I. Abstract
Banebdjedet was the principal ram-god in the area around the delta city of Djedet, known to the Greeks as Mendes. He is depicted in a number of forms which reflects a kind of relationship with his roles played to maintaining peace and harmony across the whole Egypt. Taking into account that his worship extended over nearly three thousand years, it seems inevitable that his iconography has seen some changes: he is usually represented with a human body and a ram's head and occasionally with four rams’ heads. In some circumstances the image of the entire animal evokes the divinity. However, Greek texts refer to the sacred animal of Mendes as a billy-goat.

Basically on the representations in relief, this paper aims to identify and explain the main moments of the iconography evolution of this god through answering the following questions: is it possible to identify Banebdjedet in spite of the absence of his legends? May the different aspects of his personality influence his iconography? Whether the image of this divinity varies according to the period and the function? and finally, to what extent the representation of Banebdjedet could be used as a criterion of dating? Thus, this paper tries to understand the personality of Banebdjedet throughout his iconography.

Keywords: ram-god, Banebdjedet, Hatmehit, Mendes, Djedet, iconography, ram, a ram-headed man, billy-goat, atef-crown.

II. Introduction
Egyptian god, Banebdjedet was one of the most important local deities of the ancient Egyptian pantheon whose traces have survived throughout history until Roman times. His Egyptian name was $\text{Bn b Dd}$, which means « Ba$^1$, Lord of Djedet$^2$ ». Banebdjedet was the northern equivalent of the god Khnum$^3$. He was the principal ram god in the area around Djedet, a city in the Delta known to the Greeks as Mendes. Banebdjedet has a divine consort, Hatmehyt$^4$ who was a fish or a dolphin goddess. The latter, called the foremost of the fishes, seems to have been the original local deity of Mendes. Together they were parents to Harpocrates of Mendes and they formed the

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$^1$ The Ancient Egyptians were exceedingly fond of puns, believing that homophony in language was no meaningless coincidence. They crop up frequently in both religious and informal contexts. In our case, the word Ba$^1$ is a double-entendre. The same sound of Ba$^1$ can expound the informal meaning "ram" as well as religious one "spiritual manifestation", see Redford. 2010, p. 134; Pinch. 2004, p. 114-115.

$^2$ Djedet is the Egyptian name of the city, home to Banebdjedet’s cult. Also known in Ancient Egypt as Per-Banebdjedet:"The Domain of the Ram Lord of Djedet" and Anpet. Then it was known Mendes (Μένδης) in the Greco-Roman Period. It is known today as Tell El-Ruba (Arabic: تل الربيع). The city is located in the eastern Nile delta, near the present village of El Simbellawin, about 35 km from El-Mansoura and was the capital of the 16th Lower Egyptian nome of Kha, until it was replaced by Thmuis in Greco-Roman Period. During the 29th dynasty, Mendes was also the capital of Ancient Egypt, see Redford. 2001, p. 376–377; Redford. 2005, p. 8–12; Gauthier. 1929, p. 136.


Triad of Mendes, also referred to as the "Mendesian Triad". His sacred animal was a ram or a goat.

Banebdjedet did not seem to have always enjoyed the same popularity in the different phases of history. In the Old Kingdom, Banebdjedet was almost unknown\(^5\) as he was not mentioned in the main funerary texts realized in this period (i.e. the *Pyramid Texts* and *Coffin Texts*). It is clear that until the Middle Kingdom, his role was still very limited. However, from the New Kingdom onwards, the cult grew and gained popularity that allowed him to appear alongside the great deities of the Egyptian pantheon. From that moment, the fame of Banebdjedet continued to increase remarkably in the Greco-Roman era.

In mythology, Banebdjedet was a god of some consequences as he played a small but significant role in the conflict of Horus and Seth\(^6\), when the matter of the Osirian succession is brought before the divine tribunal. They summon Banebdjedet to judge between Horus and Seth. But he diplomatically advised to consult Neith and ask for her wisdom. When that fails to settle matter, Banebdjedet advises that the throne should be given to Seth because he is older than Horus. Banebdjedet was worshipped as a god of fertility and fecundity, meaning fruitfulness; he was particularly renowned for his virility. One of his epithets was « Lord of Sexual pleasures ». In the text carved upon the stela from a chapel in the Ramesseum complex, Ptah-Tatenen states that he transformed himself into Banebdjedet in order to sleep with a mortal woman. The son resulted of this union was the future king Ramses II.\(^7\)

