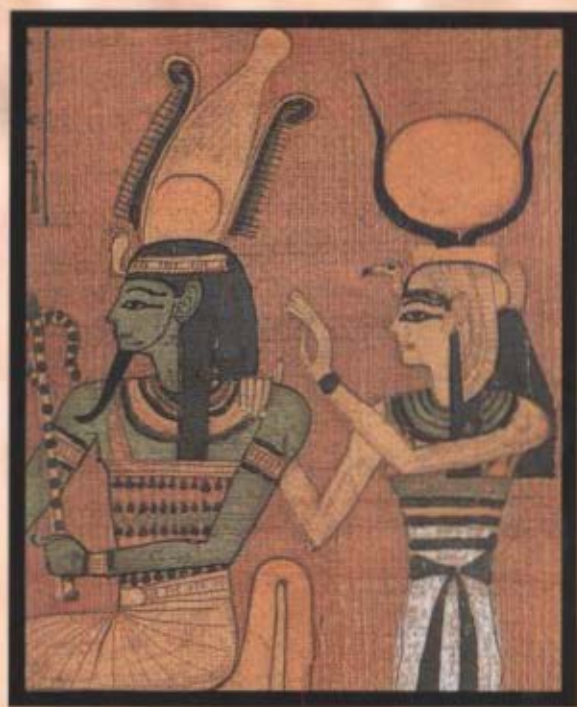


THE EGYPTIAN ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY



LISA ANN BARGEMAN



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LISA ANN BARGEMAN

Foreword by

Harrison Ola. Akingbade, Ph.D.



BLUE DOLPHIN PUBLISHING

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Note: *The Book of the Dead*, used as a reference throughout, is the customary way of referring to *The Book of Going Forth by Day* of ancient Egypt. Any contemporary reflections or comparisons refer to specifically Christianity, particularly Roman Catholicism, in the United States. Reference to *The Book of the Dead* may, in a few instances, be used as a generality representing the broad-spectrum of both that work and traditional associated stories. Specific references may be found towards the end of this volume.

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Jaye

And if you read well, you will not sin against the Lord.

2nd Enoch¹

Who can say whether Egyptian mummies may not have had something to do with the Christian concept of “resurrection of the flesh,” which belongs neither to the Old Testament religion nor to that of the Greeks?... Other religions, such as those of the Israelites and of the ancient Greeks, teach that God’s power does not extend beyond the limits of this earthly existence: it cannot penetrate the dark realms of Sheol or the gates of Hades. This makes the Egyptian phenomena all the more important and specific.... [Their] sacred act[s]... entitle us to exempt the Egyptians from the charges hurled at them by Old Testament writers for pagan idol worship, which the Israelites themselves often copied.... It is... doubtful whether [Judaism] could gain so much influence as Egypt did upon the nascent Christian religion....²



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PROMINENT HEREIN DISCUSSED PHARAOHS

(MOST FROM MANETHO'S KINGS LIST)³

DYNASTY I

Narmer (3150 B.C.E.)—some contend that Menes and

Narmer were the same person

Merneit (3000 B.C.E.)—mother of Narmer

DYNASTY II

Netjeren (2675–2625 B.C.E.)

Sekhemib (circa 2626 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY III (The Old Kingdom)

Dzoser (2630–2611 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY IV

Khufu (2551–2528 B.C.E.)

Khentkawes (~2500 B.C.E.)

Khafre (2520–2494 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY V

Sahure (2458–2446 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY VI

Teti (2345–2336 B.C.E.)

Userkare (~2335 B.C.E.)

Pepi I (2332–2283 B.C.E.)

Merenre (2283–2278 B.C.E.)

Pepi II (2278–2184 B.C.E.)

Merenre II (~2183 B.C.E.)

Nitokerti (~2182 B.C.E.)

Neterkare (~2181–2169 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY XI-XII (First Intermediate Period)

Senusret (1965–1920 B.C.E.)

Sobeknefru (~1900 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY XVIII (Amarna Period)

Ahmose (Amosis) (1539–1514 B.C.E.)

Hatshepsut (Maatkare) (1473–1458 B.C.E.)

Amenhotep III (1382–1344 B.C.E.)

Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV, Thutmosis IV) (1350–1334 B.C.E.)

Nefertiti (ruling as Smenkhkare/Ankhkheperure) (1336–1334 B.C.E.)

Tutankhamun (1334–1325 B.C.E.)

Dynasty IXX

Seti I (1394–1279 B.C.E.)

Ramesses II (1279–1213 B.C.E.)

Tausret (1194–1186 B.C.E.)

DYNASTY XXVI (Saite Period)

Qenu (Psammetikhos) (664–610 B.C.E.)



FOREWORD

The author of this book, a young American Egyptologist, claims that the Egyptian influence on modern theology can be easily discerned in Christian practices, and that Christianity as a whole is greatly indebted to its Egyptian antecedents. This phenomenon, according to the writer, is more visible in Catholicism. Egyptian influences and religious concepts filtered into the Hellenistic world as a result of trade and cultural contacts between Egypt and other countries in antiquity.

While Christian scholars will readily admit the influence of Zoroastrianism on Christianity, they would go to any length to deny that basic tenets of their religion such as Life after Death, Resurrection, the Trinity, the Ten Commandments and others, are of Egyptian origin. The reason for such denial is that Christianity is always presented as the only true religion, the only way to salvation, and as such, it could not have borrowed anything from a religion they have dubbed pagan or heathen. In their eagerness to elevate Christianity, the Christian theologians have to downgrade Egyptian religion, and by extension, African religion in general as pagan and demon worship. To acknowledge the contribution of such a religion to Christianity is to diminish its importance as the only way to the knowledge of the true God. For the author to have brought to the forefront Christianity's indebtedness to its Egyptian antecedents deserves the thanks of all truth-seeking people of the world.

Her analysis of the trinities is intriguing and persuasive.

She meticulously depicts the similarities between Osiris and Jesus.

You need to read this book to find out other compelling similarities between Egyptian religion and Christianity. The story of Adam and Eve has its equivalent in Egyptian religion. Their fall from grace by their disobedience, and their hiding from God as a result of the shame they felt by the weight of their sin is recognized by both the Egyptians and *The Bible* as the beginning of mortality. How could we account for the bewildering similarities of certain Egyptian symbols and practices that have formed the core of Catholicism; are these mere coincidences?

Despite the paucity of written materials on the subject, the writer has done an excellent job in putting the book together, given the lack of readily-available sources. This a good contribution to scholarship. Her juxtaposing texts from *The Bible* and from *The Book of the Dead* makes impugning the authenticity of her thesis almost impossible.

Although the author vehemently disclaims any point of view or agenda, her book definitely falls within the Afrocentric genre. I recommend this book to anyone interested in religion, African studies, and in humanities in general.

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INTRODUCTION

It can finally be regarded as fact that Egypt's influence on modern theology is most strongly perceived through Christian beliefs and practices. I will primarily be focusing here on the direct ceremonial parallels between the modern Roman Catholic Church and ancient Egyptian ceremony. In both systems, there is a great pride in tradition and the detailed specificity with which rituals are carried out. While all forms of Christianity display strong parallels to the rituals of ancient Egypt, perhaps the strongest examples can be seen in Roman Catholicism.

It might be said that it is impossible to compare ancient Egyptian practice with a religion which occurred much later and which on the surface appears to be entirely different. However, the case may be made that literary and historical evidence of the route of evolution can be directly traced to ancient Egypt.

Generally around 2250 B.C.E. invaders came through the English Channel "from Libya, by way of Spain, Southern and Northern France, or by way of Spain, Portugal and Brittany...."⁴ "At different periods in the second millennium B.C.E., a confederacy of mercantile tribes, called in Egypt 'the people of the sea,' were displaced from the Aegean area by invaders from the north-east and southeast; that some of these wandered north, along already established trade routes, and eventually reached Britain and Ireland; and that others wandered west, also along established

2 *The Egyptian Origin of Christianity*

trade routes, some elements reaching Ireland by way of West Africa and Spain. Still others invaded Syria and Canaan, among them the Philistines, who captured the shrine of Hebron in southern Judea from the Edomite clan of Caleb, but the Calebites, ... allies of the Israelite tribe of Judah, recovered it about two hundred years later and took over a great part of the Philistine religion at the same time.”⁵

Ancient travelers were widely dispersed from North Africa, where all evolutionary theorists agree that human life began, carrying with them their traditions and customs. Therefore, religious hermeneutics can only be properly achieved through acknowledgment of the source material. The incantations from *The Book of the Dead*, for example, began circa 3000 B.C.E., much earlier than any Biblical works; yet *The Bible* is seen as the seat of all morality.

The importance of the Egyptian sway can no longer be denied. It has prompted great thinkers like Siegfried Morenz, Director of the University of Leipzig Institute of Egyptology, to remark that “the influence of the Egyptian religion on posterity is mainly felt through Christianity and its antecedents. Egypt’s contribution to the Old Testament is actually a product of that country’s relationship with Syria; its contribution to the New Testament, indeed, even to early Christian theology, must be seen as a special instance of that general influence exerted by Egypt upon the Hellenistic world.” It is that influence which will be explored here in terms of the modern day practices of specifically the Roman Catholic Church in order that the true nature of religion as a whole may be elucidated.



CEREMONIAL PARALLELS

Imagine, if you will, opening the doors to a shrine and blessing yourself with holy water as you enter. You prepare to sit and pray, for God can provide solace from all earthly problems. Once you have confided in statues (imbued with the spirit of the living God) and sung the hymn, others join you in the chant with relics and devotional items. Litanies are read. A priest gives the sermon, makes the Sign of the Peace, and prepares the celebrants for communion. The morning hymn in an Egyptian church was: Awake graciously, which meant in peace; thou awakest graciously, so let us awaken graciously in peace.⁶

These are Egyptian rites, and it is tradition rather than coincidence that have made them so. Astoundingly, these rituals have been flawlessly perpetuated for five thousand years; but even more astounding is the fact that this miracle has gone for the most part unrecognized.

Papal custom rejects change. Modern governments have been open to more amendments than papal law through time (after 451 C.E.), but rigidity has its benefits, for it has successfully preserved such theological solemnity from before the third and fourth centuries B.C.E. to the present.⁷

Nowhere can this be better demonstrated than in the Eucharistic service of the Catholic Mass. "The priest opens the shrine containing the image, prostrates himself before it, cleanses and perfumes it with incense, adorns and embellishes it, places crowns upon it, anoints it and beautifies it with cosmetic. Finally he wipes away his prints."⁸ This sounds like the Roman Catholic tabernacle rather than an ancient Egyptian rite, and indeed, these customs can be compared to the daily cleansing of the monstrance and cup, as well as that of daily elaborate adornment.

The tabernacle, which houses the monstrance and cup, is a version of another Middle Eastern relic, the Judaic Ark of the Covenant. The Most-Holy-of-Holies contained therein is preserved in the sanctity of darkness; "the Egyptian gods would have shared Yahveh's wish 'that he would dwell in thick darkness' (I Kings viii, 12.)" This is also true of the Indian *Bhagavad Gita*, for "at midnight, in the thickest darkness, the Dweller in every heart revealed Himself in the divine."⁹

Egyptian *serdab* statues were locked away behind closed doors and kept in barely-illuminated rooms. Seen solely by gazing through peepholes provided for the purpose, only curates were permitted the privilege of gazing upon the dark storehouses of sacred items. Today the Ark of the Covenant is not usually moved from the sanctum of the church, but traditionally the Egyptian Ark was quite mobile. Both priests and statuary were floated in symbolic barks across the water—the "communion" came to everybody. Local Christian festivals of the saints, such as the San Janiero annual festival in New York City, parallel those of the ancient gods such as the Festival of Opet (a maternal hippopotamus goddess).

The true meaning of praise through communion is the unification of multifarious peoples to God through the use of a symbolic or sacred food. Communion is not a new idea; Hatshepsut wrote of Amon, he "is my bread and I drink from its dew. I am of one body with him."¹⁰ Hatshepsut, who ruled for eighteen years before dying circa 1458 B.C.E., wrote these words well over one



The Roman Catholic Church's modern-day Ark of the Covenant

(Photo courtesy of Our Lady of Mount Virgin Roman Catholic Church,
188 Mac Arthur Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026)

thousand years before the life of Jesus Christ, circa 4 B.C.E. to 29 C.E.

The Ebers Papyrus states that the cure of man through godly incantation will “cause the heart to receive bread.”¹¹ Similarly, *The Bible* states, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6: 51).

Meals could also be used as commemorative memorials. Provisions after Egyptian burial rites were much like our protocol for funeral repasts. Such ceremonies were greatly honored and as elaborate as they are today. Associated is the notion of prayer

offering as classical, not only in burial rites, at home, and in temple, but also at a headstone, marker, wall or gate. With reference to the "Wailing Wall" in Israel, this theme occurs in Egyptian lamentations and reflects the self-same desire to bring supplications to a structure, be it church, temple, etc., in order to ensure their divine honor.¹²

As communion invokes fasting, a devout Roman Catholic fasts for at least an hour before receiving communion and consumes fish rather than meat on Fridays. Within Roman Catholicism there appears to be no particular explanation for the fasting (other than rumors that it was started in France in order to promote the fishing industry). The authoritative *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*, which endorses the *Dictionary of the Liturgy* states that "this rule is not based on scientific data.... Abstinence from meat is especially recommended.... Canon Law for the world prescribes abstinence on all Fridays (Canon 1251.)"¹³ Fasting and abstinence derive from the Egyptian legend of the holy sacrament, where "Osiris ... was torn [apart] by Seth.... When Isis reassembled the pieces, the phallus had disappeared, eaten by a letos-fish. This accounts for the priestly fish-taboo in Egypt, relaxed only one day in the year."¹⁴ The fish-taboo would have been practiced as a symbolic means of preserving and upholding reverence for the god.

Unification can be practiced not only through the symbolic communion but also through the show of demonstrative attire worn while serving. The basal garment in both Catholic and traditional Egyptian religious societies is a loosely-fitting white vestment or alb; the miter, a form of the ancient "triple crown"; and the crozier. The present-day Pope wears the triple crown in its form as a large, pointed, symbolic headpiece. In Egypt the trinitarian red, white, and blue crowns (interesting choice of colors to Americans) were used, one for North Egypt, one for South, and the third to indicate military prowess and reiterate unification.

The crozier of Biblical tradition was commonly used as a shepherd's tool rather than as a weapon. The Egyptian emblems of

royalty, the crook and the flail, were tools of guidance rather than weapons; they are "tool[s] of soft material comparable to those used... in the eastern Mediterranean to collect laudanum from bushes. The pastoral role of the king is emphasized in certain literary and religious texts in which mankind is seen as the herd of cattle to be tended by the creator and by his issue on earth, the king."¹⁵ The shepherd motif is encountered as in the 23rd Psalm; "thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

Clearly the most antiquitous origins of the Christian motif were not based on that which is commonly considered primary source material. The groundwork for a mediator, a son of god as an all-powerful shepherd and a begotten savior living among the common man, had been put in motion long before the appearance of Jesus.



TRINITIES

In both contemporary Roman Catholicism and the ancient Egyptian religion, the primary god exists as plural and singular at the same time. Each aspect of same can meet the claim that “all gods are three.” Father (the stern and wrathful lawgiver,) Son (the gentle and kind-hearted sacrificial lamb) and Holy Spirit (the spiritual paraclete.) As for “Amon, Re and Ptah.... ‘Hidden’ is his name as Amon, he is Re in face, and his body is Ptah.”¹⁶ Khnum-Atum/Aten-Re-Ptah (Father gods), Osiris-Horus (Son gods), and Min/Amen (Holy Spirit gods) are the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Aten’s true name is Re-Horus, or “Re-Harakhte, rejoicing on the Horizon in the Aspect of the Light which is in the Aten.”¹⁷ By the way, according to Y.B. Jochannen, it is from this Aten-Amen that we continue to use the contemporary word, “Amen.”

The linking of the god-names here is essential, since all of these gods represent the same basic archetypes and were often combined if not in name only, then in concept. They were and are distinctly individualized in order that the varied nature of the pantheon could be noted as allowing for both divergency and the unity of monotheistic religions. Morenz notes that Ptah-Sokaris-Osiris is a single moniker used re the beginning of the Egyptian trinity.

When one initially ponders the Christian trinity, it does not seem reasonable for God to bring himself down to a secondary

level for any reason. Why would a sole supreme force exist as itself as well as manifesting as its son, becoming something not *a priori*, voluntarily placing itself in a secondary position? Egyptian literature provides the reason. God becomes the son when the king, a “personification of the cosmic god, was put out of joint by ... Re, who won supremacy and demoted the king to the rank of his son, responsible to him.”¹⁸ Egyptian trinities were conceived in order to elevate the status of a minor deity to that of a major one. Theoretically, any two lower gods could be adjuncted to the most powerful, omnipotent creator in order to reinforce their power, e.g., the power of the divine king. Catholic trinities are used for the same purpose as the Egyptian. A subsidiary trinity of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph is so powerful that it forms the crux of Roman Catholic thought. It is the inspiration for the largest-scale Christian holiday, and has elevated Mary to virtually the level of God himself, as his female manifestation. In the Introductory Hymn to the Sun-god Re as in Faulkner 27, the first verse states metaphorically, “Hail to you, having come as the sun in infancy [being, or Khepri;] a baby who is the creator of the gods.” This sentence is not only emotive but is again directly reminiscent of Roman Catholic Christmas festivities; the child is “creator god as god in human form, creator of mankind... [whose] mother shall embrace him.”

I have recently been asked the question by a gentleman (who shall remain anonymous) that “since Horus and Jesus are both solar deities, and Horus is an anti-solar deity, being the analogue in the Under-world,” why have I chosen to compare Osiris with Jesus instead of, for example, only with Horus? If one evaluates a composite view of trinity-traits with interchangeable characteristics, i.e., God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, it becomes evident that the entities themselves are similar if not identical. In this example, Horus is an extension of the parent Osiris concept; the divine son appeared born of human parents, forming a trinity: Isis, Osiris, and Horus, and Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. “The trinity was a major preoccupation of Egyptian theolo-

gians, [and] ... we also find such evidence in Greece only one generation before the beginnings of Christian theological speculation;” the trinity’s origins must be with Egypt, then, since “three was the number for “plurality of the godhead; Ptah, Nefertem, and Sekhmet.”¹⁹ Evidence clearly supports the fact that trinities evolved in Egypt at a very early time.



