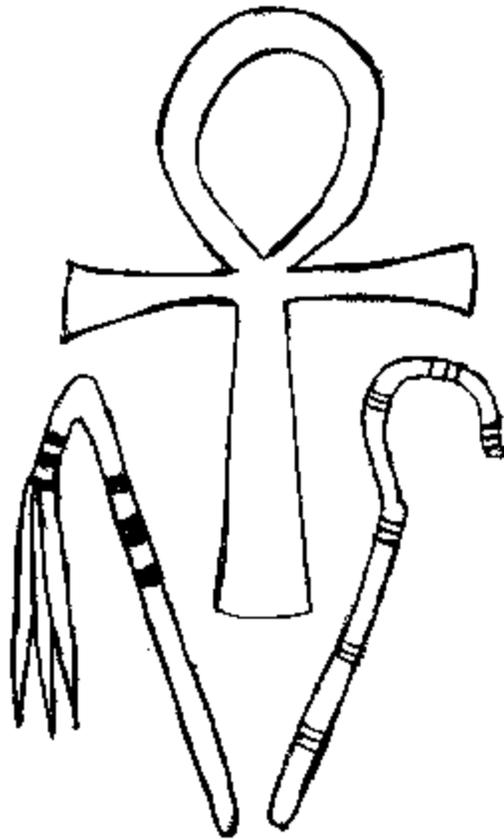


The Osirian Legend

Its African Roots and its Parables for the Present



Leon Dixon

Introduction	4
CHAPTER ONE	6
Some Historical Background Of The Osirian Myth	6
The Land and its People	6
Ancient Influence of Astronomy and Nature	12
Of Ancient Lore, Legend and Mythology	15
CHAPTER TWO	21
The Osirian Legend	21
The Creation	22
Osiris the Man-God	24
The Travails of Isis	26
Horus the Avenger	29
The Afterlife and the Judgment	31
CHAPTER THREE	34
Of The African Roots Of Osirianism	34
Some Cultural/Theological Comparisons	34
The Reverence of the Mother	37
Some Cultural Comparisons from the Arts	38
The Respect for Elders	39
The Significance of Magic	40
Funeral Customs	41
The Significance Of “The Stool”	42
On the Dogon and Their Cosmogony	43
CHAPTER FOUR	49
Of The Symbolism In The Mythology Of Ancient Egypt	49
Of Humankind’s Primal years	49
Of Ritual and Order	50
On the Triumph of the Younger Brother	50
On Time Reckoning	54
The Temple Builders	55
The Underworld	65
CHAPTER FIVE	68
Some Discussion of Parables For the Present From the Osirian Legend	68
Charity Begins at Home and Spreads Abroad	68
Pass the Torch to a Capable Successor	69
Beware of Something-for-Nothing “gifts”	69
Wisdom Combined With Knowledge Can Yield Profound Results	70
Single Motherhood	71
The Value And Role of the Sage	73
Good and Great Works are Validated by the Subsequent Generations	74
Knowing Oneself Enables Fulfillment of Potential	74
The Struggle for the Future, and Generational Tension	75

The Settling in of a New Paradigm
Unification Enables Ascension

76
76

APPENDIX

78

Introduction

The Osirian legend is the bedrock of the ancient Egyptian religious mythology. A testament to Osiris' impact on the ancient Egyptians is given by R. T. Runnel Clark in his book *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt*, wherein he writes:¹ "once synthesized, he lived on for nearly three thousand years in the hearts of the people as a symbol of the great human drama." What is known of the legend is derived from archeology and the texts that have been found. It evolved over several millennia, stretching back some six-thousand years. And due to its complexity, this work is presented merely as a primer.

The motivation for this effort was derived from the many conversations about Osiris and the ancient Egyptian religion that I have held with several of my associates, as well as friends and family. Most had only scant knowledge of it but expressed an interest and curiosity to learn more. As I had read several works on this subject, I took it upon myself to try and layout the essentials of it so as to pique that interest and curiosity of those persons with only a limited understanding of it. And to provide enough information and insight in the process to make them more conversant about it, and to whet their appetites to become desirous of learning even more about this ages old mythology whose influence has been so profound and far reaching as to still be felt even to this day.

The first chapter discusses some historical background in order to get a feel for the geographical and environmental conditions that made it possible for the kind of civilization to evolve that produced such cosmological and theological concepts. The peopling of the land and their interworkings with that environment and each other are also discussed here.

Next is a discourse on the Osirian legend itself. There is no systematic or coherent structural written record of it. Apparently the priests or scribes saw no reason for producing such an account, or what is more likely (according to several scholars), it may have simply been too difficult to harmonized all of the various aspects, components, and versions of it that evolved over the years. However, a careful study of the text and tomb records and findings that have been discovered does reveal a certain set of beliefs and consistent themes. Therefore, what is presented here is a compiled version, organized in such a manner as to try and give the lay reader a fair understanding of the Osirian legend. Most of the names and terms herein are the ones that have found their way into common usage and not the more ancient and original ones. A comparison between them is given in the appendix.

As a result of the continuing research, discoveries, excavations, etc., carried out, scholars are becoming more and more cognizant of the African contribution, influence, and indeed origin, of the ancient Egyptian civilization and its concomitant science, philosophy and religion. An example of this can be seen in how the discussion by E. A. Wallis Budge,

the former keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British museum, of the location of “the Elysian Fields” evolved.

The Elysian Fields (or Sekhet-Aaru) were a place where the ancient Egyptians believed that the spirits of the Blessed dead lived. It was a region of heaven over which Osiris had special control. Within this region was a place they called “The Field of Offerings” (or Sekhet-Hetep) where the blessed souls obtained their supplies of celestial food and drink. “Strictly speaking,” wrote Budge,² “they were not fields but islands, intersected by canals filled with running water, which caused them to be always green and fertile. On these grew luxuriant crops of wheat and barley, the likes of which were unknown on earth.”

In his book *Egyptian Religion*, first published in 1899, Budge argued that they were in the fertile lands of the Delta in Lower Egypt.³ He reiterated these claims⁴ in *The Gods of the Egyptians, Volume I*, which was first published in 1904. But in 1911, when he first published *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, he wrote:⁵

Some writers would place these Elysian Fields in the Great Oasis (Al-Khagah [in the Libyan desert]), and others in the Delta, and there is much to be said in favor of each view, especially when we look at the pictures of the Seket-Aaru in the Books of the Dead of the XVIIIth and XIXth dynasties. But it is more probable that the originals from which the idea of the Egyptian Isles of the Blest were taken were from *the islands in Lake Victoria* [a source of the Nile; see chapter one] in *Central Africa*. Several passages in the Pyramid Texts prove that the abode of the Blessed was situated away beyond a large expanse of water, ... (emphasis mine)

Budge gives strong convincing evidence of the African origin of Osirianism in his two volume work on the subject. They are referred to frequently in chapter three which discusses this influence.

In Chapter Four the discussion is on the how the ancient Egyptian mythology is grounded in astronomy. This also supports much of what was covered in Chapter One. Attention is given to the orientation of some of the stellar and solar temples, and on some of the instruction that took place there.

As mythologies can serve as cultural guides for living, in that they “justify” the mores of society, some discussion on parables drawn from the Osirian legend that could have contemporary relevancy is included in the final chapter.

Finally, it must be said that most, if not all, of the world’s peoples have their epic legends and mythologies. For those of African descent, this ancient Egyptian mythology, I submit, is the wellspring of such legends. And, I would argue, that an understanding of it serves to enhance the spiritual/cultural aspect of African or Black studies. For it addresses the prophetic call of the great twentieth century African visionary, thinker, liberator, and leader, Amilcar Cabral, to “Return to the Source.”

Chapter One

Some Historical Background Of The Osirian Myth

The Land and its People

In order to understand the Osirian legend one must journey far back into pre-history, before Egypt was Egypt; even before the indigenous people of the Great Nile Valley had begun to give rise to their most remarkable civilization. Geography holds many keys for us. For openers, it reveals that the environmental conditions were such that humankind was able to have its beginning “in the virgin rain forest of East Africa’s valley of the Mountain of the Moon, where the Great Lakes gave birth to the River Nile,” as Hunter Adams, III writes in his essay “African and African-American contributions to science and technology.” And it is from there that scholars assert that early humankind began to fan out and populate the planet. Again it is geography that reveals the reasons why various human traits, characteristics and cultures (races) evolved as the human bodies and peoples began to adapt to the environments that housed them. Geography also informs us that as the Nile flows towards the Delta, it parts the parched dry lands into the Arabian Desert on the east and the Libyan Desert on the west. Thus forming the 600 mile Great Nile Valley.

The Nile itself is over four thousand miles long and is formed by the convergence of the Blue Nile and the White Nile rivers at Khartoum in the Sudan. Further north in the Sudan at Atbara, another river which bears that name, makes an additional contribution to this mighty flow of waters. The White Nile has its sources in two great lakes located deep in the heart of Africa. One is between Uganda and Zaire, and the other is at the intersection of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The Blue Nile, which contributes approximately eighty percent of the volume of the Nile, has as its source another great lake, Lake Tana, located high in the Ethiopian highlands.

Although these great lakes are the sources of the Nile, it is its inundation which creates its value to mankind. Again we turn to geography for an explanation of how it was done. The Ethiopian Highlands reach thousands of feet above sea level into the heavens. And clouds floating in from the Indian Ocean are intercepted by these mountains as they travel northward, causing them to release their waters. This results in a ten month rainy season which causes Lake Tana to overflow into the Blue Nile. The Blue Nile rushes into the Nile as does the Atbara River further north down stream. Both of these rivers bring rich black silt from the Ethiopian Highlands, making a unique and important contribution to the environment for its exploitation by mankind. First the Blue Nile merges with the White Nile forming the Nile River which is joined later by the Atbara. Without the crystal clear waters of the White Nile the desert would drink up the two Ethiopian rivers. And alone the White Nile would only be a barren flow of water. But because of this

mixture, they bring rich topsoil to the lowlands, enabling farmers to sow their seeds on this fertile land and then wait for the energy delivered by the sun's rays to produce their crops.

This was the Nile's gift to mankind. For with this combination of rich black topsoil from the Ethiopian Highlands, showered by eternal sunshine and watered by Ethiopian rains, the indigenous population was able to obtain a year's supply of food for only a few day's work, and was thus provided with a wealth of spare time which is so essential for the development, growth, and advancement of civilization.⁶

Though humankind originated in the region of the Great Lakes and migrated from there to populate the planet, the lucrative environment of the Great Nile Valley had been a lure for settlers for ages. Groups began to settle here and there in the area, cultivating the land and organizing themselves into communities. Although it has been suggested that settlers came from various places such as Mesopotamia, Syria, Iran and from Palestine through the Sinai Peninsula, much of the archeological evidence and tradition both indicate that the primary flow of the incoming population was from the Ethiopian Highlands in the south, into what was later called Upper Egypt, and onward towards the Delta in the northern areas, later called Lower Egypt.⁷ Cheik Anta Diop alludes to the possibility that Upper Egypt had its share of immigrants also, and that they combined with the original inhabitants to later populate Lower Egypt. In *The African Origin of Civilization*, he writes:⁸

It is generally agreed that by 7000 B.C., the Sahara had dried up. Equatorial Africa was probably still a forest zone too dense to attract men. Consequently, the last blacks who lived in the Sahara now presumably left it to migrate toward the Upper Nile, with the possible exception of a few small isolated groups on the rest of the continent, who either had migrated toward the South or had headed north. Perhaps the region of the Upper Nile. Whatever the case, it was from the gradual adaptation to the new living condition which nature assigned to these various Black populations that the oldest phenomenon of civilization came about. This civilization then slowly descended the Nile Valley to spread out around the Mediterranean basin. This cycle of civilization, the longest in history, presumably lasted 10,000 years. This is a reasonable compromise between the long chronology data provided by Egyptian priests [Herodotus and Manetho place the beginning at 17,000 B.C.] and the short chronology of the modern—for the later are obliged to admit that by 4245 B.C. the Egyptians had already invented the calendar [which necessarily requires the passage of thousands of years].

In his book *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, Michael A. Hoffman Sheds more light on this discussion. Using evidence amassed from archeological findings such as pottery, stonetools, rock paintings, etc. he illuminates the following:⁹

...anthropologists have come to believe that man indeed did originate in Africa in the late Pliocene or early Pleistocene [i.e. ca. 5 - 1 million years ago] and slowly spread out from there, so that by 750,000 years ago he had settled northwest

Africa, southern Europe, and much of tropical and subtropical Asia [i.e. the habitable world]. ... the valley of the Nile would have been an ideal route of migration. Although that river was still not connected to its Ethiopian sources, it did drain all of Egypt and reached well into the Sudan. Beyond this, to the south, others streams would have flowed into closed drainage basins, forming a chain of rich lakes and river systems that led into Eastern Africa. This period was characterized by abundant and prolong rainfall in Egypt and Nubia, so that we can easily envision northeast Africa as rich in tropical and subtropical plants and animals. The shores of the Protonile, and the bordering grasslands, must have acted like a giant corridor providing entry to the north for the tropical plants and animals.