The cult of Banebdjedet at Mendes is claimed to have included sexual intercourse between humans and goats as part of fertility rites. By early Christianity, the sexual aspect of the cult at Mendes made it particularly disliked by Christians. Banebdjedet’s form as a ram or a goat-headed man was reinterpreted as a devil figure that entered western tradition as the honored king of the witches.\(^8\)

Having a radiant worship for many centuries, if not millennia, it is understandable that the representations of this god have seen many changes during this long period. Basically on the representations in relief, this paper aims to identify and explain the main moments of the iconography evolution of this god through answering the following questions: is it possible to identify Banebdjedet in spite of the absence of his legends? May the different aspects of his personality influence his iconography? Whether the image of this divinity varies according to the period and the function? and finally, to what extent the representation of Banebdjedet could be used as a criterion of dating? Thus, this paper tries to understand the personality of Banebdjedet throughout his iconography.

After indicating the type of rams that influences the images of Banebdjedet, this research is divided into three major chronological parts including: Banebdjedet’s representations starting from the New Kingdom through the Late Period, to the Greco-Roman Period respectively.

**III. Ram of Banebdjedet**

The animal features the common representations of Banebdjedet are a species of sheep with a long land fine legs which were already appeared in pre-dynastic Period. This Ovid is

\(^5\) There is no trace for the god Banebdjedet in the monuments of the Old Kingdom, Leitz. 2002, *LGG VI*, p. 683a-685c.

\(^6\) About this passage from the papyrus Chester Beatty (BM 10681), see Lichtheim, 1976, p. 214-23; Simpson. 2003, p. 94; Grandet. 1998, p. 123; Lefebvre. 1949, p. 188; Gardiner. 1931, p. 16, pl. IVa.


characterized by large horizontal and twisted horns. Paleo-zoologists have agreed to call this race - now disappeared - *ovis longipes palaeoaegypticus*.\(^9\)

During the Middle Kingdom, a new race of sheep appeared in Egypt with quite different features\(^10\). It was a hybrid of a new species and the old one. The new woolly sheep has quite short stocky legs. It is characterized by its horns that leave the temple backwards, curve around the ears and come back to the front of the head.

By the beginning of the Ptolemaic Period, a new species of sheep appeared in Egypt. It differs from the previous species mainly by its much greasy tail\(^11\). At the time of Herodotus, this species have not yet lived in Egypt. Herodotus (III, 113) refers to two particular kinds of sheep in *Arabia*, that don’t exist elsewhere. The first had extremely long tails, while the other has wide tails which reach to cubits. The latter race has given the name *terminus post quem* by Herodotus.

It is interesting to note that all the hieroglyphic versions and religious iconography of Banebdjedet are represented with horns that are actually perpendicular to the animal, in order to fully expose this feature in side view.

**IV. Iconography of Banebdjedet during the New Kingdom**

The representations of the god Banebdjedet before the New Kingdom is unknown, although the presence of few attestations of this god in the Middle Kingdom\(^12\). This is probably due to the fact that his major temple in the local city, Mendes has now totally ruined. It is also suggested that, generally, the representation of Egyptian gods before the New Kingdom was infrequent\(^13\).

The New kingdom attested the earliest known representation of Banebdjedet. The pictorial sources which come from both Upper and Lower Egypt contribute to the list of Banebdjedet’s images. Totally, only two representations of Banebdjedet appeared in the New Kingdom and in a hybrid form.

**IV.1. Hybrid form**

**IV.1.1. Ram headed human form**

The stela of Nakht-Amon (Copenhague Ny Carlsberg AEIN 1346)\(^15\) features a ram-headed god Banebdjedet behind Ptah and Amon (pl. I, A.). The deity is figured in accordance with Egyptian prototypes (fig. 1): he is depicted in a standing position with his left leg forward. He wears a short kilt-*shendjet* fixed on the waist by means of a belt, and on its back is attached a long ceremonial tail. The deity is holding a *was*-scepter in the left hand and the *ankh*-sign in the right one. He wears a long tripartite wig that leaves the ears exposed. Those ears hang slightly frontwards of the head with massive twisted horns in which is planted the *atef*-crown. It consists of a central miter topped by a disk and flanked by two ostrich feathers (fig. 3).