SACRED LANGUAGE

There were, according to George M. James, maxims in ancient times, then as now, written on temple walls and above doorway entrances. These became frequently quoted and served as memory aids to remind practitioners of the faith. The resounding cry in European courts of “eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may die” is a corruption of the Egyptian, “Gaze here” (at a physical symbol of mortality) “and drink and be merry; for when you die, such will you be.”²⁰

The word and concept of “god” is in itself an Egyptian invention and was written NTR in their language.²¹ It has been supposed that the substance natron (a natural salt from which soap is made) formed the root, symbolizing purity and renewal.

Jesus’ and Osiris’ stories, presented as second- and third-party chronicles, were used to support the idea of the predestined creator. Since it was the fulfillment of prophecy that these things occurred, written accounts were held sacred; i.e., *The Bible* and *The Book of the Dead*.

Marxist philosophy maintains that a bourgeois will always suppress privileged information in order to deem themselves “enlightened.” Certain Middle Eastern nations deemed themselves “the Chosen People” and elected that a sacred language be kept within their territorial boundaries. Arabs, too, opted for such selective classification, which affected the manner in which their

languages were written and dispersed. It is corresponding fact, for example, that the Hebrew and Egyptian languages contain no vowels. While J. Wees points out that Arabic, Syriac, and Aramaic also contain no vowels, it is currently believed that they do not come from the same language family; similarities are implied by geographic location and possible language dispersion thereof.

Thus there are also various links between the Egyptian religion and Judaism. In Jewish tradition, the true name of the lord is not to be pronounced because it is sacrosanct; Adonai is a taboo term. Similarly, *The Book of the Dead's* Spell Number 7 states that "[God] is he whose name is secret;" "[thou] hidden one, whose nature nobody knows."²²

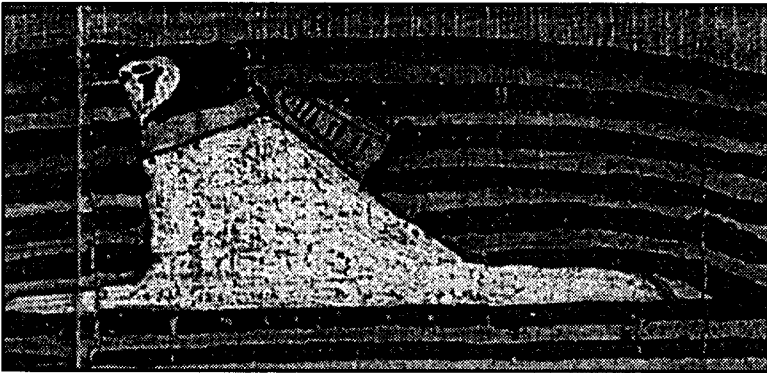
Opposites were more likely to be paralleled in everyday Egyptian speech. For example, "Seth ... is the great Wild Bull, he is the soul of Geb."²³ Explanation: Seth is primarily a negative god (the Christian parallel being Satan;) Geb is a positive god, the god of earth. Here a positive can be used to describe a negative without ruining the reputation of the god. Seth can be properly understood as the wild, raw, untamed desert earth. Morenz notes that this "juxtaposition of two contradictory terms [may have occurred because it] expresses totality in Egyptian"; again, the reiteration of separatism and simultaneous unification.²⁴

Many English words and phrases have been borrowed from Egyptian. The dictionary lists Egyptian words adapted into English (ka, ankh, and ba, for example) but how many more must there be? Strikingly, *The Bible's* title itself is a nomen of the Syrian city under strong Egyptian influence, Byblos. Byblos, a goddess associated with Egypt's celestial cow, Hathor, was famous in her city of "little books" for the papyrus trade. It follows then that Byblos, the title of a Syrian goddess, became the ancient title for our Judaeo-Christian Word of God.²⁵ Ironically, *The Bible* was named for a town goddess whose worship was therein forbidden. Conversely, the Egyptian god Set, or Seth, was identified with Baal, or Baal-Seth, who became the Canaanite god known as Baal-zebub or Beelzebub to the cities that took his name. Therefore

doubly foreboding is the claim that *The Bible's* greatest evil, Satan, was a word for God.

Other god-names may also be derived from Egyptian. Tiamat (my suspicion is that this may be a corruption of -maat) was identified with the Egyptian universal mother Nut and was similarly an aquarian Hittite goddess. Maau as feline goddess inspired the cat-call "meow," and her name is associated with the breed of domestic cat known as the Egyptian Maau to this day. Many bird species' names are Egyptian in origin (ibis, for example), also affording proof that Biblical writers used Egyptian nomenclature as reference material.

The god Buto also may have contributed to the Latin word Buteo, referring to the avian class of hawks, etc., since Buto as the uraeus snake-god could have been associated with the words "snake-tamer," or one who has power over the snake. Buteo allies were significant in the culture, as is demonstrated by the falcon-god Horus, the vulture goddesses Nekhbet and Isis, and the class' pervasiveness unto phonetic characters; the representation for the letter m is an owl, and vowels currently interpreted as a, e, and o are represented by a vulture.²⁶ Buto's influence in the uraeus or snake-



*Here Horus-Osiris, the ancient Egyptian falcon god
and Buteo ally, is shown.*

(Photo taken from p. 183 of *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, trans. by Faulkner, © 1972, revised ed. by C. Andrews 1985 with permission of the University of Texas Press and British Museum Press.)



Buteos and their allies are significant enough to gain a place in both the present-day Roman Catholic Church and the ancient Egyptian religion. Pictured is the lectern of a modern Roman Catholic Church.

(Photo courtesy of Our Lady of Mount Virgin Roman Catholic Church,
188 Mac Arthur Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026.)

like headdress of the pharaoh harnessed and directed the power for heka/heqa through the pharaoh.

"Heka" referred to the unification of positive and negative forces, the harnessing of which was called magic. The Egyptians, who invented the goddesses Heka and Heqet, had their idea adopted by the Greeks in the goddess Hecate (harbinger of death and black magic) while today the English language employs words like "hecatomb" and "hex."

The subject of language-likening is certainly worthy of further study and current pronunciations may shed light on the ancient pronunciations of words for which we have limited record of spoken combinations. The word "wad" in Egyptian, for example, was used to identify the color green. To this day the word "wadi" is used to refer to places where greenery and water can be found in the desert during the rainy season. It seems certain that other desert miracles, such as that of the "manna" fed to Biblical travelers, had something to do with Egyptian linguistics, since an Egyptian word for power is "mana."²⁷

In order to better study texts, it would be most accurate if scholars could agree on a translation based on one set of original god-names. Uniformity in the field of Egyptology appears to be impossible because of previous authors' and translators' incongruent attempts; for example, common Egyptian names are frequently referred to in Greek. This is a gross misappropriation of Egyptian credits. It is no longer possible to correct this in all cases because there are many instances by which the original word has been so vulgarized that it is no longer recognizable by its original god-name; i.e., Pai has been forever turned into the Apis bull.



FIGURATION

Jesus as God has been addressed in terms of the sun's power just as in ancient Egypt. In innumerable books of *The Bible* the "Word of God," meaning the metaphorical Path to Life, is known as the Light which battles Darkness, or Evil, daily. This is the general equivalent of Re as the Sun-god, rising in the East in order to banish the Darkness commanded by the evil serpent Apep; Apep and Seth in this context are virtually interchangeable.

God has been Biblically referred to in terms of Re as in the instances listed below.

"[The] new priest will shine forth like the sun on the earth; he shall take away all darkness from under heaven."²⁸

"The hypocrite is green before the sun...."²⁹

"A pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun...."³⁰

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings...."³¹ (This is not only a reference to the sun but also to the ba as benu-bird, or phoenix concept, where God is so associated.)

"He maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust...."³²

"Make it known that one must rise before the sun to give you thanks, and must pray to you at the dawning of the light; for the hope of an ungrateful person will melt like wintry frost, and flow away like waste water."³³

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."³⁴

In Josephus' book *The Jewish War*, which covers the first half of the first century of the Common Era, he describes the Sadducees or Essene religious as "wearing white garments ... [and] pray[ing] every day at sunrise, ... purifying themselves in cold water."³⁵ These are the same practices of the ancient high priests. Jewish traditions (observed after sunset) still follow a sun-relevant system.

The Essenes, who it is claimed were the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls, "appear to have been an offshoot of the Therapeutai, or Healers, an Asiatic Jewish sect settled by Lake Mareotis in Egypt.... It is recorded that the Essene novice wore a blue robe, the adept a white one. Was this because the novice was still a 'lotus-borne,' that is to say, not yet initiated?"³⁶ The Egyptian lotus was blue and associated with spiritual strength, love and fertility; the kind of regeneration associated with the heron as benu-bird, able to fly to Re, the sun.

"The Hemero-baptists, a mysterious Hebrew Sect usually regarded as a branch of the Pythagorean Essenes, ... worshipped Jehovah in his Sun-god aspect."³⁷ In his descriptions, Robert Graves even attempts to allude to the conclusion that, as he put it, "the original Hebrews were Libyans..." or, as I would rephrase it, that many original Jewish traditions are actually indigenous to Africa. In support of his theory, he mentions that Sicalus and Hecataeus wrote that "the 'land of the Hyperboreans' ... [existed] in the 6th century B.C.[E.].... This does not contradict Herodotus's account ... or the view ... that the original Hebrews were Libyans."³⁸ As support, he again continues that "the Jews attempted to dispense with 'idols' only in post-Exilic times."³⁹



ANIMISM

In the Dead Sea Scrolls' Rule of Blessings, written circa 1000 B.C.E., the "Prince of the Congregation is praised, 'May you slay the wicked.... May God make your horns of iron and your hooves of bronze; may you gore like a bull and trample the Gentiles like mud in the streets.'⁴⁰ The Apis, Mnevis and Buchis bulls of pharaonic tradition and celestial cows like Baty, Ihet, Sekhat-Hor, and Hathor existed in Egypt long before this verse was written. Biblical writers adopted the same metaphors with all sorts of creatures.

In the Egyptian Ptolemaic Stela it is written that "a priest should mention his services in looking after and embalming sacred animals, in the same breath with his good moral conduct, as deserving divine reward."⁴¹ The Egyptians had already founded the "significant theological concept... [in that they had] accepted man yet did not reject the animal kingdom."⁴² "Paganism and animistic religions viewed mankind as a part of nature equal with all other creatures and parts."⁴³ The Egyptians also had an advantage in that they did not deny nature as part of the heavenly domain. Spell 24 reads, "Transform yourself into a heron, the mother who created you." The imagery permits negligible division between real life, religion, and science.

This is diametrically opposed to the contemporary Roman Catholic view. The Pope, though he permits "our typifying [Jesus]

as a fish, as the sun, as bread, as the vine, as a lamb, as a shepherd, as a rock, as a conquering hero, even as a winged serpent, yet threatens us with hellfire if we ever dare to celebrate him in terms of the venerable gods whom he has superseded and from whose ritual every one of these symbols has been derived."⁴⁴

It is clear that Biblical authors drew parallels from such material, as is demonstrated by lion gods and goddesses such as Sekhmet, Pakhet, Shesmetet, and Tefnut, who became, as was traditional using their Egyptian definitions, associated with the wrath of the Israelite god; "the lion killed enough for his cubs, and strangled the prey for his mate.... The Angry Lion who smites by his great ones and the men of his party, [filling with his kill, ladens] his lairs and his dens with prey, ... acts of revenge against the 'seekers of smoothness,' who hangs up men alive ... in Israel.... For concerning one hanged alive on a tree, it says, 'Behold, I am against you.'"⁴⁵

Many such comparisons may be made, such as the Hymn to Aten with Psalm 104 and the Maxims of Ptah-hotep with the Ten Commandments.⁴⁶ On the following pages are a few more examples, but it is certain that an exhaustive study of ancient Egyptian literature as compared with Biblical works would prove to be a rewarding and much-needed enterprise.

Also in this vein, it is certainly worth mentioning that predestination establishes another link with Protestantism and therefore it is not only a reformatory idea. Its "ideologies developed" in ancient Egypt where it was "asserted that the king was predestined to rule, at or even before his birth.... The Instruction for Merikare states that God created ... 'rulers from the womb.'"⁴⁷ The Inscriptions of Petosiris read that "God places it [evil thoughts] into the heart of him whomever he hates in order to give his goods to another whom he loves;" and again, in Ptah-hotep's doctrines, he "whom ... [the gods] hate ... [is] condemned in the womb."⁴⁸ In ancient Egypt, the tradition is also as in *The Bible* where, as with Methuselah, "men are rewarded for right conduct by the grant of longevity...."⁴⁹

Pre-Christian resurrection verbiage: "You have not departed dead, you have departed alive."⁵⁰

The Book of the Dead

The Bible

<p>Put not thy trust in length of years; [the judges of the dead] regard a lifetime as an hour. A man remaineth over after death and his deeds are placed beside him in heaps.⁵¹</p>	<p>Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt.... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.⁵²</p>
<p>Hail to you, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Ruler of Rulers, who took possession of the Two lands even in the womb of Nut; he rules the plains of the Silent Land, even he the golden body, blue of head, on whose arms is turquoise.⁵³</p>	<p>He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city ... having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone ... and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.... And he that talked with me had a golden reed....⁵⁴</p>
<p>O you waxen one who take by robbery and who live on the inert ones, I will not be inert for you, I will not be weak for you, your poison shall not enter into my members, for my members are the members of Atum. If I am not weak for you, suffering from you shall not enter into these members of mine.⁵⁵</p>	<p>And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable that one of thy members should perish, not that the whole body should be cast into hell.⁵⁶</p>

The Book of the Dead

The Bible

Your serpent-foe has been given over to the fire and the rebel serpent is fallen, his arms are bound, Re has taken away his movements.⁵⁷

The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God has made.... The Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above ... every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and ... the great dragon was cast out, that old Serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.⁵⁸

The hero ... looks into the realm of the dead [and] ... learns how, in accordance with a divine judgment, the pompous furnishings of a rich but unjust man's tomb are assigned to the poor but just man, who is buried in just fashion; the latter achieves happiness next to Osiris, while the rich man suffers the torments of hell.⁵⁹

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.^{60, 61}

The Book of the Dead

The Bible

<p>He says: O all you gods of the Soul-mansion who judge sky and earth in the balance.... Give praise to Re, Lord of the Sky, the sovereign who made the gods.... May a place be made for me in the solar bark on the day when the god ferries across, and may I be received into the presence of Osiris in the Land of Vindication.⁶²</p>	<p>Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.⁶³</p>
<p>Worship of Osiris Wennefer, the Great God who [is]... King of Eternity, Lord of Everlasting ... whose White Crown is tall, Sovereign of gods and men. He has taken the crook and the flail and the office of his fore-fathers [shepherd's tools].⁶⁴</p>	<p>The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want...Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.⁶⁵</p>
<p>He rules the plains on the Silent Land, even he the golden body, blue of head, on whose arms is turquoise. O Pillar of Myriads, broad of breast, kindly of countenance, who is in the Sacred Land: May you grant power in the sky, might on earth and vindication in the realm of the dead....⁶⁶</p>	<p>For, behold, I have made thee this day a defended city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah.... And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.⁶⁷</p>

The Book of the Dead

The Bible

<p>O Pillar of Myriads, broad of breast, kindly of countenance, who is in the Sacred Land, May you grant power in the sky, might on earth, and vindication in the realm of the dead.⁶⁸</p>	<p>You provided a flaming pillar of fire ... for your people's unknown journey, and a harmless sun for their glorious wandering.... The deliverance of the righteous and the destruction of their enemies were expected by your people.⁶⁹</p>
<p>Let there be given to him bread and beer which have been issued in the presence of Osiris, and he will forever be like the followers of Horus.⁷⁰</p>	<p>Jesus took bread ... and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup ... and gave it to them, saying, Drink ... for this is my blood ... shed for ... remission of sins.... I [will] drink it new with you in my father's kingdom.⁷¹</p>
<p>He did not go about with deceitful speech while he was on earth.⁷²</p>	<p>Let your speech be always with grace.⁷³</p>
<p>He did not diminish the offerings in the temples, he did not destroy what had been made....⁷⁴</p>	<p>Come and offer thy gift ... before the altar.... [One] shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain....⁷⁵</p>

The following section contains comparisons of the Hymn to Aten with Psalm 104.⁷⁶ Some of the latter verses are repeated or dissected in order to show the accurate detail of the comparison. Please keep in mind that The Hymn to Aten was written circa 1350 B.C.E., while Psalm 104 is believed to have been written as late as 500 B.C.E.

The Hymn to Aten

At daybreak, when you arise on the horizon
All the world, they do their work.
(The psalmist proclaims Yahweh who has set in place
the regularity of the sun.)

Psalm 104: 22-23

When the sun rises, they come home and crouch in their dens.
Man then goes out to his work, to his labor until the evening.

The Hymn to Aten

How manifold it is, what you have made....
O sole god, like whom there is no other!
You did create the world according to your desire
When you were alone.
How effective they are, your plans,
O lord of eternity!

Psalm 104: 24

How many are the things you have made, O lord;
You have made them all with wisdom;
The earth is full of your creations.

The Hymn to Aten

You set every man in his place,
You supply their necessities:
Everyone has his food, and his time of life is reckoned.

Psalm 104: 14-15, 27

You make the grass grow for the cattle,
and herbage for man's labor
that he may get food out of the earth;
wine that cheers the hearts of men,
oil that makes the face shine,
and bread that sustains man's life....
All of them look to you
to give them their food when it is due.

The Hymn to Aten

For you have set a Nile in heaven,
That it may descend for them and make
waves upon the mountains.

Psalm 104: 6, 10

You made the deep cover the earth as a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
You made springs gush forth in torrents;
they make their way between the hills.

The Hymn to Aten

O thou living sun disk—lord of heaven and earth—
You rise beautifully on the horizon of heaven—
shining on the eastern horizon,
having filled every land with thy beauty!

Psalm 104: 1b-2a

O Yahweh, you are very great ...
you cover yourself with light as with a garment.

The Hymn to Aten

Every lion is come forth from his den;
All creeping things, they sting.
Darkness is a shroud, and the earth is in stillness,
For he who made them rests in his horizon.

