well a manifestation of the symbolic concepts of the east and the west sides represented as well in some symbols that will follow in the study such as the sign *3ht* and the portals of the afterlife.

3.3.2. “*B3hw*” and “*m3nw*” Mountains

Since the very beginning, (*B3hw*) mountain referred to the western Lands (Libya), of which Sobek was the Lord.

However, since the New Kingdom, (*B3hw*) was located in the east as one of the two mountains carrying the sky (*B3hw* and *m3nw*) and (*B3hw*) became the site of the sunrise.¹

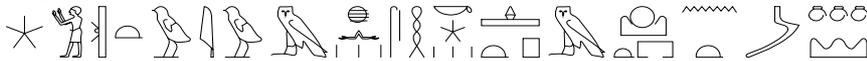


Ir dw pf n b3hw nty pt tn rhnty hr .f
wnn .f m i3bt pt ni – sw ht 300 m 3w .f ht 150 m wsh .f
Tw sbk nb b3hw m i3bt dw pf
Tw hf3w hr wpt nt dw pf ni – sw mh 30 m 3w .f mh 7 m h3t .f

(*B3hw*) Mountain, upon which the heaven is based, is located in the eastern side of the sky, 300 Khet long and 150 Khet width.

He is Sobek, Lord of (*B3hw*), to the east of this mountain....There is a serpent on top of that mountain, it is 30 arms long and his head measures seven arms.²

On the other side, (*M3nw*) Mountain is located to the west and is considered to be the place for sunset.



dw3 tw ihmw – sk htp .(k) m 3ht nt m3nw

The non-degradable stars worship you (Re) when you set in the (*m3nw*) horizon (in reference to the western mountain where the sun sets).³

¹ Otto, E. “*Bachu*”, in *LÄ*, I, col. 594

² Budge, E. A. W. *Book of the Dead*, Vol.II, London, 1910, p. 108, 2 – 5

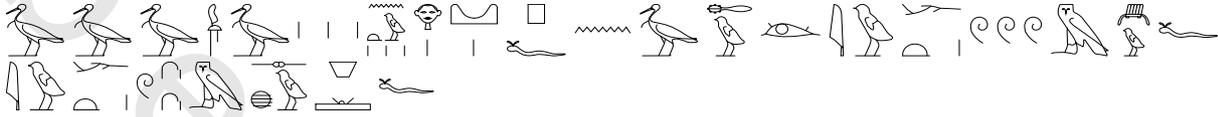
³ Budge, E. A. W. *Book of the Dead*, vol. I, p. 37 (5, 6)



šsp tw m3nw m htp, htp .k (m) sht .k imyt m3nw

M3nw receives you in peace; you set in your field, located in *m3nw*.¹

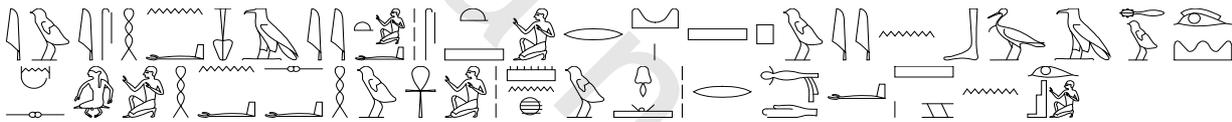
Then the two mountains were combined together with the regions of the netherworld, in spell (752) of the coffin texts, a call to the souls of the dead inhabiting the (*b3hw*) Mountain.



b3w imntyw ntyw hr dw pf n b3hw iw ht 300 m 3w .f iw ht 120 m wsh .f

O Souls of the Westerners who are on the *b3hw* Mountain, which is 300 Khet long and 120 Khet width.²

However, in chapter (189) of the Book of the Dead, the deceased denied his existence among the followers of Seth who are in this mountain



(n) iw (.i) is hn̄ sm3yt stš r dw pwy n B3hw hms .i hn̄ s̄hw mnhw r šd š n wsir

I'm not with the followers of Seth at *B3hw* Mountain, but I am sitting with the good nobles to dig the lake of Osiris.³

Moreover, a number of texts described *m3nw* with some attributes of the kingdom of the dead or as a part of it.⁴



dw3 (.i) R̄ htp .f m m3nw m ihwty nwt

I worship (Re) when he sets in *m3nw* between the thighs of (Nut).

¹

ماجدة السيد جاد، مرجع سابق، ص. 315

² CT, VI, 381

³ Budge, E. A. W. Chapter (189), Vol. III, 27 – 28; Hornung, E. *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter*, Zürich & München, 1979, 189 (S. 90)

⁴ Wb, II, 29, 13

When the god Re crosses (*m3nw*), he illuminates for those who are in the netherworld.



py hm .f m m3nw shd .n .f n imyw dw3t

His Majesty has entered the *m3nw* and he has illuminated for those who are in the netherworld (*dw3t*)

Therefore, the *m3nw* mountain inhabitants are glad.



htp .k nfr ib .k 3w m 3ht nt m3nw im t3yw.spsw m h'w

You set in happiness and your heart is glad in the *M3nw* horizon there. These praised are in jubilation.¹

¹

From the beginning of the Middle kingdom onwards the word  *3ht* is represented by two mountain peaks and a sun disc, hence including both east and west

The book of the dead attested the symmetry between the eastern and the western mountains as

The eastern mountain is referred to as  *B3h* that stands for the place where the sun rises (the east).¹

On the other side  *m3nw* stands for the western mountain or the place where the sun sets (the west)

B3hw and *m3nw* were not estimated to refer to certain geographical regions but they were interchangeable directions when the sun god moves between the two horizons following a periodical transformation from east to west along the sky and from west to east through the underworld. The two mountains rather determined the phases of the sun's cycle (Sunrise and Sunset).²

3.3.2.1. The Western Mountain *m3nw*

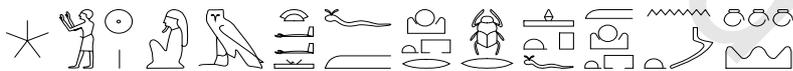
- Text from the XIX dynasty:



tm htp m m3nw

Atom sets in Manu³

- Inscription from the time of Ramses II:



dw3 R^c m h^{cc} .f m 3ht r hpr htp .f m 3ht nt m3nw

Hail to Re on his appearance from the horizon as Khepri and when he sets in the horizon of Manu⁴

¹ Wb, I, 422

² Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 5

³ De wit, C. *Le Role et Le Sens du Lion dans l'Egypte Ancienne*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1951, p. 156

⁴ KRI, III, f.6, p. 173, line 6

See also Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 5

3.3.3. Portals of the netherworld

After death, the deceased is required to pass through many portals and walk by a lot of routes that he ought to be aware by them and their names as they form the obstacles that may prevent the transition from one portal to another or from one region to another. These portals are usually represented by the sign of the door (𓂏𓂑) depicted in the scenes with two leaf (the two parts of the door could represent the right and the left sides, Hence, the east and the west. Therefore, he should have to overcome them as they form clearly the threshold of heaven through which the deceased hopes to pass into the afterlife.¹

These gates and portals were described and depicted clearly in the book of the gates. The number of these portals and gates differed according to the textual evidences as the coffin texts indicated that the deceased passes by three gates, while chapter (144) of the (Book of the Dead) assigned seven gates of the underworld and by each gate there are three seated guardians holding knives in their hands.²

These guardians played an important role as the deceased needed to know their names in order to permit them to pass.³ The deceased hoped to be allowed to enter all the regions of the netherworld and to recognize all of his secrets; he also used to prove the credibility such as telling the guardians that he had come from a certain sacred region so as not to be prevented from entering.⁴



Nn ḥsf .f nn šnꜥ .f ḥr sb3w nw imntt

(He) Will not be staved off, and he will not be prevented to enter the portals of the West.⁵



Nn ḥnr .tw b3 .i ḥ3t .i (ḥr) sb3w nw imntt m ꜥḳ .i m ḥtp prt (.i) m ḥtp

My soul and body will not be warded off (by) the portals of the west when i am entering in peace and leaving in peace.⁶

¹ Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 147

²

محمد عبد الحليم، مرجع سابق، ص.ص. 161 – 162

³ Bergmann, E. von, "Das Buch von durchwandeln der Ewigkeit", in *SAWW*, 86, 1877, S. 382 , 38

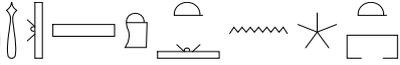
⁴ Zandee, J. *Op Cit*, p. 29

⁵ BD. 137 a (Budge. Vol.II), 26

⁶ BD. 26 (Budge. Vol. I), 9

In spell 68 of the book of the dead, the deceased is going to open the doors of the afterlife. The lintel in the upper part of the door is represented in the form of the sky sign (pt).