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\(^9\) See Boessneck. 1988, fig. 1 and 12.

\(^10\) About the new race of sheep, see Newberry. 1893, pl. 30. Very naive drawings of the two races of sheep are still in a Theban tomb which dates back to the beginning of the eighteenth dynasty, see Boussac. 1896, pl. 5.

\(^11\) See Boessneck, *ibidem*, p. 73; Helk, Otoo. LÄ VI, col. 1243 sqq. *s.v. « Widder ».*


\(^13\) Sandman. 1946, p. 12.

\(^14\) About the type of the ram, see *supra*, p. 2.

\(^15\) About this stela see Koefoed-Petersen. 1948, p. 26 and pl. 30.
IV.1.2. Ram headed human mummified form

On a relief from the King’s Valley\textsuperscript{16}, Banebdjedet who is represented in a standing position receives the offerings presented by the owner of the tomb (pl. I, B.). Banebdjedet is depicted as a ram headed human mummy (fig. 3). The body is entirely wrapped; the head and the hands are the only parts that jut out. His two hands are holding a combination of was scepter with djed and ankh-signs. He wears a long tripartite wig that leaves the ears exposed. Those ears hang slightly forwards. The head latter is surmounted directly by massive twisted horns in which is planted the atef-crown. It consists of a central miter with vertical stripes, flanked by two ostrich feathers. A solar disk at the base and the center of the miter. The whole is drawing between two Uraeus, which their heads are surmounted by solar disk. A small black square beard is attached to the face of the god (fig. 4).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure1}
\caption{Banebdjedet ram headed human form\textsuperscript{17}.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure2}
\caption{Banebdjedet ram headed human mummified form\textsuperscript{18}.}
\end{figure}

\textit{After}: Koefoed-Petersen, 1948, pl. 30

\textsuperscript{16} This scene comes from the tomb n°.19 which belongs to Prince Mentuherkhepsef, a son of pharaoh Ramesses IX. It dates back to the Late New Kingdom.

\textsuperscript{17} This figure is derived from pl. I, A.

\textsuperscript{18} This figure is derived from pl. I, B.
IV.2. Comment
The god of fertility Banebdjedet was depicted with the head of a type of ram that was once common in ancient Egypt no later than the Middle Kingdom, but it was extinct during the New Kingdom. This race had a different quite appearance from the existing common race. As can be seen in fig. 1, 2, 3 and 4, the typical iconography of the New Kingdom, which will still prevalent later, shows the horizontal twisted horns taken out directly from the skull. It is always the characteristic massive twisted horns of ram of Banebdjedet. In both attestations, the horns are topped with additional elements including the *atef*-crown. The small square beard is not a part of the ram and seems to be a divine sign. The ram ears are depicted exposed in both examples and hang slightly frontwards of the head (fig. 3 and 4). Regarding the type of the wig, two variants appeared: the pan falling on the visible side of the head can be in a straight line from below the ear (Fig. 4), or starts at the height of horns and curved around the ears (fig. 3). The differences between these variants are not significant.

![Figure 3](image3.png)

![Figure 4](image4.png)

V. Iconography of Banebdjedet in the Late Period
In the Late Period, the representations of Banebdjedet have been enriched with new phenotypes. Beside his most common hybrid form; ram headed man donating the *atef*-crown, other forms appeared. Babebdjedet was depicted in full ram (Fig. 7-8) or as human mummy with the head of the belly-goat (fig. 6).

V.1. Hybrid form
V.1.1. Ram headed human form
V.1.1.1. Standing
The pictorial sources from the Late Period contribute to the list of Banebdjedet’s representations as ram headed human god. Two examples of this phenotype are known. The first comes from the decoration of the Room J of the temple of Hibis\(^\text{19}\) (pl. II, A.). It features Banebdjedt as a ram headed man wearing the *atef*-crown (fig. 5). The second (pl. II, B.) is carved in the stela

\(^{19}\) It is exactly the lower scene which is carved in the west wall of the room J of the temple of Hibis, see Davies, 1953, p. 20 and pl. 21.
found in Banebdjedt’s local city, Mendes. Both representations are almost identical to images of Banebdjedet already appeared in the New Kingdom without significant differences.