Psalm 104: 20-21

The lions roar for their prey
and seek food from their god.
The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.

The Hymn to Aten

All beasts are content with their pasturage;
Trees and plants are flourishing.

The birds which fly from their nests,
Their wings are [outstretched] in praise to your ka.
All beasts spring upon their feet.
Whatever flies and alights,
They live when you have risen for them.
The ships are sailing north and south as well,
for every way is open at your appearance.
The fish in the river dart before your face;
Your rays are in the midst of the great green sea.

Psalm 104: 11-14, 25-26

The [springs] give water to all the beasts of the field;
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.
The birds of the air nest by the waters;
they sing among the branches.
He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;
the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work.
He makes grass grow for the cattle,
and plants for man to cultivate
bringing forth food from the earth:
There is the sea, vast and spacious,
teeming with creatures beyond number,
living things both large and small.
There the ships go to and fro,
and the leviathan, which you
formed to frolic there.

The Hymn to Aten

You have made the heavens afar off in order to shine in them.

Psalm 104: 2

You have stretched out the heavens like a tent.

The Hymn to Aten

You have made the seasons in order to nurture all that you have
made.

Psalm 104: 19

You have made the moon to mark the seasons.

The Hymn to Aten

You set on the western horizon and the land is in darkness in the manner of death.

Psalm 104: 19-20

The sun knows its time of setting....
You make darkness and it is night.

The Hymn to Aten

Every lion comes forth from his den, and all the serpents bite.

Psalm 104: 20

When all the beasts of the field creep forth, the young lions roar
for their prey.

The Hymn to Aten

Dawn comes when you rise on the horizon.

Psalm 104: 22

When the Sun rises....

The Hymn to Aten

The whole world, they do their jobs....

Psalm 104: 23

Man goes forth to do his work....

The Hymn to Aten

The fish in the river leap before you; your rays are within the sea.

Psalm 104: 25

Yonder is the sea, great and wide, which teems with things
innumerable, living things both small and great.

The Hymn to Aten

Ships sail both north and south.

Psalm 104: 26

There go the ships....

The Hymn to Aten

You put each one in his place; you provide each one their needs
with his food.

Psalm 104: 27

These all look to you to give them food in due season....

The Hymn to Aten

How manifold is what you have done.

Psalm 104: 24

O Yahweh, how manifold are thy works!

Classic Biblical themes also recur. In Genesis 1: 15-21, Sarah and Abraham's desire to bring forth a son in spite of apparent barrenness could well have been based on the story of Taimhotep and her husband. God directed that sacrifices be made, after which time the couple would receive their blessing.⁷⁷

In the Biblical version of this story, the son, Isaac, begat Jacob. Jacob and his family saw visions in dreams, e.g., the famous "Jacob's ladder" motif. The Egyptian faithful also received such messages in dreams. Literary instances include notations in the Famine Stele where in order to cease death Khnum-Re-Ptah appeared to Pharaoh Dzosser (2630-2611 B.C.E.) and offered him knowledge of the time of solace.⁷⁸ Clearly, innumerable parallels existed, were maintained and distributed throughout the higher classes and through associated religious education.



THE EGYPTIAN MYSTERY SYSTEM

As the proselytes of any religion require instruction, institutions become significant. Literary and artistic merits, in addition to the benefits of long-lasting tradition, can only be maintained by a highly-organized and rigorously-knowledgable faculty. Egyptian systems organized for this purpose became later known to foreign visitors as the infamous "Egyptian Mystery System," and they were to become roughly equivalent to our universities. Classes were "provided ... on the nature of religion.... It must have been something like Bible school or catechism."⁷⁹

Since organized theological institutes may well have originated in Egypt, it must be determined how knowledge was dispersed from one continent to another. By 650 B.C.E., under the Pharaoh Qenu (664–610 B.C.E.), Egypt was trading with Greece, as the Egyptians attempted to extend their sphere of influence as far and wide as possible. To the northeast, the Hittites and their allies, profoundly affected by Egypt, began to quickly imitate their hieroglyphs and sphinxes.⁸⁰ To the south, the citizens of cities such as Meroe, lost home of ancient Sudan and Ethiopia, went so far as to build pyramids and make Egyptian their native language.

Senusret (1965-1920 B.C.E.) extended Egypt's trade range to include India and the territory east to the Pacific Ocean. This

explains not only India but also China's Egyptian influence indicated from renderings of political mediation.⁸¹

Yosef Ben Jochannen claims that Abraham was born in Ur in Chaldea circa 1675 B.C.E. "Before 1000 B.C.E., there was not any European writing—the first writing was Homer, and he said that Zeus and Apollo came from Ethiopia." These theories support that of George M. James in that university students went to Egyptian schools and then traveled elsewhere with missionary zeal. Their reputation became widely-known and "impressed Herotodus when he visited Egypt in about 450 B.C.[E.] ... Homer's *Odyssey* speaks of the Egyptians as 'sons of Paean all,' Paean being the physician of the Olympian gods.... The prophet Jeremiah also spoke of the country as 'the land of many medicines....' Their practices were thus "carried out by the priesthood and were described by Heron, a Greek mathematician of the second century B.C.[E.]"⁸²

Graduates apparently had "doctorates" in the priesthood, which included healing both mental and physical illnesses. "Egypt abounded with sorcerers and magicians.... The Egyptian doctor was expected not only to cure his clients but to prevent snakes from entering their houses and to drive all vermin away."⁸³

Jochannen also finds that Imhotep practiced medicine in 2870 B.C.E., 2400 years before Hippocrates was credited with doing so. His thesis is that the Greeks and Europeans are credited with more than they actually accomplished, which, for the most part, is a probability. It may thus be believed that such educational institutions were established throughout Egypt's territorial extensions. Rumored is that famous spokesmen and prophets, Moses among them, attended such schools.

The "mystery" of Egyptian lodges is why they were labeled as such, for the teachings appear to have been clear and readily available to all, provided that the student was familiar with basic tenets. Proper instruction would have included the hermeneutics of sacred texts, with phrasing such as, "as for Min, he is Horus who

protected his father.”⁸⁴ Explanation: Osiris battled Seth, was injured, died and resurrected; Min, the god of mummies, or of “the living dead,” preserved Osiris as did Horus, trying to protect his father. Like the language of *The Book of the Dead*, the explanation is the technical formula for speaking the “arithmetic” of that which could possibly be construed as an exemplary ancient Egyptian mystery. The here-chosen verbiage may be celebrated as preserving a well-thought-out sacred order enlivening raw literary description by way of colorful storyline and background; the goal must have been memory-aid, where a suggested verbal idea conjures a mental picture.

In order to say that Min is Horus, who protected his father, one must know the stories of all three. It is like saying “Jesus, Mary, and Joseph” and automatically Roman Catholics visualize a manger in a stable full of hay and cattle. This requires not only extremely detailed knowledge on the part of anyone hearing such ceremonial words, but also evokes the idea that, while Egyptian visual art and writing are considered flat and static by today’s standards, creative memorization had to have been facilitated in a way that can best be compared today with campfire stories and oral tradition. This requires a great deal of influence and is thought-provoking in and of itself; it implies that detailed religious information was readily available to the public as opposed to the high-classes only.

Not only was the pantheon detailed, but it linked complex concepts and god-names one to another. Akhenaten’s sole god, Aten, was actually Re-Harakte, the falcon of Horus, at conception, which later became the sun-disk.⁸⁵ Aten was the culmination of scores of gods who came before him and had been contrived as the ultimate deification of a substance or thought, a characteristic of the Egyptian pantheon.

Such deification as hermeneutics may have begun with the philosophically complex association of an untouchable divine ideal with things best recognized in daily life. Greek philosophers attempted to modify what was actually an Egyptian theological

abstraction as evidenced in Plato's "World of Forms." A chart has been provided on the following pages in order to demonstrate the correlation between such ideals and their deified names. Please note that these ideas are general and are not necessarily limited to only the expressed abstractions. For example, as the Editor-in-Chief of *Kemet* in a January 2005 review puts it, "Sekhmet is not only the personification of the principle of 'revenge,' but she also unites warlike and restorative aspects as curative and success-bringing forces."

Abstraction	Egyptian	Judaeo-Christian	Latin/Greek ⁸⁶
Abundance	Bahet	Zinah	Poros
Angel of the Night	Heqet	Lailah	Hecate
Baptism	Kebechet		
Being	Khepri	Eheych	Zeus
Coma Bernices	Berenic		Venus
Confusion	Rait	Babel	
Contention	Neith	Esek	Eris
Coral		Ramoth	
Cow	Hathor		Io
Darkness	Kekt		Erebus
Desert/Desolation	Seth	Beelzebub	Hades
Destruction/Sin	Ammit	Hormah	
Division		Peleg	Zelos
Dust		Adamah	
Earth	Geb	Robu/Heled	Gaia
Education	Seshat		Saturn
Face of the Sun	Re	Peniel	Helios/Apollo
Falcon	Horus (Elder/ Younger)/ Hor-pa-chered/ Hor-whom		Harpocrates/ Haroeris
Fertility	Bast		Demeter
Fire	Upes	Esh	Prometheus
Fortune	Renenti		Fortuna
Heavens	Hotep	Tohu	Ouranos
Infinity	Hauhet		
Intelligence	Sia		Penelope

Abstraction	Egyptian	Judaeo-Christian	Latin/Greek
Isolation	Aasith		
Joy	Autyeb	Naum	Euphrosyne
Judgment	Anubis	Dinah	
Life	Ankh	Chavah	Atropos
Light	Khut	Lior	Hyperion
Lion	Sekhmet	Ariel	Herakles
Love	Ken	Jegar	Eros
Magic	Heka		Khoemnis/ Magicus
Mercury	Sebeg		Hermes
Moon	Mut/Khons	Lewana	Selene (Roman Diana)
Morality	Anubis		Erinyes
Motherhood	Baty	Eve	Hera
Mummification	Min		
Orion	Sekhmet	Cesil	
Pleiades		Cimah	
Politics	Onuris		
Pride		Rahab	Arachne
Primordial Orb		Adoil	
Protection	Sekhmet		
Seed	Mut		
Sirius	Sepedet/Isis		
Smoke		Chidon	
Spring Equinox		Nisan	Zeus
Strength		Boaz	Kratos
Sun's Path	Abetneterus		
Sunrise	Aasheft	Kedem	Eos
Sunset Flame	Ahabit/Akusaa		
Sunshine	Ahat/Net		
Time	Atem		
Ursa Major	Kepha		
Vengefulness	Sekhmet/Setna	Sitnah	
War	Mafdet		Ares
Weather	Nebt		
Youth	Kebehut		
Zodiac		Mazzaroth	Urania

Great leaders had not only detailed religious knowledge, but also comprehensive medical and botanical knowledge. The Ebers translation of the Kahun Papyrus, circa 2000 B.C.E., "contains seven hundred prescriptions.... The mineral remedies included a solution of ammonium hydroxide with the sulphates, carbonates, and oxides of several metals. Salts of copper may have been prescribed for ophthalmia which was always prevalent in their hot and sandy country. Sodium chloride, iron sulphate, and the oxides and carbonates of lead are all mentioned.... The vegetable remedies include onion, caraway, mint, aloes, myrrh, colchicum, saffron, and cedar.... The pea and bean family ... are characteristic of the Nile valley ... [as are] acacias, mimosas, and cassias...."⁸⁷ The Egyptians used gum arabic, fig, flax and linseed oil as well. The Ebers Papyrus also contains curing prescriptions; some have even suggested its origins circa 3000 B.C.E.

"The blood of the ibis was frequently given, and we are told a great deal about the therapeutic value of precious stones."⁸⁸ In this vein, it should be noted that science is presently proving many of the ancient theories. I have recently read a study in which various metals and gems were studied for their healthful effects, and some positive results were found from tourmaline, pearls, mica, gold, and serpentine. Why should we be surprised? We've known the beneficial effects of iron, calcium, copper, zinc, manganese and magnesium for years. Even more "Heka-imbued" are such wild thoughts as are indirectly suggested by the chemist when he states that "widely used heavy metals such as mercury ... in traditional medicine ... stimulate catalytic activity by their presence ... without ever reaching the blood stream."⁸⁹ Perhaps there is a good deal more to science than we presently know and more art in so-called "folk" medicine than is presently acknowledged.

In any event, metallic, herbal, and other natural medicinal training would not complete the education. As suggested by the chart on pages 32-33, the properties attributed to the gods would have to be studied (as examples, see the discussion of God/Re as magnetite and of natron as an allegory of divinity, p. 41-43).

Heavenly bodies and representations of iconographic matter were fair game and an essential component of any serious student, including astronomy, quite possibly astrology, and meticulous mathematics.

Intricate detail was required in order to elucidate mathematically exact positioning of burial places, e.g., the pyramids, so that resurrection in the next life would be ensured. In one documented example, in order to prove results, the Egyptians would have to have done the following: "compute the date when the right ascension of the two stars differed by exactly 180 degrees ... [and] compute the minimum angular distance between the north celestial pole and the great circle passing through the pairs of stars at 25-year intervals around these dates."⁹⁰ Precision meant the difference between life and death. It would be logical as to why Pythagoras is rumored to have studied in Egypt.

In the second year of a pharaoh's reign, there was an induction ritual in order to design a burial place based on the position of the stars. "There was an elaborate 'fixing the north' ceremony ... rather than a systematic sequence ... over months or years...."⁹¹ The movements of the stars and plot assignments were determined at that time. "Researchers proposing stellar methods agree that the Egyptians used northern or circumpolar stars for orientation, which suggests that the alignment ceremony was carried out for either the east or west side of the pyramid.... [Studies] suggest that only one side was accurately aligned and that it was the west side of the structure"⁹²; the side facing the realm of the dead, that pertaining to the afterlife, was the most accurate.

The Big and Little Dippers form "hooks" around the pole between Kochab and Mizar; Kochab and Mizar are in the constellation which includes our Big Dipper, ancient Egypt's Adze. "Can Egyptologists find references to such a ceremony in the ancient texts? There is a text about two sharp claws chasing each other around the pole. Could this be an echo of Kochab and Mizar making their alignment rounds? Of the eight pyramids dating from 2600-2400 B.C.[E.], six lie approximately in a straight line.

The other two, the pyramids of Khafre [(2520–2494 B.C.E.), son of Khufu (2551–2528 B.C.E.)] and Sahure [2458–2446 B.C.E.], lie close to this group.”⁹³ All this is to say nothing of the myriads of other alignments, such as with the Queens’ Chambers’ and the Belt of Orion, etc.

Points exist at which all of these characteristics verge in order to project a shamanistic image. A meticulous knowledge of astronomy and mathematics is extended to the figure of the constellation Ophiuchus, for example. “In Greek mythology, Asklepios was ... a mortal physician who never lost a patient by death. This alarmed ... [the] god of the Dead.... When [the Serpent-Holder] tried to revive Orion who had been killed by a scorpion, Hades ... [tried to eliminate him.] In recognition of his merits ... Asklepios was put into the sky as a constellation, together with the scorpion but far away from Orion to avoid further trouble. Since then, Orion and Scorpion never meet, being on opposite sides of the sky. When you see one, you cannot see the other.... [Ophiuchus, the Serpent-Holder] ... reaches into the zodiac, yet is not ... counted among the zodiacal figures, possibly because there would then be 13 constellations instead of 12.... To speak of the Serpent-Holder as a doctor is not a mere whim. The figure is thought to represent Asklepios, Greek god of medicine who can be traced back to the Egyptian Imhotep (about 2900 B.C.[E.]), eminent physician and architect ... [and thus represents] a historical person.”⁹⁴ (The Serpent-Holder as a representation is similar to the symbol of the doctor’s staff around which climb two snakes; it is the taming of the snakes or the curing of the snakebite that implies heka regarding the doctor’s ability to settle maladies.)

There are other constellations in which the same metaphor occurs, of which I will just name a few, i.e., King Khufu’s (Cheops of pyramid fame circa 2700 B.C.E.) association with Cephus; Berenic, an Egyptian queen of the third century B.C.E., with the Coma Bernices, who had her hair stolen and dedicated to the Goddess; Cassiopeia, an Ethiopian queen and wife of Khufu, to the constellation that bears her name; and also Andromeda, their daughter.⁹⁵ Andromeda had a boastful mother, and the Whale was

sent to swallow Andromeda (oral history of constellations listed as prior to 2000 B.C.E.—anyone ever heard of Jonah and the Whale?) She, too, was saved. The Pleiades also appear to have Egyptian under their Greek roots, since the seven compositional stars were placed by Zeus in the sky at death in order to immortalize people, congruent to the Egyptian idea of akhu.

It is becoming apparent that the ancient Egyptian Mystery System consisted of rigorous studies including the following: morality in sacred practice regarding priestly conduct and conduct with common people, including sacrifice and decorum; oracular training, including the ability to cause “mysteries,” to interpret dreams, and to give counsel; and an understanding of medical botany, basic geology, methods of bodily preservation, and other interpretive and allied arts and sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy. It is impossible for such wonders to have been perpetuated without formal education.

Thus detailed religious knowledge perpetuated through schools included healing illnesses and repelling negative manifestations in all their forms. Complex deifications were linked in such a way that creative memorization and oral tradition were fostered as the most readily understandable methods of matter association. There were no negative divisions between astronomy and astrology, and between the animal and mortal worlds; spirituality could be felt with and in the another, as is reflected in the literature. Geological, medical, and botanical knowledge complemented mathematical precision of the kind that requires generations of study; and, subsequently, pyramids and other structures were masterfully aligned with the sun and stars. The resulting member of the priesthood was, in effect, a shaman of art and magic.

In order to be a religious leader modeled after Imhotep, doctors and Egyptologists, such as Axel Karenberg and C. Leitz of the University of Cologne in Germany, believe that “the border between magic and medicine ... did not exist for ancient healers.” Perhaps this is one advantage not retained by modern medical science.



MAAT

Not only did the Egyptians share our national colors, but they also shared another American symbol, the Statue of Liberty, in the sense that she personifies a form of the Lady of Truth weighing the scales and judging the moral affairs of the nation in an Anubis-like manner. (Anubis weighed the heart of the deceased at Judgment on a scale against the Maat feather. If the heart and symbolic feather of Maat were equal, the owner could pass through to bliss; if unequal, the organ was thrown to Ammit, the part lion, part crocodile deadly “Eater of Hearts.”)