Hoffman also discusses how the Sahara went through periods of drought and bloom; and how populations migrated and shifted according to this geological ebb and flow; and how hunting, fishing, the domestication of animals and plants, and farming evolved in this geological area while accommodating these climate shifts. Hoffman asserts that a recent find “demonstrates conclusively the importance of the desert peoples in the later prehistory of northeastern Africa, between about 7,000 and 4,000 B.C.” The site is called Nabta Playa. It lies approximately 200 kilometers west-southwest of Aswan, and is dated between about 7,300 and 4,000 B.C. He writes:¹⁰

Today, fossil dunes, heavy clays, and solidified root casts bear witness to the effects of the Neolithic Subpluvial as its rains reopened the Sahara to extensive human occupation for the first time in 30,000 years. ..., it seems that terminal Paleolithic hunting and gathering way of life of Nabta soon gave way to a Neolithic farming and herding economy based on the cultivation of barley and the domestication of sheep, goat, and cattle. This change took place around 6,000 B.C. despite variations in rainfall during the Neolithic, settlement persisted at isolated spots like Nabta for at least 2,000 years.

Another interesting observation pertaining to this discussion is found in an article entitled “An Ancient Harvest on the Nile” by anthropologist Fred Wendorf and his research assistant at Southern Methodist University, Angela E. Close, and Romuald Schild who is the associate director of the institute for History of Material Culture at the Polish Academy of Sciences. In the book *Blacks In Sciences*, edited by Ivan Van Sertima, they speak to the misconception that farming began about 10,000 years ago in Southwestern Asia, just after the last ice age. They write:¹¹

Our excavations at Wadi Kubbania, a desolate region in Egypt’s Western Desert, throw all this into doubt. We have found that, between 17,000 and 18,000 years ago—while ice still covered much of Europe—African peoples were already raising crops of wheat, barley, lentils, chick-peas, capers, and dates. They were doing it in the flood plains of the Nile, much as people would continue to do for another 13,000 years until the classical Egyptian civilization arose, and on into modern times.

In addition to this Sertima himself writes in the “Overview” of the same book, p. 20, that:¹² “University of Massachusetts anthropologist, Dr. Charles Nelson, announced to the *New York Times* in 1980 that his team had unearthed evidence in the Lukenya Hill district of the Kenya Highlands, about 25 miles from Nairobi, that Africans had been domesticating cattle 15,000 years ago.” He adds, same page: “The picture in Africa is not yet complete but certain things we do know. Apart from the latest findings in Eastern Africa by Wendorf and Nelson, we have hard carbon dates for domesticated grains in the Sahara agricultural complex as early as 6,000 B.C. We know too that, as the Sahara became drier (5,020 - 2,500 B.C.) Africans were forced to migrate to other parts of the continent, taking their crop science with them.”

“The cultures of the late Paleolithic,” writes Michael A. Hoffman,¹³ “spawned in the adversity of a regional climate and schooled in a tradition of making the best of locally available sources, constituted such a varied and ultimately healthy pool. Groups clung to old ways, while others moved headlong into a new microlithic [small stone tool] technology—the earliest of its kind in the world—while others charted a middle course between conservatism and innovation.” He continues:

Broadly speaking, the period after about 30,000 B.C. witnessed marked environmental deterioration, pronounced technological innovation, and the regionalization of social groups. All these factors were related to one another and combined to produce a cultural mosaic in the Nile Valley that gave rise to two precocious developments: the invention of the world’s first microlithic technology and one of the world’s earliest attempts of domesticate plants.

In addition to this, Hoffman states further¹⁴, p. 164, that:

It was doubtless the diversity of such predynastic peoples that ultimately enabled them to develop a prosperous society and outward looking economy that exploited connections with both the Sahara to the west and the Red Sea to the east and plied the Nile with high-prowed sailing vessels from Aswan to the Delta, and perhaps beyond. It was this prosaic pattern of broadly based economic and social networks linked with more inexplicable cultural factors like the preference for elaborate ornamentation and public display and an unusual fascination with the accumulating foods for the afterlife that ultimately laid the foundations for classical Dynastic civilization.

These peoples descended to the Lower Nile Valley, setting up their isolated village communities for both protection and to carry out projects and schemes for their mutual benefit and advancement. Their political units were independent with their own capitals. They consisted of enough land to support their own inhabitants, were ruled by their own chieftain and worshipped their own deity. These independent units continued to grow and eventually formed larger districts of governments referred to as “nomes.” As living conditions continued to improve, attracting people and making it necessary for more cooperation among them, these districts developed into larger units of government and over time separated into independent kingdoms. The northern one containing the Delta in

what is called Lower Egypt, and the southern one in what is called Upper Egypt. These are the “Two Lands” often referred to in history and mythology.¹⁵

Although the Nile Valley was fertile, its narrowness necessitated adaptation and required the development of expertise in irrigation, dam building, and precision calculations to predict the inundations of the Nile river in order to derive the ensuing economic and social benefits. An example of this was the invention of geometry, which was necessary in order to delimit property after the boundary lines were obliterated by the floods.¹⁶ The irrigation necessary to prepare the lands for crops and to ensure that the water was spread to maximum advantage over as wide an area as possible required patient and diligent work by farmers: River banks had to be cut to divert water into barren areas so that they could be brought into cultivation. All of this required constant co-ordination and supervision. Unification of the Two Lands was a desirability. There is evidence to show that this was begun by a Pre-dynastic king name Scorpion who was the powerful King Menes, who some scholars think is the same person as King Narmer, who eventually united by conquest the two kingdoms, thus establishing what was later called Egypt’s first dynasty.¹⁷

A reason for this continued northward migration is offered by Alexander Moret, who is cited by Diop¹⁸, as writing:

As soon as it could be made fit for cultivation by dint of embanking and draining and irrigating, this stretch of earth, repeatedly renewed by the Nile silt, offered a wider area, a more productive soil, and a more favorable habitat for the growth of a prolific race than the narrow [rather much narrower] valley of Upper Egypt. The result was a precocious material prosperity and intellectual development, ...

The constant interaction of people, necessitated largely for mutual benefit, resulted in the development of common folkways, customs, and traditions which produced the culture and advanced the philosophies and cosmogonies, all of which were reflective of their evolving civilization. By the time the Two Lands were unified their civilizations were already thousands of years old. We learn of this from Manetho, the high priest of the Temple of Isis at Sebennytus in Lower Egypt.

For nearly three centuries Egypt had been under foreign rule, first by the Persians and followed by the Greeks, when Ptolemy I Soter ordered Manetho in 241 B.C. to write an account of Egyptian history and religion in order to ascertain knowledge of the secrets and wisdom of their “mystery system.”¹⁹ Manetho, who wrote his history in Greek, as a high priest had access to Egypt’s historical archives housed in their temples. His account allegedly covered thirty-six thousand years, and included the first arrangement of sequential pharaonic reigns. He designated thirty dynasties which represented three hundred and thirty kings.

Manetho begins Dynastic Egypt with the unification of the Two Lands by Menes, which he dates around 5,500 B.C. This still leaves over thirty thousand years of predynastic history of which he wrote. Manetho’s date of 5,500 B.C. for the First Dynasty has been

questioned by scholars. Initially, Egyptologist Sir William Flinders Petrie proposed a date for the beginning of the First Dynasty agreeing with Manetho. Later he revised it to 4,326 B.C. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge proposed a First Dynasty date of 4,400 B.C., close to Petrie's date. Chronologies using dates close to those are called "long" chronologies. Whereas, "short" chronologies use dates close to those proposed by Egyptologist James Breasted and Eduard Meyer of 3,400 to 3,100 B.C., all of these dates are derived from an analysis of Manetho's history. So much of it has been lost that many scholars have assumed that several kings ruled simultaneously, thus causing the contraction of the historical ranges of the Dynasties. A chronology table of the Dynasties (Table I) and a table of Dynasty dates of various scholars (Table II) are given for your comparison.

Table 1

A Chronology of Egyptian History (dates B.C. except where indicated)				
<i>Dynasty</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Petrie</i>	<i>Meyer & Breasted</i>	<i>David</i>
	Pre-Dynastic	7500? - 5500		5000 - 3100
I	Archaic	5500 - 5300	4186	3100 - 2890
II				2890 - 2686
III	Old Kingdom			2686 - 2613
IV		4780 - 4500	3430	2613 - 2494
V				2494 - 2345
VI		4275 - 4075	2920	2345 - 2181
VII	First Intermediate			2181 - 2173
VIII				2173 - 2160
IX				2160 - 2130
X				2130 - 2040
XI	Middle Kingdom			2133 - 1991
XII		3580 - 3370	1995	1991 - 1786
XIII				1786 - 1633
XIV				1786 - c. 1603
XV	Second Intermediate (Hyksos)			1674 - 1567
XVI				c. 1684 - 1567
XVII				c. 1650 - 1567
XVIII	New Kingdom (Empire Dynasties)	1587 - 1328	1580	1567 - 1320
XIX		1328 - 1202	1305	1320 - 1200
XX		1202 - 1102	1200	1200 - 1085
XXI	Third Intermediate	1102 - 952	1090	1085 - 945
XXII		952 - 749	945	945 - 730
XXIII				817? - 720
XXIV				720 - 715
XXV	Kushite or Ethiopian	725 - 664	712	715 - 664
XXVI		664 - 525	663	664 - 525
XXVII	Persian	525 - 405	525	525 - 404
XXVIII				404 - 399
XXIX				399 - 380
XXX		378 - 342	378	380 - 343
XXXI				343 - 332
	Conquest by Alexander			322
	Ptolemaic			322 - 30
	Conquest by Romans			30
	Roman			30 - 4th century A.D.

Dates by Petrie and Breasted & Meyer are cited by John G. Jackson in *Introduction to African Civilization* pp. 96 - 97. The other dates are cited by A. Rosalie David in *The Ancient Egyptian: Religious Beliefs and Practices*.

Table 2
Dynasty Dates Proposed by Several Scholars of Egyptology

	I	VI	XII	XVIII
Manetho (3rd Century B.C.)	c. 5700	c. 4300	c. 3400	c. 1700
Wilkinson (1836)	2320			1575
Champollion (1839)	5867	4426	3703	1822
Bockh (1845)	5702	4402	3404	1655
Lepsius (1858)	3892	2744	2380	1591
Unger (1867)	5613	4310	3315	1796
Mariette (1876)	5004	3703	3021	1703
Brugsch (1877)	4400	3300	2466	1700
Meyer (1887)	3180	2530	2130	1530
Petrie (1894)	4777	3503	2778	1587
Meyer (1904 - 1908)	3315	2540	2000	1580
Sethe (1905)	3360	2480	2000	1580
Breasted (1906)	3400	2625	2000	1580
Petrie (1929)	5510	4206	3459	1588
Macnaughton (1929)	5598	4151	3398	1709
Petrie (1929)	4553	3282	2586	1587
Macnaughton (1932)	5776	4360	3373	1709

Cited by John G. Jackson in *Man, God, and Civilization*, p. 219 (from the book *A Scheme of Egyptians Chronology* by Guncan Macnaughton, p. 161).

Ancient Influence of Astronomy and Nature

How can any of the above positions be verified? Firstly, Heroditus gives corroborative evidence of Manetho’s claim of a thirty-six thousand year historical span when he states that Egyptian scribes told him that they had astronomical records going back for 50,000 years. Even though these figures cannot be checked, it is commonly agreed that Egyptian astronomers did have records going back to a remote past. For even Plato insisted that the Egyptians had been charting these stars and planets for at least 10,000 years. And Gerald Massey in *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, states that:²⁰ “The longer one dwells in presence of Egypt, the older grows the face of her unveiled antiquity. Not fifty merely, but more like a thousand centuries look down upon us from her summit of attainment.”

The efforts to pinpoint the First Dynasty date have employed the uses of a variety of fields. Among the methods that seek a reconciliation of that illusive date that deserves attention is the comparative analysis of astronomy, historical records and what is known about ancient Egyptian astro-mythology. It should be noted, however, that the First Dynasty date merely marks the time when Menes formed the epochal union of the Two

Lands. The acquisition of Knowledge and the advancement toward civilization had to have begun eons before that.

First let us discuss some of the astronomy that we will make use of. The ancient Egyptians were in possession of the knowledge of what has been called the Kemetic Great year. This is determined by the revolution of the earth's magnetic north pole around its true north pole, which takes from 25,860 to 25,920 years, i.e. approximately 26,000 years. This slow retrograde movement caused the equinoxes to precess counterclockwise against the background of the stars in such a way as to appear to revolve, at one time, around the star Sirius.²¹

Now some astro-mythology: The ancient Egyptians worshipped four compass gods representing the summer and winter solstices, and the spring and autumn equinoxes. They also worshipped two sets of eight polar gods; one set in The North with Ptah as the god of the northern pole with seven architects, and one set in The South with Khnumu as the god of the southern pole with seven sons.

Originally the ancient zodiac had only the four compass gods. The eight gods of The North were later merged with them to give the twelve gods of the zodiac.