Figure 5: Banebdjedet ram headed human form\(^\text{21}\).  

After: Davies. 1953, pl. 21.

V.1.2. Belly-goat headed human form  

\textit{IV.1.2.1. Mummified form}  

In the central illustration of the papyrus of \textit{Ta-udja-Ra}\(^\text{22}\) (pl. 3, A.), Banebdjedet is depicted as a standing human mummy with belly-goat bead with a long beard (Fig. 7). The body is entirely wrapped; the head is the only part that juts out. He wears a long tripartite wig that leaves the ears exposed. It is surmounted directly by vertical long zigzag line horns which go across the front part of the head to upwards, as if it was implanted in the skull of the animal or his effigy.

Figure 6: Banebdjedet Belly-goat headed human mummified form\(^\text{23}\).

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\(^{20}\) Koefoed-Petersen. 1948, p. 41-43 and pl. 56.  
\(^{21}\) This figure is derived from pl. II, A.  
\(^{22}\) About this extract see Piankoff. 1964, p. 156 (n\(^{\circ}\) 56).  
\(^{23}\) This figure is derived from pl. III, A.
After: Piankoff. 1964, p. 96-97.
V.2. Theriomorphic form

V.2.1. Full ram form
Banebdjedet can be represented in the form of a full ram. The god is shown on two occasions with this new phenotype which appeared for the first time during this period. The first image comes from the decoration carved in left side of the statue of Psamtik-Seneb\(^{24}\) (pl. III, B.) where the deity is figured as a full ram-headed god with curved horns. The head of the animal is surmounted by horns which is curved upwards at the end, and in which is planted a solar disk. The second picture is located between the decorations of the Naos CGC 70021 of Nectanebo\(^{25}\) (Pl. IV, A.). Banebdjedet was depicted almost identically to the previous representation. The crown of the god cannot be distinguished because the upper part of the scene is damaged.

Figure 7: Banebdjedet full ram.\(^{26}\)

Figure 8: Banebdjedet full ram

After: Kákosy, 1999, pl. 31.

V.3. Comment
The images of Banebdjedet were enriched not only by new phenotypes like the depiction of the god in the form of ram (fig. 7, 8), but also by the birth of new and unique variant of the old typology; the human mummmified belly-goat-headed (fig. 6).

The image of the ram of Banebdjedet was performed according to the existing animal zoological reality at that time. Worth mentioning a damaged scene in fig. 5 might refer to the old representation of the horns?

In the standard iconography of Banebdjedet, the horns are topped with additional elements, including mainly the atef-crown (fig. 5). Occasionally, a solar disk was overlooking the horns of the ram (fig 7-8), an element that refers to the relationship between Banebdjedet and Ra\(^{27}\). The vertical horns were rarely depicted alone on the top of the figure (fig. 6).

\(^{24}\) For much information about this statue see, Kákosy. 1999, p. 62-63 and pl. 31.
\(^{25}\) See Roeder. 1914, p.90-91 and pl. 24.
\(^{26}\) This figure is derived from pl. III, B.
\(^{27}\) About Ra in the form of a ram with a solar disk in the head, see for example Caverley, Gardiner. 1935, pl. 14, 19, and vol. IV 1958, pl. 22.
However, representations with both types of horns, without crowns, were also documented (fig.7 and 8). It seems to offer a compromise between the old form of ram and the characteristic of the current ram.

VI. Iconography of Banebdjedet in the Greco-Roman Period

The Egyptian temples in the Greco-Roman period contained many representations of Banebdjedet. Although, his composite form consisting of a human body with ram's head is still the most common, new phenotypes as well as new variations of already known typology that have been seen in the previous periods were documented in the visual sources of the period under consideration.

VI.1. Anthropomorphic form

Banebdjedet appeared for the first time as a fully human form. This new phenotype was performed with different attitudes; either standing or enthroned.

VI.1.1. Standing

The decoration of the east wall of the Roman Mammisi\textsuperscript{28} represents Banebdjedet standing between a group of Egyptian deities receiving the offerings presented by the king (pl. IV, B.). Banebdjedet was depicted wearing a short kilt \textit{shendjet} fixed on the waist by means of a belt and a ceremonial tail is attached to its back. He wears a large collar around the neck. He has a human face, with long curved beard. An Uraeus is protruded just above the forehead of the god. His head is covered by a mortar which leaves the ears exposed, and in which is planted a crown composed of two tall straight feathers with a solar disk in between. In the right hand, Banebdjedet is holding the \textit{was}-scepter, and in the left one, the \textit{cross-ankh}-sign (= fig. 9).