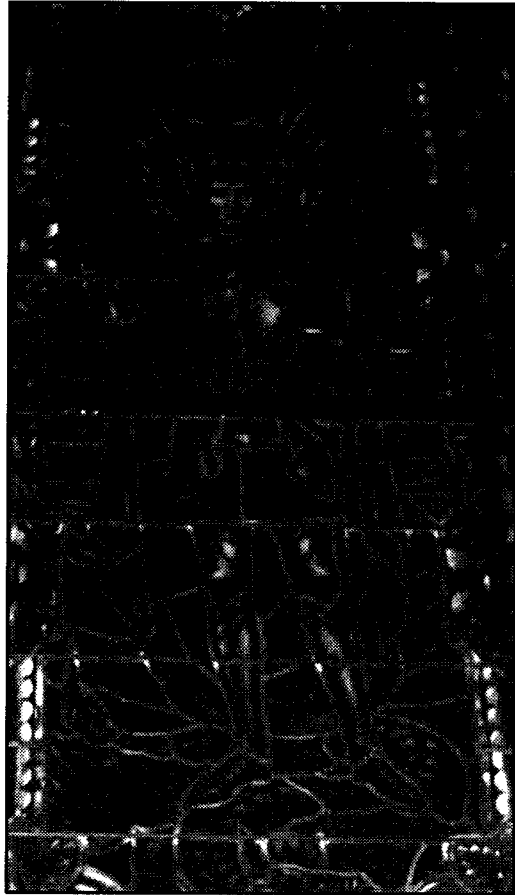
The concept of morality also comes from north Africa. “It is not surprising that the world’s first concept of justice comes out of Egypt. To have justice, there must be a sense of order, a belief that there are rules governing behavior. This sense of order permeates every aspect of Egyptian society.... When Western legal systems adopted a symbol of justice, it was the balance scale of the Egyptians”—everything was weighed or judged against Truth.⁹⁶

The term “religion” is a late Christian term. The Egyptians did not have a word for their beliefs, but they did use the words for prayer, priesthood, and sacrifice. These concepts were the foundations for the laws and beliefs of the Old Testament. Indeed, the ancient origins of these borrowed beliefs are evidenced as in Medieval Scholasticism. Before the counter-Reformation, one originally had to wait until Judgment Day and have his or her heart



The Christian representation of the Holy Spirit as a dove is perhaps the most obvious and pervasive modern symbol indicative of avian divinity.

In this illustration, Maat even appears to have penetrated the story of Saint George and the Dragon. George wears a Maat-style feather headdress, holds Maat's scales of equity, and is a present-day version of the avian connection to the divine, as in the benu-bird, ba, etc.



(Photos courtesy of Our Lady of Mount Virgin Roman Catholic Church,
188 Mac Arthur Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026.)

weighed before going to heaven, rather than going to heaven or hell immediately. Hell was portrayed similarly, as the gaping jaws of a certainly Apep or Ammit-like serpent's head were awaiting one there.

Maat, her feather being the good to counterbalance the righteous heart, was the goddess of truth and right conduct. What was particularly notable is that she was also consciousness. One's every thought should have been the goddess Maat or, as they say, the act of "thinking rightly"—having the Goddess express herself through you.

If anyone might raise an objection to such a comparison on the grounds that Egyptian liberty was limited in that all, including people, technically "belonged to" the Pharaoh and therefore liberty was not an option, let me point out that the Pharaoh did not permit belief or promote belief/control belief, even if he was supposed to; Akhenaten proved that. He declared, and ultimately few listened. When he disappeared, traces of him and his religion were eradicated. I am referring to Maat as the ideal: the Goddess, and not the implementary force which may or may not truly be effectual. That definition as expressed is very controlled. If the Pharaoh, male or female, were theoretically the only source of liberty, in charge of his/her care, what would the point of the gods be? If there were no possibility of liberty, then, except as releases of principle, there would be no allowing people to comprehend the intangible. If, however, Maat is held as the goddess of right thought though consciousness, one may only get to heaven through the liberty of right thought that she sponsors. Right thought is then a psychological choice and a liberty.

Avian importance during the era (i.e., the Maat feather and the supreme wisdom of gods and goddesses such as the ibis, Thoth) represented "the freedom to go in and out," that is, to traverse divine worlds as in *The Book of the Dead*. This same Maat-principle correlating the divine with birds, again, infiltrates Christianity unto today.



NETRI

The word “God” comes from ancient Egypt—NTR. NTR was lord of time and death, and he/she would save souls through the gift of grace, as is Biblical and the practice of modern Protestantism and/or Born-Again Christendom.

It is the attributes of people and gods which are god-names. The ultimate NTR, neter or God ideal, is not only the primary self-produced producer but is also the Maat-quality which the gods possess, greater than the gods themselves. This Maat-quality and goddess-consciousness is capable of elevating all to an equally-godly level.

If one uses such a definition of pure consciousness or essential energy to understand “netri,” verses such as those below from *The Book of the Dead* evoke a more Eastern feel like that of the *Bhagavad Gita* or other Buddhist texts. These passages are quoted by Budge:

1. Boy netri, heir of eternity, begetting and giving birth to himself.
2. I am devoted in my heart without feigning, o thou [of] netri more than the gods [the gods being referred to as neteru].
3. Shall be said this chapter over a crown of netrat.
4. I have become neter.
5. I have risen up in the form of a hawk[’s] netri.



Netri is the divine Maat-quality. Thus, as per Morenz, NTR, the Egyptian name for God, is believed to have been taken from nitre or natron, the naturally occurring salt used for embalming which symbolized purification and renewal.

Natron is also discussed in The Bible. (In the following passage, keep in mind that vinegar makes a substance bubble up to the surface, so there is also this upward release and freedom associated with nitre.)

*Proverbs 25:20: Like one who takes away a garment in cold weather
[to wash it,]
And like vinegar on nitre,
Is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.*

(Figure courtesy of Chantel Janae Shaw)

6. I have become pure, I have become neter, I have become a spirit, I have become strong, I have become a soul (ba.)
7. His being neter with the gods in the [realm of] Neter-khertet.
8. He shall [make] netra his body all.
9. They make neter thy soul in the house of Sebut.
10. He makes neter thy soul like the gods.
11. God netri, self-produced, primeval matter.

In Verse 4 NTR appears to refer to the essential energy of enlightenment, that meditative “golden silence” esteemed by all cultures, particularly Zen Buddhism.⁹⁷ One does not have to be identical to the god to be strictly godly or godlike—one does not have to be metaphorically “created in God’s image,” as it were.

If the concept of neter is beyond god, also known as the ultimate essential energy, then each part of the puzzle is essential. Each individual should “make netra his body all,” and it is this that “makes neter thy soul like the gods.” Living rightly by Maat means that one is “devoted in [his/her] heart without feigning... [to] netri” and can so achieve “more than the gods.”

The root of NTR or netri as the ultimate godly Maat-behavior is grammatically rumored to be the naturally occurring salt, natron. Natron was used in human preservation regarding mummification. This substance’s root is complex but relevant in that its properties are comparable to those that would be expected in the divine. Most famously, natron is representative of purity since it was used as a soap in ancient Egypt. Natron also contains magnesite, and magnetism has perpetually been a source of wonder. In addition to its obvious qualities, magnesium burns with a white flame.

Magnetite is an iron ore, which indicates its strength. Magnesium is used for light metallic building purposes regarding structures. Thus it is natural, it preserves, it is strong, brilliant and pure—all of the characteristics that one would desire in a god.



CONSCIENCE AND THE GATES OF SAINT PETER

The Egyptian soul, although composed of numerous parts, is primarily composed of the ba, ka and akh at death. Akhu are the soul-stars of those who have passed before; the ba is the winged soul which rises to the Field of Rushes; and the ka has been called one of the infinite mysteries of ancient Egypt.

The ka is a facet of the soul which could be characterized as a double self; a living conscience within each person. The ka performs the same actions as the being because it *is* him or her; however, it may think differently and express a different opinion upon death. The ka speaks for you in the next life but lives with you in this one. It knows all of your actions so that by the time you arrive in the next world and meet your maker, there is one who intercedes on your behalf to the Panel at the Gate, if your moral behavior on earth was worthy. If we were faced with the Gates of Hell, let's hope that our kas spoke up for us. The ka should say, "I know that *N.* is a good person because he/she has followed Maat (Righteousness)."

Your ka experiences your emotions and has your name. One's ka cannot exist without one, but it can leave if it finds that person's action repulsive. In texts such as Spell 110, it is a privilege to have a ka, and not an absolute right—"Hail to you, you owners of kas!"

The ka may live forever in heaven, and the soul may traverse the worlds as a ba (the heavenly, winged soul-form) with the ka's permission. Permission must be granted to "go in and out," but it is achieved due to the balance of these two soul-aspects created by Re.

The soul is judged by the god in the presence of a tribunal. Note that the Ennead judged in heaven by means of Maat. The Ennead consisted of nine elders who had become gods, and were in fact similar to the Ogdoad, an original god-group of eight. "Nine here represents three times three [the Trinity,] a graphic device to signify plurality of plurality, in other words, totality."⁹⁸ (Atum means totality.) The Egyptian tribunal faced at death consisted of 42 gods. Similar are the four-and-twenty elders of Revelation, the Bible's tribunal, which consisted of the inverse, 24.⁹⁹

When the Egyptian died, he would "appear in the Hall of the Double Truth" (a foundation for our gates of Saint Peter), "a court presided over by the gods.... There he would make his pleas as to why he should be admitted to the next world. If found worthy, he was declared 'true of voice.' In a second judging his heart would be placed on one side of a balance scale and on the other side a feather, the hieroglyphic symbol for the Egyptian word Maat. If the scales balanced and his heart was as light as the feather, uncluttered with evil deeds, he could proceed to the netherworld."¹⁰⁰

One could not pass through the metaphorical "Gate" to heaven in both modern Christianity and the ancient Egyptian religious systems unless the representative(s) posted there allowed entrance. One can hear an echo of the Egyptian ability "to go in and out by day" in *The Bible*; "the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."¹⁰¹

This is directly parallel to the famed Gates of Saint Peter that guard the way to heaven. For the Egyptians, heaven was Rosetjau; the Field of Rushes. Rosetjau was, of course, associated with the sun. In Spell 80 it is written, "I am the Woman who lightens darkness; I have come to lighten the darkness and it is bright;" a refreshing change from the patriarchy of the Old Testament. It is the inverse of John 1:1, 3-5; "The Word was God.... All things were made by him.... In him was life ... and the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Thus there is no lack of moral essentials, by way of Christian comparison, between Maat, or right conduct, leading one's conscience, or ka, through the Gate of Judgment and into the Field of Light. The only differences are perceptive and interpretive.



THE JESUS/OSIRIS CONNECTION

The nexus of communion is personal fulfillment through renewal, as is most clearly expressed through a sacred prophet's resurrection. As Christians celebrate Jesus, Egyptians celebrated Osiris. Both unjustly-persecuted patriarchs, braving death for the glory of resurrection, attracted worshippers re-enacting or "going through the motions" of their martyrdom. Known as experiencing "mysteries" (the Stations of the Cross are libations of this type) such involvement promotes both patronage and drama by reinforcing a Freudian system of punishment and reward.

"... We find that the doctrine of eternal life and the resurrection of a glorified or transformed body, based upon the ancient story of the resurrection of Osiris after a cruel death and horrible mutilation inflicted by the powers of evil was the same in all periods, and that the legends of the most ancient times were accepted without material alteration or addition in the texts of later dynasties."¹⁰²

"One characteristic detail, the mask, evolved out of the general desire of worshippers to see their deities represented. It is known that in later [Egyptian] periods priests would don masks and act



Osiris and Isis

(Photo taken from p. 183 of *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, trans. by Faulkner, © 1972, revised ed. by C. Andrews 1985 with permission of the University of Texas Press and British Museum Press.)

the parts of gods.”¹⁰³ In contemporary African Candomblé, worshippers don masks and ritualistically perform/spiritually become or act as the gods in order to become closer to them. This may be vestigial in the Roman Catholic Stations of the Cross, where worshippers “pick up the cross,” as it were, travelling along the metaphoric road that is Christ’s journey. Christians are vicariously donning the mask of Christ and moving towards his resurrection—it is a performance of another sort: the “Passion Play,” as it is termed.

Between the two evangelists, there are vivid similarities. The divine son comes down from heaven. God came down to earth to guide the world: “I am Thoth, the eldest son of Re, whom Atum has fashioned.... I descended to earth with the secrets of ‘what belongs to the horizon....’”¹⁰⁴ The aspects of his godliness are, in some way deified, a Christian example being *The Bible*’s Sofia, or Wisdom, and an Egyptian example being Thoth—female and

male aspects of the same principle; "wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets."¹⁰⁵

Jesus and Osiris, though just men, were betrayed by dinner-guests (Jesus by Judas, and Osiris by Typhon) at their own privately-held banquets. Jesus was 23 and Osiris was 28 (Budge has noted the latter in his commentary on *The Book of the Dead*.)

Wooden trunks became their instruments of death as well as their memorials. Upon death, their bodies were wrapped by Isis and Mary in linens, anointed with oil, and entombed. The deaths of the Sons of Man were reverberated on earth in the manifestation of strange natural phenomena. A curtain was rent in two at Jesus' death, and there were storm clouds and/or a darkening of the sky; "the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst."¹⁰⁶ (Huxley notes that curtains seem to be "living hieroglyphs that stand in some particularly expressive way for the unfathomable mystery of pure being.")¹⁰⁷

This is also the case in the *Stories from Chinese Mythology* (findings which further support George M. James' theory). Upon Pan Gu's death, as Jesus' rough equivalent in the *Stories from Chinese Mythology*, "his breath became winds and clouds and his voice, roaring thunder, his left eye was turned into the sun and his right one into the moon.... By the sacrifice of his whole body, Pan Gu ... lent beauty and splendor to the newly-born world."¹⁰⁸

This demonstrates the co-evolution of ancient Egyptian tradition leading up to and culminating in *The Bible*; for after Osiris' death by the hand of his murderer, Typhon, "hunting by the light of the moon ... tore ... the body ... into fourteen pieces," which Isis collected and also which resulted in battles between good and evil. "O thou son of Nut, the whole world is gratified when thou ascendest thy father's throne like Ra. Thou shinest in the horizon, thou sendest forth thy light into the darkness.... The glorious Isis ... avenged her brother. She alighted not.... She made wind with her wings."¹⁰⁹ By the way, Dionysus was also described upon death as changing "into winds, water, earth, stars, growing plants and

animals” and similarly refer to him as “the torn,” a phrase particularly associated with Osiris.¹¹⁰

Osiris and Jesus were thereafter shortly resurrected. Reassuming earthly form, they demonstratively affirmed right conduct and its other-worldly rewards, after which time they returned to heaven, having “saved the world.”

Regarding assumptions and ascensions, it is interesting to note that the uniquely Egyptian transcendent idea of ba was not alien to



*Christians retain
The Assumption as
a remnant ba
concept. Not only is
the invisible,
spiritual soul
retained, but there
is also an assumed,
holy form,
metaphorically
rising as if on
wings, to heaven.*

(Photo courtesy of Our
Lady of Mount Virgin
Roman Catholic Church,
188 Mac Arthur Avenue,
Garfield, NJ 07026.)

the Chinese. In Chinese myth, Jingwei was the soul-bird which rose from danger (in this case, during the Great Flood) and assumed to heaven.¹¹¹ Modern Christianity retains a similar belief in the form of assumptions and ascensions, since the soul may be transferred to a supernatural body which then rises to heaven. Jesus, Pan Gu, Nu Wa, Mary, Rhea (Greek), and Nut (Egyptian) have all experienced such transitions upon their deaths.

A similar general observation is that ancient Chinese religion parallels Egyptian regarding rows of worker-soldiers buried *shabti*-style. Such figures were intended to endure the work of the dead and/or ensure resurrection per the religion-specific savior. As a side note regarding such parallels, an analogy also exists regarding Pan Gu and the Greek god, Atlas; just as Pan Gu carried heaven with his feet on the earth, so Atlas stood in heaven and supported the weight of the earth with his arms, demonstrating that the two gods are oppositely parallel.



THE MARY/ISIS CONNECTION

The Son of God appears on earth born of a woman through the union of the human and the divine. Osiris' and Jesus' births were paracletic virgin births. While the "Immaculate Conception" has been deemed to be a Medieval idea, the premise is actually an ancient one; "in Queen Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari, and in one of the halls built by Amen[hotep] III in the temple of Luxor.... God, in the guise of the pharaoh, is shown approaching the woman thus blessed."¹¹² Y. B. Jochannen asserts that the divine conception is recorded before Greco-Roman history in the Temple of Seti I (1394–1279 B.C.E. at Abydos.

He also asserts that there is evidence to support the theory that Mary and Jesus were Egyptian in origin. I would like to stress that this is not about skin color; my college professor, Ira Spar, said that Egyptians painted all men as red and all women as yellow; they were not concerned with skin color, therefore, why should we be? Surely, all colors existed in that environment, for I have seen photographs of mummies with red hair of possible European origin (believed to be Ramesses II, 1279–1213 B.C.E.), as well as much evidence which points to a purely African origin. In any event, Y.B. Jochannen suggests that Jesus was born in a cave in



The Visitation occurs in both Roman Catholic and the ancient Egyptian religion, e.g., where there is an announcement by a spiritual paraclete that the divine son will be born of a virgin.

(Photo courtesy of Our Lady of Mount Virgin Roman Catholic Church,
188 Mac Arthur Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026.)

Ethiopia—before the Copts, under the Emperor Constantine, changed the scene and created the idea of a manger in Bethlehem. He alleges that the Black Madonna, still an essential symbol in Roman Catholicism, moved to Greece as the “Herculean worship of Isis.”

Other findings support these facts, but are of later date. The Roman Catholic and Apocryphal book *Bel and the Dragon* originated in the second century B.C.E. and appears to have been used as reference material for *The Bible*, particularly the Book of Revelation. The ancient origins of *Bel and the Dragon* as part of the Christian Apocrypha are historically acknowledged; “the author was ridiculing, in typical early Jewish literary fashion, the two main characters of the Babylonian creation myth, the *Enuma Elish*, Bel (Baal) or Marduk, and Tiamat, a sea serpent or monster whom Marduk slew as the major act of creation.”¹¹³ The ancient north African and Middle Eastern nations set forth various dogmas; the Egyptians worshipped the sun, the Babylonians worshipped the moon, and the Assyrians worshipped reptiles. These themes were united in the Mary/Isis concept, where the feminine, associated with a dragon in Tiamat, was glorified and became interchangeable; “a great dragon... the Babylonians revered...”¹¹⁴ It is therefore logical, Biblically and otherwise, as per the following two verses, that Isis and Mary be associated with reptile species.