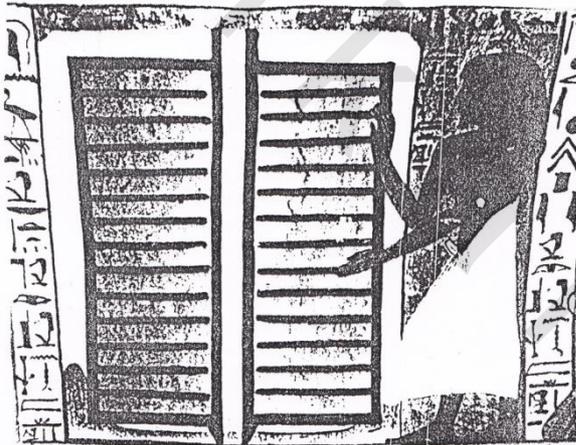
The door is called:



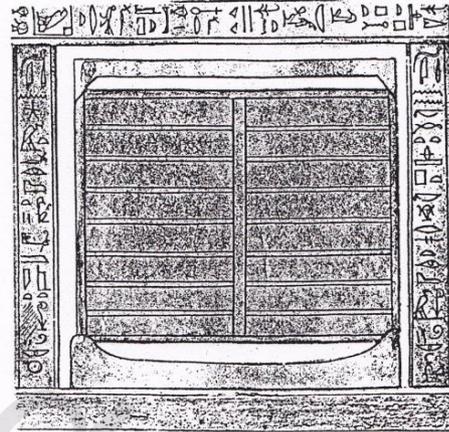
3 sst3 n dw3t

The great secret door of the netherworld

In some other vignettes the deceased opens the door and enters and sometimes the door is just represented between the sky and the horizon signs.



A



B

Fig. 80

(A) The deceased is opening the doors of the afterlife

Book of the Dead – Spell 68

After,

Saleh, M. *Das Tottenbuch in den thebanischen Beamtengräbern des Neuen Reichs: Texte Und Vignetten*, Verlag Philipp Von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein, 1984, p. 37, fig. 40

(B) Door represented between the sky and the (dw) sign

After, Bruyere, B. “*Tombes Thebaines de Deir El Medineh a Decoration Monochrome*”, *MIFAO*, 1952, pl. XXVII

The eastern door of the sky is represented in three different forms through which the sun god appears in the world of the living ones.

On the left side, the door is closed and is placed upon the mountains of the eastern desert. In the middle, the door is opened and the sun disk is represented.

On the right side, the sun god is sitting upon the mountains of the eastern desert above which the door is represented opened. This scene represents the eastern horizon of the sky.¹

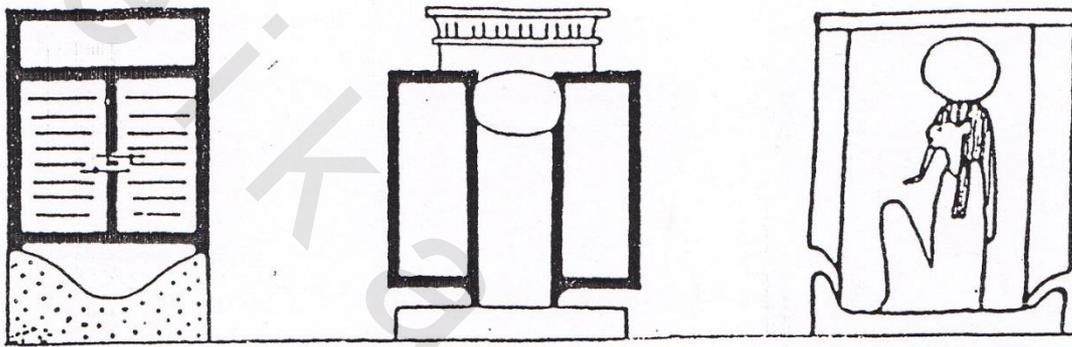


Fig. 81

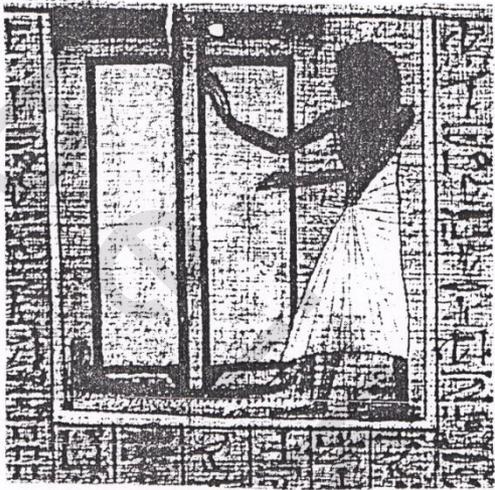
The Eastern Portals of the sky

After,

Helmut, B. “Die Rolle von Tür und Tor im Alten Ägypten”, in *Symbolon Jahrbuch für Symbolforschung*, N. F. 6, 1982, p. 267, fig. 5

¹ Helmut, B. “Die Rolle von Tür und Tor im Alten Ägypten”, in *Symbolon Jahrbuch für Symbolforschung*, N. F. 6, 1982, p. 267

The same portals supporting the sky were mentioned in the papyrus of (Nefer Renpet) and in the ceiling painting of the Nineteenth Dynasty tomb of (Sennedjem) at Deir El Medineh and they are represented resting on the horizon mountain. ¹

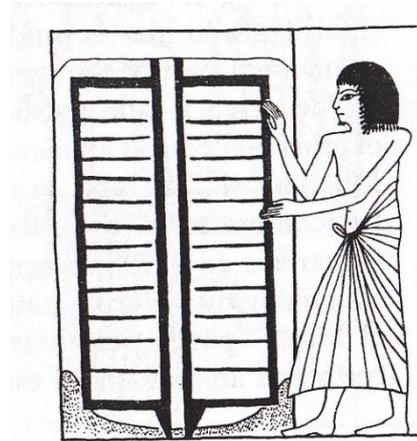


(A)

(A) The doors of the sky in the Papyrus of Nefer Renpet

After,

Helmut, B. *Ibid*, p. 268, fig. 7



(B)

(B) Sennedjem is hoping to pass the portals to the afterlife

After,

Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 146, ill. 3

¹ Helmut, B. *Ibid*, p. 268; Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 147

3.3.4. The Sign ☀ (*3ht*)

The hieroglyph for (horizon) that shows the two mountainous peaks with the solar disk appearing between them on the horizon from which the sun emerges and disappears thus it is associated with the eastern and the western extremities of the universe. ¹

The simple amulet (fig. 83 A - B) indicates that the horizon embraced the idea of both sunrise and sunset and was protected from early times by the akher, a double lion deity who guarded both ends of the day (Fig. 85). This double deity was represented in a number of ways, often as a long narrow tract of land with a human, or more usually leonine, head at each end.