When the Kemetic Great Year (cycle) was divided into twelve arcs, each one was designated a "house" that the sun was said to move into as the retrograde precessed. The time it takes to sweep through one of these arcs is from 2,155 to 2,160 years, which is known as an "age." The zodiac now in use was standardized much later by the Greeks. But the one that the ancient Egyptians used had the summer and winter solstices beginning in Leo and Aquarius, respectively; and the spring and autumn equinoxes occurring in Taurus and Scorpio, respectively. The New Year for the ancient Egyptians began at the summer solstice in Leo, so named presumably because the summer heat drove the lions from the desert by thirst to the banks of the Nile. (Incidentally, Aquarius was when the Nile overflowed; Taurus was when the plowing season began—the bull was instrumental in the plowing; Scorpio was when the certain periodic winds brought burning vapors like the venom of scorpions. Other signs of the zodiac were similarly named.)

Similarly, the Great Year began with the age of Leo, supposedly because the sun's rays were most nearly perpendicular to ancient Egypt then. From astronomy we know that the last time it occurred was around 10,858 B.C. Each age is said to be associated with a particular god or savior, and that its respective zodiacal symbolism is reflected in the mythology (discussed in more detail in succeeding chapters), we find that the gods Atum, Shu and Tefnut, which are associated with "the creation" are depicted with lion heads. Using 2,160 years, the figure many scholars use, we find the next age, Cancer, beginning around 8,696 B.C. In the mythology we find Khepera, the "self-created one" represented by the scarab beetle, the symbol the ancient Egyptians used for Cancer. Then we have Gemini around 6,538 B.C. Historically speaking this matches the predynastic period when ancient Egypt coalesced into two kingdoms Known as the Two Lands.

Mythologically the twins Set, the god of Upper Egypt in The South, and Horus, the god of Lower Egypt in The North. This is also considered by many scholars to be the dawn of history.

The age of Taurus began around 4,378 B.C. The history of Manetho and the iconography of the period show that Menes instituted the worship of the Apis-Bull. And that both Menes and his successors were staunch devotees of Ptah, the pre-eminent bull deity of that epoch. There is also evidence that the rise of Osiris occurred during this period. It is agreed that it was Menes who unified the Two Lands, thereby forming the First Dynasty. This comparative analysis gives us compelling evidence to justify setting its commencement sometime during the Taurean age. Charles S. Finch, III, M. D. asserts this in his book *Echoes of the Old Dark Land*.²²

The First Dynasty dates proposed by those scholars who prefer to use the short chronologies (between 3,400 and 3,100 B.C.) place the beginning of Egyptian civilization after that of Sumer, around 4,000 B.C. This allows arguments to be made that Africans were not the originators of the world's first civilization. If the above arguments is not convincing enough to suggest an earlier First Dynasty date, there is even more evidence to which we can turn. When we compare the archeological evidence of the information contained in the Egyptian calendar with the astronomical Sothic cycle (the 1,460 year period it takes for the sidereal and solar years to realign due to the approximately one-fourth of a day that the sidereal year lags behind the solar year) we find the Egyptians were in possession of a calendar date *no later* than 4,241 B.C. Finch informs us that:²³ "Such a calendar, due to the high level of astronomical sophistication flourished *at least* 6,200 years ago, before there was a Sumer." (Italics his) This makes Egypt the earliest known civilization.

Finally, let us consider the astronomical fact that the current Great year began around 10,858 B.C. and that it takes approximately 26,000 years to complete its revolution. If indeed Manetho did write a history that spanned 36,000 years, as has been claimed, then the above figures indicate that Manetho wrote of a time span covered by the previous Great Year up to his own time. It has been argued that these figures are too close to be a mere coincidence.²⁴ This also implies that his history had to cover events before the advent of "Egypt," even prior to "predynastic Egypt." This suggests that events were being noted and passed on to succeeding generations before the modern historians and archeologist say the domestication of plants and animals began; and even before the peoples coalesced into the nomes, and later into the two kingdoms, that ultimately led to the forming of "Ancient Egypt." Consequently, one may argue that perhaps part of Manetho's history is speculative, inferential or extrapolatory. Or, one may be led to conclude that the true depth of ancient Egypt civilization is vaster than we have even begun to fathom.

To finish up the discussion on the Great Year: We have the age of Aries beginning around 2,218 B.C. Scholars assert that this is around Biblical times. Here we have the ram, lamb, and shepherd symbols dominating, supplanting those of the bull. Around 58 B.C. the equinoxes precessed into the age of Pisces ushering in the sign and significance

of fish and fishermen. At present we are approaching the dawn of the age of Aquarius, which is scheduled to begin somewhere between 2,072 and 2,102 A.D.

Of Ancient Lore, Legend and Mythology

The necessity for the Nile Valley inhabitants to acquire this knowledge has been touched on previously. But again we look to geography to provide us with the explanation of why they were able to do it. Because Egypt was a dry land that lay under clear nighttime skies for months on end, it was ideally suited for observing the heavenly bodies with the naked eye. This they did for thousands of years, discovering remarkable periodic phenomena. Finch recounts a salient example of this (p. 116):²⁵ “For most of the year at the latitude of Thebes in Upper Egypt, Sirius, a star in the southern heaven, is invisible, but appears suddenly on the eastern horizon just before dawn at the summer solstice. This is known as the ‘helical’ rising. Within 20 days after this solstitial rising, the Nile floods begin.” He continues: “The coincidence of all these events left a profound impression on the minds of the early Kamite astronomers [Kemet, Chem or Kam, which means the “black land,” was the designation the indigenous people called their country], who made Sirius the herald of the sun, the announcer of the flood, and the harbinger of the New Year [which began for them at the summer solstice].” It is well known that they had three calendars; a solar, a lunar, and a stellar (sidereal) based on the phenomenal Sirius.

From Manetho’s account we learn that, in addition to the geological gift of the Nile, Egypt had other blessings that typically flowed from the south. As immigrants continued to pour into Lower Egypt, eventually settling in overtime, tensions began to develop between them and the adherents of the culture of the indigenous population, who were mainly comprised of southerners or Nubians. This resulted in a vying for power between the blended-in immigrants, mostly Lower Egyptians, and the indigenous population, mostly Upper Egyptians. During all of this, the Lower Egyptians never totally subdued the Upper Egyptians. They mostly wrestled control of Lower Egypt for a time from them, while Upper Egypt mostly remained in the hands of the Nubians. Hence, a unification of the Two Lands only really occurred under the auspices of the southerners. Un-unified Egypt typically suffered declined (commonly referred to as the Intermediate Periods). The resurgence of past glories and the revival of civilization advancing activities flowed typically after the Southerners developed a strong enough leader to re-take or re-unify the Two Lands. This unification would usher in a period of peace and prosperity, which invariably drew and brought in new immigrants. When weak kings occupied the throne and/or internal strife developed beyond a certain point, Egypt would again become vulnerable for a takeover by the Northerners, pushing the Southerners further back into the Southland or hinterlands until they could regroup around another leader powerful enough to bring about another unification. This back-and-forth continued with the Blacks, following the path of least resistance, drifting further and further south until they eventually lost control of the civilization that they had originated, and given so much to for a final time. After which Egypt’s fortune began to wane until it became a mere shadow of its former self.

It had been previously mentioned how in predynastic times the Kemites (Egyptians) organized themselves into scattered communities and nomes, each with their own ruler or deity. At times, one of these rulers would become the king of Lower or Upper Egypt or both. Whenever this occurred, that leader and community or nome would endeavor to promote their particular deity to the status of primacy with respect to other deities; i.e. the Lord of Lords, the Great God, etc. As the cosmogony of the Egyptians evolved, they began to view their kings as the son of the Great God, thus making him part divine. This view carried on well into the dynastic eras, with the part divine kings becoming more and more mythologized as time passed.

One such ruler was said to be Osiris, who became the most legendary of them all. He has been identified in later classical sources as a human king who ruled Egypt in an earlier period. It is said that he brought agriculture and civilization to the land and that Egypt prospered during his reign. Early on in Egypt's development he became known as the god of vegetation (which is why he is depicted as green) and became the personification of its rebirth that followed its annual death. This eventually led to the installation of Osiris as the ruler of the dead and the god of the underworld who could, as a result of his earthly experience, offer his followers a similar resurrection after their earthly demise and grant them eternal life in heaven.

Among the significant consequences that resulted from Osirianism was the elimination of cannibalism. At one time human sacrifice was performed whereby a savior would give up his (originally a post menopausal "her") life for the sake of others, and his body and blood would be consumed. As Osiris was the vegetation god, and hence the god of the grape and grain, wine and bread became identified with his blood and body. And early they began to be ritualistically partaken of as such. Hence, replacing the human consumption and thus causing Osirianism to be credited for ending cannibalism.²⁶

In the preface on his book, *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume I, E. A. Wallis Budge gives a brief discussion of the evolution of Osiris. He writes:²⁷

The fundamental belief of the ancient Egyptians belongs to a time when he was near to nature. ... Religion was a reality to him long before he could describe it, and the spirits he could not see were also realities to him, ... he appealed for guidance and help as a matter of course to his father and grandfather, so long as they lived, and when they were dead he turned to their spirits for assistance. So long as he was helped out of his troubles, and was successful in all his undertakings, he attributed his good fortune to the power of his father's or grandfather's spirit, to that great, First Spirit, Who had made the first member of his own and every other tribe, and everything which was wholly natural and personal, was at all times a mixture of fear of spirits in general, and of hope in the power of ancestral spirits. This power developed later in his mind into the veritable power of God. Whom he believed to be incarnate in his great ancestor Osiris.

The Osirian legend that we know today evolved through several Egyptian dynasties. It was mentioned previously how certain kings and priests sought to promote their deities (and demote others) as the assumed power. Among the deities that went through such transformation and transitions that significantly impacted the evolving Osirian legend were Horus, Isis, Ra, Set, and Thoth.

When discussing these various gods, one could easily get the impression that the Egyptians were polytheistic. But Budge, who has written extensively on the subject, argues otherwise. He asserts that the French scholar, M. Pierret, “holds the view that the [pyramid] text prove that the Egyptians believed in a God who is One, and is without a second, and was infinite and eternal.” Neter is the word that the ancient Egyptians used that best captures their sublime concept of God. Its exact meaning remains a mystery, but some scholars assert that it is related to such ideas and concepts as self-existence, self-production and the ability to renew life indefinitely. In other words it refers to a being who has the power to generate life and to sustain and maintain it after it has been generated. Other scholars say that the concept of a Neter refers to a causal, governing, or fundamental principle of nature.

With regards to the Egyptian concept of God, Budge also writes that the German scholar, Dr. H. Brugsch accepted “the view, which the Egyptians themselves held, that the gods were only names of various attributes of the one God ... [as] he searched through the literature ... hymns, prayers, etc.” And Budge himself states that: “The fact remains that such attributes were ascribed to the gods who were created by God, and that the Egyptians arrived as such ideas as those described above is lasting proof of the exalted character of their religion and of their conception of monotheism.” The evidence derived from the literature of Egypt proves that monotheism existed in that country over 5,500 years ago; “in fact, Egyptian monotheism is the oldest form of monotheism known to us.”²⁸

The priesthoods of the larger districts (cities or nomes) would endeavor to persuade the worshipers of local gods that the god of the priest was the being who combined within himself the attributes of the great cosmic god who created the heavens and the earth, and with the ethical aspects as proclaimed by the elevation to primacy the god of the priests.

In the earliest times, Horus appears to have been an early god chosen in this manner. Under the form of the hawk, called Heru, it seems that he was worshipped throughout the country generally. To the predynastic Egyptians the hawk (said to be able to look at the sun without blinking) was the personification of the god who made the sky and was considered to be the spirit of the heights of heaven. Later the god Heru (Horus) became identified with the face of heaven. And thus, the sun was called the “right Eye of Horus” and the moon was regarded as the “left Eye of Horus.”

It has been discussed previously how civilization moved down the Nile from upper Egypt into Lower Egypt. The evidence shows that Horus was worshipped in both Upper and Lower Egypt in the periods immediately prior to the unification of the Two Lands. Another god of Upper Egypt was Set (Sat, Seth, or, Sut). Finch writes: “To the

Egyptians, the South was always the land of beginnings, the origin, the source, the top, the chief.”²⁹ We find that in earlier times Horus and Set were very closely associated. Horus, however, takes on several forms. One of the earliest forms we know of is Heru-ur or “Horus the Elder” and is a twin of Set. They were equal in every respect. Heru-ur was the “face of heaven by day” and Set was the “face of heaven by night.” The evidence shows that the worshippers of Set were mainly in the South, whereas the Horus worshippers gravitated towards the North. These two regions invariably would come into conflict as immigrants continued to pour into and blended with the Northerners, and the mythology around Horus and Set would reflect this struggle. In the earliest form the mythology records this as the natural “struggle” between night and day, and that Thoth prevented either from obtaining the upper hand. (Thoth is the god of balance, right and truth, the scribe of the gods and inventor of all the arts and sciences. He is depicted as a human with the head of an ibis. It was thought by some ancient writers that the ibis was a bird connected with the heart and this bird was dedicated to Thoth as the lord of all knowledge and understanding. The intuitive aspects of which the ancients thought took place in the heart.)