“I purpose to describe her divine semblance.... [She was in a] cloak ... pleated in most subtle fashion.... Here and there upon the edge thereof and throughout its surface the stars [were] glimpsed, and in the middle of them was placed the moon in mid-month, which shone like a flame of fire.... Her vestment was of finest linen yielding diverse colours, somewhere white and shining, somewhere yellow like the crocus flower, somewhere rosy red, somewhere flaming.... Round about the whole length of the border of that goodly robe was a crown.... An asp lifted up his head with a wide-swelling throat. ‘I am she that is the natural mother of all things, mistress and governess of all the elements, the initial progeny of worlds, chief of the powers Divine, queen of all.... the

Mother of the Gods.... Do call me by my true name, Queen Isis.”¹¹⁵ “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. [The moon has virtually always been associated with a woman, in varied cultures.] And she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven: behold, a great red dragon.”¹¹⁶

Both women conceived immaculately, performed the same tasks upon the deaths of their sons, and were dramatically personified by the use of reptiles.¹¹⁷ As mentioned previously, one may positively note that the source of heka or heqa and the religious significance of snakes and reptiles in general is Egypt.



TIAMAT

Tiamat, frequently identified with the Universal mother as Isis, Akhet or Nut, similarly was an aquarian Babylonian goddess. In her Egyptian guise, in public displays such as the Ceremony of the Bark she safely delivered gods across the Nile waters for public adoration. She can be associated with rebirth and baptism because Akhet held humanity as Nut in the vault of heaven. Heavenly spirits were reborn upon death as stars (akhu). Tiamat was a female goddess of the sea, the ending of her name perhaps a corruption of, or association with, the Egyptian female goddess Maat of perfection.

"The she-monster Tiamat who, in **early Babylonian mythology**, swallowed the sun-god Marduk (but whom he later claimed to have killed with his sword) **was used by the author of the Book of Jonah** to symbolize the power of the wicked city ... that swallowed and then spewed up the Jews. The icon, a familiar one on the Eastern Mediterranean, survived in Orphic art, where **it represented a ritual ceremony of initiation: the initiate was swallowed by the Universal Mother, the sea monster, and reborn as an incarnation of the Sun-god.** [All boldface emphasis added.] (On one Greek vase the Jonah-like figure is named Jason, because the history of his voyage in the Argo had by that time been attached to the signs of the zodiac around which the sun makes its annual voyage.)"¹¹⁸

The Biblical Studies Foundation gives the date of the writing of the Book of Jonah as approximately 793–753 B.C.E.¹¹⁹ The same site characterizes the “external”—I assume this means archaeological—evidence for this as “late,” being of the second or third centuries B.C.E. Based on this and the above information, it is clear that the means of religions dissemination in the example is as follows: Egypt, Babylon, throughout the Middle East, followed by the Mediterranean and surrounding Europe including Greece.

It also establishes beyond the shadow of a doubt that the modern Born-Again Christian metaphor is not modern at all. The goddess Tia-Maat, as I like to refer to her, was a “familiar ... icon ... [who] represented a ritual ceremony of initiation: the initiate was swallowed by the Universal [Parent] ... and reborn as an incarnation of the Sun-god.” Note also the continued reference to the ultimate, even in this Babylonian and Mediterranean reference, to the Sun-god. (Re is as Egyptian as it gets.) This view, too, is more all-encompassing, since both a female and a male are necessary, unlike the modern Protestant view.

As Morenz puts it, “these male and female gods [the Ogdoad] ‘gave birth to the Sun-god.’”¹²⁰ Thus there could be no gods without the union of male and female in its broadest sense, including the sense of the universal One and/or the duality of a composite. “The doctrine of Harmony, defined as the union of opposites ... was copied by and used in the teachings of [the Greeks....]”¹²¹

The eloquent ... system of ancient Egypt ... [is] encounter[ed re]ligious use ... on the earliest known numerical document known from the Nile valley which is also the earliest of any sophistication from anywhere on this planet.... As we might expect from a system so based on and permeated with religious symbolism, its signs and numbers served for much more than mere counting....

The properties of Number include opposite elements: odd and even, finite and infinite, and positive and negative. This principle of

opposites was copied by and used in the teachings of Heraclitus, Parmenides, Democritus, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.... Number possesses opposite elements and the principle of opposites belongs to the Egyptian ... System in which it was represented by male and female Gods. Harmony being a blending of opposites, needs no further reference.¹²²



AKHENATEN

Although we hear it frequently rumored that the Pharaoh Akhenaten (1350–1334 B.C.E.) should be credited with the introduction of monotheism to Egypt, the concepts were already inherent in the culture. Akhenaten's revolution, not unlike the Protestant Reformation, began with the stress on the personal aspect of God's relationship. God was Time, Life and Death, and He-She would save souls through grace as is Biblical and the belief of contemporary Born-Again Christendom and Protestantism. The Pharaoh Akhenaten brought that Personal Jesus aspect to the forefront.

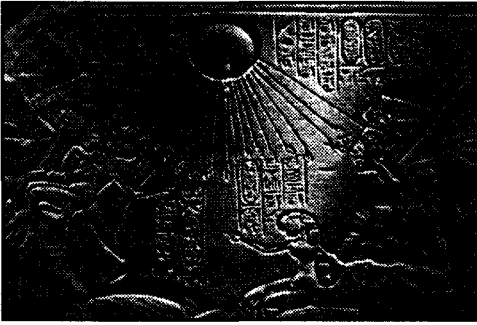
By latest estimates, Akhenaten was a slender man of 35 to 40 years of age, and his portrayals have given rise to the theory that he may have endured Marfan's syndrome; but, whatever the cause, certain of his family members in the art of the period possessed a rare appearance, exhibiting elongated skulls (which is also uncharacteristic of Marfan's syndrome). Those with symptoms exhibit elongated faces, fingers, toes, "off-center eyes, ... curved spine ... and deformed rib cages."¹²³ Wees notes that "Brier ... took that idea from a graduate student at the University of Toronto.... There are those, myself included, who think that the depiction is just artistic, an attempt to unify masculine and feminine in the king, like the god of the Nile, Hapy, and indicate the fecundity of the Two Lands."¹²⁴



Judgment ultimately came from Amen-Re (the origin of our word "Amen") who became identified with Aten during the reign of Akhenaten (Thutmosis IV). Akhenaten is often credited with first introducing monotheism to the world. The concepts inherent in monotheism, however, were already present in the culture, and were united in ways parallel to our Christian trinity, virgin birth, etc.

(Photo courtesy of Gerard M. Foley, Columbus, Ohio – gfoley@columbus.rr.com. Original in the Luxor Museum, Luxor, Egypt.)

In any event, it does not appear that Marfan's syndrome is cause enough in and of itself to explain the attempt at sexual androgyny. There are also no such exaggerated characteristic effects of which I am aware exhibited by those with Marfan's syndrome, thus eliminating it as one of the causes of the artistic gender unification of the period. If it had been true that Akhenaten was affected with a disease or genetic condition that altered his appearance and made him look unusual, why would "he permit court sculptors to show his physical characteristics?... For more than a thousand years pharaohs had been portrayed as young, well-muscled, and perfect, no matter what they looked like."¹²⁵ Brier indicates that Akhenaten may have been trying to make a case for people with Marfan's syndrome, a.k.a., indicating that its victims were "as good as anyone else." While this is possible, it does not explain why pharaohs with other conditions, even that as familiar as obesity, did not in any other epoch find it necessary or acceptable to portray themselves as such to as great a degree; and certainly this would have been more readily accepted. "Akhenaten could have stayed with the traditional art style and been portrayed slim and well-muscled like his ancestors before him. He chose not to



*Aten's hands deliver
ankhs of life to all whose
rays he shines upon—
another "Re" (ray)
metaphor or expression.*

and the entire royal family followed suit. Why? I think the answer is a psychological one."¹²⁵ It stands to reason that if Akhenaten *were* making a psychological statement, then the statement would have to be greater than his family's physical appearance alone if he would have wanted it universally expressed.

What is shown in Akhenaten's figured illustration in this chapter is his softer side. Visually, it's as if his face were melting or dripping down the sculpture, the harsh lines of prior periods erased in favor of exaggerated curves and, in the case of Nefertiti's bust, a visible attempt at realism and grace. Thus the visible difference here is a softening and a lessening of rigor in favor of increased emotiveness. This is also demonstrated in the figure because it is clear that Akhenaten is either smirking or smiling; he certainly looks pleasant to some degree. His eye positions reflect calmness. He appears warmer, as opposed to distant. He is the confident living Aten. The figure of Akhenaten and his family on this page also shows an unmistakable tenderness and love.

The exaggeration may also have been an idealization. Bigger brow lines, for example, can indicate more thoughtfulness and strength. The exaggerated features would have been, by this definition, more of an extension of the original Egyptian/Platonic World of Forms and make the stresses more important and necessarily evident. It would follow that, if this definition were true, Akhenaten's differences would be more pronounced. Akhenaten was the living Aten. His non-Aten but still Nefer (beautiful) wife, would have features seeping with less emotion. Thus Akhenaten stood on

the fence between emotion and tradition, male and female, the old gods and the new gods.

Therefore, it may also be that Akhenaten was interested in bringing Horus-Isis doctrine, where male gods could be referred to in the context of goddess worship, into the forefront. There is linguistic evidence to support this—in addition to the artistic evidence—in the theories of Edo Nyland to follow. Amen-Re was no longer the static, circular ball of the sun that he had previously been; Amen-Re as Aten was shown pictorially with his arms and hands reaching out to the people and giving them ankhs and lotus flowers. This is, again, the Personal Jesus aspect of Re. These are more effective explanations as to why Akhenaten's beliefs were not universally accepted, particularly in light of the public unisex changes. Prior explanations seem rather ineffectual with regard to the actual magnitude of the movement.

Another reason for these transitions would have been to glorify Nefertiti and to promote her to the level of pharaoh in the public eye. Akhenaten's goal would have been to compare himself in a most visual way to the largely illiterate common people on a largely equal level with Nefertiti, and thus promote her pharaonic right. Everything was in question; not only the gods, but also the religious, official and traditional importance of the arts, aesthetics, and objects.

According to Nicholas Reeves, however (present curator of Egyptian Art at the Myers Museum of Eton College and director of the Valley of the Kings Foundation, "The smaller, unofficial objects ... [belonging to the common man] tell the true story of Amarna. For example, if we look at this [specimen in the Cairo Museum of a] scarab of King Amenhotep III which was found at Amarna, we see that the name Amen has been excised in what I can only suppose is a fearful form of self-censorship. It was obviously not wise to be caught in possession of objects bearing the name of the hated god, Amen. This [excising] clearly wasn't done by Akhenaten's official agent because, although officially issued, this piece was ultimately ... privately-owned. This shows us the true

climate at Tel Amarna, and, for me, it was a climate of fear."¹²⁶ This theory is not in keeping with either the Hymn to Aten and associated linguistic alterations (as we will soon discuss) or the art of the Amarna Period. This would lead to the possibility of two opposite camps on the matter; one, a loving Neferneferaten, versus the "tough" inflictor of the wrath of God. To which camp did Akhenaten truly belong?

If Akhenaten changed the shift from general to Personal, "to the great and living Aten, ... my Father," then the focus was direct and not divided between gods.¹²⁷ In this same "sermon" Akhenaten also speaks of Aten as Ptah, as the Biblical "Is/I am," he "whom no craftsman had devised." Therefore, the god becomes abstract; indeed, "the shift from visual gods to an abstract concept was perhaps the most fundamental change that Akhenaten instituted."¹²⁸ Here, again, would be a reason for the visual symbol of Akhenaten as the living Aten to be overly pronounced; he was the visual demonstration of a faceless god; or, interpretively, of a god with the sun's face.

Egyptians were the "chosen people...." But since "Aten was the god of all people, then the Egyptians were no longer superior," which would have resulted in "the first religious revolution in recorded history...."¹²⁹ Convention holds that "Akhenaten was probably murdered and all traces of him eradicated."¹³⁰ There is a new theory that Akhenaten may have been attempting to create a novel and rather limitless utopia, no matter what the circumstances of his demise. (Since the publication of Brier's book, it has been disproved that Tutankhamen died by a violent blow to the head; and someday other rigorous standards regarding the deaths of famous monarchs of the Amarna Period may likewise be challenged.

There is an author by the name of Edo Nyland who recently published a book called *Linguistic Archaeology*. While I cannot support all of his theories, one is particularly interesting. His primary premise—and, indeed, his life's work—boils down to the fact that he claims to have traced pharaohs' names and other words

to the Basque/Saharan language, which he purports still exists in Spain. If true, here is his explanation.

All pharaohs' and deities' names are formulaically agglutinated with the use of the "Secret Language" (so named in the last line of the Demotic text of the Rosetta stone). This is an invented language dating from the Bronze Age. All words start with vowel-consonant-vowel (VCV) and are vowel-interlocking, meaning that the vowels on either side of the hyphen are the same. The amazing thing is that this language is still part of the Basque language and can be accessed in Gorka Aulestia's modern Basque-English dictionary (U. of Nevada 1989). With some exceptions (because of poor transliteration,) pharaohs' [and other] names can be translated with confidence.... YHWH, [for example] comes from the word Ihawalih (in Basque ihabali) meaning "to be feared," or "frightening." God or Gott comes from Basque/Saharan gotor meaning "strong, robust, commanding...." [But] the Egyptian [original] equivalent, NTR or ... Neter, comes from "Nator," [unattached to patriarchy, and] expressed in VCV-VCV-VCV, in Basque/Saharan [as] na-ato-or, ana-ato-ora, anaitu-ator-oroegile, [or] to unite-to come-Creator; "The Creator has come to unite us" [again, expressing duality and simultaneous unity.] We are dealing here with the oldest scholarly organized language in the world.

What makes his theory pertinent are such translations. I find it interesting that he traces the characteristic Egyptian male and female duality all the way back to Amen when he says that Amen-Re (male) "has to be a goddess" (female). He interprets Re as meaning "pure," which is again interesting because NTR is the word for God from the same root as natron or nitre, a naturally-occurring salt and soap constituent used re purification. So, then, by Nyland's definition, NTR and Re would be equal. Also interesting is the fact that he defines Min as "pain," and since Min represents the Holy Spirit in Christianity, "Min" being "in pain" is an interesting thing; it is a spiritual lament, if you will.

But, to be shockingly pertinent to the subject at hand, Nyland's translation of Akhenaten is, "The Great Goddess, my refuge." Since I can make a strong case for the Amarna Period being "the Unification Period" regarding making duality the norm in the expressions of the time and in artistic portrayals, this definition makes sense. Although, I must admit, Akhenaten does refer to "my Father" in the Hymn to Aten; but perhaps this is a translation issue, or, again, that Double-issue, in which both male and female would be true. Recall Biblical texts such as the Odes of Solomon which include this tendency; "the Holy Ghost opened the Father's raiment and mingled the milk from the Father's two breasts."¹³¹ Or, alternately, from *The Book of the Dead*, remembering that Aten started out as Re-Harakhte/Re-Horus: "Horus ... has become ruler over Egypt, the gods work for him, he has nurtured myriads and has brought up myriads by means of the Sole Eye, the Mistress of the Enneads, the Lady of All."¹³²

It would also make sense that the people to whom Akhenaten was related either by blood or marriage would have congruent names, as Nyland has shown; Nefertiti, "reform the cursed patriarchy and discover faithfulness," and Tutankhamen, "it is senseless to dispossess the priesthood of the Great Goddess...." These translations raise further questions about the Amarna Period and the Unification Movement, and we can explore them further by examining what we know of the reigns of Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and others of the Amarna Period in depth.



AMENHOTEP III AND "SMENKHARE"

It is believed that Akhenaten began his reign with a co-regent, his predecessor, Amenhotep III (1382–1344 B.C.E.). Before Akhenaten's mummy was correctly dated, the reason for co-regency was believed to be his youth, indicating that Akhenaten would have died by the time he had reached twenty-five or thirty; however, with Akhenaten's age at death now known as being between thirty-five and forty, the co-regency, which lasted for the first twelve years of Akhenaten's reign, would have served no purpose other than a "trinitarian" one, expressing the classical need for trinities (that a deity who is potentially unacceptable can be made acceptable through association with a tried and true absolute). There are theories that his "brother," Smenkhare, could have also acted as co-regent.¹³³

The question then becomes why Akhenaten would not be readily accepted on his own, where two theoretical answers exist; improper divine lineage, or did Nefertiti rule alongside him for twelve years? Did such substantial differences exist during the time of his reign that he needed "back-up"? Since Akhenaten was direct descendant of legitimate Queen Tiye, the latter must be the case.

Substantial evidence of such change is indicated by study of his wife's portrayals. In "Akhenaten's new religion ... only the king and

his immediate family had direct access to the god. The ordinary man and woman could only worship through them."¹³⁴ This sounds suspiciously like the Protestant and Biblical tenet that "there is only one mediator between god and man, [that is,] Jesus Christ."¹³⁵

As Aten "was a dramatic change; ... a farmer in a village would say, 'this is crazy.' A priest [might] say, I will kill him....' The whole country was going against this man, but this man, Akhenaten, was supported by one powerful lady—Nefertiti."¹³⁶ She held the reign together since the god had changed, becoming a unisexual and abstract One.

The Amen-Aten was more readily acceptable to believers in "bite-size pieces" rather than a collective whole, as is just the opposite of today. It is ironic that then, people protested radically to all gods being made as one, whereas today, most would protest if their one god were made into many.



