IDENTIFICATION OF GODLIKES
THROUGH THE EGYPTIAN RELIGIOUS TEXTS

Dr. Abou El Eyoun Barakat
Dr. Adel El Toukhy
A comprehensive review of the religious texts; pyramid texts(1), coffin texts(2), and book of the dead(3), reveals that numerous names of characters, who resemble gods, appear in these texts having no reference in the other texts or in the inscriptions on the walls of temples and/or tombs. The ancient Egyptians, in their life, did not express any petitions or prays to those characters indicating doubts about their god-being and whether they were gods acting in the netherworld or they were spirits who had a definite duty in the netherworld. So, they will be dealt with as the so called "godlikes" in this paper.

Among the godlikes under this study whose names frequently appear in the religious texts, Nḥb-K3w, M3-ḥ3.f, and ġqn are the godlikes to be considered in this respect.

Nḥb-k3w.

This name appears in the pyramid texts in various forms of writings as follows:

1. [diagram] (PT I 489 b)
2. [diagram] (PT I 361 a)
3. [diagram] (PT I 340 b)
4. [diagram] (PT I 346 a)

Other forms of the name Nḥb-k3w writings appear in the coffin texts as follows:

1. [diagram] (CT III 318 d)
2. [diagram] (CT IV 311 b)
Also, the form $\text{...(BD30)}$ appears in the book of the dead.

Moreover, WB dealt with this name as "der die kas macht" describing it as a characteristic of some gods particularly, both of Horus and Thot. In addition, this name refers to the evil snake and the feminine form Nḥbt-k3w means the snake who guards the queen(4).

Nḥb-k3w was drawn in various snaky forms. The most important forms are: (1) a great snake having two heads each with a different neck,(5) and the tail is ended with a snaky head(6). (Fig. 1,2), (2) a snake having a human limbs with raising hands to the mouth or carrying a small container, with w3dtd eye. This form is also graved on the basis of Sekhmet and Bastet thrones(7). (Fig. 3), and (3) a human form with snaky head. This form is represented in the ivory statues in the British Museum(8). Also, the form of a kneeling man catching a snake in both hands.(9) (Fig. 4).

Concerning the duty of Nḥb-k3w, it is obvious, from the religious texts and the drawings, that he had a conflict duties. For example, Nḥb-k3w is mentioned in the pyramid texts in a letter to the snakes in the netherworld.

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dd  mdw ɛnt ñw nn nt ìtm ìrt ts qbsw Nḥb-k3w ss3t ìnw m Ṭnw ḫr sbn.
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Words to be said: O you adze of Atum which is upon the vertebra of Nehebkau, which brings to an end the strife in Unu; fall! perish! (PTI 229 a-c).
Another example from the coffin texts reveals that Nḥb-k3w had a similar duty, besides to describing the dead with the name of Nḥb-k3w.

\[ j \, 3m \, hm \, Nḥb-k3w \]
"O you who burn Nehebkau." (CT V 40 b).
\[ jnk \, Nḥb-k3w \]
"I am Nehebkau" (CT V 37 l).
\[ hpr \, m \, Nḥb-k3w \]
"To become Nehebkau" (CT VI 133 i).

Moreover, the name of Nḥb-k3w is mentioned as a judge of the forty-two judges of Osiris in the netherworld at the 125th chapter of the book of the dead. It is also shown, in the religious texts, that Nḥb-k3w is one of the sun god characteristics\(^{10}\) with supporting references in the pyramid texts.

\[ jn.sn.\, n.f \, fdw \, jpw.\, j3hm \, smsw \, hntjw \, ksktjw \, chc\, m \, gs \, j3bt \, n \, pt \, dsrw \, hr \, dcmw \, sn \, dd.sn \, mn \, nfr \, n \, Wnjs \, pn \, n \, Rc \, sjw.\, sn \, Wnjs \, pn \, n \, Nḥb-k3w.\]

"They (the gods) bring to him those four eldest spirits who are in front of the tresses of Horus, who stand in the east of the sky, adorned with their sceptres. They tell the beautiful name of this Wenis to Re, they announce this Wenis to Nehebkau." (PTI 339b-340b).
Teti is summoned by Re, food is given to him by Nehebkau." (PTI 346a).

As for the coffin texts, Nhb-k3w has the characteristic of the god Ptah. Also, he was considered the godson of the god Geb and the goddess Rennut.

"I departed and returned in the bark of Re, that I give thrones to Nehebkau" (CT VII 169 f-h).

"Ho! this Osiris N! you are Nehebkau, son of Geb, born of his mother Rennut; you are indeed the double of every god, having power in his heart." (CT VI 392 j).