There were other worshippers of Horus in Upper Egypt whose temple was in Edfu. This Horus was called Heru-Behutet or “Horus of Behutet (Edfu).” From the legends they were very successful in subduing their adversaries, apparently followers of Set, for miles around in both the Delta in Lower Egypt and further south in northern Nubia, establishing the primacy of Horus in the process. In the mythology the relationship between Horus and Set went from being a balance between day and night, and a natural duality that was a reconciliation of opposites, to a battle between light and darkness, between life and death and a battle between the forces of good and evil. Set eventually became more and more vilified, evolving in the mythology to the personification of evil. Heru-Behutet is also a form of Heru-Khuti or “Horus of the two horizons” who, according to budge, the famous sphinx is a monument of.³⁰ We also see from the legend that among the followers of Heru-Behutet were blacksmiths that produced formidable weapons that facilitated their many victories.

The most famous of all of the Horus gods is Heru-Sa-Ast-Sa-Asar or “Horus, son of Isis, son of Osiris.” Earlier it was pointed out that according to legend; Osiris was an Egyptian king who later became deified because of the remarkable accomplishments during his reign. A. Rosalie David says that some scholars argue that a group of Set worshippers routed some Egyptians and put their king, Osiris, to death. (In the mythology that comes down to us, primarily from Greek sources—Plutarch in particular, this is symbolized by Set murdering Osiris. However, Dr. Jacob Carruthers argues in his book *MDW NTR* that there is no reading of the actual text that indicates this.³¹) Later some followers of Horus consolidated their power and moved southward and conquered the indigenous population there, and installed the rulership of Horus. In the mythology this Horus became the avenger of his father, Osiris. And the living rulers came to be identified with Horus, and the deceased rulers were identified with Osiris. They became somewhat complements of each other, with Horus representing the present and Osiris the past. In the *Book of the Dead*³² it is expressed as: “Osiris is yesterday and Ra (i.e. Horus grown up) is today.” This particular Horus would at one time or another embody all of the Horus gods.

Evidence suggests that it is possible that Ra worship had been established in Egypt as early as the Later Predynastic Period in Annu or An (On in the Bible and called Heliopolis by the Greeks), where it seems to have taken over a local deity, Atum. As for the worship of Osiris, scholars have concluded that its beginning is hopelessly lost in obscurity. However, from Egyptian texts we are able to trace it from the Archaic Period, at least as early as Dynasty I. But clearly interrelations and juxtapositions of the gods continued. For this is illustrated by the fact that by the second dynasty, although the king at this period had associated with Horus, who had become a “royal god,” he had adopted the title “Son of Ra.” With this power in the hands of the Ra priests, Ra and the personification of his various forms became the “father of the gods.” Budge adds further that: “Viewed from a *practical* point of view, Ra was the oldest of all the gods of Egypt, and the first act of creation was the appearance of his disk [the sun] above the waters of the world-ocean; with his first rising time began.”³³ (Emphasis mine.) The Egyptians had compared the daily course of the sun with the life of man at a very early date. And with this identification, Ra worship became so entrenched that when priests or rulers tried to install their gods over Him, the most they could do was to have their gods identified with Ra or an aspect of him.

After the old kingdoms (Dynasties III - VI) collapsed, the new rulers were seeking for a deity who had wide enough appeal that could supplant Ra. Due to His association with funerary ceremonies, divine rituals, and the rites performed at the kings’ ascension and coronation, Osiris was the obvious choice. At first the funerary rites were only for royalty, but as time progressed they were applied for non-royalty also. This would contribute immensely to the widespread appeal that Osirianism would acquire among the common people. But Ra was a god of the living, whereas, Osiris was a god of the dead. And as such the worship of Osiris did not rival directly that of Ra (or the other gods). The worship of Ra had much in common with the worship of Osiris. For they both symbolized the divine ability to overcome death, and both of them reflected the cycle of life, death, and rebirth in the natural phenomenon. Ra symbolized this through the continual rising and setting of the sun. Whereas Osiris symbolized it through the life and death cycle of vegetation as a vegetation god, he also symbolized victory over death because of his own resurrection (discussed in Chapter Two).

There were differences between them, however, with respect to the afterlife that would ultimately endear Osiris more so to the hearts and souls of the people. Budge writes³⁴:

The heaven of Osiris was believed to exist in a place where the fields were fertile and well stocked with cattle, and where meat and drink were abundant; the abodes of the blessed were thought to be constructed after the model of comfortable Egyptian homesteads in which they had lived during life, and the ordinary Egyptian hoped to live in one of these with his wife and parents. On the other hand, the followers of Ra, the sun-god, believed in a heaven of a more spiritual character, and their great hope was to occupy a seat in a boat of the god [They mythologized the heavens as an ocean which the sun, i.e. Ra, traversed in a celestial boat.], and arrayed in light, to travel whithersoever he went. They

wished to become bright and shining spirits, and to live upon the celestial meat and drink upon which he lived; as he was, so they hoped to be in every respect. The materialistic heaven of Osiris appealed to the masses in Egypt, and the heaven where Ra lived appealed to the priests of Ra and other solar gods, and to royal and aristocratic families, ...

The various waves of religious thought and feeling, which swept over Egypt during the five thousand years of her history which are known to us, did not seriously disturb the cults of Osiris, for it held out to the people hopes of resurrection and immortality of a character which no other form of religion could give. ... Kings and priests from time to time made attempts to absorb the cult of Osiris into religious systems of a solar character [e.g. Horus and Ra], but they failed, and Osiris, the man-god, always triumphed, ...

Chapter Two

The Osirian Legend

As we have discussed previously, Egyptian rulers and priests were continuously trying to establish the primacy of the god they worshipped whenever they took power. But even still, when this was done, they had to take into account the local deities into the system of gods that they constructed. Research shows that as a result, “there must have been several schools of the logical thought in Egypt, and each of these priests did their utmost to proclaim the superiority of their [own] gods. In dynastic times there must have been great colleges at Heliopolis, Memphis [Lower Egypt], Abydos [Upper Egypt], and one or more places in the Delta, ... Of the theories and doctrines of all such schools and colleges, those of Heliopolis have survived in the completest form, ...”³⁵

The priests of Heliopolis (Annu) were originally worshippers of Tem (or Temu) and later Ra. And as such the prominence assigned to him is as to be expected. Nevertheless, a good understanding of ancient Egyptian cosmology can be ascertained from the Pyramid Texts of their era. We can derive from them that in predynastic times that there were eight gods that made up what is called the great company of gods (accounts differ for other cities both the number and names). There were four pairs, of male and female counterparts, representing the personifications, aspects, phases, or property of primeval matter. They are:

Nu and Nut; the watery mass of the sky (Nu) and the heaven above it (Nut).

Hehu and hehut; fire (?).

Kehui and Kehuit; the darkness that covers the primeval watery abyss.

Kerh and Kerhet; night (?) or inactive powers of the primeval water abyss (?).

The question marks are there because there is uncertainty as to the exact interpretations of the texts. Budge suggests that these gods were “invented by people in whose households women held a high position, ...” For they were the equals of their male counterparts, as he explains, “and not merely the bearers of offspring as were the later goddesses.” Notice that the name of the female gods can be obtained by attaching a ‘t’ at the end of the names of their male counterparts. Budge also asserts that the texts seem to indicate that three of the pairs seem to be “qualities, or characteristics, or attributes of the fourth pair [Nu and Nut] personified, although some would make the four pairs represent the male and female elements of the Four Elements, Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, and others would make them stand for the primeval Matter out of which all things are made, and primeval Space, and primeval Time, and primeval Power,”³⁶ In later periods the priests of Hermopolis (i.e. city of Hermes, which is Greek for Thoth) would place Temu, then later Ra, at the head. One papyrus has Osiris in that dominant role. But it is the Heliopolitan priests that are most often referred to and therefore that is the version that will be featured here.

The Creation

From the texts we learn that for the ancient Egyptians, in the beginning everything in heaven and earth existed “in a quiescent state in the watery mass of Nu.” Budge cites the texts as placing “in the mouth of the god Neb-er-tcher, the lord of the universe and a form of the Sun-God Ra,” as saying: “I am he who came into being in the form of Khepera, ... I was the creator of everything that come into being, ... when I came into being myself, the things which I created and which came forth from my mouth were very many.” Here we see Ra raised himself up from the watery abyss of Nu in the form of Khepera. Khepera is depicted as a man with the head of a type of beetle which belongs to a class of dung-eaters. These particular beetles lay their eggs in masses of dung and roll them up into balls. These balls are left to bathe in the sun and in due course young living creatures come forth and seek their food. “At a very early period in their history the Egyptians associated the Sun’s disk with the dung ball of the beetle, partly on account of its shape, and partly because it was the source of heat, and light, and life to man, even as the dung ball was to the beetles.” To the ancient Egyptians these dung balls were made up of dead, inert matter that contained the germs of life in a new form, and the like, became attached to the beetle, and the god with attributes of the beetle, among which in later days was included the idea of self-production, became one of the most important forms of Ra.”³⁷

Neb-er-tcher or Ra goes on to say: “I found no place there whereon I could stand. I worked a charm upon my heart (or, will), [and] I laid a foundation in Maa, [and] I made every form (or, attribute). I was by myself, ...” The foundation referred to is probably the earth upon which Ra stood as he continued with his creations. “From the texts of all periods we learn much about the conceptions which the Egyptians had arrived at concerning Maa, and it is clear that the word primarily meant ‘what is straight,’ and that it also came to mean ‘straightness, rectitude, uprightness, right, law, order, regularity, justice; and other significations of like character; the goddess Maat, was the personification of ‘Truth’.”³⁸

We have seen that the Sun-God has been referred to as Tem (Temu), Ra, and Khepera. Upon analyzing their usage in the text, we see that they represented different phases of the sun. Khepera was the rising sun, Ra was the midday sun, and Tem was the setting sun. Later when the priests of Heliopolis became worshippers of Amen (which means hidden, or hidden one), that name was to represent the Sun-God between sunset and sunrise (or while it was hidden from view).

Of what happens next, the births of Shu and Tefnut, there are several differing accounts. One view, current in the VI Dynasty, has the god Tem, rather than Khepera, produce them by masturbating. Another view has the widely worshipped sky goddess Hathor as the wife of Ra, and they become the parents of Shu and Tefnut. And still another version has Osiris in the role of Khepera. This version has Neb-er-tcher to say: “My name is Ausares (i.e. Osiris) [who] is the primeval matter of primeval matter. ... I brought my

own name into my own mouth, that is to say [I uttered it as] a word of power, and I forthwith came into being...”³⁹

Here we see the importance in the minds of the ancient Egyptians that “words of power” played and the special significance of names. For Osiris transforms “himself from the essence of primeval matter into the active principle of creation by merely uttering his own name.” Budge also underscores the fact that the ability to create one’s own life “is a remarkable attribute to ascribe to the god of the dead, and it is only understandable when we remember that it was a common belief of the Egyptians that life rose out of death.” It should also be noted that for the ancient Egyptians “no creature, animated or inanimate, could be said to have an existence until it possessed a name, ... Every god and goddess and supernatural being were believed to possess a hidden name by, and through, and in which he and she lived. The man who could find out these names was able to command the help of the gods who bore them, and the man who could obtain by any means the hidden name for himself thought he would be the equal of these gods. On the other hand, to destroy or ‘blot out’ a name was to wipe out of existence the being who bore it.”⁴⁰

This particular narrative continues: “... I made all the forms under which I appeared by means (or, out of) the god-soul which I raised up out of Nu, out of a state of inertness (or, out of inert mass).” Here we have the concept of the Soul introduced, which “was in existence in a quiescent state in the inactive watery mass of Nu.” In this version Shu and Tefnut are also produced through masturbating. “Shu was a god who was connected with heat and dryness of sunlight and with the dry atmosphere which exist between the earth and sky, and Tefnut was a personification of the moisture of the sky ...”⁴¹ “Shu and Tefnut were supposed to possess but one soul between them, but the two halves of it were identified with the soul of Osiris and the soul of Ra ...”⁴² After Shu and Tefnut were produced, light was immediately created, darkness was dispersed, and the firmament was formed. Then people were created followed by plants and animals, or vice versa, depending on the text.⁴³

Of what follows next, there are also differing accounts. One text says that Shu and Tefnut gave birth to Seb, Nut, Osiris, Heru-Khenti-an-Maati (or the blind Horus, i.e. when his eyes, the sun and moon are invisible), Set, Isis, Nephthys, and Heru-ur. The latter version is the most famous, so that is the one that will be discussed herein.

At one point in antiquity Nut had been turned into a cow (The bull was significant in that its strength was useful in plowing, and of course the cow was important as the female counterpart of the bull) and Ra had mounted her back. Nut became weary and began to tremble whereupon Ra commanded Shu to hold her up, thus separating Nut from earth, personified by the god Seb. The four legs of the cow came to represent the props holding up the sky from the earth at the four cardinal points (i.e. the northern, southern, eastern, and western points on the horizon where the sun rose at the summer and winter solstices, and the vernal or spring and autumnal equinoxes, respectively). However, while they were together, Seb and Nut (the sky goddess) were consorts and Nut had become pregnant.