NEFERTITI

Nefertiti (1336–1334 B.C.E.) is arguably one of the greatest of Egyptian matriarchs. Her shabti have been mysterious because they portray her with the royal crook and flail—a king’s right—but not in the dress of the king as was adopted by Hatshepsut during her pharaohship. Nefertiti, however, has been portrayed wearing the untraditional ram’s horns.¹³⁷ “We see her wearing the kinds of headdresses that only pharaohs are shown with. We see her performing the kinds of actions that only pharaohs are shown doing.... She was evidently ... the most powerful lady in ancient Egypt, because she took [up] one role that was only connected with kings, which is [to be] shown smiting an enemy.”¹³⁸ Therefore, she may well have claimed the typically male role that Hatshepsut had usurped, if you will (re the use of the traditionally masculine bull’s tail and ceremonial beard), but attempted its feminization.

Although theories as to her co-regency have sprung up from time to time, it was thought up until recently that Nefertiti could not have been co-regent because it was “inconceivable that an anointed and consecrated ruler with a distinctive prenomen and nomen, and a king’s titles, would not have retained such honors after death and burial.”¹³⁹ However, as J. Wees notes, “as for Nefertiti losing her titles after death, the Amarna period was a hated period and all efforts were made to erase them from memory. In fact, they were even erased from native kings lists.” In any event,

would a loyal wife and queen with king's titles, knowing that her "divine" husband had difficulties ascending the throne, try to ruin that which he had spent over twelve years trying to attain?

There is the co-evolutionary idea that Nefertiti, like Hatshepsut, ruled independently. It has been suggested that she ruled under the guise of Smenkhare. If Akhenaten did allow his wife Nefertiti to rule either single-handedly or alongside him, or with a male alias, no threats to the throne would exist. J. Wees; "there is a school of thought that thinks that Nefertiti was in fact Smenkhare, ruling after Akhenaten, and that the reason she disappears from the record is because she had new royal names and was ruling alongside her husband until his death."

Apparently both Nefertiti and Akhenaten had these "double identities" which allowed for interchange on a whole new psychological level. If Nefertiti had firmly believed in Akhenaten (she was at the very least loyal to his ideas), then a show of regnal dominance would have been an affirmation of his right to both theory and throne: one god, one leader, and one uniform authority level. This provides a substantial reason for the uniformity of Aten, the sexlessness of religious portrayals, and the pervasiveness of these ideas into the language. As Nietzsche wrote, "if the personality is once emptied of its subjectivity, and comes to what men call an 'objective' condition, nothing can have any more effect on it;" in other words, the Egyptians recognized the correct state of God.



Nefertiti

(Photo courtesy of Allan T. Kohl,
Minneapolis College of Art & Design/
Art Images for College Teaching.)



ZENNANZA

Nefertiti apparently attempted after Akhenaten's death to secure for herself a husband in Zennanza, son of the Hittite king Suppiluliumas. It has been suggested that this act was treasonous on Nefertiti's part, and was the reason why Zennanza was assassinated on his way to Egypt for his bridal affair; yet the common people remained loyal to Nefertiti even after this occurrence and did not destroy her images long after her death. It appears that it was not the acquisition of a husband that was treasonous, but the fact that he was not Egyptian; that is why he was killed, before he had a chance to set foot on Egyptian chosen soil. This was originally believed to have been Ankhsenamun, widow of Tutankhamen (1334–1325 B.C.E.), Akhenaten's son, who sought a husband in Zennanza; however, the tides are turning in this matter and the newest conclusions are that it was Nefertiti, and not Ankhsenamun, who sought a new husband.¹⁴⁰

According to the Columbia Encyclopedia on-line, Suppiluliumas' emissaries attempted to clandestinely overthrow a weakened Akhenaten's reign. They succeeded in taking control of Palestine without any resistance whatsoever. In Nefertiti's paraphrased letter to Suppiluliumas requesting one of his sons as a husband, she mentions that her husband died and that she was significantly fearful. Nefertiti may have feared the independent factions that may have killed her husband and would kill her husband-to-be.

If the Hittite kings took Palestine under Akhenaten's reign without resistance, Nefertiti could only have surmised that marrying Zennanza could ensure strong political support in a threatening and subversive environment; although fate determined that this was not to be. Edo Nyland's translation of Zennanza supports these theories. I requested his translation without his ever having known the Egyptian story, and the definition came back as our "very famous and daring religious brother," which makes perfect sense in light of his courageous travels to marry the queen and his untimely martyrdom.

In part, we are looking here to discover what truths we can about Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and the Amarna Period. It is claimed, therefore, that Nefertiti did effectuate changes when her reign began.

From the start of her independent reign she re-implemented the old gods and gained the people's favor.¹⁴¹ She appears to have "played along" with Akhenaten's ideas while ruling as queen, but, when promoted to pharaoh, to have reinstituted gods of her choosing. For proof that the old gods were restored after Nefertiti, you have only to look at Akhenaten's son's name. When Nefertiti was with "Ahky," she was Neferneferaten. Then, King Tut (the son) became Tutankhamen as we now know him, and Nefertiti went back to her original name.

Rank took on matrilineal precedence during the Amarna Period. "In the Eighteenth Dynasty, the line of inheritance was by the eldest son of a king by a God's Wife who was a descendant of Ahmose-Nefertari, the chief queen of Amosis (1539–1514 B.C.E.), founder of the Dynasty."¹⁴² Thus the old gods were reinstituted, and efforts were made to ensure that women continued to play a prominent political role.

A new priesthood was appointed as Nefertiti's purported son, Tutankhamen, was ascending to the throne. It may well be that the rebellious factions had seeped into the internal infrastructure of the priesthood and thus into the political sphere. In any event, Nefertiti used her political position to foster positive changes within the system, as did Hatshepsut and others before her.



FEMININE PHARAOHSHIP

Nefertiti both effectuated some radical changes, and successfully held the common favor throughout her reign; i.e., Egyptian women of the Amarna Period held greater power than in other cultures. High positions were not easily granted but, once attained, were easily maintained, as exemplified to the greatest degree during this period of Egyptian history; i.e., Tausret (1194–1186 B.C.E.), Hatshepsut, Queen Tiye, and Neferiti. According to the Dynastic King List of Manetho, prior periods had seen Merneit, mother of Narmer, as king in the 1st Dynasty, and Sobekneferu in the 12th Dynasty. Edo Nyland's research suggests a new female ruler in the 2nd Dynasty named Sekhemib, about which virtually nothing further is known.

Female Rulers in Egypt

According to the Dynastic King List of Manetho (dates approximate)

1st Dynasty, Sixth "king" (Abydos) - Merneit, Mother of Narmer,
3000 B.C.E.

2nd Dynasty - Sekhemib, 2626 B.C.E.

4th Dynasty - Khentkawes, 2500 B.C.E.

6th Dynasty - Nitokerti and Neterkare, 2190 B.C.E.

12th Dynasty - Sobeknefru, 1900 B.C.E.

19th Dynasty - Hatshepsut, 1473–1458 B.C.E.

- artistic renaissance under her reign
- beginning of *The Book of the Dead* at her instruction
- insisted she was king, and not queen, of Egypt, and rightly so

19th Dynasty (of the Sety II royal line) - Tausret, 1194–1186 B.C.E.

Wives of all classes held the purse-strings; if a woman were disgraced by her husband, he lost the dowry. It is perhaps for this reason that a woman could, at least to some degree, select her husband and thereby her position. Again, the Dynasty II Decree of Netjerem (2675–2625 B.C.E.) permitted women “to hold the kingly office,” indicated that Sekhemib may have had some trouble ascending the throne in this time period.



Hatshepsut was the first pharaoh to wear the bull's tail, e.g., male dress, while on her throne. The ceremonial "beard" is shown in this figure.

(Photo courtesy of Allan T. Kohl, Minneapolis College of Art & Design/Art Images for College Teaching.)



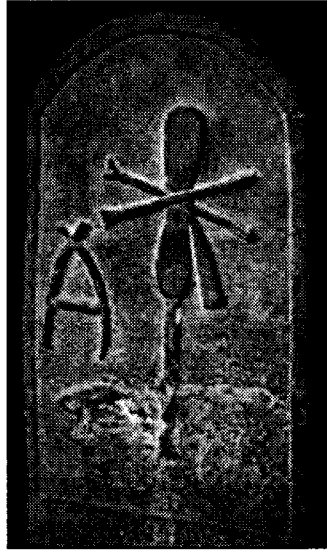
UNCOMMON MATRIARCHS

In this vein, it is worthwhile to ponder the lives of an exemplary few female leaders who contributed to the image of divine unification in Egypt. There are links between traditional African and ancient Minoan civilizations in that matriarchy has been acceptable unto recent times. "The story ... begins around 6000 B.C.[E.], when the first settlers arrived on [Crete], probably from Anatolia (now a province of Turkey), North Africa, Syria, and Palestine. Finds of jewelry and vases from this time show a strong Anatolian and North African influence."¹⁴³ Thus the first place that I know of where matriarchy was acceptable was in ancient Egypt. "The decree of King Netjerem ... of the Second Dynasty allowing women 'to hold kingly office' shows that this legitimacy had long been established."¹⁴⁴

MERNEIT

Merneit, the mother of Narmer, was believed to have been poisoned in perhaps a mass ritualistic grave at the time of the death of her husband. Her name is derived from the goddess Neith, the "goddess of hunting and of weaving, the two arts of a nomadic

people. Her emblem was a distaff with two crossed arrows, and her name was written with a figure of a weaver's shuttle...."¹⁴⁵ "She was adored in the first dynasty, when the name Merneit, 'loved by Neit,' occurs; and her priesthood was one of the most usual in the Pyramid Period. She was almost lost to sight during some thousands of years, but she became the state goddess of the 26th Dynasty when the Libyans set up their capital in her city of Sais." It has been suggested that she is responsible for a funerary complex at Abydos and the arrangement of certain prominent burial places at Saqqara. Because of the ominous circumstances surrounding her death, she may also be considered the first known queen martyred for her country.



(Photo courtesy of Péter Nagy)

KHENTKAWE

Khentkawes' royal titles included both masculine and feminine terms, representing her as the "King ... and Mother"—a nice combination. Her name means "King's Daughter and Prophetess of Hathor," Hathor being the cow goddess of love and fertility. Khentkawes' bovine association with Hathor is sensible when one thinks of the mammalian need for *la laiche*, combining the allure of authority and maternity. Khentkawes is believed to have built the first pyramid of the Fourth Dynasty at Meidum.

NITOKERTI

The time period in which Nitokerti lived, Dynasty VI, is confusing because there were apparently two female pharaohs with similar names (Nitokris) during that time. Not only that, but Otter Vendel states that “the Turin Canon notes this dynasty with eight Memphite kings and Manetho’s five kings seem too few for the dynasty, estimated to 181 years by modern science.” In any event, it appears evident that the female pharaoh Nitokerti ruled for a single year as the wife and successor of Merenre II. The Dynasty was turbulent, in part, so factual descriptions are often intertwined with mystery and legend.

Although Vendel states that “she cannot be identified by remains from any historical pharaoh,” it was claimed by Manetho that Nitokerti assumed the throne after her brother had been

TABLE OF DYNASTY VI

	Name	Manetho	Reign	Manetho	Pyramid
1	<u>Teti</u>	Othones	32	30	Saqqara North
–	<u>Userkare</u>	–	3?	–	?
2	<u>Pepi I</u>	Phios	34	55	Saqqara South
3	<u>Merenre</u>	Methosophis	9	7	Saqqara South
4	Pepi II	Phiops	94	94	Saqqara South
–	Merenre II?	–	1, 1?	–	?
–	Name lost	–	–	–	–
5	<u>Nitokris</u>	Nitrokis	2–4	12	?
		Years=	169	198	

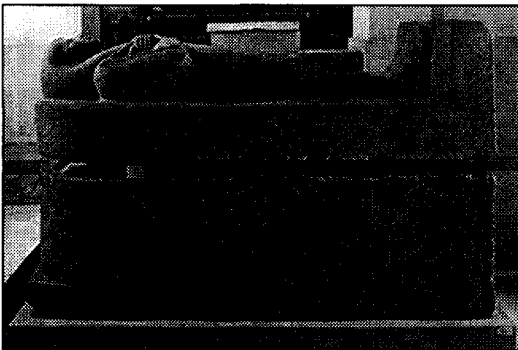
(Reprinted with permission from Ottar Vendel from the website <http://www.nemo.nu/ibisportal/Oegyptintro/4egypt/4main.htm>)

assassinated. In order to get revenge, she pretended to befriend her brother's murderers and succeed thus. Once upon the throne, according to Herodotus, she invited the assassins and political players to a banquet, proceeding to artfully cause the banquet hall to become flooded with water, and remove her problems, so to speak. Legend has it that she committed suicide in order to escape punishment. Although this story has no factual basis, there is the simple supporting record that Merenre II, Nitokerti's husband, ruled for only one year; if Nitokerti had been a person of any other kind, her reign might have been longer. If her reign had been a stable one, she could not have so avenged murder, which probably needs to be a short-term plan as opposed to an extended venture in terms of years.

NETERKARE

All records seem to show that the last remaining pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty was Neterkare. Manetho claimed that Neterkare built the Third Pyramid and that her "throne name was Men-kare." There are physical proofs of the existence of this pharaoh, including the figured sarcophagus.

As I have attempted to show presently and in the last chapter, Nitokerti (which means "Neith is excellent" in Egyptian, where Neith was a huntress) can be best identified with the mysterious avenger who ruled for one year; a separate ruler, Neterkare, can be



*The Sarcophagus
of Neterkare*

(Figure courtesy of Jim Dunn,
www.touregypt.net; original in
the Cairo Antiquities Museum)

identified with a stable pyramid-builder. I should think it was she to which Manetho referred, when he said that Neterkare was “the noblest and loveliest of the women of her time.”

Neterkare's reign had rounded out the Old Kingdom and ushered in the New Intermediate Period. The Seattle Art Museum describes her “as ‘king of Upper and Lower Egypt,’” and states that “this woman, whose fame grew in [the] Ptolemaic (Greek) Period in the guise of the mythical Rhodopis, was the first known queen to exercise political power over Egypt.”¹⁴⁶

There are, of course, many more Egyptian female rulers than it is possible to mention here. One can only hope that research will shed light on pharaohs for which our information is limited, and time bring fame to those that have so far remained hidden. It may be worthy of note that in a January 2005 review of this book in the German language Egyptian journal *Kemet*, the Editor-in-Chief brought up the point that it is “understandable” and “doubtless that a deep gap exists in relation to the segment about feminine pharaohs and the role of women as it existed in Egypt as related to *The Bible* and Christianity.”



GENESIS

Aten created all by means of the sun and the sun's rays. He was the Old Testament's "Sun of Righteousness."¹⁴⁷ He "came into being' before the creation," as is evident in Genesis, and "refers to his original state... [as] 'not yet,' which characterizes what is chaotic and shapeless all over the earth: 'Heaven had not yet come into being, the earth had not come into being, the creatures of the earth [and] the reptiles had not been made in that place.'"¹⁴⁸

Creation accounts develop life from a chaotic physical object in its first form: a stone or an egg.¹⁴⁹ "The primordial egg is occasionally referred to as having been laid by a primeval bird: 'the egg of the great cackler....'"¹⁵⁰ This is also comparable to the Big Bang evolutionary theory in that the cosmos arose from the explosive division of an orbled mass. These developments took place during a lengthened creation time rather than in *The Bible's* interpretable "days."

If the egg is the primary material out of which life sprang, then the Egyptians' other theory may be considered a subset of it, life from a lotus. (It seems to have arisen later in Egyptian history, but may have gained ground in China.) The lotus sprang from Nun, the primeval ocean. The egg, stone, and lotus (where each begins as a bud or a ball) are all the "primeval mounds" from which life arose.

"The earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep[;]... the face of the waters."¹⁵¹ The concept of Nun existed in *The Bible* in the sense of its definition, a chaotic ocean to which the sun goes when it sets as Ahabit.

"God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light ... [and] divided the light from the darkness.... And the evening and the morning were the first day."¹⁵² Day and night settled into Nun in accordance with Egyptian rites. Atum then created Shu and Tefnut, air and moisture. In both creation accounts, Nun is the root out of which the earth and sky are created as Geb and Nut.

On the second day, "God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters. And God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven."¹⁵³ Here the sky was separated from the rest of creation as Nut. Morenz suggests that in the "ancient concept of the cosmos, the earth rests on or in the primeval ocean. Above this is the vault of heaven. Supported by four pillars, below it is the counter-heaven which in the very beginning lay beneath the primeval ocean.... This ... picture was formulated in many variations but was never abandoned."¹⁵⁴

Associated with rebirth and baptism, Akhet held humanity as Nut in the vault of heaven. (Heavenly spirits were reborn upon death and would become stars, or akhu.) The waters in heaven, the Field of Rushes, were separated from the waters on the earth in a division supported by pillars. In Exodus 13:21-22 and Proverbs 9:1, it is written, "and the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.... [There were] seven pillars...." The Biblical pillars were called in Egypt the Supports of Shu.

"God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was

so."¹⁵⁵ This is Geb's first appearance. The sky and the dry land were separated.

"Now the land ... presented a scene of prosperity. Spring, summer, autumn and winter came in turn. The whole universe was in perfect order.... There were no beasts, birds, insects or serpents but that concealed their claws and ceased to discharge their poisons. [There were no] vicious hearts to do harm to the human race. Food plants grew everywhere on the plains.... Free from care, people of the 'central plains'... lived an easy, blissful life."¹⁵⁶ The concept of the Garden of Eden exists in these belief systems as a perfect, ideal world in which to place the new creation, humanity. In the Tale of Re and Sekhmet, Re created a parallel perfect world where flora and fauna flourished in peace.

"And the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...."¹⁵⁷ This tree is perhaps the most prominent feature in the Garden. "Immortality trees" are mentioned in *The Stories from Chinese Mythology* and hold the clandestine prospects for either destroying the one who partakes of its fruit (Eve in *The Bible*, the Lady Changé in Chinese myth) or for making the individual "ascend to heaven and become a god."¹⁵⁸

Once land and sustenance were created, humanity was born. God took a stroll in the world which he had created and ascertained what was missing. "One day, Nu Wa was strolling on the vast plains ... [and] a sense of loneliness overcame her. She felt that something needed to be added to the universe to make it thrive and prosper.... [Nu Wa] dug a handful of clay from the brink of the pond and mixed it with water. She rolled the clay into a ball in her hand and moulded the first ball into a little thing like a baby.... No sooner [had it] touched the ground than it came to life and shouted: Mama!"¹⁵⁹

Egyptian creation by the hands of Khnum-Ptah was almost as tender as in the Chinese parable. Man was lovingly formed by hand on God's potter's wheel, made out of clay and straw. *The Bible*

was more matter-of-fact regarding such things—"Male and female he created them" out of dust (Genesis 1:27)—as when the incident is echoed in Jeremiah 18: 3-6; "I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as [it] seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." The Biblical version is not emotive, but almost frightening in its baseness.