VI.1.2. Enthroned

This phenotype of enthroned Banebdjedet (fig 10) is depicted in the temple of Edfou, exactly in the east wall decoration of the outside of the Naos, second section\textsuperscript{29} (pl. V, A.). Banebdjedet is seated on a throne with a lower back, in the head of a group of deities composed of the god Herishef\textsuperscript{30} and the god Menh\textsuperscript{31} receiving the offerings presented by the king. He wears a sticking kilt \textit{shendjet} fixed on the waist by means of a belt. He has a human face, with long curved beard of the gods. He wears a long tripartite wig. In the right hand, he is holding the \textit{was}-scepter, and in the left hand, the \textit{cross-ankh}-sign.

Figure 9: Banebdjedet fully human form\textsuperscript{32}.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Banebdjedet fully human form.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{28} About this scene see Leitz. 2002, LGG II, p. 684\textsubscript{(c)} [57]; Daumas. 1959, p. 176 and pl. LXIX.

\textsuperscript{29} See Leitz. 2002, LGG II, p. 684\textsubscript{(c)}, Chassinat. 1929, p. 240 and pl. XCI.

\textsuperscript{30} About this god see Leitz. 2002, LGG V, p. 381-384.

\textsuperscript{31} About the god Menh see Leitz. 2002, LGG III, p. 304-305.

\textsuperscript{32} This figure is derived from pl. IV, B.
VI.2. Hybrid form

VI.2.1. Ram headed human form

VI.2.1.1. Standing

The reliefs of the Greco-Roman period have several examples of this standard phenotype for the god Banebdjedet. A scene carved in the Roman Mammisi of Dendara temple complex, precisely in the second register of the frieze in the northern wall of the sanctuary 34 (pl. V, B.), feature Banebdjedet’s head covered with a long tripartite wig which around the curved twisted horns by a curve (fig. 11). The ears move slightly downwards of the head. A small black square beard is attached to the face of the god. The head is surmounted directly by two horizontal twisted horizontal horns in which is planted the atef-crown which consists of a central miter with a solar disk at its base, flanked by two ostrich feathers, the whole is drawing between two Uraeus having heads surmounted by solar disk.

This widespread phenotype cans also be represented in the enclosure wall, inner face, west side of northern wall of the temple of Edfou 35. Two scenes carved in the walls of Osirian chapels in Dendara temple complex contribute to the list of this phenotype. The first one is located among the scenes in the substructure of northern west wall of the western Osirian chapel n° 1 (fig. 12) 36 (pl. VI, A.). The second scene is found in the first register of the southern west wall in the eastern Osirian chapel n° 2 37 (fig. 13) (pl. VI, B.). Moreover, the scene depicted upon the small stela from Mendes 38 presents the same model of this phenotype. Finally, an elaborate scene carved in the Rom E of the temple of Dendara 39, confirming this series of representations for this standard phenotype.

33 This figure is derived from pl. V, A.
34 See Leitz. 2002, LGG II, p. 684(c), [69]; Daumas. 1959, p. 139 and pl. LXi
35 See Leitz. 2002, LGG II, p. 684(c), [71]; Chassinat. 1931, p. 51 and pl. CLVII.
36 About this scene see Leitz. 2002, LGG II, p. 684 (c) [72]; Cauville. 1997, p. 280 and pl. X 152.
37 About this scene, see Cauville. 1997, p. 89 and pl. 42.
38 About this stela, see infra, p. 17, pl. VIII, A. B.
39 About this scene see Chassinat, Daumas. 1965. Pl. CCCXLIII.
VI.2.2. Man with four ram heads
A scene carved on one of the walls of the temple of Dendara, more precisely on the western Osirian chapel, n° 2 (pl. VII, A.) illustrates the god Banebdjedet as a man with four ram heads (fig. 14). The divinity is depicted in accordance with Egyptian prototypes.