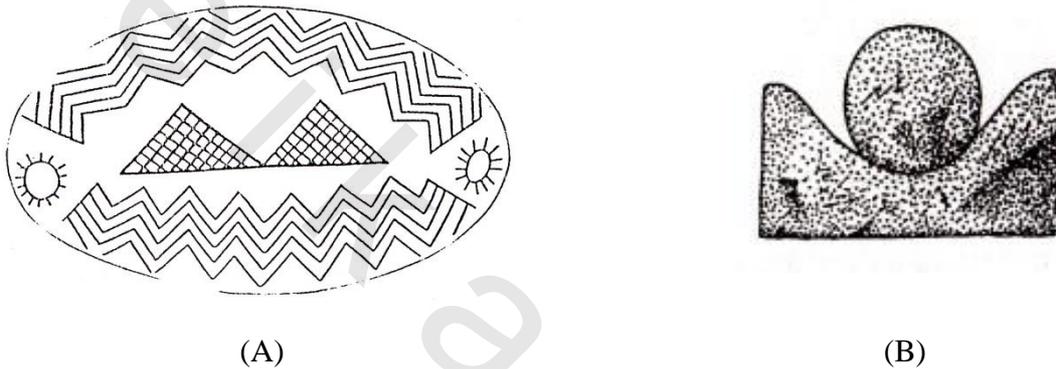


Fig. 83

- (A) The two mountains of sunset and sunrise on a pre – dynastic Amratian pottery
After, Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 155, fig. 36
- (B) The Akhet sign, Amulet of the horizon – New Kingdom
After, Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 134, ill. 1

The radiant sun disk containing the image of the scarab (*hpr*) and the ram as symbols of morning and evening as it rises above the horizon sign. The accompanying texts indicate the east and the west. East for (khepry – Beginning of the day with sunrise) and west for (Atum – End of the day with sunset) ²

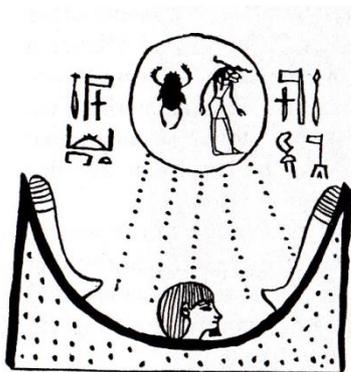


Fig. 84

- Atum and Khepry in solar disk emerging from the horizon
After, Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 128, ill. 3

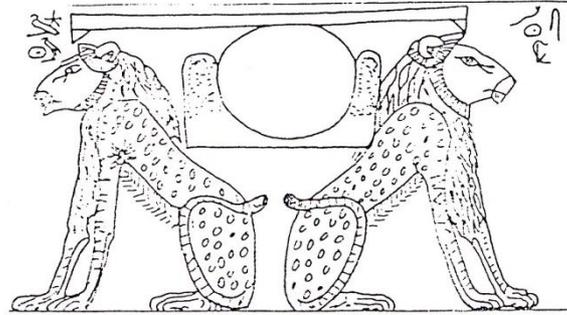
¹ Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 135

² Wilkinson, R. H. *Ibid*, p. 129

In this instance the opposed lions have clearly been made to mirror the shape of the mountain-glyph, with the circular space between them representing the sun in the image of the horizon.



(A)



(B)

Fig. 85

Representations of Aker with the sign (3ht)

(A) After, Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 134, ill. 2

(B) After, Rania Younes, *Op Cit*, p. 159, fig. 44

In the New Kingdom, Hor-em-akhet (Horus in the Horizon) was the god of the rising and setting sun and is variously represented as a child, a falcon, or more commonly, as the leonine sphinx. The Great Sphinx of Giza thus came to be viewed as a literal "Horus in the Horizon" as it lay between the twin peaks of the giant akhet formed by the pyramids of Khufu and Khaefre. In the relief scene carved on the famous "Sphinx Stele" at Giza, Thutmose IV is shown making offerings to twin sphinxes which represent the two aspects of the same god - Horus in the Horizon (whose name appears above the animals' heads). Because these sphinxes are placed back to back with the winged sun disk above and between them, this whole composition can be seen to be a complex elaboration of the horizon hieroglyph.

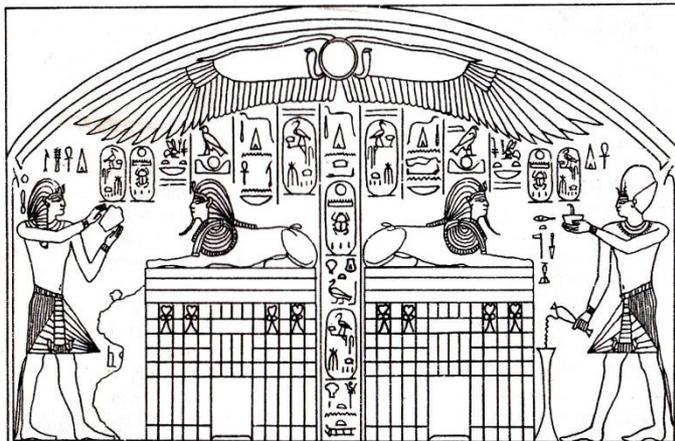


Fig. 86

The Representation of ☀ 3ht in the "Dream Stelae" of Thutmose IV
After, Wilkinson, R. H. *Op Cit*, p.134, ill. III

Sometimes in two-dimensional representations the Egyptian artist would represent the mountains of the Akhet as the two breasts of a reclining goddess who holds the sun aloft.

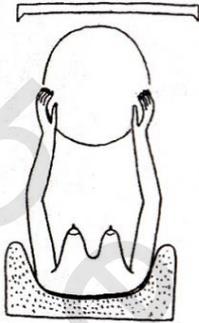


Fig. 87
The Goddess of Horizon – Tomb of Sennedjem – Nineteenth Dynasty
After,
Wilkinson, R. H. *Ibid*, p. 134, ill. 4

The scene that was repeated representing both the east and the west in the form of sunrise and sunset on the coffin of Khonsu preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

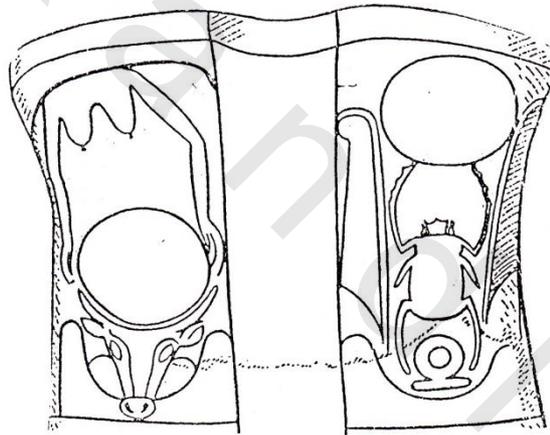


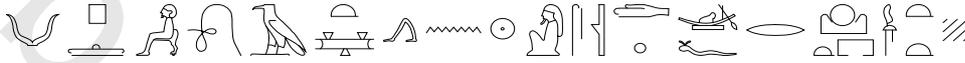
Fig. 88
Sunrise and sunset on the coffin of Khonsu
After,
Piankoff, A. *Mythological Papyri*, p. 35, fig. 18
See also, Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 150, fig. 26

3.3.4.1.2. THE WESTERN HORIZON

The western horizon symbolized the realm of the dead situated in the necropolis; it was referred to in some sources as:

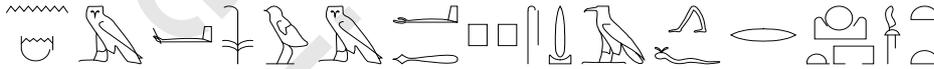
- Coffin Texts

- Spell 80



Wp .i w3t n R^c skdy .f r 3ht imntt

I will open the way for Re that he may voyage to the western horizon.



nhm .i sw m ^3pp sd3 .f r 3ht imntt

I save him from Apep (when) he travels to the western horizon

- Spell 458



Ink nb dw3t ity 3ht imntt

I (Horus) am lord of the netherworld, monarch of the western horizon.