"I am he who is south of his wall(11), Monarch of the gods; I am king of the sky, even Nehebkau who rules the two lands, Nehebkau who grants souls, crowning doubles and beginnings, I am Nehebkau, and their lives are at my hand, when I wish I act they live." (CT VI 268 h-l).
In the book of the dead, messages for the sun god and Nehebkau to let the former sails in the sky leading an enjoyable and healthy life and later in the Mcndt - bark(12) which belonged to the god Re.

\[
d3.k \ hrjj m \ cnh \ w3s \ Nhbb-k3w \ m \ mcndt \ rs3j
wj3.k \ jb.k
\]
"You sail over the sky in life and health, Nehebkau being in the M\textsuperscript{c}ndt-barque, your barque rejoices your heart" (BDI 15 a).

M3-ḫ3.f and ATEGORY

Another godlikes named M3-ḫ3.f and ATEGORY appear in the religious texts in relation to the deceased's journey to the field of Iaru across the winding waterway(13). They have special duties with the ferry-boat by which the deceased traverses to the field of Iaru.

M3-ḫ3.f.

The godlike M3-ḫ3.f appears in the religious texts in various writing forms:

In the pyramid texts:
1. \[
\text{\begin{figure} \centering \includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image1.png} \caption{Image of pyramid text 1} \end{figure}}
\]
   (PT 1 383 a)
2. \[
\text{\begin{figure} \centering \includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image2.png} \caption{Image of pyramid text 2} \end{figure}}
\]
   (PT 1 597 a)
3. \[
\text{\begin{figure} \centering \includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image3.png} \caption{Image of pyramid text 3} \end{figure}}
\]
   (PT II 925 c)

In the coffin texts:
1. \[
\text{\begin{figure} \centering \includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image4.png} \caption{Image of coffin text 1} \end{figure}}
\]
   (CT V 73 n)
2. \[
\text{\begin{figure} \centering \includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image5.png} \caption{Image of coffin text 2} \end{figure}}
\]
   (CT V 74 i)
3. \[
\text{\begin{figure} \centering \includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image6.png} \caption{Image of coffin text 3} \end{figure}}
\]
   (CT V 170 g, M2N4a)
Also the book of the dead involves the same name in numerous locations.

From the previously mentioned writings, the name can be transliterated in different types; m-h3.f, m3.n h3.f and m3-h3-tp.f. In spite of being written or transliterated in different forms, the name M3-h3.f has sole translation with the meaning of "a person who can see his back" or "who can see backwards". This meaning is in agreement with the translation given by Mueller(14), Budge(15) and Faulkner(16).

The abovementioned meaning is in accordance with the appearance of the name in other forms such as:

1. \[\text{PT I 383 a}\]
2. \[\text{PT II 999 a}\]
3. \[\text{PT II 1441}\]
4. \[\text{CT III 174 i}\]

These forms have the transliteration: Hr.f-h3.f which has the synonymous of the name M3-h3.f. Also it was written in the form Hr.f-m-h3.f (PT I 493) as translated with the meaning "his face is in his back", which leads to the same meaning.

Using the world hnt instead of h3 with indication in Hr.f m hnt.f (PT I 493) was another form for the godlike name.

The duty of M3-h3.f is obviously shown in the various religious texts. He is frequently mentioned in the spells related to the deceased's journey in the netherworld at his way
to the field of Iaru(17). He seems to be responsible of the ferry-boat, by which the deceased traverses to the field of Iaru across the winding waterway which surrounds its northern edge.

Meuller believes that the name of the godlike M3-h3.f is due to the fact that the ferry-man, during rowing, must sit at a position in which his back faces the foremast. In other words" his face is backward". That ensures the normality of the godlike M3-h3.f 's face position.

There is a scene on Ani papyrus(18), in which the deceased appears carrying the writing tools in one hand and raising the other in front of the ferry-man (M3-h3.f) sitting in the ferry-boat. with his face towards his back. (Fig. 5).

The duty of the godlike M3-h3.f begins as the deceased calls him to be awake.

\[ \text{dd mdw rs.k m htp Hr.f - h3.f m htp M3-h3.f m htp} \]

words recited: "May you awake in peace! O Hr.f - h3.f in peace! O M3-h3.f in peace!" (PTI 383a).