This figure is derived from pl. V, B.
41 This figure is derived from pl. VI, A.
42 This figure is derived from pl. VI, B.
The four ram’s heads are representing the four *bas* of the creator sun god who was the first four gods to rule Egypt: Ra-Atum, Shu, Geb and Osiris. This linked Banebdjedet with the god Osiris, who was often named as a ba of the sun god. The book of Heavenly Cow states that the *ba* of Osiris is the ram of Mendes\(^\text{44}\). The ram *quadrifrons*, or "four faces upon one neck", represents the four hypostases of the abstract qualities of the Abyss, each with a nuance of the Infinite. These are: Absolute Darkness (*Kkw*), Infinity (*Hhw*), Fluidity (*Nw*), and Directionlessness (*Tnmw*). The ram *quadrifrons* also encompassed the basic elements of Creation: Light (or Flame), Air, Earth, and Water. These correspond to the Gods Ra, Shu, Geb, and Osiris, respectively\(^\text{45}\).

**VI.2.3. Mummified form**

The phenotype of Banebdjedet as enthroned mummified god was depicted in the central image of the illustrated hieroglyphic papyrus Book of the Fayoum\(^\text{46}\) (pl. VII, B.). Banebdjedet is featured with the body entirely wrapped; the head is the only part that juts out. It is covered with a long tripartite wig which around the curved twisted horns by a curve. The ears move slightly backwards of the head which is surmounted by massive horizontal twisted horns in which is planted the *atf*-crown (fig. 15).

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\(^{43}\) This figure is derived from pl. VII, A.


\(^{45}\) Redford. 2010, p. 134.

\(^{46}\) About this figure, see Leitz. 2002, *LGG* II, p. 684(b); Beinlich.1991, 326-328 and pl. 16.
VI.2.4. Ram-headed squatting figure

In the period under consideration Banebdjedet can be documented as a ram headed human figure in squatting position. He is holding the *ankh*-sign over his knee. He wears a long tripartite wig which around the curved twisted horns by a curve (fig. 16). The head is topped with a base extending slightly upwards and in which is planted a crown composed of two long straight feathers. The ram ears move slightly downwards of the head.

Figure 15: Banebdjedet ram headed mummified form.

After: Beinlich. 1991, pl. 16.

Figure 16: Banebdjedet ram headed squatting figure.

After: Chassinat. 1934, pl. LXXV.

VI.2.5. Ram headed falcon

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47 This figure is derived from pl. VII, B.
48 This figure is illustrated in the frieze of the east wall of the mysterious corridor, outside of the sanctuary of the temple of Dendara, see Leitz. 2002, *LGG* II, p. 684(c) [57]; Chassinat. 1934, p. 119-120 and pl. LXXV.
49 This figure is derived from pl. VII, C.
In the outer frame of the east door of the kiosk W\textsuperscript{50}, of Dendara temple complex, Banebdjedet can be portrayed with a new phenotype. He is depicted with the falcon’s body and the head of a ram. The head is topped with horizontal horns in which are planted two feathers with a solar disk in between.

![Fig. 17, Banebdjedet ram headed falcon form\textsuperscript{51}.](image)

\textit{After: Chassinat, Daumas. 1978, pl. DCXCVI.}

\textbf{VI.3. Theriomorphic form}

\textit{VI.3.1. Ram form}

The Greek Roman sources contributed to the list of this phenotype depicting Banebdjedet in the form of a full ram (fig 18). This is well performed in the scene carved in a small stela (pl. VIII, B.)\textsuperscript{52}, found during the excavations of the Antiquities Department at Tell Timai-el-Amdid\textsuperscript{53} in April 1963\textsuperscript{54}. The head of the ram, which is surmounted by horizontal horns in which is planted a sun disk, is portrayed with the curved twisted horns.

![Figure 18: Banebdjedet full ram\textsuperscript{55}.](image)

\textsuperscript{50} See Chassinat, Daumas. 1978, p. 12 and pl. DCXCVI.
\textsuperscript{51} This figure is derived from pl. VIII, A.
\textsuperscript{52} About this stela which is now kept in the store of Zagazig Inspectorate under the number 228, see Kamal. 1966, p. 27 and pl. I-II
\textsuperscript{53} Tell Timai-el-Amdid was the Capital of the XVI\textsuperscript{th} nome of Lower Egypt, see Porter-Moss IV, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{54} For more information about the excavations at Tell Timai-el-Amdid, see Kamal. \textit{ibidem}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{55} This figure is derived from pl. VIII, B.
VI.4. Comment

The pictorial sources of this period bore a clear evidence not only to the appearance of a new phenotype depicting Banebdjedet; the anthropomorphic form (fig. 9 and 10), but also the birth of further mysterious variants to already known phenotypes such as his representation as a man with four ram heads (fig. 14) or a ram-headed falcon (fig. 17).