- Spell 818

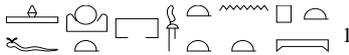


ndm - ib .f m - m ntrw m 3ht imntt htp .f m ^nh m 3ht hr nw

He is happy among the gods in the western horizon, (and) he sets in life in the horizon with Nu.

- Book of the Dead

- Chapter 72



htp .f (m) 3ht imntt nt pt

He rests (in) the western horizon of the sky

- Tomb of *nbi mn* in Draa Abou el Naga



šms .i ntr .i imy niwty .i r dsrw 3ht imntt

I followed my god who is in my city to rest (set) in the privacy (holiness) of the western horizon (The Netherworld).²

¹ Naville, E. *Op Cit.*, pl. LXXXIV, chapter 72, line 6

² Urk, 1, Heft 2, p. 150, line 7 – 10

- Tomb of the vizier Paser in Thebes (Ramesside period)



m33 Itn dgi i'ḥ m 3ḥt imntt nt pt

Aten sees the moon in the western horizon of the sky ¹

¹ Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 22

3.3.4.1.3. The East - West Symmetry Textual Evidence

The symmetry occurred as well in the texts as both of the eastern and the western horizons are mentioned in the coffin texts:

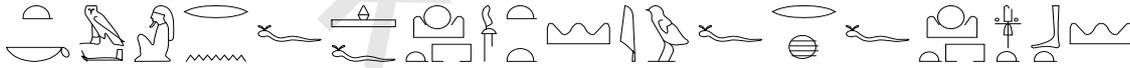
Spell 80



sn it .i tm pr .f m 3ht i3bt. sd3 .f m htp r 3ht imntt

My father Atum kisses me when he goes forth from the eastern horizon. He proceeds in peace to the western horizon.

Spell 404

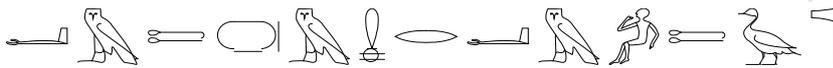


tkm rn .f htp .f (m) 3ht imntt iw .f rh .f 3ht i3bt

He (the gate keeper) opens up the western horizon, He knows the eastern horizon and his name is Tkm.¹

Moreover, both the eastern and the western horizons were mentioned in the process of giving birth to “Re” by Nut, goddess of the sky.

As Re is born through the process in which Nut swallows it (the sun) in the evening in order to give him birth in the morning.



*cm .t N mi Rc m .t s3 ntr.*²

You swallow the king as you swallow the divine son.

The divine sun here is “Re”. This process is pictured in the osirion of Abydos when the sun enters in the Nut’s mouth described as  (*3ht Imntt*) and when it is born in the morning from the eastern horizon  (*3ht i3bt*).³

¹ Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 18

² P.T. 1417 b

³ ضياء محمود ابو غازى، رع فى الدولة القديمة، رسالة دكتوراة غير منشورة، كلية الآداب، جامعة القاهرة، 1966، ص. 44

The representation of both the eastern and the western horizons occurred in the tomb of Ramses X, the left cliff is called  *3ht 'Imntt* (The western horizon) and the right cliff is called  *3ht 'Bb* (The eastern horizon).¹

Above the portal of the tomb of Ramses X, the stylized mountains support the sky and enclose the great disk with the scarab “Khepry” and the ram – headed solar deity. In kneeling position on either side, the king offers the two (*wd3t*) eyes leaving no doubt as to the west and east significance of the two mountains.

Behind Isis to the left is the inscription of the western horizon (*3ht 'Imntt*), while the horizon of the east is behind Nephthys to the right.

Under the raised arms of the two goddesses are the winged (*wd3t*) eyes with the sign  of the “Sed” festival hung from the (*šn*) of the cosmic circuit.

Similar representations used to be found above the entrances of the Theban tombs of the kings, the mountain of the left is considered to be the eastern place of light while the one to the right is the western place of light.²

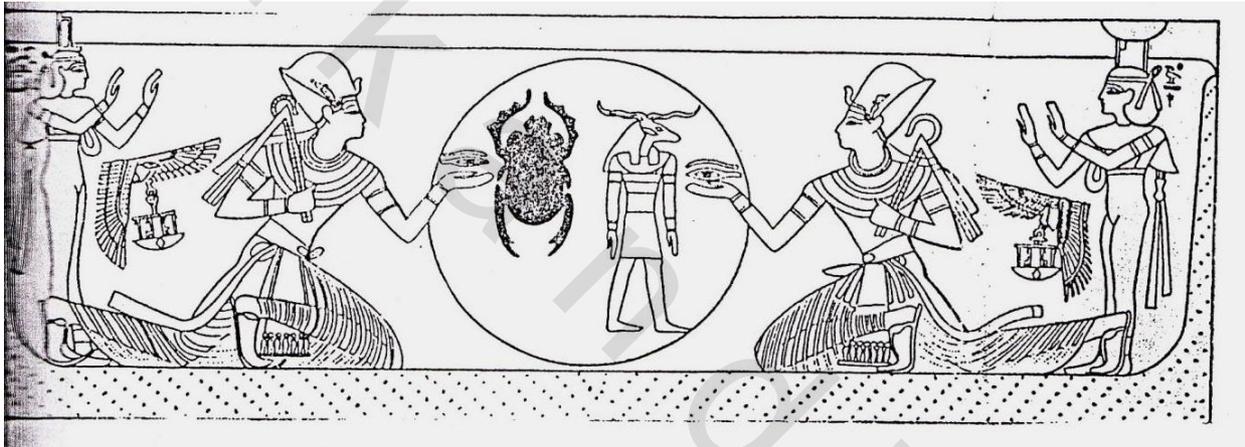


Fig. 89

Ramses X offering the *Wd3t* to the disc at sunset and sunrise – Portal of the tomb of Ramses X
After,

Piankoff, A. *Mythological Papyri*, Bollingen, Pantheon Books, New York, 1957, p. 31, Fig. 12

¹ De Wit, C. *Le Rôle et le sens du lion dans l'égypte ancienne*, E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1951, p. 151

² Piankoff, A. *Op Cit*, p.p. 31 – 32; Schafer, H. *Op Cit*, p. 34, fig. 24

3.3.4.2. The Incorporation of the sign *3ht* with the symbols of the east and the west

The two jackals (Anubis and Wep - wawet) had been associated in some of their representations with the sign ( *3ht*) - that was personified by the representation of the two goddesses of the east and the west- so they functioned as the horizon animals. ¹

in chapter (16 A) of the book of the dead, the two jackals are represented flanking the symbol of the east ( *iabtet*) emerging from the sign of the Horizon ( *3ht*). ²

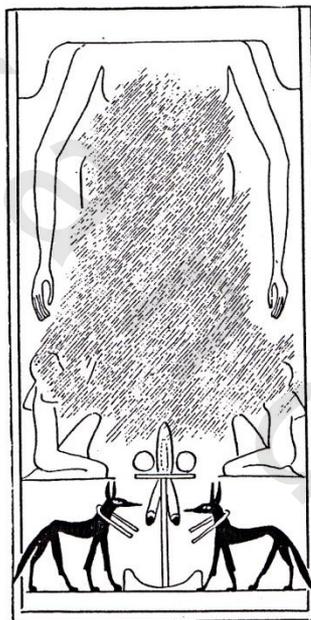


Fig. 90

Iabtet between two jackals (Book of the Dead)

After,

Naville, E. *Das Ägyptische Todtenbuch Der XVIII bis XX Dynastie*, Vol. 1, Asher & Co., Berlin, 1886, Chapter 16 A, pl. XXI

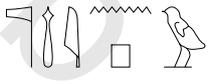
¹ Westendorf, W. "Götterpaarbildung", in *LÄ*, II, 1977, col. 706

² Younes, R. *Op Cit*, p. 88

In tomb no. 214 at Deir El Medineh, the two Jackals (Anubis and Wep – Wawet) flank the personification of the symbol of the west represented armed and holding in its arms two vases of plants.