From this point, most scholars refer to the version given by the Greek writer Plutarch. Here we find that Nut was the wife of Ra. And after he discovered her condition he cursed her and declared that she would not give birth on any day of the year. But Thoth, who was very fond of Nut (some accounts say he was in love with her), played a table game with Selene, the goddess of the moon, and won from her one-seventieth of her illuminations. This added up to five days, which were attached to the end of the year, which before then contained three-hundred and sixty days. These five days were observed by the Egyptians as the birthdays of their gods. On the first of the days Osiris was born. And at the moment of his arrival a voice was heard proclaiming “the lord of all the earth (or creation) is born.” On each of the subsequent days the following gods were born: Horus-the-elder (Heru-ur), Set, Isis, and Nephthys. One account has it that the father of Osiris and Horus-the-elder was Ra, Thoth was the father of Isis, and Seb was the father of Set and Nephthys. And that Set was born neither at the right time nor place, but forced his way through a wound on his mother’s side. Isis and Nephthys were born in the marshes of Egypt. Of Osiris and Isis, one account says that they had a mutual affection and “enjoyed each other” in their mother’s womb, and as a result Horus-the-elder was born.⁴⁴

This myth is obviously complicated as these complications resulted when so many priests tried to elevate their gods and reconcile the traditional legends and mythologies with their evolving theologies and cosmologies. Scholars have determined that the Egyptian priests were adamant in their conservatism. For once a god or story became part of the lore, it was virtually never dropped, only reconciled.

Most writers proceed with the mythology wherein Seb is the father of the five gods, so we will continue in that vein.

Osiris the Man-God

In due course Osiris decided to leave heaven and go to earth (recall that his father, Seb, was the earth-god) and live there in the form of a human where he became king of Egypt. He “devoted himself to civilizing his subjects and to teaching them the craft of husbandman; he established a code of laws and bade men worship the gods. Having made Egypt peaceful and flourishing, he set out to instruct the other nations of the world.”⁴⁵ In his absence the care of Egypt was turned over to Isis, who ruled the country with the assistance of Thoth, whom Osiris had besought to assist her, exceedingly well.

Nephthys gave birth to a son. Some accounts say that Set was the father and others say he was begotten by Osiris. The account that has Osiris siring the child seems more plausible because we find that it was Isis who raised him. From Plutarch’s account we learn that Nephthys, who was in love with Osiris, deceived him into “enjoying” her. When Anubis was born Nephthys removed him (the text says she “exposed it as soon as it was born”) fearing the anger of Set. Both Isis and Set became aware of their “unlawful commerce” because of a certain flower left behind by Osiris. When Isis learned of all this she “made it her business to search the child out ... and accordingly, after much pains and difficulty, by means of some dogs that conducted her to the place where it was, she

found it and bred it up; so that in the process of time it became her constant guard and attendant, and hence obtained the name Anubis, being thought to watch and guard the Gods, as dogs do mankind.’⁴⁶ Hence, the Egyptians depicted Anubis as a man with a dog’s (or jackal’s) head.

Some insight into this particular aspect of the myth can be obtained when one realizes that the Egyptians referred to the extreme limits of their land as “Nephthys,” and spoke of her as being a goddess rather than in terms of her as a woman. Now Osiris was apparently at one time a water god or the god of some arm of the Nile. So when the overflow of the Nile was very great, it extended to the remotest parts of the boundaries of Egypt causing it to flower. This part of the legend can thus be seen as referring to this phenomenon of nature.⁴⁷

While Osiris was away, Set plotted his murder. And the above story offers us a reason why. Others say that Set himself was so much in love with Isis and that his desire for her, given her unwavering and undying love for Osiris, was the reason he wanted to get rid of him. And still another version was that Set was simply envious of Osiris’ power and wanted to be king of Egypt himself. Perhaps it was all or some combination of these reasons. But at any rate, Set, according to the version obtained from Plutarch, did conspire to murder Osiris along with seventy-two other accomplices and an Ethiopian queen named Asso, who happened to be in Egypt at that time. They secretly took Osiris’ measurements and made a very beautifully ornamented chest that was a work of art, beauty, and craftsmanship that fitted Osiris’ body exactly. Set displayed it at a banquet and every one there admired it tremendously. So Set, as if in jest, offered it to anyone who could fit in it exactly. Everyone tried to fit in it, but of course they all failed. When finally Osiris tried, and of course did fit in it, they immediately closed it up, nailed it shut and poured melted lead all over it. They then carried it to the Nile and let it float to the sea. (Again, a couple of observations of Jacob Carruthers should be noted: first that the Egyptian texts themselves offer no evidence of Set murdering Osiris; and second that the war with Horus was over property rights.)

The death of Osiris was said to have happened when the sun was in the constellation Scorpio in the twenty-eighth year of his reign. Other accounts say he was twenty-eight years old when it happened. The number twenty-eight is significant in that it represented the number of days it took the moon to complete its cycle. It was the Pans and Satyrs, who first knew of what had happened and began to spread the news. (From this we get the expression “Panic Terrors,” and the word panic.) As soon as Isis heard of what had happened, she immediately went into mourning. She then set out to search for the chest bearing Osiris’ body. She searched everywhere and asked everybody as to the whereabouts of the chest. She chanced upon some children who told her which mouth of the Nile that the chest was set out to sea. From this the Egyptians looked upon children as being endowed with the ability of divining. It was actually during this interval that Isis became aware of Anubis and endeavored to retrieve him.

The Travails of Isis

Isis' Quest for Osiris' Body

In due course Isis receives more detailed news as to the whereabouts of the chest. It had been carried by waves to Byblos (not in Phoenicia, but the papyrus swamps of Egypt⁴⁸) where it came to rest on some branches of a Tamarack (swamp tree). In a short time the tree had grown large and beautiful, enveloping the chest completely. The king of that area of the country, amazed at the size of the tree, had it cut down and made the part of the trunk that contained the chest into a pillar to support the roof of his house.

Supposedly some demons made all of this known to Isis. After which she immediately went to Byblos and sat silently by a fountain and spoke to no one except the queen's women who happened by. These she "saluted and caressed in the kindest manner possible, plaiting their hair for them, and transmitting into them part of that wonderfully grateful odour, which issued from her body."⁴⁹ The queen became intrigued by this stranger who could do all of these wonderful things and invited her to her house. The queen, after becoming better acquainted with Isis, got her to nurse one of her sons. Isis nursed the child by letting it suck her finger, rather than her breast. (After all Isis was a goddess.) Isis endeavored to give the child immortality by nightly placing it into a fire to consume its mortal parts. While this was being done she would change herself into a swallow and mourn for Osiris.

One night the queen happened by and thinking her child was left in the fire, screamed out; and thereby deprived it of the immortality which otherwise would have been conferred upon it. Isis then transformed herself back and proceeded to tell the queen of her situation and requested the pillar which contained the chest. After her request was granted, Isis cut out the trunk, removed the chest and wrapped the remainder of the trunk in fine linen, poured perfume over it and gave it back to the king and queen.

The Birth of Horus

Isis then took the Chest containing Osiris' body back home. Plutarch says that: "No sooner was she arrived at a desert place, where she imagined herself to be alone, but she presently opened the chest, and laying her face upon her dead husband's embraced his corps, and wept bitterly; ..." Later he adds that, "Isis intending a visit to her son Orus [Horus], who was brought up at Butos, deposited the chest in the meanwhile in a remote and unfrequented place; ..." ⁵⁰ Here we have the mention of Horus the son of Isis and Osiris. But what of his conception and birth? There is a hymn to Osiris from the XVIII Dynasty that is quite illuminating in this regard. A section of it speaks of how Isis, his sister and wife, conceived Horus with the power of certain words which Thoth had taught her to use:⁵¹

Thy sister protected thee, and she drove away thy foes, ... and uttered the words of power with all the skill of her mouth; her tongue was trained, and she committed no fault of utterance, and she made [her] decree and [her] words to have effect,

Isis, the mighty one, the avenger of her brother. She sought thee without weariness, she went round about through this land in sorrow, and she set not to the ground her foot until she found thee. She made light with her feather, she made air to come into being with her wings, and she uttered cries of lamentation at the bier of her brother. She stirred up from his state of inactivity him whose heart was still (i.e. Osiris), *she drew from him his seed, she made an heir*, she suckled the babe in solitariness, and the place wherein she reared him is unknown, and his hand is mighty with the house of Seb [the earth].” (Emphasis mine.)

In another text Isis says: “I Isis, conceived a man child, and I was heavy with Horus, I, the goddess bare Horus, the son of Isis, within a nest of papyrus plants (or ‘Island of Ateh’). I rejoiced over him, for I saw in him one who would make answer for his father.”⁵² Perhaps Horus was conceived at the time when Isis laid with the body of Osiris at the desert place.

The Scattering of Osiris’ Body

At any rate, from Plutarch we learn that Set discovered the chest accidentally while he was hunting. Upon realizing that it contained the body of Osiris, he tore it up into fourteen pieces. (Fourteen is the number of the days representing half a moon cycle. However, some accounts use fifteen as it is half a month of a solar calendar.) He then hid them in different places throughout the land. When Isis heard of this she set out to recover the pieces of Osiris’ body. Whenever she found a member of his body she buried it and built a tomb over it. She was able to find all of his body parts except one, the phallus, which had been eaten by fish. Isis then fashioned a model of representative of it in imitation of it in an ithyphallic symbol. “Isis consecrated the phallus made in imitation of it, and instituted a solemn festival to its memory, which is even to this day observed by the Egyptians.”⁵³

The Wanderings and Sorrows of Isis

One would think that the above was enough for any one woman to go through, even if she is a goddess. There are texts which give “a clearer idea of the troubles which Isis endured after the death of Osiris.” In one of them Isis narrates about her “wanderings and sorrows.” Apparently Set, not content with murdering Osiris, places Isis and Horus “in some place of restraint.” But Thoth, the great god, the prince of law both in heaven and earth,” came to her and said, “Come, O thou goddess Isis, it is good to be obedient, for there is life for him that will follow the advice of another. Hide thou thy son the child [Horus], and this is what shall happen: his limbs will grow, and will become enclosed with two-fold strength, and he shall avenge him [Osiris] and take possession of the rank of the prince of the Two Lands.”

Isis took Thoth’s advice, hid Horus and left the “house at eventide.” Seven scorpions appeared to accompany and help her. Isis commanded them to show her the way in which she should go. When they arrived at their destined country, she went, Isis narrated, “to the habitations of the women who belonged to the overlord of the district,

and the chief woman who had seen me coming along shut her doors in my face, and was angry with me in her heart because of those (i.e. the seven scorpions) that were with me.” The scorpions “took counsel on the matter” and collectively put their poison on the tail of one of their group who stung the son of the “noble lady, ...” The lady’s “heart ..., was sad, ... and although she went round about through her city uttering cries of lamentation, none came to her call.” Meanwhile a swamp woman had taken Isis in. When Isis heard of the noble lady’s plight she sent for her and told her that she could help her: “I can drive the evil out of thy son by one of my utterances, which my father taught me.” The noble lady heeded Isis’ call and “then Isis laid her hands upon the child to restore to life him that was without breath, ... At dawn Isis uttered the appropriate words in the appropriate manner, following which came the exclamation, ‘The Child liveth and the poison dieth’.”⁵⁴

The above story reveals a compassionate side of Isis which would latter cause problems.

The Death and Revival of Horus

In the meantime, those who were tending to Horus let it be known that “Horus liveth for his mother.” Set then found him, and in the form of a scorpion stung him to death. The gods informed Isis of what happened, saying to her, “Isis, Isis, come to thy child Horus, O thou whose mouth is wise, come to thy son.” Then “came Isis like a woman who was smitten in her own body.” The text has Isis saying: “I went away to the city of Am, and the people thereof saluted me according to their wont, and I passed the time in seeking food and provisions for the buy; but when I returned to Horus, I found him, the beautiful one of gold, the boy, the child, inert and helpless.” The text goes on to say that people from the swamp where Horus was hidden came to mourn with Isis, and to see what they could do. But none could help. “Then came Nephthys shedding tears, and she went about the Papyrus Swamps uttering cries of grief” and the scorpion-goddess, Serqet, whom Nephthys brought with her, said “What is it? What hath happened to the child Horus”? Apparently Isis could not help Horus herself. Nephthys and Serqet told Isis to “pray to heaven,” to Ra. She then “sent forth a cry to heaven ... and the Disk [i.e. the Sun, or Ra] stood still ... And Thoth came, and he was provided with magical powers and possessed the great power which made [his] word to become Maat [i.e. law], and he said: ‘O Isis, Thou goddess, thou glorious one, who hast knowledge how to use thy mouth, behold, no evil shall come upon the child Horus, for his protection cometh from ... Ra’.” Isis feared that it was too late but she begged Thoth to come anyway and do whatever he could. “Thereupon Thoth besought Isis not to fear, and Nephthys not to weep, for he said, ‘I have come from heaven in order to save the child for his mother,’ and he straight way spoke the words of power which restored Horus to life, and served to protect him ever afterwards in heaven, and in earth, and in the Underworld.”⁵⁵

Isis the Sorceress

From the above discussions it is easy to see why Isis was worshipped as the “faithful and loving wife,” and as the “tender and loving mother.”⁵⁶ For Isis “had made a vow never to marry again” and had spent her life “administering justice among her subjects, and had

excelled all other princes in her works of charity towards her people. ... Isis discovered many medicines, and was greatly skilled in the art of physic.” She made the lame to walk and the blind to see. She turned no one away. She is said to have discovered medicine that can raise the dead to life. And in addition to this, she passed knowledge on to her son, Horus, so that he could benefit mankind.⁵⁷

But Isis also had a cunning and devious side to her (i.e. an enchantress or sorceress nature). One text contains the following story: “Now Isis was a woman who possessed words of power; her heart was wearied with millions of men, therefore she chose the millions of gods, but she esteemed more highly the millions of spirits. And she meditated in her heart saying, ‘cannot I by means of the sacred name of God make myself mistress of the earth and become a goddess of like rank and power to Ra in heaven and upon earth’?”