The absence of the atef-crown - a specific element of Banebdjedet which represents a key element and an index of his identification - in the anthropomorphic form (fig. 9 and 10) is a major difference to the standard representation of Banebdjedet in the form of human ram headed or the whole animal.

The ram image of Banebdjedet was performed according to the features of the third race of rams that existed at that time; with the ultimate zoological reality. The curved horns became a remarkable feature of Banebdjedet (fig. 11-18) that can be used for dating. Another dating feature is the ears orientation towards the back of the head (fig 12-15) or downwards (fig 11, 16).

Furthermore, Banebdjedet was frequently depicted with both types of horns (11-15, 17-18), which seems to offer a mixture between the old and the current representations of rams.

In terms of the type of the headdress, Banebdjedet can be depicted with tripartite wig (fig. 10-13, 15-16), or with a mortar (fig. 9). The only known type of wigs starts at the height of the horn and around it by the means of a curve.

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56 About this race see supra, p. 2-3.
Regarding the crown of Banebdjedet, the deity is depicted frequently with two horizontal twisted horns in which the atef-crown is planted (fig. 11, 13, 14, 15). Occasionally, a solar disk overlooked the horizontal imaginative horns of the ram (fig. 18), and the solar disk can be topped by two feathers in another representation (fig. 12). The head of Banebdjedet can be topped with a crown composed of two straight long feathers; planted in a base that slightly extending upward (fig. 16), or in a mortar (fig. 9). Rarely the god can be represented without any crowns (fig. 10).

VII. Discussion and Results
It is evident that the study of Banebdjedet’s iconography is still in its infancy. Further excavations and studies of collections with Egyptian and Levantine objects will inevitably increase the iconographic typology proposed here. However the first conclusion one can confidently reach is that, despite his quite narrow theological profile, Banebdjedet’s iconography remained fairly many variants throughout the centuries. The Egyptians have always preferred to represent Banebdjedet in a hybrid form (human ram headed) at least since the New Kingdom until the Greco-Roman period (fig. 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16). The other phenotypes of Banebdjedet which were greatly enriched his iconography; however, have never replaced the standard representation. The study revealed no evidence of Banebdjedet’s anthropomorphic representation (fig 9-10) before the Greek-Roman period.

Due to the conservative nature of religious ideas and images, the change of race Ovidae had no immediate impact on the representations of Banebdjedet. As a result, the image of the ram of Banebdjedet during the New Kingdom was performed according to the iconographic features of the old race of sheep that was disappeared from Egypt no later than the Middle Kingdom. It also had quite different features from the existing common race. By the beginning of the Late Period and with the loss of memory of the former longipes palaeoaegypticus, it became necessary after a certain period of time to conform the image of Banebdjedet’s ram to the ultimate zoological reality, and to perform the features of the ram which can be seen at that time. The old form could no longer be understood as a battering ram and look almost as a fabulous animal. This is evident in the representations of the ram Banebdjedet from the Late Period. At the beginning of the Greco-Roman Period, the apparition of the new race of sheep has its effect on the representations of his images.

Concerning the horns of Banebdjedet, the pictorial sources of Banebdjedet dates to the New Kingdom show the horizontal twisted horns taken out directly from the skull (fig 3-4). By the beginning of the Late Period until Greco-Roman period, Banebdjedet was portrayed with both types of horns; the real curved horns of the animal and the imaginary horns of the old race already disappeared from Egypt (fig. 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18). It seems to offer a compromise between the old form of ram and the characteristic of the current ram.

Regarding the ears of Banebdjedet, the earliest attestations of Banebdjedet dating to the New Kingdom period showed the god with ears, hanging slightly to the forward of the head (fig. 1-4). By the beginning of the Ptolemaic period, the way of ears representation was changed due to the new features of that type of sheep. The iconographic criterion level for the ear was moved backwards (fig 12-15) or downwards (fig. 11, 16).