The sign of the west is planted in the sign  *3ht* of the Horizon.

The accompanying text reads:

 *ntr 3 inpw*

The Great God Anubis

It could be an indication for the relationship between Anubis and the west as the guardian of the necropolis.

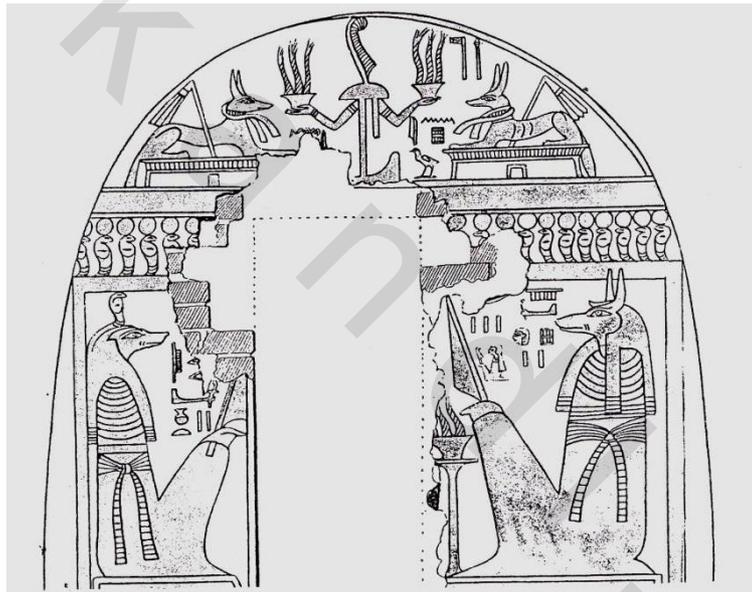


Fig. 91

The sign *Imntet* between the two Jackals

After,

Bruyere, B. “*Tombes Thebaines de Deir El Medineh à decoration Monochrome*”, in *MIFAO*, LXXXVI, 1952, pl. XXIX

3.4. The Personification of *Imntet* and *Ibtet*

The Duality that characterized the Ancient Egyptian art appeared in the representations of both *Imntet* and *Iabtet* who were two counterparts and functioned as protective deities for the east and the west directions. Despite the great importance of the goddess *Imntet* as the symbol of the west due to the relation with the hereafter, *Iabtet* who personified the east, may have been originated since the very beginning of the historical time together with her much more important counterpart *Imntet* as personifications of the two cardinal points (*Iabtet* for the East and *Imntet* for the west).¹

In the papyrus of (*P3 – di – Imn*) the circuit of lifting the sun is represented by means of the two deities symbolizing the east and the west served to alternate in lowering and lifting the disk, the goddess of the west to the right and the goddess of the east to the left. The arms of the netherworld deity reach up to draw the disk into the night region in its western descent while the arms of the reversed deity above reach down to draw the disc upward into the sky at sunrise.²

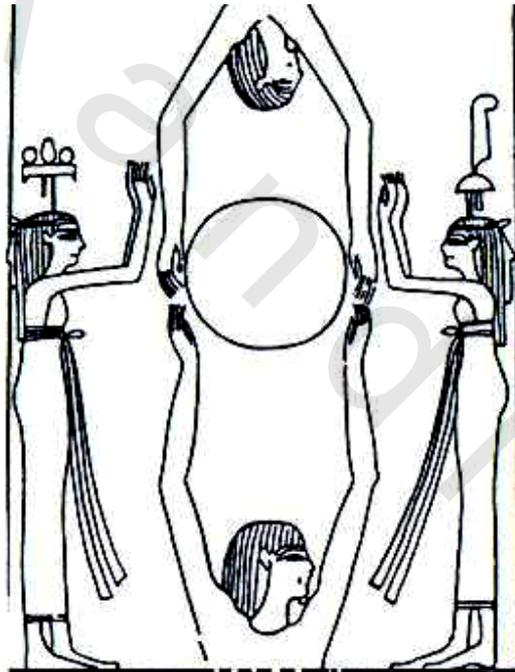


Fig. 92

Imntet and *Iabtet* as two protective deities of the east and the west
After,
Refai, H. *Op Cit*, p. 97, fig. 13

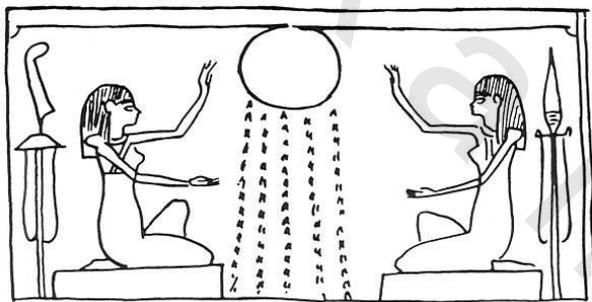
¹ Refai, H. “(*IABET*), *The Goddess of the East*”, *ASAE* LXXVI, 2000 – 2001, p.p. 89 - 97

² Piankoff, A. *Op Cit*, p. 38, fig. 20

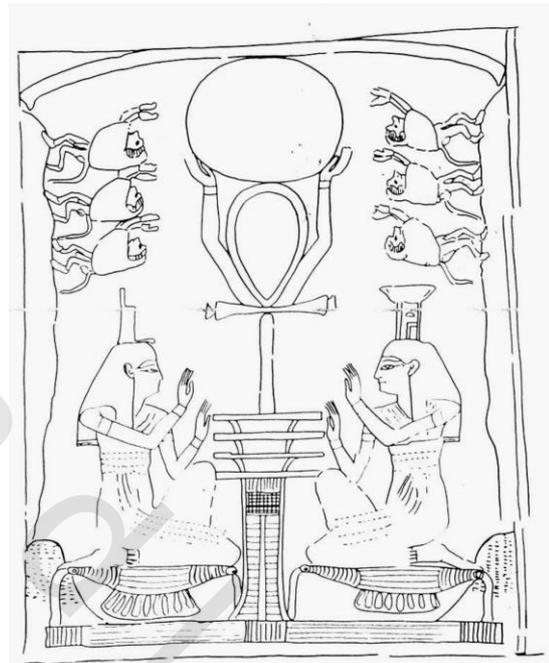
A part from the personification theory, sometimes the hieroglyphs of Imntet and Iabetet were found without any indication of personification, the best instances of this were found in the vignettes of the rising and setting sun.

Among the variants, there are some scenes representing the sun setting between  and  with a pair of unnamed adoring figures next to the hieroglyphs. The gesture of the figures is often rather ambiguous. At the opposite extreme, there are cases of the sun adored by Isis and Nephthys, midway between these instances, where the adoring figures have the hieroglyphs on their heads (fig. 93) therefore, the female figures of Imntet and Iabetet could be considered as versions of Isis and Nephthys plus the orientation.

In so far as Isis and Nephthys relate to Osirian implications that are perhaps present in the scenes, this will be a departure from the solar idea for the sake of visual unity.¹



(A)



(B)

Fig. 93

(A) Imntet and iabetet preceded by two adoring female figures
After, Baines, J. *Fecundity Figures: Egyptian personification and the Iconology of Genre*, England, 1985, p. 57, fig. 33

(B) A representation of Isis and Osiris adoring the rising sun above (dd) Pillar

After, Baines, J. *Ibid*, p. 57, fig. 34

¹ Baines, J. *Fecundity Figures: Egyptian personification and the Iconology of Genre*, England, 1985, p. 56

Some ideographic signs from the Ptolemaic Period depicted the two goddesses (Imntet and Iabet) lifting the sun disk between them invoking the Horizon sign and symbolizing the Pylon or the façade of the Ancient Egyptian temple.