Then the deceased asks him to bring the ferry-boat to traverse across the winding waterway, calling him with many different attributes and describing him as a god ox to indicate the M3-h3.f powerful.

\[ \text{Hr.f-m-hnt.f Hr.f-m-h3.f jn nw n Wnj} \]
"O Herefemkhentef, Herefemhaef, bring this to king Wenis" (PTI 493).

\[ M3-\text{ntrw in nw n Wnjs dj Wnjs pn m gs pf n cnh w35} \]

"O Mahaf, Bull of the gods, bring this to the king Wenis and set this king Wenis on that side of life and authority" (PTII 925 c-d).

\[ j Hr.f-h3.f m \text{hntj n s'Nh3 jn n.j nw d3 wj dj wj m pf gs hnc snw pn ntjw m-c.j} \]

"O Herethaf, Ferryman of the winding waterway, bring this to me, ferry me across, and put me in that side with these bags which are in my hand." (CT III 174 i-1).

After that the deceased asks him to awaken cqn (the other godlike who will be discussed in the next part of this paper).

\[ M3-\text{srs n.j cqn hn.k m cnh mk wj jj.kwj} \]

"O Mahaf, awaken Aqen for me, may you endow with life. Behold, I have come" (CT V 77 b-c).

\[ M3-\text{SrS cqn jn.tj.fj n.j nw hn.k m cnh mk wj wr jj.kwj} \]

"O Mahaf, awaken Aqen who will bring me this, may you endow with life."
Behold, I am a great one and I have come.
(CT V 74 i-l).

cqn

The name of the godlike cqn appears in the same texts of his companion M3-ḥ3.f in various writing forms as follows:

1. ḫn            (CT V 730 )
2. ḫn            (CT V 77 b)
3. ḫn            (CT V 82 c)
4. ḫn            (BD 99)

He often is the ferry-boat servant or attendant who is responsible for preparing the ferry-boat to be ready to cross the winding waterway. It was mentioned before that the deceased asks M3-ḥ3.f to awaken cqn. Here cqn awakes saying:

jsšt pwj jn cqn wnnt sgr. kwj
"What is it? says Aqen, I was asleep"
(CTV 107a).

In a long conversation between the godlike cqn and the deceased which deals with the knowledge of the later about the gods names and the portions of the ferry-boat, indicates the ability of the deceased to reply most of the questions. However, the cqn says:

nn n ḏd.n.k ḏ3.k r bw ḫr ntr pf ṣpsj jm dd
jrs ntr pn ṣpsj jn ḏ3.n.k n.j ḫ ny ṣrw ṣs ḏcw.f
"As for what you have said, that you would ferry over to the place where this august god is, this august god will say: "have you ferried over to me a man who doesn't know the number of his fingers?"

(CT V 115 a-d)

Then, the Cqn permits the deceased to ascend the ferry-boat after the later shows his knowledge by counting his fingers.(19)

\[ h3 \text{ mk} \text{ nhnt tn n rh.k tnw nw dbcw.k } \]

"Go abroad the ferry-boat, because you know the number of your fingers." (CT V 154 d-e).

In a conclusion, the mentioning of the name of Nḥb-k3w accompanied with and in equal to the god Re is a good indication that he is not a characteristic of Re and can be considered an independent creature named Nḥb-k3w, who often was a companion or an attendant of Re. Some texts mentioned that Nḥb-k3w was an enemy who was attacked by the god Atum. This evil role may be due to the appearance of Nḥb-k3w among the terrifying gods consisting the forty-two judges of Osiris tribunal.

Concerning the duties of M3-h3.f and Cqn, it is evident that they have the responsibility of the ferry-boat. The M3-h3.f has numerous and different writings and transliterations i.e., Ḥr.f-h3.f, M3-h3.f, Ḥr.f-m-hn.t.f, M3-h3-tp.f and Ḥr.f m h3.f, which all lead to the same meaning: "whose face is in his
That indicates his principal duty as a ferry-man whose face must be in this position. The cqn is in charge of preparing the ferry-boat to be ready for sailing across the winding waterway to the field of Iaru. Also he has the duty to ask the deceased to prove his knowledge about the gods and he has the right to permit the deceased to ascend the ferry-boat.

Thus, the Nhâb - k3w, M3-š3.f and cqn are three characters who have different duties in the netherworld. Their duties give them the priorities to have characteristics that make them of god-being nature. But they can not be considered as real gods.

Notes


11. About the phrase rs jnh.f as a title for the god Ptah see WB II 452.
17. About the field of Iaru see: Weil R., Le Champ des roseaux et le champ des Offerands dans la religion funéraire et la religion générale, Paris 1936; Bayoumi A., Autour du champ des souchets et du champ des Offerandes, Cairo, 1940.
18. Faulkner R. BD, P. 94.
Figure 1: Clark R., Myth and Symbol, p. 40

Figure 2: Shorter A., The God Nebekau, in JBA 21, p. 42
Figure 3: loc. cit.

Figure 4: loc. cit.

Figure 5: Faulkner R., B.D., P. 94.