Creation occurred in the Biblical and Egyptian Gardens through the act of naming. The responsibility was given by God to the caretaker of the Garden. "God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."¹⁶⁰ Surely this designation by name could not be deemed wrong since it is a prerequisite for existence. Egyptians, if guilty of anything regarding their pantheonic dedication, are only at fault for following this verse to a tee.

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."¹⁶¹ Both the Biblical and Egyptian chronicles recount the beginning of mortality.

"The man and his wife heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from Yahweh God among the trees of the garden."¹⁶² While humanity was not made ashamed and embarrassed of awareness in the comparative Egyptian Tale of Re and Sekhmet, the couple did commit the sin of hubris, arrogance and forgetfulness of god. In it, Re determined that they should be forever reminded, so that humanity would no longer disrespect him or the environment which he had created. In an almost Sodom and Gomorrah-like

expression of anger, Re sent the goddess Sekhmet to "set them straight."¹⁶³ Clearly, Egyptian creation stories are on all levels parallel with those retained by modern Christianity.



THE GREAT FLOOD

T*he Book of the Dead*, Pyramid Texts, Mesopotamian *Gilgamesh Epic*, *The Bible*, and other Oriental creation accounts include tales of a Great Flood where spiritual birds return live branches as proof that the flood has subsided. This is because birds represented the freedom to go in and out, that is to traverse the other world, and yet return safely from divinity and its associated danger/fear of the unknown.

Evil beasts could be conquered by such a flight to heaven. Re as the sun-disk could take the shape of a benu bird if he so chose, and the transfer of his spirit in the flight of the bird was associated with ascendance to the next life. Re's human soul could rise as a ba and fly to the Field of Rushes.

The Egyptian language united the religious with the avian as with the ba, the heron as benu bird, and the hawks, kites, eagles and vultures as symbols of the Heavenly Sun. The Old Testament noted but reversed the idea in texts such as the canonical lists of Leviticus and Deuteronomy whereby birds that may have been worshipped by some populations were designated as unclean and/or not to be eaten as a rebuke; "the lapwing is there mentioned as an unclean, that is to say tabooed, bird in the distinguished company of the eagle, the griffon vulture, the ibis, the cuckoo, the swan, the kite, the raven, owl and little owl, the solan- [or] ... barnacle goose, the stork, the heron and the pious pelican....

Biblical scholars have been puzzled by the 'uncleanness' of the lapwing ... and doubt whether the bird *is* a lapwing and not a hoopoe." (Deuteronomy's list includes a bird called the glede.) Also mentioned are the nighthawk and nightjar, the osprey, the hawk, and the cormorant. It may be noted that the arbitrariness of these lists is augmented by the fact that they close with the words, "and the bat."¹⁶⁴

Birds are important complements of creation, traditionally associated with gods and the sun. It is therefore quite logical that they should have a significant standing in creation, particularly in view of their honorable status in ancient Egypt.



ANCIENT ROOTS: CONTEMPORARY THOUGHTS

From [http://www.rabdavis.org/tallit in the nt.htm](http://www.rabdavis.org/tallit_in_the_nt.htm):

The Jewish roots of Christianity have been neglected until this time. More and more we observe that, as more Jews become converted, new facets of the Holy Writ [are] opening up other avenues of inquiry for Christians, and ... Jews as well. The Christian Church has become complacent, predictable, and believers need a challenge to inspire, to become excited about their faith again. I see Jewish concepts underlying the Messianic Scriptures (New Testament) as part of that excitement. I'm constantly amazed at how many Christians do not even think of Yahshua as Jewish or for that matter the Apostles, the early 'Church' or the writers of the New Testament.... [The] roots have been obscured over time by neglect or intention. The Old Testament is ignored and understanding is sacrificed because of it. Our journey has brought us into the time of Yahshua or, as he would more commonly have been called, Yehu. (I prefer the name of our Lord as Yahshua because the name Jesus is translated from 'Iesous')

and 'Jesus' which come from the Greek healing goddess 'Ieso.' 'IHS' is the abbreviated form and is the mystery surname of Bacchus: also known as Tammuz and Ichthus the Fish. All these variants of the same name are 'son of Zeus.' [1] *A Study in Ancient Religion*, Odedipus Aegypticus, et al.)”

This Ieso, IHS, or Ichthus Fish, also reflects Isis and ichthys the fish in the story initially mentioned, where pieces of Osiris were thrown to fish and reclaimed by Isis—the apparent cause of the fish taboo in modern-day Catholicism as well as ancient Egypt. There are, of course, Ishtar and many other similar god- and goddess-names for the same idea, which are Egyptian in origin. This idea was perpetuated down to the Biblical “loaves and fishes” of Jesus. This combines various aspects of contemporary Roman Catholic practice, such as fasting, sacramental communion, etc. It also may be interesting to note here that in ancient Chinese thought in particular, fishes symbolized plenty. Thus the name and the giving of food would relate man to a god as riches in the most essential way possible; as ancient Egyptian literature puts it, “to cause the heart to receive bread.”¹⁶⁵



THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

BAPTISM

Heka could be imbued through a structure, and it follows then that spiritual immersion with and in sacred materials increases the propensity for divinity. This accounts for mummification as well as baptism. Baptism in Egyptian times was a privilege deigned to be given only to royals. Blessed waters “poured from four gold vases” sacramentally sanctified the pharaohs, priests, and priestesses.¹⁶⁶ “Baptism was not, of course, invented by the Christians. They had it from St. John, and he had it from the Hemero-baptists, [at least] a mysterious Hebrew Sect usually regarded as a branch of the Pythagorean Essences, who worshipped Jehovah in his Sun-god aspect.”¹⁶⁷

PENANCE

The need for absolution was usually practiced in the ancient world through conversation with a priest, as it is today. However, the forum was often of another nature; in the Grecian world, oracles were common. A citizen could go to the oracle and communicate with the god via the priest as mediator.

In Pharaonic times, one could visit a priest outside or near the temple and he would interpret one's dreams and/or resolve difficulties. In short, the confessional/confidante functions in ancient societies were virtually identical to those in modern times.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation may include any traditions which have the sole purpose of reinforcing beliefs in the divinity's status on earth. The Sed Festival served this purpose. The pharaoh donned a white robe and jogged on a temple courtyard designed for the purpose to demonstrate fecundity. The act served to renew interest in the reign and motivate new followers.

COMMUNION

As previously discussed, Biblical writers quickly learned that they could borrow Egyptian verbiage and maxims in order to describe and give solid foundation to their "new" religion. "But what, for the early Church Councils, seemed the most diabolical and unpardonable heresy of all was the identification of the Hercules Dionysus-Mithras bull, whose living flesh the Orphic ascetics tore and ate in their initiation ceremony, with Jesus Christ whose living flesh was symbolically torn and eaten in the Holy Communion.... This heresy ... was second-century Egyptian...."¹⁶⁸ The eucharist was neither a new idea, nor was it novel to associate it with the god of the Israelites.

MATRIMONY

The existence of the sacrament is certainly verified, and its religious significance well known. One of my favorite examples is the Pharaoh Narmer's granite marriage mace, inscribed with pleasant scenes from the wedding. What I enjoy about this depiction is the metaphoric ability of the king to bear future royals solely

through the queen, and particularly her characterization as protectress, wife, and mother. The Buteo ally, Nekhbet, is a wonderful depiction of this fulfillment because it is she, the vulture with wide wings, who "wraps her arms around" all by way of protection; and here, the king and future generations, by way of the marriage ceremony. They sky-goddess, Nut, can be pictured here as Nekhbet's extension, wings outstretched throughout the vault of heaven, embracing the earth.

Carved about 3100 B.C.E. ... with relief scenes of a ceremony and an inscription that includes all the higher numerals of the Egyptian hieroglyphic system from a thousand to a million, ... Narmer achieved said renewal through his union with a "king-bearer" lady who is shown seated before him on a flat bed and under a vaulted canopy that is shaped like an early shrine (and like a giant numeral ten). That lady acted apparently as a representative of the sky goddess who also hovers as a vulture above the enthroned king and protects him with her wings. This is consistent with captions on later pictures of that vulture goddess which describe her as the king's mother. The seated human delegate of that celestial lady would magically give birth to and then nurture the king's rejuvenated new self, as indicated by the cow and calf in an enclosure above her canopy and facing the vulture.¹⁶⁹

Thus the queen as Nekhbet was the king's favored means of support, guardianship, and regeneration at all phases of the pharaoh's existence.

HOLY ORDERS

Egyptian priests had podia for prepared speeches in temples as today.¹⁷⁰ Egyptian faithful kept religious and aesthetic relics at home and in church. Morenz asserts that they had fold-out home triptychs which celebrated miraculous deeds.

Clergy have always made their imagery and statuary realistic. They painted statues as we do, inserted false eyes, and made the

drama as true-to-life as it is today. As mentioned previously, statues were imbued with the spirit of the living god—not a wild idea or one beyond modern times. If one spends enough time at a Roman Catholic Church, it is easy to see how many statues have their feet kissed by worshippers or have flowers placed upon them.

Priests have always been relied upon to recall their canons to support the existence of miracles, most of which are, of course, fictitious. In the ancient world, shock value/the element of surprise has often been credited with magic. There is little oracular difference between, let's say, the masculine bread and wine's transformation in the monstrance and cup into the literal body and blood of Christ than there is in the Egyptian rendering of an earthenware pitcher, molded with feminine features, so that the pitcher could be used to release a mechanism and some contents of the pitcher through the breasts of the goddess—one of many altar-ready-made miracles; again, "heka," the Egyptian word for power, which is the rough equivalent of the Latin *Magicus*.

Related is the philosophy whereby heka as a phenomenon made it possible from a religious standpoint to transfer energy from one person or thing to another by means of an object. This may be indicated in the Biblical story through the presentation of the three gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh by the Magi (a word which, in fact, evolved out of the Latin *Magicus*.) Magi were Zoroastrian sacramental priests, and the story of the Magi's arrival during the birth of Christ is arguably somewhat of a Biblical acceptance of Zoroastrianism.

EXTREME UNCTION

Heka-tradition has survived throughout Judaeo-Christian times and finds expression today primarily in unction. It is still acceptable for the dead to be buried with items of personal fondness, and, during a funeral ceremony, Hebrews cast soil on a casket as more than a reminder of "ashes to ashes, dust to dust"—there is an attempt to convey a last emotive energy with that soil.

I believe that the same heka is involved in memorializing a grave with flowers, where the presentation is a concrete wish for the body to remain spiritually preserved through a physical sign.

Such maintenance occurred then, as now, through visitation of the memorials. "Thus Egyptian sculpture, which had once served religious need alone, was elevated to an independent aesthetic plane: inscriptions by visitors praise the beauty of monuments in tourist fashion."¹⁷¹



GENERAL PRACTICES

USE OF PALM AND OLIVE BRANCHES

It was Egyptian tradition that the honorable be rewarded by their peers and kinsfolk by "the waving of palm fronds and olive branches."¹⁷² This activity is Biblically documented in Mark 11: 6-10 and lasts until this day in Palm Sunday Catholic tradition.

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

Holy Sanctified could, if blessed by Amen-Re, work wonders such as the restoration of health to mortally-ailing children. Such incidents, portrayed in memorial stelae from Thebes, remind one of Biblical verses such as in Luke 7: 2-3, 6, 10 and 21, where Jesus performs similar acts; "a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.... Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof.... And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.... And in that same hour he cured many of

their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight." Thus the "laying on of hands" was not uncommon.¹⁷³

"In the Genesis Apocryphon from the Dead Sea Scrolls, Abram heals the Pharaoh by laying hands on his head, thus proving that this New Testament 'innovation' existed earlier and was recorded in earlier scriptures."¹⁷⁴

THE USE OF CEDAR

In ancient Egypt, the "hieroglyph for the word 'god' was a banner on a staff of cedar."¹⁷⁵ Here begins the association of pharaonic royalty with the cedar tree. There is also the common ceremonial use of incense containing cedar and/or other aromatics in both ancient Egypt and modern Roman Catholicism.



ANGELS

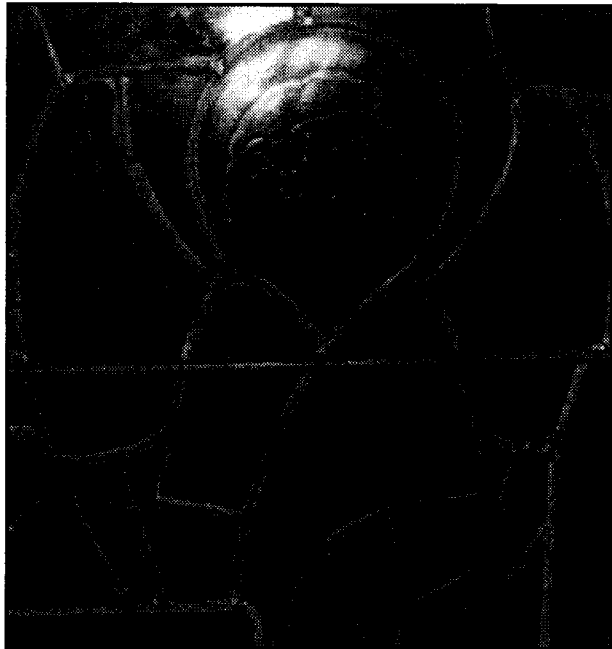
The spiritual seraphim and cherubim of which Roman Catholics sing in the hymn "Salve Regina" are actually based on Middle Eastern and/or North African combatant omnipotent beings. There is a tradition of angels standing guard at the Gates of the Gardens. "According to Genesis 3:24, cherubs were stationed at the East Gate of Eden.... The Seraphs, or 'fiery serpents' and the cherubs, [or] 'storm-cloud angels,' [were] armed with 'the whirling sword of Jehovah'—the one with which (according to Isaiah 27: 1) he killed the Dragon, as Marduk had killed Tiamat—to prevent anyone from entering.¹⁷⁶ This martial origin is conveniently forgotten today, since it does not fit in with modern interpretations. "These are the Kherefu = Cherubs stationed at the seat of judgment on the Mount [in ancient Egypt.] 'Let ... the spirits of fire make way for me, that I may enter the Mount of Glory and pass through where the great ones are; ... which is Maat."¹⁷⁷ Gerald Massey (1828–1907) asserts that, in ancient Egypt, these four were portrayed as on the Canopic jars: "ape-headed, jackal-headed, bird-headed, and human-headed;" thus the only two to have been modified were the ape and the jackal, although some identical characteristics can be found in the lion and ape versus the jackal and cow (boldness and intelligence versus meekness and imprudence).



*The symbol for
the Gospel of
Luke, or
Ritenbaugh's
Sentient Man*

*The symbol for
the Gospel of
Matthew, or
Sekhmet*

(Photos courtesy of
Our Lady of
Mount Virgin
Roman Catholic
Church,
188 Mac Arthur
Avenue, Garfield, NJ
07026.)



According to Anthony Padovano, the cherubim were based on an animal known as the Karibu (transferred to the word cherubim) with the head of a human and the feet of an ox. This fictitious animal also had wings and the body of a lion, and was inscribed upon temple walls in Babylon in order to keep away evil spirits. The home of the composite god is, of course, ancient Egypt, where virtually every god and goddess had a combined human and animal form. The Karibu is still retained by Roman Catholicism, where it is used in the combination of animal and human symbolism used to indicate the four Gospels; these four are portrayed in literature not only in Revelation but also in the book of Ezekiel, presumed to have been written circa 582 B.C.E.¹⁷⁸

According to Massey, however, "the mount in Revelation ... turned into the throne of the Father and the Son, but it is the same throne as that of Osiris, from beneath which the water of life wells up, with the four ... standing before the shrine. These became 'the four living creatures full of eyes....'"¹⁷⁹ These four are then the cherubic figures persisting to this day as living creatures (symbolic of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) in Roman Catholicism.

In support of these theories, I volunteer the following information regarding the earliest surviving Biblical connotations regarding these four symbols. "The Book of Durrow is most commonly dated to the late 7th-century, more than a century before the Book of Kells.... (which contains a very richly-decorated copy of the four gospels in a Latin text based on the Vulgate edition completed by St. Jerome in 384 A.D.) ... and ... is the earliest surviving fully-decorated insular gospel manuscript.... The traditional association of the Book of Durrow is with the monastery of Durrow about four miles north of Tullamore, founded by St. Colum Cille. Not a great deal is known about Durrow in the Middle Ages. This may be simply because its library was burned late in the eleventh century. The Annals of Ulster record for the year 1095 the burning of many churches, among them 'Durrow with its books:' one of the many losses hampering our knowledge of early medieval Ireland.... Durrow employed symbols of the evangelists: the Man symbolized

St. Matthew, the Lion symbolized St. Mark, the Calf, St. Luke and the Eagle was St. John's symbol. In a reversion to the pre-Vulgate order of Irenaeus' [lived between 105–202 C.E.] scheme, St. John's gospel in the Book of Durrow is introduced by the Lion, and St. Mark's by the Eagle."¹⁸⁰

If Irenaeus' lifetime was circa 105 and Jesus' death is placed at 29 C.E., then these symbols were picked up early in Christian history. The cow had been traditionally associated with Hathor, the Buteo ally or Hawk-Falcon-Vulture-Eagle with Horus and Nekhbet (just to name two of many) and the Lion with Sekhmet and Pashet, etc. These symbols were uniquely important to the ancient Egyptian civilization. Is it coincidence, then, that their religious significance has endured in the Roman Catholic Church until modern times?

John W. Ritenbaugh, in his series entitled "Four Views of Christ (Part 2)," states the following: "The model for this [may have] come out of Revelation 4 and the cherubim that are briefly described there. Each cherub has four faces. One is the face of a lion, the other face is an ox, the other face is a man, and the fourth face is an eagle. According to Jewish tradition, these were also the symbols for the coat of arms of the ... tribes of Israel on their journey through the wilderness. Judah was the lion. Ephraim was the ox. Reuben was the man. Dan was the eagle."