Here, the goddesses of the east and the west are represented standing in the sun bark and lifting the sun disk encircling the figure of Khnum between them.¹

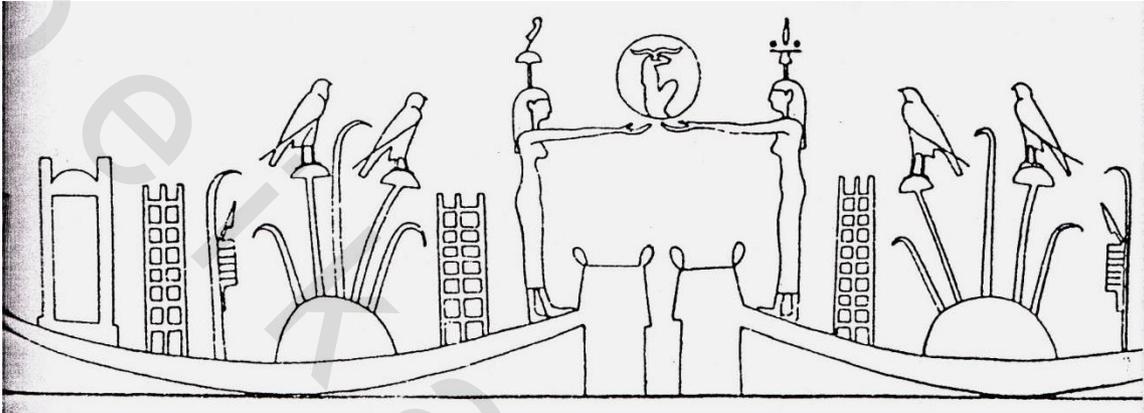


Fig. 94

The Ptolemaic Representation of Imntet and Iabet imitating the horizon sign

After,

Schäfer, H. “Altägyptische Bilder der auf – und untergehenden Sonne”, in *ZÄS*, 71, 1935, fig. 25

¹ Schäfer, H. *Op Cit*, fig. 25; Daumas, F. et al. *Valeurs Phonétiques des Signes Hieroglyphiques d'époque Greco-Romaine*, Vol. I, Montpellier, 1988 – 90, p. 134

The Ancient Egyptian artist represented both Iabtet and Imntet recognized by their symbols upon their heads.

The two deities are performing a kind of greeting on the papyrus of (Amon – em – saf), the two goddesses are worshipping a representation of the Akhet sign (Horizon).

The sun disk is above by two Ankh signs flanking the scarab that is supported by the armed *dd* pillar, symbolizing Osiris between Isis and Nephthys and above the whole scene the mountain sign representing the sky to symbolize the two horizons of sunrise and sunset.¹

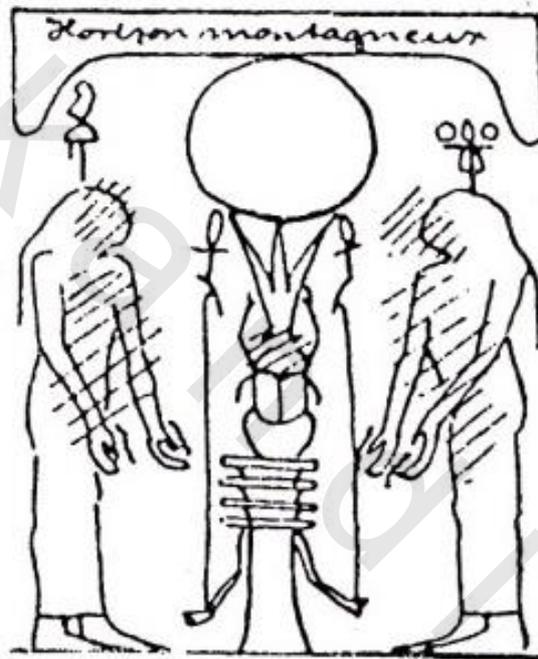


Fig. 95
Imntet and Iabtet flanking the *dd* pillar
After,
Schäfer, H. *Op Cit*, p. 24 fig. 5

¹ Hornung, E. "Zu den schlußscenen der unterweltsbücher", *MDAIK* 37, 1981, p. 220, fig. 4

Another scene represents the unification process executed by Ramses III in the sacred bark of Khonsu at Karnak.

Here, the king Ramses III (Twentieth Dynasty) is represented acting the (*sm³ – t3wy*) process in a double scene representing the symmetry of the Ancient Egyptian art, he is wearing the blue crown (*hprš*) and the shendyt kilt and on the two sides the two goddesses of the east and west (distinguished by their symbols above their heads – to the right is Imntet instead of Isis and to the left is Iabtet instead of Nephthys) are represented raising their hands in a gesture of protection to the king.



Fig. 96

Imntet and Iabtet are accompanying Ramses III while acting the unification process

After,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Karnak_Khonsou_080522_c.jpg

In the Theban tomb (TT 49) of Neferhotep, a partially destroyed goddess appears opposite Imntet in a double scene which possibly could be a further depiction of Iabtet. In this scene both goddesses are placed in accordance with the true cardinals and usually stand behind Osiris and Anubis, whom the tomb owner worships or presents offerings to. At the top of the scene allusions to the journey of the sun are seen in the sun bark or the winged disc.

Here the two goddesses are represented flanking the (*dd*) pillar supporting the solar bark and each one of them is looking to the proper direction that she represents and the tomb owner is represented in an adoration posture.¹

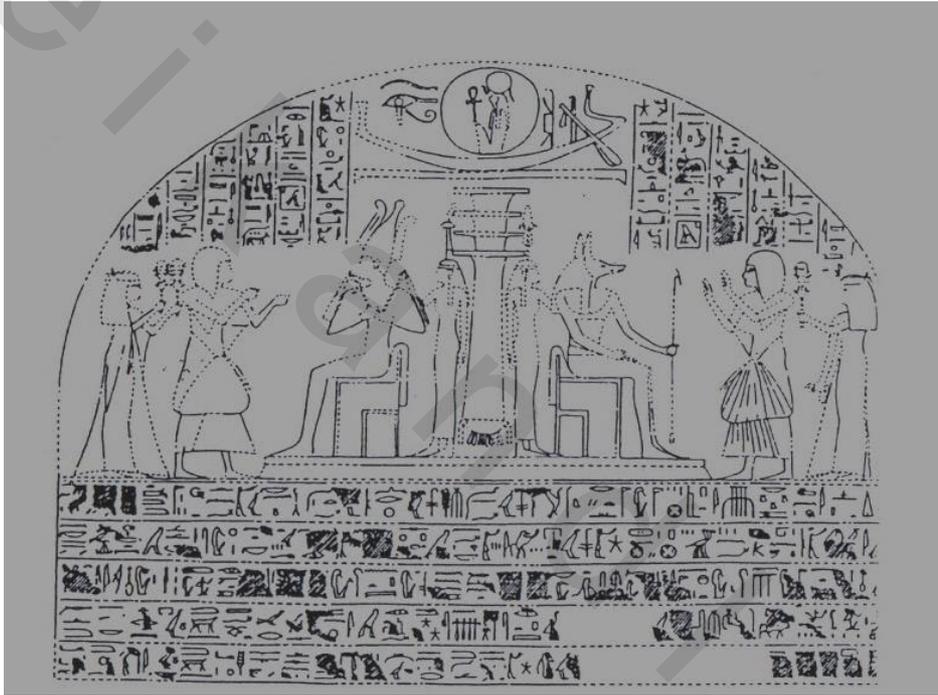


Fig. 97

A Double Representation of Imntt and Iabt in the tomb of Neferhotep (TT 49)

After,

Refai, H. *Op Cit*, p. 90, fig. 1

¹ Davies, N. G. *The Tomb of Nefer - hotep at Thebes*, Vol. I, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1933, pl. XXXIV

Both Imntet and Iabtet could be regarded as counterparts to Isis and Nephthys in a number of scenes of which the scene of the Book of the Gates represented on the sarcophagus of Sety I and depicting a continuation of the journey of the sun god on his bark through the night till he shines in the next day.

Here we can see both Isis and Nephthys (Fig. 98) flanking the sun god “Kheper” who supports the sun disc. The two goddesses represented a part of the boat crew together with Seb, Thot, Hekennu, Hu, and Sa.

