

Asp

Latin name	<i>Naja haje</i>	Polarity	Masculine
Family	<i>Elapidae</i>	Element	Earth
		Planet	Sun
Etymology	Middle English from Old French <i>aspe</i> , or Latin from Greek <i>aspis</i>	Deity	Ra

The asp is found in North Africa, Egypt, Arabia, and Southern Europe. The *Elapidae* have poison fangs in the front part of the upper jaw. They include the cobras, such as the Indian or Spectacled Cobra (*Naja naja*), the Monocled Cobra (*Naja naja kaouthia*), the smaller Asian Cobra (*Naja naja oxiana*) and the King Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*), all of which live in Asia. The Asp or Egyptian Cobra (*Naja haje*) lives in Africa. Another species of Elapid is the Banded Krait (*Bungarus fasciatus*), which lives in south-east Asia.

Symbolism

In Egypt, the asp was the symbol of the Sun, royalty, dominion, and power. The uraeus, which consisted of a solar disk supported by two asps, symbolised sovereignty, royalty, power, light, life and death, the power to rule, the destruction of enemies, and the eye of Ra, the Sun god. The so-called 'horned asp' may well have been the **slug** (q.v.).

In Greece, it embodied protective and benevolent power.