Isis observed that Ra was getting old and had spittle from his mouth dribbling on the earth. She mixed this with dirt and made a sacred serpent which she laid on the path that Ra took on his daily trip (i.e. the sun’s path across the sky). When the snake bit Ra, the poison spreaded quickly throughout his body, causing him great pain. He cried out to the other gods, but none could help him. Isis came to him and asked, “what happened?” When he told her he had been bitten by a snake, she said that she could help him with her “words of magical power.” According to the text, Isis said to Ra, “O tell me thy name, holy Father, for whosoever shall be delivered by that name shall live.” Ra proceeded to relate many of the great things he had done, for example the creation and so forth. But Isis said, “What thou hast not said is thy name. O tell it unto me, and the poison shall depart; for he shall live whose name is revealed.” Then the poison began to “burn like fire” and Ra said, “I consent that Isis shall search into me, and that my name shall pass from me to her.” Ra then hid himself from the other gods. “And when the time had arrived for the heart of Ra to come forth, Isis spake unto her son Horus, saying, ‘The god hath bound himself by oath to deliver up his two eyes (i.e. the sun and the moon).’ Thus was the name of the great god taken from him, and Isis, the lady of words of magical powers, said ‘Depart, thou poison, go forth from Ra. ... Let Ra live’! These are the words of Isis, the mighty lady, the mistress of the gods, who knew Ra by his own name.”⁵⁸

Horus the Avenger

In due course Horus had grown into maturity. He had been well reared and nurtured by his mother, Isis, who had taught him that his duty was to avenge the murder of his father and had encouraged a warrior spirit in him. The time had come for Horus to fulfill his destiny. Osiris had appeared to him in a form that he could recognize and encouraged him to take up the battle with Set to avenge him. And it is under this form of “Horus, the avenger of his father, that he appealed so strongly to the imagination of the Egyptians.”⁵⁹ Set had “escaped punishment because Osiris had, at the time of his death, none to avenge his cause.”⁶⁰ After Osiris had instructed Horus in the use of arms he asked him, “What he thought was the most glorious action a man could perform?” to which Horus replied, “To revenge the injuries offered to his father and mother.”⁶¹ Osiris was pleased.

The Battle Between Horus and Set

The battle that ensued between Horus and Set lasted “many days,” which stretched into centuries according to some accounts. (Jacob Carruthers, in his book *MDW NTR*, presents the argument that this struggle was one over inheritance between the deceased king’s oldest brother and the king’s son.⁶²) The tide of this epic battle swung back and forth, until eventually Horus sought and received guidance from Thoth. After which the struggle inclined in his favor, rendering him victorious. He took Set prisoner, and turned him over to Isis to watch. Isis felt sympathy for Set, who was her brother, and set him free. This is her compassionate nature, which was referred to earlier, coming to fore at a most inopportune time. Horus became so outraged that he turned on his mother with the fury of a “panther from the south,” and tore the royal emblems from her head. (Some accounts say he tore off her head.) When Thoth saw this he replaced them with a helmet in the shape of a cow’s head.⁶³ (Other accounts say he replaced her head with the head of a cow.)

While Set was free he publicly accused Isis of being a harlot and Horus of Illegitimacy and a trial had to be held by the gods. (This would be consistent with the “inheritance theory” of their struggle.) Therein Thoth, who became their advocate, proved that Horus was the rightful heir to Osiris’ throne.⁶⁴ Some accounts say that Thoth acted as judge, i.e. he “weighted their words,” and decided that Horus spoke the truth.⁶⁵ There followed two other battles in which Horus won. In the great (perhaps the decisive?) battle they first fought as men, and then in the form of bears in which they fought for three days and three nights.⁶⁶

The Reuniting of the body of Osiris

Recall that Isis had buried the dispersed members of Osiris’ body wherever she found them. From the texts we see that Horus collected and reunited them with the help of Isis, Nephthys, and his four sons (who became the gods of the four cardinal points of the earth). By performing a number of magical ceremonies wherein he “made use of several words of power,” Horus was able to make Osiris a “complete man, endowed with all his members,” and restored life and breath to his body. After Osiris had been brought back to life, it was time for his ascent into heaven.⁶⁷

However, Osiris’ troubles with Set were not over. In order to prevent his entry into heaven, Set gathered together the “Seban fiends and prepared to destroy his body by their means,” but was foiled in their endeavor by Thoth. Having failed at this attempt, Set proceeded to make some very serious charges against Osiris. They were of such nature that Thoth, “the spirit and intelligence of the creator of the world, ... the great mastermind of the universe” decided that the matter should be tried by the gods in the “great Hall of the Aged god in An” (i.e. Heliopolis). Set was allowed to present his charges, to which Osiris replied. After the “weighing of the words,” Thoth rendered the verdict “in favor of Osiris, and he became the god of truth, and of those who spoke the truth. Moreover,

Osiris, having been declared true of word, or true of voice, by Thoth, went up into heaven, and reigned there as King.”⁶⁸

But there was some difficulty in getting Osiris up into heaven. And in order to overcome the difficulty, a divine ladder had to be built by the gods, which was set up from earth to heaven by Horus and Ra. (Earlier versions, when he was viewed as a benevolent god, say Set instead of Ra. This undoubtedly derived from the aspect of the mythology when Horus and Set were viewed as a complementary duality, or perhaps the harmonizing or reunification of the two.) With their help Osiris entered into heaven. Ra was on one of his sides and Horus on the other, Isis was in front of him, and Nephthys was behind him, as the gods welcomed him in. And when Osiris entered into heaven, he went in “as a ‘living being,’ not merely as one about to begin a second state of existence with limited powers and faculties which he possessed on earth, but as one who felt that he had the right to rule heaven and the denizens thereof.” Osiris “was very different from the gods whose heaven he entered, for he was at one time an inhabitant of earth.” Because he was the first man to rise from the dead, “he became the type and symbol and hope of every dead man, and the other gods in heaven seem to have thought it right to set apart for him a place in the Other World where he could live with those who died believing in him and rule over them.”⁶⁹

The Afterlife and the Judgment

The Egyptians believed that “because the human body of Osiris rose from the dead, the body of every man could rise from the dead also.” And they believed further, that Osiris was beyond a doubt the only god who could grant them everlasting life, not only because he had risen from the dead but because he too had lived as a human and knew first hand of their experience. They knew that it was impossible to live a perfect and divine life as Osiris had done, for unlike Osiris they lacked “the *divine* body, soul, spirit, and nature, which has brought about the resurrection of his *human* body, soul, spirit, and nature.”⁷⁰ (Emphasis mine) But Osiris was a just and merciful god and if they tried to follow his teachings and lived a decent life, they believed that Osiris might look kindly on them at their judgment.

Special preparation of Osiris’ body had been made. Anubis had taken special care in embalming it and swathed it in “linen swathing which were woven by Isis and Nephthys.” And Horus had performed “words and ceremonies which Thoth taught Isis,” that resurrected Osiris.⁷¹ The Egyptians believed that if their priests performed for them these same rituals, and if they could successfully pass their judgment trials, then if Horus, who had done so much for his father, would present them to him for acceptance that “Osiris would favorably receive” them.⁷²

It was also clear to the Egyptians “that not every man was fit to be raised from the dead to life immortal, and at a very early period men felt that good and evil deeds of man ought to be taken into account somewhere and by someone who had power to punish the wicked and reward the just.”⁷³

The Negative confessions

The hall of Maat is where this judgment took place. It was a long hall wherein two rows of twenty-one gods sat along the walls. (These forty-two gods probably represented nomes, i.e. districts of cities, in Egypt.) The deceased had to learn their names and offer prayers before they entered. After their entrance into the hall of Maat, they addressed each of the gods by their names and declared that they had not committed the offense that that particular god was in charge of. The procedure went somewhat as follows.

Hail (name of the particular god), who cometh forth from (name of the city, district, or the nome of the god), I have not:

- (1) done iniquity.
- (2) committed robbery.
- (3) stolen with violence.
- (4) committed theft.
- (5) killed men.
- (6) made light the bushel of corn.
- (7) acted deceitfully.
- (8) robbed the property of god (?).
- (9) uttered falsehood.
- (10) stolen food.
- (11) cursed.
- (12) attacked any man.
- (13) slain the cattle of god.
- (14) used deceit (?).
- (15) stolen grain (?).
- (16) acted the part of the spy (or eavesdropper).
- (17) slandered.
- (18) been angry without cause.
- (19) lain with another man's wife.
- (20) abused myself.
- (21) made any man angry.
- (22) attacked any man.
- (23) been a man of wrath.
- (24) been deaf to the words of truth.
- (25) stirred up strife.
- (26) made one to weep.
- (27) acted impurely, nor lain with men.
- (28) eaten my heart.
- (29) cursed any man.
- (30) done deeds of violence.
- (31) acted hastily.
- (32) pierced (?) my skin and I have not taken violence (?) with the god.
- (33) made loud my voice in speaking.

- (34) acted deceitfully, I have not acted wickedly.
- (35) cursed the king.
- (36) fouled the water.
- (37) made loud my voice.
- (38) cursed the god.
- (39) acted insolently.
- (40) worked for honors (?).
- (41) increased my possessions except through my own goods.
- (42) treated with contempt the god of my city.

These declarations are known as the “Negative Confessions.” The renderings of the words for certain sins are not always exact,” according to Budge⁷⁴, “because we do not know the precise idea which the framer of the remarkable document had.”⁷⁵

The Weighing of the Heart

Next came the weighing of the heart of the deceased, which was to the Egyptians “symbolic of the conscience,” against the feather of Maat, which was “emblematic of Right and Truth.” These two were placed in the Great Balance Scale where the weighing was done by Anubis. Thoth recorded the results and presented them to the gods for ratification. If the weighing was unfavorable, the deceased was devoured by a crocodile headed beast, The Great Devourer, Who was waiting for the outcome. Otherwise the deceased was approached by Horus, who took the left hand of the deceased in to his right hand and led “him up to the shrine wherein Osiris is [was] seated.” Horus then presented the deceased to Osiris and announced the favorable outcome of the weighing. The Deceased then proclaimed his final confessions in an address to Osiris. In addition, he offered Osiris gifts of fruits and flowers, and asked for permission to receive his favor. This being granted the deceased had to pass through the rest of the hall of Maat by pronouncing the names of each of its parts. When this final ordeal was completed, Thoth bid him to “come forward.”⁷⁶

Chapter Three

Of The African Roots Of Osirianism

Some Cultural/Theological Comparisons

When analyzing the religion of the ancient Egyptian, one has two main sources of materials. They are the “Magical, Religious, and Mythological Texts written by the Egyptians” for themselves and the accounts of these three areas in addition to the “Gods of Ancient Egyptians written by Greek and Roman historians and philosophers ... for the use and information of their countrymen.”⁷⁷ Of the former, the writers, i.e. the priests, assumed “the existence of the same beliefs in their readers, as well as a knowledge of the essentials of the “native Religion of Ancient Egypt,” and therefore did not document certain details of information.⁷⁸ One has to glean this information from the analysis of these texts. By the time the Greco-Roman writers arrived on the scene, the dynastic periods were over. And as they did not possess knowledge of the essentials of the ancient religion, they were unable to fully grasp the information that they were given by their contemporary Egyptian priests. However, much valuable information can be ascertained from their writings that can be substantiated by the Egyptian texts.