The sky goddess Nut receives the sun disc emerging from the eastern end of the “*dw3t*” or the womb of the morning and the new disc and Kheper are transferred to the divine crew that stands waiting in the boat which is held up above the surface of the celestial ocean by the god Nu who is represented with his upraised arms which are said to appear from the water and on his hands rests the boat with all of its gods. At the top of the scene is a human figure with his body bent round in a circle, the figure is that of Osiris and his body forms the circle of the (*dw3t*), on his head stands the dark figure of a woman with her arms upraised and her hands nearly touching the solar disk, representing the sky goddess Nut who has conceived “Re” and brought him forth from her body into the sky.¹

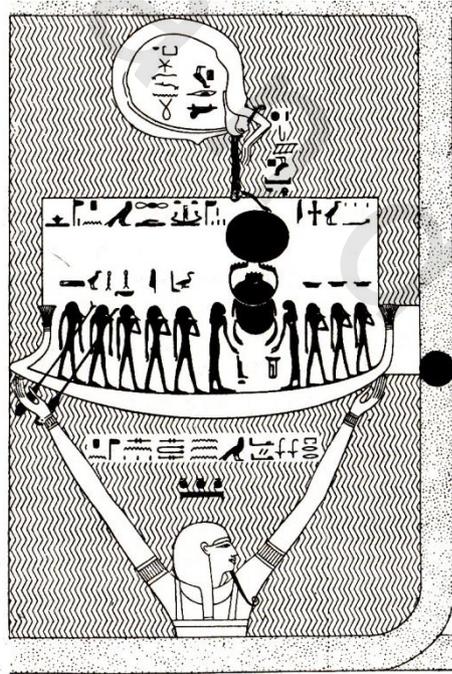


Fig. 98

Imntet and Iabtet flanking the scarab *hpr*

After, Budge, E. A. W. *Book of the Dead*, p. cii, fig. 1

¹ Budge, E. A. W. *An Account of the Sarcophagus of Seti I, King of Egypt, B.C. 1370*, 1908, p.p. 126 – 127

The goddess of the west was sometimes personified in the form of the hieroglyphic sign (Imntet) with arms attached and embracing the mummified Osiris, here Osiris is shown embraced in his shrine by the personified west in exactly the same manner that the god is usually shown being embraced by Isis or by Isis and Nephthys.

The metaphoric significance of the scene is that the Egyptian deceased was usually identified with Osiris (in the funerary inscriptions, he is usually spoken of as “The Osiris X”), then the text accompanying such examples usually gives an assurance to the deceased to the effect “... the perfect west: her arms will receive you”. In this way the goddess played a parallel role to that of the sky goddess Nut who accepted the deceased into her arms from the Old Kingdom onwards.¹

Osiris is represented wearing the (*3tf*) crown in a mummified form and holding the two signs (*hk3*) and (*nhh*) for power and sovereignty.

He is preceded by the four sons of Horus on a lotus blossom and the accompanying text reads (Osiris Khentyw – Imntyw, Foremost of the Westerners).

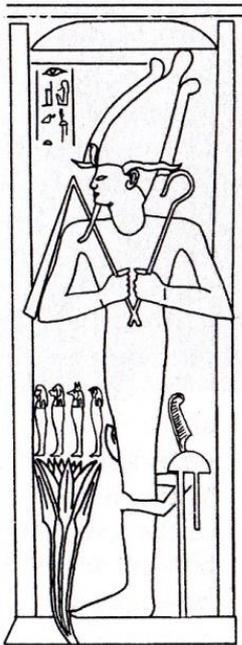


Fig. 99

Osiris embraced by the personified west sign

Temple of Ramses III – Madinet Habu – Twentieth Dynasty

After,

Wilkinson. R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 166, ill. 4

¹ Wilkinson. R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 167

The two female deities personifying the west and the east were often depicted together kneeling on either side of the sun disk as it sets on the horizon and thus portraying the two ends of the day.¹

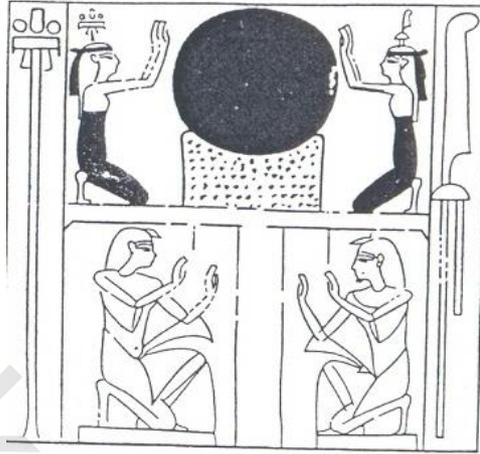


Fig. 100

Imntet and Iabtet flanking the Horizon

After, Refai, H. *Op Cit*, p. 93, fig. 4

Occasionally the level of personification is such that the sign imntet is shown replacing the head surmounting the body of the goddess as the representation on the papyrus of Imntet that dates back to the Twenty – first dynasty.²



Fig. 101

Imntet headed goddess – Papyrus of Imntet – Twenty - First Dynasty

After,

Wilkinson, R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 166, ill. 4

¹ Wilkinson. R. H. *Reading Egyptian Art*, p. 167

² Wilkinson. R. H. *Ibid*, p. 167

The emblem imntet replaced the goddess of the west in a number of scenes in which the goddess imntet appeared alone. It can assume that Iabtet is expandable and that she was added afterwards for the sake of symmetry. ¹

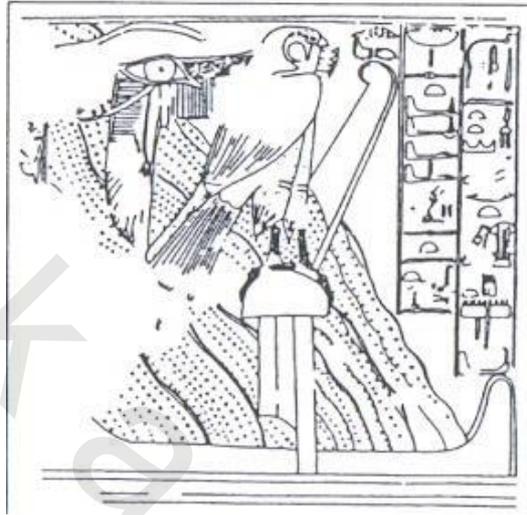


Fig. 102

The Emblem Imntet instead of the goddess of the west

After,

Refai, H. *Op Cit*, p.p. 95 – 96, fig. 10

¹ Refai, H. *Op Cit*, p.p. 95 – 96, fig. 10

See also, Leblanc, Ch. *Ta Set Neferu, une necropole de Thebes ouest e son histoire*, dissertation, Lyon, 1987, p. 211, fig. 63

There may have been male versions of Amentet and Iabtet as in *the Book of the Earth* of in the tomb of Ramses VI, there are two male deities who are shown to welcome the sun - $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆑}$ *i3btt* and $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆑}$ *imntt*. Amentet may have been the male personification of the west.