The way of portraying the horns and ears could be a significant index of dating as they existed at all times, but the change within their shape or position could help the researchers to indicate the exact date of some pieces.
The atef-crown was specific to Banebdjedet; it is a key element and an identification index for the god, especially on appearing without inscription. Other crowns are considered less common and occur in specific contexts.

The historical development of the cult of Banebdjedet, especially from the New Kingdom, was characterized by such increasing associations with other deities, particularly Osiris. This partially contributed to his specific manifestations. Further, due to his association with the first four gods to rule Egypt; Ra-Atum, Shu, Geb and Osiris, Banebdjedet gained some diffusion, both in terms of geographical distribution and semantic contexts as well. Moreover, he played his roles until the Greco-Roman period, as many pictorial and written sources attested.

The occurrence and use of Banebdjedet images seem not to be geographically restricted. His traditional main cult city; Mendes revealed through the times being discussed; merely a number of attestations. The Upper Egypt also contributed to the list of Banebdjedet’s representations with some found attestations. It is important to indicate that the depictions of Banebdjedet outside of Egypt cannot be noted thus far.

As for the Egyptian deities in general, it is rather difficult to describe an exact profile of Banebdjedet’s character and iconography. The god can be closely associated with other deities, exchanging roles and attitudes. For instance, Banebdjedet was sometimes associated with Osiris "the dead sun god"57 which was reflected some representations of Banebdjedet as a mummy formed. Additionally, there was no element or even emblem referring to his fertility shown in the worship of Banebdjedet.

The identification of Banebdjedet was usually obvious due to the legends that accompanied his representations. However, confusion with the gods Khnum, Heryshaf and Amon is possible to be occurred as well.

In conclusion, the representation of Banebdjedet could be used as a criterion of dating, even if one should remain prudent and careful about the interpretation of certain iconographic forms.

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Egyptians have always preferred to represent Banebdjedet in a hybrid form (human ram headed) at least since the New Kingdom until the Greco-Roman period. It is significant to note that the representations of Banebdjedet before the New Kingdom is unknown, although the presence of few attestations for this divinity in the Middle Kingdom. The New kingdom attested the earliest known representations of Banebdjedet. The atef-crown was specific to Banebdjedet; it is a key element and an identification index for the god, especially on appearing without inscription. Other crowns are considered less common and occur in specific contexts.

The representation of Banebdjedet, especially the way of portraying the horns and ears, could be used as a criterion of dating, even if one should remain prudent and careful about the interpretation of certain iconographic forms.

IX. Bibliography


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X. Plates

Pl. I

A. Stela of Nakht-Amon (Copenhague Ny Carlsberg ÆIN 1346).
After: Koefoed-Petersen O. 1948, Les stèles égyptiennes, pl. 30.
B. Tomb n° 19 of prince Mentuherkhepsef, King’s Valley.

A. Temple of Hibis, Room J, west wall, lower register.
B. Stela of Apries (Copenhague Ny Carlsberg ÆIN 1037).
After: Koefoed-Petersen O. 1948, Les stèles égyptiennes, pl. 56.

A. Papyrus of Ta-udja-Ra.

B. Statue of Bsamtik-Seneb, Left side (Turin catalogue 3031).
A. Naos CGC 70021, outside right wall.
After: Roeder G. 1914, Naos, CGC nos 70001-70050, pl. 24.

B. Dendara temple complex, Roman Mammisi, southern wall.
After: Daumas Fr. 1959, Les mammisis de Dendara, pl. LXIX.
A. Temple of Edfou, outside of the Naos, eastern wall, second section.  
After: Chassinat É. 1929, Le temple d’Edfou IV, MMAF 21, pl. XCI.

B. Dendara temple complex, Mammisi roman, sanctuary, northern wall.  
After: Daumas Fr. 1959, Les mammisis de Dendara, pl. LXI bis.

A. Dendara temple complex, western Osirian chapel n° 1, northern west well.  
B. Dendara temple complex, eastern Osirian chapel n° 2, southern west well.  

A. Dendara temple complex, western osirian chapel, east wall.  
B. Papyru Book of the Fayoum.

C. Dendara temple complex, outside of the sanctuary, mysterious corridor, frieze of the eastern

A. Dendara temple complex, kiosk W, outer frame of the eastern door.

A. Stela from Medes.