The evidence shows that the fundamental beliefs of the ancient Egyptian religion are of indigenous origin, that is, they are Nilotic or Sudanic in the broadest sense. And the understanding and explanation of it cannot be elucidated in any other way except by “the evidence which is afforded by the Religions of the modern peoples who live on the great rivers of East, West, and Central Africa.” And that the “central figure of the ancient Egyptian Religion was Osiris, and the chief fundamentals of his cult were the belief in his divinity, death, resurrection, and absolute control of the destinies of the bodies and souls of men.”⁷⁹

From the writings we also gather that the worship of the Sun-God in one form or another (e.g. Ra, Temu, Khepera, Horus) “was the form of Religion accepted by the pharaohs, and the priesthood, and a limited aristocracy from the middle of the Vth Dynasty onwards. ... These astute theologians, either by force or persuasion, succeeded in making the official classes and priesthood believe that all the indigenous great gods were forms of Ra, and so secured his supremacy. Meanwhile, the bulk of the people clung to their ancient cult of the Moon [“It is certain, however, that just as at one time the star Orion was regarded as his (Osiris’) abode in the sky, and Sothis (Sirius) that of Isis, so at one period Osiris was identified with the moon.”⁸⁰], and to their sacred beasts and birds, etc., and worshipped the spirits which dwelt in them, wholly undisturbed by the spread of the foreign and official cult of the Sun-God, which appealed so strongly to the great mixture of peoples in the Egyptian Delta, ...” Consequently, it is apparent “that the existence of the cult of Ra in Egypt does not affect the inquiry into the indigenous Religion of Egypt in any way.”⁸¹

“The general evidence derived from the Religion of Ancient Egypt showed that all the Great fundamental beliefs centered in Osiris and his cult, ... With the cult of Osiris was bound up all that was best in the civilization of Egypt during the Dynastic period.” “Early in the Dynastic Period his priest cleverly succeeded in incorporating in his worship all that was best in the local cults, and the ideas of morality, justice, and righteousness which they grouped about it appealed quickly to the people all over Egypt. The spread of the cult was rapid, both in Upper Egypt and in the Delta, because no other cult offered to its adherents the hope of the resurrection and immortality. Among the tribes of Egypt in general the cult of Osiris took the place of the cult of ancestral spirits, but the people lost nothing by the exchange, for Osiris became the divine ancestor of them all.”⁸²

The evidence indicates that Osiris was an African and the birthplace of his worship “seems to have been Upper Egypt.” As stated earlier, the worship of Osiris was very ancient. So ancient that it is impossible to discuss its origin. But Cheik Anta Diop cites Diodorus of Sicily as writing:

The Ethiopians say that the Egyptians are one of their colonies which was brought into Egypt by Osiris. They even allege that this country was originally under water, but that the Nile, dragging much mud as it flowed from Ethiopia, had filled it in and made it a part of the continent. ... They add that from them, as from their authors and ancestors, the Egyptians get most of their laws. It is from them that the Egyptians have learned to honor kings as gods and bury them with such pomp; sculpture and writing were invented by the Ethiopians. The Ethiopians cite evidence that they are more ancient than the Egyptians, ...⁸³

Diop himself writes: “we may even add that the legend pinpoints the birth of Osiris and Isis in Upper Egypt: Osiris born at Thebes and Isis at Denderah.”⁸⁴ Of the birth of Isis Budge writes, that in Denderah “Nut brought forth the goddess in the form of a dark-skinned child,... gave birth to her brother Osiris in Thebes, ... to her sister Nephthys in Het-Seshesh.”⁸⁵ All were born in Upper Egypt, as was Horus-the-Elder, and Set, although on different days as the texts state.

The African origin of the gods are clearly evident as one other part of the legend indicates. Recall that the gods Shu and Tefnut were produced by masturbation by the Sun-God Temu (or Ra). Here we see the influence of the Heliopolitan priests. In the legend they have, in late dynastic times, the “races” divided up into four classes; The Egyptians, the Semites, and the Libyans were created by Horus and Sekhet [the female counterpart of the god Ptah, the opener of the day]; and the Nubians or the Nehesu, were created by masturbation by Ra. Hence, we see that both the gods Shu and Tefnut, and the Nubians were created by masturbation is indicative and suggestive of its antiquity. For in the later periods the concepts of creation took on a more refined, sophisticated and enlightened form which reflected the evolving and advancing civilization. The above connection also indicates that the origin of the gods Shu and Tefnut is a product of the

Nubians. Budge writes: “the legend as to the origin of the gods Shu and Tefnut is ... likely to have been the product of some indigenous dark-skinned race ...”⁸⁶

Budge in his two volume work on Osiris unequivocally argued that upon examination of the texts, tomb deposits, and excavations of the Predynastic, Archaic, and Early Dynastic Periods prove “beyond all doubt that the indigenous Religion of ancient Egypt was unlike any of the Asiatic Religions with which it had been compared and that all its fundamentals remain unchanged throughout the dynastic period.”⁸⁷ He underscores his point further by stating that it was “clear that the general character of the Religion of the dynastic Egyptians was identical with that of the Religion of the Primitive Egyptians. ... The evidence derived from the Egyptian texts also supplied information about several beliefs and characteristics of the Religion of all periods.” And he adds that: “All these characteristics seemed to indicate that the Egyptian Religion was of African rather than Asiatic origin.”⁸⁸

Several of the characteristics of the Egyptian Religion that many Egyptologists had difficulty understanding could be explained through comparative analysis with African religions. One such characteristic was the “belief in the existence of the Dual Soul, and the extraordinary ideas as to its functions and capabilities which underlie ... ancient Egyptian psychology and eschatology in general.” Professor G. Maspero, “was disposed to explain them by references to the beliefs of Modern African peoples in the Sudan and West Africa.”

Of this particular aspect of the Egyptian religion Budge explains: “We have seen that the texts speak of man having more than one ‘soul,’ and that the Egyptian, like the modern African, thought that he possessed three at least, the Ka, or Double, the Ba, or Heart-Soul, and the Khu (Spirit-Soul). ... It appears, then that the Khu is the Spirit, or Spirit-Soul of a man, which it was impossible to injure or kill, and that it was the vital principle of a man and was immortal. The Ka perished if offerings were not provided for it, and the Ba (Heart-Soul) might, it was thought, also die, but the Khu was ‘imperishable’.” He adds: “When the body died there could be raised from it by means of words, holy or magical, and ceremonies performed by priests, a Spirit-body called Sahu, which the Khu (Spirit-Soul) could inhabit at pleasure. The Ka, Ba or Heart-Soul, and Shadow dwelt in the tomb with the body, or wandered about outside it and away from it, when they desired to do so.”

Of West African beliefs Budge writes: “the belief into dual-soul, i.e. the soul of the body, and the soul, or, as we may call it the ‘Spirit-Soul,’ is well-nigh universal. The soul of the body, the Egyptian Ba, is mortal, but the Spirit-Soul, the Egyptian Khu, is immortal. Nothing is soulless to the African, and even matter is thought to be a form of soul, of a low order it is true, which souls of higher nature can make use of.” He adds; “... it seems to me that actually the Egyptian and the African only know of the Dual-Soul, i.e. the Body-Soul and the Spirit-Soul.”

Budge states that among the people of “the Sudan and Western Africa exactly parallel beliefs exist, and we are driven to conclude that the eschatological ideas of the Egyptians

were not peculiar to themselves, but belonged to the indigenous peoples of those parts of Africa.”⁸⁹

In explaining his views on the relationship between the ancient Egyptian religious beliefs with those of modern Africa, Budge had this to say:⁹⁰

During subsequent visits to the Sudan I became convinced that a satisfactory explanation of the ancient Egyptian Religion could only be obtained from the Regions of the Sudan, more especially those of the peoples who lived in the isolated districts in the south and west of that region, where European influence was limited, and where native beliefs and religious ceremonies still possessed life and meaning. I then began to read systematically the books of all the great travelers in the Sudan, beginning with the Travels of Ibn Batutah, and ending with the recent publications like Mr. Ward’s View from the Congo. The notes made in the course of this reading formed a large mass of material which seemed to me to be of great value for the comparative study of the Egyptian and modern African religious beliefs. It may be objected that the modern beliefs and superstitions of the Sudan and Congo-land and Dahomey are survivals of ancient Egyptian religious views and opinions, but the objection seems to me to possess no validity. The oldest and best form of the Egyptian Religion died more than 3,000 years ago [i.e. around 1,000 B.C.], and many of the most illuminating facts for comparative and illustrative purposes are derived from Religions of peoples who live in parts of Africa into which Egyptian influence never penetrated. ... *Modern Sudani beliefs are identical with those of ancient Egypt, because the Egyptians were Africans and the modern peoples of the Sudan are Africans.* (Emphasis mine.)

The main point to be ascertained from the above quote is that the Africans did not inherit their religious ideas from the Egyptians but rather they both were derived and evolved from the same indigenous peoples. And that is what explains their similarities.

When discussing the Dual-Soul, mention was made of the heart-soul. To the Egyptians the heart was the source of “wish, longing, desire, lust, will, courage, mind, wisdom, sense, intelligence, manner, disposition, attention, intention, etc., and it is clear that the heart was regarded as the seat of life, and as the home of the passions, both good and bad, and as the seat of the pleasures derived from eating, drinking, and the canal appetite. There appears to have been a soul which was connected with the heart.”⁹¹ “Among modern African peoples the heart of both man and beast is regarded as the source of all life, emotion, passion, movement, and strength, and in the case of man the heart is often identified with the soul.”⁹² Also we note that at the ancient Egyptian “weighing of the heart” at the judgment the deceased addressed his heart, referring to it as his “mother” and the “seat of his being” and prays that “nothing and no one oppose him in judgment. ... and that his heart may not be departed from him.”⁹³

The Reverence of the Mother

Notice the reference that is made to the heart as “his mother,” and the equating of “his mother” to the “seat of his being.” In both ancient Egypt and Africa the mother was held in high esteem. And great reverence was paid to her. There is an ancient Egyptian text that reads: “Give thy mother no cause to be offended at thee, lest she lift up her hands to God, who will hear her complaint and punish thee.” We also observe that both cultures trace their descent matrilineally, “probably because there can never be any doubt as to a man’s parentage on his mother’s side.”⁹⁴

Of Africa and her regard for the mother W. E. B. DuBois wrote the following in *Darkwater*:⁹⁵

The land of the mother was and is Africa. In subtle and mysterious ways, despite her curious history, her slavery, polygamy, and toil, the spell of the African mother pervades the land. Isis, the mother, is still titular goddess, in thought if not name, of the dark continent. Nor does this all seem to be solely a survival of the historic matriachate through which all nations pass, – it appears to be more than this, – as if the great black race in passing up the steps of human culture gave the world, not only the Iron Age, the cultivation of the soil, and the domestication of animals, but also, in particular the mother-idea.

DuBois proceeded to quote another author who wrote: “No mother can love more tenderly and none is more tenderly loved than the Negro mother.” Effects of this reverence for the mother is manifested among present day African-Americans wherein no other insult is more caustic than a put down of one’s mother, and wherein people are judged in terms of how they treat their mother.

Some Cultural Comparisons from the Arts

In speaking of contemporary descendants of Africa, one often hears reference made to their love for music and dance; so much so that many are inclined to think that these traits are genetically endowed. Evidence of this love for music and dance can be found as far back as one chooses to look. Ibn Khaldun, the fourteenth century Tunisian born Arab historian made the following remarks as a result of observing Africans throughout the continent: “They are found eager to dance whenever they hear a melody.”⁹⁶

It is reasonable to expect that any characteristic that is clear to a people will show up as an attribute of their deity. From the writings of Diodorus we find that Osiris “was a patron of dancers and musicians of all classes, both male and female.” He wrote that when “Osiris passed through Ethiopia, a company of satyrs were presented to him, ... For Osiris was a man given to mirth and jollity, and took great pleasures in music and dancing. ... Therefore the satyrs, who are naturally inclined to skipping, dancing, singing and all sorts of mirth, were taken in as part of the army.” Budge says of this information obtained from Diodorus that it:

... is both interesting and valuable, for it not only describes the love of Osiris for music, and singing, and dancing, and the pleasure which he took in watching buffoons, who Diodorus called “satyrs,” but it throws light on the cult of Osiris, and on one of the most important features of the African religion and the character of the African. All Nilotic peoples are greatly addicted to dancing, and they never seem able to perform any ceremony without dancing; they dance at weddings and they dance at funerals, and dancing among many tribes constitutes an act of worship of the highest and most solemn importance.⁹⁷

We find from reading the text that an Egypt priest brought to King Assa, of the IVth Dynasty, a pigmy from Punt (i.e. the Sudan) “who knew how to dance the ‘dance of the god [Osiris],’ and was said to come from the ‘Land of the Spirits’.” This indicates that Osiris had a special dance, and that “Egyptians” were surprised and/or impressed that that the Sudani pygmy knew it! It has also been noted that every important god of the West Coast African had “his own dance, which was sacred to him, and is known only to the initiated,”⁹⁸

It is also interesting to note the significance of the drums to African dance. For “the dance is always performed to the sound of drums.”⁹⁹

In his book *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume I, Budge has a chapter entitled “Osiris and Dancing” wherein he gives numerous similarities between modern Africans and the ancient Egyptians with respect to their regard for music and dance.