Ritenbaugh proceeds to point out verses where the lion is again prominently used to describe God, i.e., Revelation 5:5: "Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals;" and, again, he quotes Hosea 11:10: "They shall walk after the Lord. He will roar like a lion. When he roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west." His inference is that "regardless of which sense a lion is used in, there is [a] majestic, fierce, and terrorizing aura about this.... [where] the lion symbolizes power, courage, eminence, kingdom, firmness, and ... wisdom; they're pretty good hunters.... The order in which [the symbols] appear seems to be according to John's arrangement in Revelation 4:6-8. The lion is the book of Matthew.



*The symbol for
the Gospel of
Mark, or
Hathor*

*The symbol for
the Gospel of
John, Buteo ally
as in Horus*



(Photos courtesy of
Our Lady of
Mount Virgin
Roman Catholic
Church,
188 Mac Arthur
Avenue, Garfield, NJ
07026.)

That's where those characteristics are emphasized; the ox with Mark, where service to mankind is emphasized; the man, with the book of Luke where there is much sympathy and empathy ... in common with man in a universal sense." Ritenbaugh chooses to associate man with intelligence and sentience in this model—"... and then the eagle in John [where] Christ's divinity is emphasized." The latter is most interesting because it stresses the, now becoming rote, avian association with the divine, particularly regarding Buteos and their allies.

Job 39: 26-29 and Job 9: 25-26 are his next supporting choice in this vein: "Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, and spread its wings toward the south? Does the eagle mount up at your command, and make its nest on high? It dwells on the rock and resides on the crag of the rock and the stronghold. From there it spies out the prey; its eyes observe from afar.... Now my days are swifter than a runner; they flee away, they see no good. They pass by like swift ships, like an eagle swooping on its prey."

He supports his views on the ox with the following quotation from Proverbs 14:4: "Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; but much increase comes by the strength of an ox," as well as with Deuteronomy 33:17: "His glory is like a firstborn bull, and his horns like the horns of a wild ox; together with them he shall push the peoples to the ends of the earth...."¹⁸¹

It is evident that these representations are traditional to the ancient Egyptian religion, and became converted to the image of the Karibu in a composite with the characteristics of the three indicated creatures. This image may have been adopted by Middle Eastern cultures. So it endured until the rise of Christianity, where the corporeal characteristics were applied to the images for the word Karibu/Kherefu and replaced with the new model of "cherubim." This also involved a supplanting of their original fierce characteristics with the intelligent, kind, and sentient characteristics indicated by the presence of the "thinking" man, giving rise to the four angels written about in the Old and New Testaments.



CONCLUSION

It is impossible to speak of Plato, Aristotle, and the schools of thought associated with classical thinkers without speaking of ancient Egyptian theo-philosophy as well. Disregard for Egypt has resulted in gross theological misunderstanding. Within the limits of this book, we have traced the routes of humankind's knowledge out of Africa, and must thereby graduate and recognize the continent as the seat from which religion sprang.

It is grievously disappointing that with one original way of life we have produced many sects which are constantly at war with one another, be they Islam and Judaism or sects within Christianity itself, such as Born-Again Christendom, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Episcopalianism, Methodism, etc. It is simple logic that belief in one's own system outweighing all others in terms of moral or hermeneutic value is unjust.

The Bible states that "if any man among you seems to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth in his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the [uncleanliness in the] world" (James 1: 26-27.) St. Paul said:

I think myself happy ... because I shall answer for myself.... Therefore, anyone's use of anything Biblical to promote segregation or that which is "superior" is mistaken.

There is a financial author by the name of Doroghazi who writes that we all want to be members of an “exclusive” club where only a select few can gain entrance. He labels this as “ego and greed,” or vanity. The “country club” mentality is evident not only in this but also in the shroud of spirituality.

For example, regarding this very book, I have received commendations from atheists and Christians alike. Why? Because the roots of all religions are the same. Whatever your belief or lack thereof, the only thing that might be keeping you from understanding your neighbor could be you. One must ensure that “country club” exclusivity does not divide one from his or her neighbors, thereby defeating the purpose of religion and or spirituality.

Throughout this book, we have seen that, by way of the evolutionary theory, the first humans arose in northern Africa; the first numerical and religious texts came from North Africa; and that the very words for godliness and moral righteousness are derived from Egypt. The essentials have not changed, even if the words used to describe them have.

It is difficult to discern any theory or religious principle that can be described as wholly new or modern, from baptism or monotheism to Born-Again Christendom. In ancient Egypt, duality—good and bad, male and female, and associated Oneness—were “the Way”; and so both men and women each held strong roles in the socio-political bureaucracy. These principles made a significant impact overall and were transmitted to the common people in varied forms during differing time periods, especially during the Amarna Period.

Fans of Akhenaten who herald him as the forerunner of monotheism—which he may or may not be—ignore the other side of the coin. “Even Akhenaten didn’t comprehend the great danger of monotheism—that it is divisive. If there is only one god, then those who don’t accept that god are wrong. Monotheism draws a line between ‘us’ and ‘them,’ divides people and nations into believers and non-believers.”¹⁸² This inherent danger must be

keenly avoided since we are all members of the same spiritual family tree and share its traditions.

Think of the connotations, as we have seen, associated with our modern interpretations of language in even a limited context as single words. Consider the foreign goddess Byblos and *The Bible*; or, consider the use of the word Jerusalem, which means "Holy Salem." These meanings are opposite, and yet they are identical; each radically different view is similar to or congruent to its opposite and, with an understanding of the roots of both, the words take on new meaning.

As with Narmer's wedding mace and the associated principle of reawakening, so the ancient Egyptian world was filled with regeneration. Khepri, the scarab beetle of *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* was described metaphorically as a baby and a god in one. Again, this is our theory of Jesus and of his life; of life arising from and vanquishing death. Perhaps we can take this ancient principle and apply it to our daily lives. To paraphrase Nietzsche, "we must recreate ourselves daily; and let this be our best creation." Only then can we renew spiritual fervor in such a way that, understanding history, it may transcend divisiveness and acknowledge our unified historical roots on ethnic and religious levels.



NOTES

1. Barnstone 8.
2. Morenz 212-3, 156, 333-4.
3. Dates were primarily obtained from the following three sites other than those of Ottar Vendel referenced on p. 78: www.touregypt.net/kings.htm, www.kingtut.org/timeline.htm, and www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/chronology/tausret.html.
4. Graves 55.
5. Ibid 61.
6. Morenz 91.
7. J. Wees refers to the Council of Chalcedon, when Egypt separated from the rest of Christendom.
8. Morenz. 88.
9. Morenz 88; Radhakrishnan's Introduction 35.
10. Morenz 120.
11. www.crystallinks.com/egyptmedicine.
12. Morenz 7.
13. Lang 11.
14. Graves 381.
15. Quirke and Spencer 71.
16. Morenz 105, 307.
17. Aldred 94.
18. Morenz 33.
19. Ibid. 255, and Quirke and Spencer 62, 70.
20. Morenz 195.
21. Ibid. 19.
22. Hymn to Ptah in Morenz 92.

23. Morenz 19.
24. Morenz 279.
25. Padovano 1995.
26. However, we do not really know what sound was associated with the vulture as a vowel.
27. Morenz 17.
28. Dead Sea Scrolls Testament of Levi 18: 4 in Cook 163.
29. Job 8: 13, 16.
30. Ecclesiastes 11:7.
31. Malachi 4: 2.
32. Matthew 5: 45.
33. Songs of Solomon 16: 27-9.
34. John 1: 1-5.
35. Cook 86.
36. Graves 149.
37. Graves 135.
38. Graves 140.
39. Graves 130.
40. Dead Sea Scrolls Rule of Blessings, Section V 24-27 as noted in Vermes.
41. Morenz 107.
42. Ibid. 143.
43. Adler 2.
44. Graves 144.
45. Dead Sea Scrolls Nahum Pesher 2:12a, 2:13; I 4-9 in Cook 135.
46. "He is punished who trespasses against the laws" in Morenz 127.
47. Morenz 61, 67.
48. Morenz 126.
49. The Pyramid Texts in Morenz 39.
50. Morenz 38.
51. Instruction for Merikare in Morenz 128.
52. Matthew 6: 19-20; Romans 3: 27.
53. Introductory Hymn to Osiris in Faulkner 27.
54. Revelation 21: 10-1, 15, 18-9.
55. Introductory Hymn to Osiris in Faulkner 27.
56. Matthew 5: 29-30.
57. Introductory Hymn to the Sun-god Re in Faulkner 27.
58. Genesis 3: 1, 14; Revelation 12: 9.
59. The Setna Story in Morenz 210.

60. Matthew 19: 24.
61. An interesting note regarding associated theory, I have been recently informed by a colleague that such verse may not have been intended as it appears on face, but contrived as a bourgeois rule of thumb designed to keep lower classes subject.
62. Introductory Hymn to the Sun-god Re in Faulkner 27.
63. John 14: 1-2.
64. Introductory Hymn to Osiris in Faulkner 27.
65. Psalms 23: 1, 4.
66. Introductory Hymn to Osiris in Faulkner 27.
67. Jeremiah 1: 18-9.
68. Introductory Hymn to Osiris in Faulkner 27.
69. Songs of Solomon 18: 3, 7.
70. Spell 30B in Faulkner 27-8.
71. Matthew 26: 26-9.
72. Spell 125 in Faulkner 31.
73. Colossians 4: 6.
74. Spell 125 in Faulkner 31.
75. Matthew 6: 24; Isaiah 11: 9.
76. From both www.asa3.org/ASA/PSCF/1995/PSCF6-95Schafran.html.ori (where Philip Schafran of Canada's Northwest Baptist Theological College and Seminary demonstrates the famed comparison—his comment particularly worthy of note here is that “I look at the interrelationship between the literary structure and themes of the poem ... [and find] that mankind is not viewed as dominant over creation or as a Lord over creation, but *on an equal level with the natural world*,” emphasis added) and also from Jim S.'s commentary, particularly the latter portions, from <http://64.233.161.104/search?q=cache:NwVG76upLmIJ:www.thehallofmaat.com/maat/read.php%3Ff%3D1%26i%3D99267%26t%3D99267+%22Psalm+104+was+written%22&chl=en&ie=UTF-8>.
77. Morenz 62.
78. Genesis 28: 12; Morenz 32-3.
79. Brier 110.
80. Gurney 4.
81. Quirke and Spencer, 223; James 11; Spar 1994.
82. Budge's commentary on *The Book of the Dead*, 59-61.
83. Ibid.
84. *The Book of the Dead*, Spell 17 in Faulkner 44.

85. Aldred 94.
86. Peniel re Lev. 11; Hormah, Deut. 15; Cimah, Ramoth & Mazzaroth, Job; Cesil, Job 38:31; Ariel, Isaiah 29:1; Bohu & Tohu, Haggadah; Adoil, 2 Enoch chs. 24B-68; Nisan, Heled, Lailah & Esh, see the Haggadah chs. 1-2; Harpocrates see Graves; Imel text referenced. I have also attempted to supplement the gaps in my chart using the Internet's boundless resources, so my apologies if minor corrections are needed. Also, the gods or goddesses listed may not be limited to only these; i.e. I have listed Baty for Motherhood, although Hathor and many others represent motherhood as well.
87. Budge's commentary on *The Book of the Dead*, 59, 61.
88. Ibid. 59.
89. Kumar, A., Nair, A., Reddy, A. & Garg, A.N. "Bhasmas: Unique Ayurvedic metallic-herbal preparations-chemical characterization," *Journal of Biological Trace Element Research*, in press. Drs. Kumar and A.N. Garg (primary author) are in the Dept. of Chemistry at the Indian Institute of Technology in Roorkee, India; their research was made possible by a grant and assistance from the Government of India and the Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences.
90. *Nature* 408, 321; "Ancient Egyptian chronology and the astronomical orientation of pyramids" by Kate Spence.
91. *Nature* 408, 297-8; November 2000; "Plotting the pyramids" by Owen Gingerich.
92. *Nature* 408, 321; "Ancient Egyptian chronology and the astronomical orientation of pyramids" by Kate Spence.
93. *Nature* 408, 297-8; November 2000; "Plotting the pyramids" by Owen Gingerich.
94. Rey 52.
95. Ibid. 32, 26.
96. Morenz 4.
97. Verses from Budge 72-74.
98. Barnstone 10.
99. Revelation 4:, 5:8, 5:14, 11:16, and 19:4.
100. Brier 24.
101. Revelation 21:25; following parallel quotation from Faulkner 79.
102. Budge (1967) x-ix, x-viii.
103. Morenz 7.
104. Ibid. 33.
105. Proverbs 1:20.
106. Luke 23:45.

107. Huxley, *The Doors of Perception*, 33.
108. *The Stories from Chinese Mythology (I)* 17.
109. The Legend of Osiris is quoted by Budge's commentary (1967), where he is referring to the IVth Sallier Papyrus.
110. Graves 134.
111. *Stories from Chinese Mythology (I)* 72-74.
112. Morenz 33.
113. Metzger and Murphy 183.
114. Ibid. 184-5.
115. Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* in Graves 72-3.
116. Revelation 12: 1-3, 7, 9.
117. J. Wees notes that although Mary and Isis do not play "identical roles [as] mothers of the gods, ... [another] similarity ... would be ... with Moses in the rushes [as compared with] the story of Sargon the Great, the Mesopotamian king who was said to have been floated down a river in a basket."
118. Graves 480.
119. www.bible.org/doc/ot/books/jon/jnh-intr.htm.
120. Morenz 176.
121. James 168-9.
122. <http://www.recoveredsdscience.com/const120Narmermacesigns.htm>, James 168-9.
123. Brier 53-4 and The Learning Channel documentary aired the evening of December 6, 2000.
124. J. Wees.
125. Brier 54-55.
126. The Learning Channel documentary aired the evening of January 15, 2002; words spoken by Nicholas Reeves.
127. Brier 72.
128. Ibid. 72-3.
129. Ibid. 74, 58.
130. Ibid. 76.
131. *The Odes of Solomon* has been described as a Syriac "Jewish hymn-book, in Christian redaction, subjected to Gnostic interpolations" (from Barnstone xxi)—the Gnostics "thought themselves the true and uncorrupted Christians;" Ibid., xix. The Gnostic "theology and lexicon[s] reveal Jewish, [and] Christian ... parallels and exemplify ... the syncretic nature of religious traditions.... Thus after Jesus Christ is crucified the Jews think him another man and go on seeking the messiah, the Christians proclaim the crucified Jesus both man and

God, and the Gnostics take the Docetic view that Jesus was only a simulacrum on the cross, for God is always God," but the underlying principle is the same; *Ibid.*, xx, xxii.

132. *The Book of the Dead*, Spell 7 in Faulkner 78.
133. Aldred 202.
134. The Learning Channel documentary aired the evening of January 15, 2002.
135. I Timothy 2:5.
136. Quote from Zahi Hawass, Director, Giza Pyramids; broadcast on The Learning Channel documentary aired the evening of January 15, 2002.
137. Aldred 46.
138. The Learning Channel documentary aired the evening of January 15, 2002; first sentences quoted from James Allen, curator of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, NY; last sentence quoted therein from Zahi Hawass, Director, Giza Pyramids.
139. Aldred 230.
140. Gurney 31-2.
141. The Learning Channel documentary aired the evening of January 15, 2002.
142. Aldred 170.
143. www.sfakia-crete.com/sfakia-crete/outsidecrete.html.
144. www.belovedegypt.com.
145. www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/4168/history/din_1.htm.
146. www.seattleartmuseum.org/exhibit/archive/egypt/emanial/epedia/pharaohs/Nitokris.htm.
147. Malachi 4: 2.
148. Book on the Destruction of Apophis, Papyrus BM 10188, 26, 2 in Morenz 25.
149. Egyptian and Chinese theory; *Ibid.* 178-9.
150. Morenz 178.
151. Genesis 1: 3-5.
152. *Ibid.*
153. *Ibid.*, 1: 6-8.
154. Morenz 8.
155. Genesis 1: 9.
156. *Stories from Chinese Mythology (I)* 25.
157. Genesis 2: 9.
158. *Stories from Chinese Mythology (I)* 231.
159. *Ibid.* 19.

160. Genesis 2:19.
161. Ibid. 2: 16-7.
162. Ibid. 3: 8.
163. Brier 19-20.
164. Leviticus 11:13-19 as quoted in Graves 53-4; Deuteronomy 14:12-18.
165. Bryan 1930: 80 as on crystalinks.com.
166. Brier 95.
167. Graves 135.
168. Ibid. 142.
169. <http://www.recoveredscience.com/const120Narmermacesigns.htm>.
170. Aldred 61.
171. Morenz 2.
172. Aldred. 18.
173. Morenz 103.
174. Barnstone xix.
175. Brier 107.
176. Graves 91, 415-6.
177. Massey, Book X, Egyptian Wisdom in the Revelation of John the Divine, online at www.theosophical.ca.
178. www.encyclopedia.laborlawtalk.com/Book_of_Ezekiel.
179. Massey, Book X, Egyptian Wisdom in the Revelation of John the Divine, online at www.theosophical.ca.
180. This is excerpted from the proceedings of the International Congresses in Florence's Certosa, regarding Irish Psalters and Bibles from May 30-1 and June 1, 2001; <http://www.umilta.net/beta3.html>.
181. <http://www.cgg.org/index.cfm/page/literature.sermons.T103.HTM>.
182. Brier 99.



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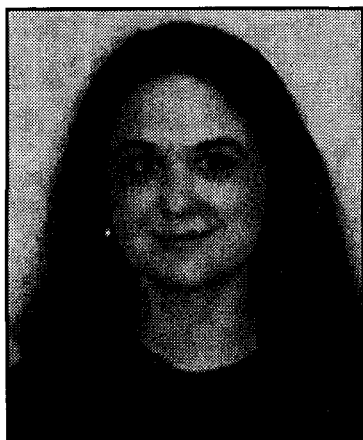
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The Egyptian Origin of Christianity focuses on the ceremonial parallels between the modern Roman Catholic Church and ancient Egyptian ceremony. While all forms of Christianity display strong parallels to the rituals of ancient Egypt, perhaps the strongest examples can be seen in Roman Catholicism.

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—**Midwest Book Review**

Lisa Ann Bargeman graduated from Ramapo College of New Jersey in 1996 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Literature. She has written several books on World Religion and currently works for a scientific publisher.



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