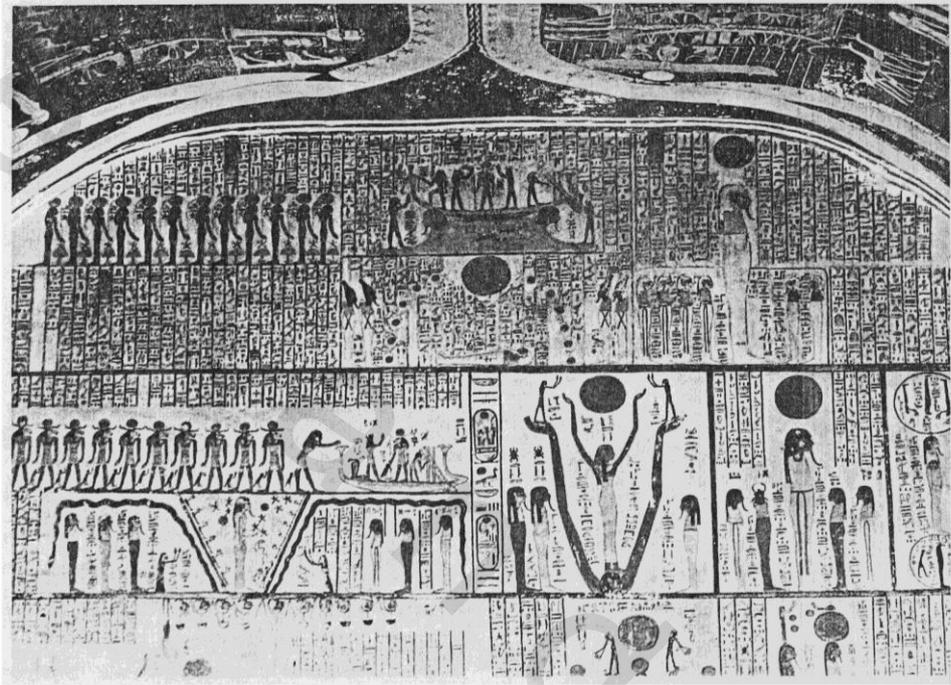


Fig. 103

Part (A) of the book of the earth (including the two male figures of the east and the west)

After,

خالد أنور عبد ربه عبد الغنى، اله الشمس و علاقته بألهة ومخلوقات العالم الآخر أثناء رحلته الليلية، رسالة ماجستير غير منشورة، القاهرة، 2005، ص. 296، لوحة 15



Fig. 104

Detail of The Male forms of Imntet and Iabtet in the book of the earth

After,

Site

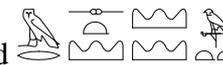
<http://www.thekeep.org/~kunoichi/kunoichi/themestream/iabet.html#.Uj4YRPr8LIIs#ixzz2fZJ6aTKg>

- **Conclusion**

The Research deals with the hieroglyphic signs of the East and the West in the Ancient Egyptian Civilization, their relation with the geography of both the Eastern and Western Sahara and their function as natural borders of Ancient Egypt, shedding the light on the directions of the East and the West in the other world and the fields mentioned in the books of the afterlife, Gods and goddesses associated with the east (*i3btet*) and the west (*imntet*), The personification of both the signs (*i3btet* and *Imntet*) in two goddesses through the study of the idea of personification that dominated the ancient Egyptian art and the interference with the two signs (subject of the study) with the signs (*3ht*) and (*dw*).

The study revealed the following conclusions:

- The Egyptian territory is divided into two vast deserts (the eastern and the western deserts) flanking the tiny strict Nile Valley and Delta inhabited by the Egyptians, These two deserts are considered to be the natural secured borders of Ancient Egypt as well as being rich in minerals. Therefore, mining campaigns were directed to the deserts especially the eastern desert. Moreover, they needed to be very well fortified and guarded by the ancient Egyptians by means of the boundary stelae, administrative officials in charge of the deserts and by dedicating certain divinities for the mission of safeguarding and protecting both the eastern and the western borders.
- The importance of securing the eastern and the Western borders increased, as the deserts were not enough to prevent the infiltration of enemies into the Egyptian territory (as foreigners were considered to be elements of chaos according to the ancient Egyptian concept). Hence, the importance of the military campaigns sent to protect and to secure those deserts. Therefore, castles and forts were constructed and evidences of both military campaigns and mining expeditions were recorded in the graffiti inscriptions such as the inscriptions of “Wadi Hammamat”.
- The study of the various titles and epithets related to both the Eastern and the Western deserts revealed that the central authority paid great attention to the deserts therefore it was crucial to strengthen the political and the administrative control determining certain administrative positions and employees who held different titles such as:

 *imy – r h3swt 3btt* (Overseer of the eastern desert) and  *imy – r smiwt imntt* (Overseer of the western desert), This illustrates some kind of specialization in the areas of supervision of the deserts as there are responsables for the eastern desert and others for the Western desert whose task was to manage the affairs of the deserts and their employees such as laborers and miners in addition to sending their products to the capital as what was stated in the tomb inscriptions of “Rekhmire” at Thebes (New Kingdom).

- Duality dominated various aspects of the life of the Ancient Egyptian of which an example is the division of the territory into two deserts (the eastern and western deserts) separated by the Nile, this duality was reflected as well in the other world creating two heavenly worlds (The eastern division of the heaven) featuring certain class of the dead living in the (*Brw*) field and (The western division of the heaven) inhabited by another category of the dead living in the (*hpt*) field.

Apart from the two heavenly divisions, The existence of both the east and the west in the form of two deserts is reflected in some other religious thoughts such as the presence of the double mountain horizon sign "  *3ht*" (as the mountain is one of the desert phenomena), as well as the two cosmic mountains (Bakhu and Manu) that functioned in carrying the sky.

- The terrestrial world is connected with the heavenly one that was attested by the voyages of the sun god through both of them every day in the morning and the evening through the gates of which the entrance to the sky is located in the east where the sun shines. Moreover, Pyramid Texts indicated that the eastern portal of the sky used to be opened for the deceased to reach the sky so as to be unified with the god "Re". However, Coffin Texts indicated the possibility of passing through the eastern gates of the sky among the followers of "Re" and through recognizing the souls of the easterners.
- As one of their aspects, The East and the west were dangerous regions in the sky that should be avoided by the deceased as the east represented the place of punishment of the guilty. However, the West represented the place of no return and it appeared in the Coffin Texts as a dangerous region where demons are threatening the dead.
- The pylon of the temple is considered hypothetically to be the architectural representation of the horizon and the east-west axis of the temple represents the two mountains (Bakhu and Manu) so the temple remains firmly like the cosmic mountains. Certain gods and goddesses were associated with the two symbols of the East () and the West () in a direct way such as Imntet (goddess of the west) and Iabtet (goddess of the east), *h3* (lord of the west) and Soped (Lord of the east) who represented together the concept of duality in the ancient Egyptian art, thoughts and culture. While some gods had more functions related to the desert such as (Min), the protector god of the nomads, fishermen, miners, quarries and travelers passing through the eastern desert.

However, some other gods and goddesses were associated with the west in an indirect way as protective gods and goddesses of the necropolis hence, the west such as (Anubis), (Hathor), (Isis), (Ash), (Khenty - Imntyw) and (Meret Segret).

- The Ancient Egyptian worried about the other world that was regarded as an unknown world within which are hidden a large number of dangers and places that should be

known well either to pass by or to avoid them (such as the eastern and the western parts of the sky considered sometimes as dangerous sections of hell)

He had imagined the other world with various divisions for the righteous dead and other separated places for the sinners. Moreover, he had drawn a map similar to Egypt to describe the most favorite place or the “*h̄tp* field” which is The Paradise of the Ancient Egyptian.

- Purification process was crucial for the ancient Egyptian. Therefore, he dedicated a specific place for cleansing in the netherworld (*Brw* field).

The study resulted that the Ancient Egyptian did not overlook the moral aspect as not all the people can achieve their desires in the afterlife, but only good human beings will win the pleasures of the afterlife imagined in the form of fields, lakes, canals, islands, rivers, hills and mountains where they can practice all the earthly activities.

- According to some hypothesis the study concluded that lapwings and Bows (the two symbols of the foreign countries) were considered to be alternative symbols of the west (Lapwings) and the east (The Bow) in the Ancient Egyptian civilization
- It can be argued that the Ancient Egyptian regarded with great attention both the eastern and the western directions due to their role in determining the path that should be followed by the deceased or the obstacles that might hinder his way and should be exceeded.
- The Ancient Egyptian imagination for the eastern and the western celestial sites is considered to be a reflection for his fears of the unknown afterlife and his desire for eternity where he can enjoy a safe life between the gods of the afterlife such as Osiris and Thot.