Parenthetically:

When one muses over the titles conferred to several of Twentieth Century African America’s most laudable goddesses of song, one cannot help but notice the uncanny similarities to the titles that were given to Isis, herself a goddess renown for her soulful utterances; such as “The lady of heaven” (Billie Holliday – “Lady Day”), “The divine one” (Sarah Vaughn), “The Queen and Lady of the lands of the South” (Dinah Washington – “Queen of the Blues”), and “The queen of the Earth” (Aretha Franklin – “Queen of Soul,” recall that the African believed that everything contained a soul.)¹⁰⁰

The Respect for Elders

Another Trait that is commonly found in African cultures is the high respect and regard for the aged, which “was a characteristic of the Egyptian, and it is found among a large number of modern African tribes at the present day.” A maxim found in the pyramid text of Ani says: “Sit not down when another is standing up if he be older than thou, even if thy rank in life be higher than his, ...” Of the African’s deep respect for the aged Budge writes:

The aged must only be addressed in terms of flattery and adulation. Any disrespectful deportment or reproachful language towards such persons is regarded as a misdemeanor of no ordinary kind. And there is nothing which a young person so much depreciates as the curse of an aged person and especially that of a revered father. This profound respect for aged persons, by a very natural operation of the mind, is turned into idolatrous regard for them when dead. They are not divested of their power and influence by death, but, on the contrary, they are raised to a higher and more powerful sphere of influence, and hence the natural disposition of the living, and especially those related to them in any way in this world, to look to them and call upon them for aid in all emergencies and trials.¹⁰¹

The Significance of Magic

The Africans and the ancient Egyptians also had the belief in magic as a common characteristic in their religions. In both cultures the magicians, were sometimes the kings themselves, but were most often a high official such as a priest. They both believed that the world was governed by the “gods and spirits” and that the priests (magicians) could hold communication with the spirits of these gods and could influence them. The kings in both cultures often believed they held their positions due to the influence of the priest, “who posed as interpreters of the divine will, and the acts and policy of the chief were often directed by them.” In primitive times the chief or king was the strongest and bravest in the land. He was “the most fearless hunter and fiercest fighter and was in fact the embodiment of physical strength.” [The Zulu king T’Shaka (1785 - 1828), was a prime example of this.] The priest, on the other hand, the man of “occult” powers was “the incarnation of intelligence, agility of mind, thought, cunning shrewdness and foresight, and when Egyptians had acquired the art of writing, he added to his powers the ability to read and write, and he possessed a thorough knowledge of the sacred books.” And this condition existed among many communities of West Africa at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁰²

These “magicians” were known by many titles, which include priest, witch doctor, shaman, medicine-man, etc. Some of the feats ascribed to them are legion and legend. They include: telling the future, interpreting dreams and omens, casting good and evil spells, casting out devils, concocting potent medicines, curing the sick, raising the dead, rendering themselves invisible, changing themselves into the form of animate and inanimate things, such as animals etc.

In the Osirian legend, when Horus is stung to death by a scorpion, Thoth gave Isis the potent and magical words of power that enabled her to restore his life. This knowledge of these words and of how to properly utter them and of how to correctly perform the ceremony was “transmitted to her priest” by Isis, “and by its use they were enabled to do away the effects of the reptile’s poison in the human body, and so preserve the lives of many Egyptians.”¹⁰³

The Westcar papyrus gives an account of a remarkable feat performed by the priest Tchatha-em-ankh during the reign of Seneferu, of either the IIIrd or IVth Dynasty. It says that he “divided the water of a lake into two parts, and placed one part upon the other, in order to allow a singing woman, who was rowing the royal boat with the king in it, to recover a jewel which dropped from her into the water as she rowed and sang.”¹⁰⁴

Along with the similarities between the “magician” etc., that the two cultures had in common, were also the charms, amulets, and other symbols. Two of the most noticeable are the flail and scepter which several pictures and sculptures of Osiris depict him carrying. They are not only amulets, but they are also symbols of power and authority. The flail, which is used in thrashing wheat, can be seen as symbols carried by African leaders of modern times, most notable was Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of post-colonial Kenya.¹⁰⁵

Funeral Customs

There are many customs and ceremonies surrounding the ancient Egyptian funeral and burial preparations that can be made clearer when they are compared to their counterparts among several of the African peoples. An example of this can be seen in the significance attached to the importance of the umbilical cord and the jawbone, especially the lower jawbone.

In the “Liturgy of Funeral Offerings” found in “the pyramid of Unas, a king of the VIth Dynasty” is the phrase: “I have come, I have brought to him the jawbones in Re-stau.” One chapter in the *Book of the Dead* points out that both the god and the deceased are provided with jawbones.” And another chapter reads: “Horus hath avenged thee, he hath destroyed the jawbones of thine enemies.” Scholars have been unable to find in the Egyptian text anything that explains “the allusion to the jawbones in any one of these passages.” However when we examine the funeral costumes of some modern Sudani peoples we gain some insight.

In Uganda when a king died an official took the body and removed the lower jaw, placed it in a wooden dish, and put it in a specially built house designed by a chief appointed to be its guardian. Also the Baganda and other African peoples cut out the jawbones and preserve them with honor. Further insight into the special significance given to the lower jawbone is obtained from the Eastern Ewe people who believe “that the lower jaw is the only part of the body which a child derives from its mother.” Here the reference to the mother should be underscored.

The rise of Osirianism, which prohibited the mutilation of the human body caused the “custom of cutting out jawbones” to become obsolete.¹⁰⁶

Of the umbilical cord, the *Book of the Dead* contains the following passage: “I have done away my impurity, I have destroyed the evil things in me.” The question was asked: “What does this mean?” The answer given was: “It is the cutting off of the umbilical cord of Osiris, the scribe Ani, triumphant before all the gods, and driving away all of the

evil things before all the gods, and driving away of all the evil things which belong to him.” Another question: “What does this mean?” The answer: “It is the purification [which takes place] on the body of his birth.” Again the texts offer no insight into the significance of the umbilical cord. However, King Mtesa of Uganda and the queen mother informed an interviewer that when a king dies, his umbilical cord is attached to a beautifully covered wooden frame and kept in a receptacle called a Balongo. And that when “its owner dies his spirit enters the wooden frame, and lives there with the cord forever. If the frame be destroyed the spirit departs.” Further investigation reveals more important facts about the preservation of the lower jawbone and umbilical cord of the king in Uganda. “The cord seems to be to the afterbirth what the lower jawbone is to the person to whom it belonged” that is, the ghost of the person attaches itself to the lower jawbone after death, and the ghost of the afterbirth attaches itself to the bit of the cord. ... The jawbone and the umbilical cord must always be kept together to fulfill the requirements of the ghosts after the death of the king.”¹⁰⁷

The Significance Of “The Stool”

Another characteristic of interest is the role and significance of the stool in customs and traditions in Osirianism and several of the other African peoples. The war god, Kibuka, of the Baganda, sits on a stool that has a basin fitted into it where his lower jawbone is kept along with his genital organs. In the *Book of the Dead* we find that the stool on which Osiris sits is made to resemble a tomb and represents a “sepulchral coffer,” (i.e. a burial vault and/or receptacle of sacred articles) that undoubtedly contains sacred parts of Osiris’ body such as his “genitals and lower jawbone, as was the case of Kibuka.”¹⁰⁸

The stool has special importance in parts of West Africa as well. Although the meaning may differ somewhat, the fact that it is the stool upon which such significance is conferred is noteworthy. The “Legend of the Golden Stool” of the Ashanti is well known among those who are familiar with the traditions of West Africa, and is well worth the mention here. In his classic two volume work, *World’s Great Men of Color*, J. A. Rogers writes:¹⁰⁹

According to Ashanti tradition, the Golden Stool had descended from the skies, having been conjured thence by a celebrated magician, servant of Onyame, god of the sky who had commanded the wizard to make the Ashanti a powerful nation. One day, in the presence of a great multitude the Stool dropped from a great black cloud and fluctuated slowly down until it came to rest on the knees of the king.

It was firmly believed to be the fountainhead of health, wealth, coverage, and strength and to be linked to the destiny of the nation. ...

So sacred was it regarded that not even the king himself dared sit on it.

On the Dogon and Their Cosmogony

Circumcision and excision have apparently been practiced in Africa and ancient Egypt since time immemorial. Scholars have for years tried to determine the ancient beliefs behind it; religious, health, fetish, phallic worship, or what? Fortunately for us there is a people in West Africa that can help shed some light on these as well as other practices, customs, and traditions of ancient Egypt. This elucidation comes to us due to the patience and persistence of the French ethnologist, Marcel Griaule (1899 - 1956).

Griaule began studying the Dogons of Mali, West Africa in 1931. The Dogons are often referred to as “Cliff Dwellers,” because they retreated to the hills and cliffs of Mali to avoid the onslaught of the European’s colonial designs. They were never conquered as the Europeans could never overcome the relentless defense and bombardments of rocks from those heights that the cliffs blessed them with.¹¹⁰ Thus, they retained their old ways and culture until time and technology finally allowed the Europeans to penetrate their midst.

For sixteen years Griaule studied, investigated, and queried the Dogons. Finally the priests held a council and decided that he was serious and worthy enough for them to reveal to him their knowledge and wisdom. Of which Griaule and his associate Germaine Dieterlen, who joined him in 1937, write in their classic work on the Dogons, *The Pale Fox*:¹¹¹

It is a consciously composed lore of master ideas which may not be placed within the reach of just anyone at any time. Certainly it constitutes a form of “slight knowledge” – a Bambara expression – sometime available to the average man. It conceals statements and coherent systems reserved for initiates, who alone have access to the “deep knowledge.” The myths present themselves in layers, like the shell of a seed, and one of their reasons for being is precisely to cover and conceal from the profane a precious seed which appears to belong rightly to a universal, valid body of knowledge.

The Dogon priest appointed one of their elders, the blind sage Ogotemmel, to instruct him and to report to them each day on the proceedings, as Griaule was to later learn. The lessons lasted thirty-three days and led, as the Dogon priest knew it would, “to months and years of intensive work.”¹¹²

These lessons were published in a book by Griaule entitled *Dieu d’Eau* (God of Water) and later translated into English as *Conversations with Ogotemmel*. From it we learn that Amma (notice the similarity to Amēn), whom the Dogon called God, created the heavens and the earth. The earth which lay flat and faced upward was feminine. “Amma, being lonely and desirous of intercourse with his creation, approached it. That was the occasion of the first breach of order of the universe. ... At God’s approach the termite hill rose up, barring the passage and displaying its masculinity. It was as strong as the organ of a stranger, and intercourse could not take place. But God is all-powerful. He cut down the termite hill, and had intercourse with the *excised* earth. (emphasis mine)

But the original incident was destined to effect the course of things forever; from this defective union there was born, instead of the intended twins, a single being, the *Thos aureus*, or jackal, symbol of the difficulties of God.”¹¹³

Here we are reminded of the birth of Anubis, regarded as the jackal headed offspring of Osiris and Nephthys; where Osiris is considered as a water god (or Nile god) and Nephthys is considered as the remote parts of the land.

The Dogon believed that under the ideal circumstance, twins would have been born, an androgynous pair, one predominantly male and the other predominantly female. But due to the difficulties presented to Amma by the termite hill, and the need to excise it, only a single birth occurred. Later when things settled down to normal Amma had “intercourse with his earth-wife, and this time without mishaps of any kind, the excision of the offending member having removed the cause of the former disorder. Water, which is the divine seed, was thus able to enter the womb of the earth and the normal reproductive cycle resulted in the birth of twins. Two beings were thus formed. God created them like water. ...

“These spirits, called Nummo [sometimes spelled Nommo], were thus two homogeneous products of God, of divine essence like himself, conceived without untoward incident and developed normally in the womb of the earth. Their destiny took them to Heaven, where they received the instructions of their father. ... the pair were born perfect and complete; they had eight members and their number was eight [the same number that occurred in one version of the ancient Egyptian creation], which is the symbol of speech [recall the importance of the ‘word’ in ancient Egyptian mythology].

“They were also of the essence of God, since they were made of his seed, which is at once the ground, the form, and the substance of the life-force of the world, ... This force is water, and the Pair are present in all water: they *are* water [or moisture as was Tefnut?], the water of the seas, of coasts, of torrents, of storms, and of the spoonfuls we drink.”¹¹⁴

The Nummo pair saw that their mother, the earth, was naked, due to the excision by Amma and brought some fibres from the plants created from the “heavenly regions.” These fibres were full of water and words and placed over the earth’s genitalia. Since they contained water, the Nummo were always present. With the words, the earth now had its first and most primitive language. The jackal, desirous of possessing this speech, “laid hands on the fibres in which language was embodied, that is to say, on his mother’s skirt. His mother, the earth, resisted this incestuous action. She buried herself in her womb, that is to say, in the anthill, disguised as an ant. But the jackal followed her. There was, it should be explained, no other woman in the world whom he could desire. The hole which the earth made in the anthill was never deep enough, and in the end she had to admit defeat. This prefigured the even-handed struggles between men and women, which, however always ends in the victory of the male.”¹¹⁵

As a consequence of this “incestuous act” the jackal acquired the gift of speech which he ever afterwards was able to reveal to diviners the designs of God. This “act,” to the Dogons, was the reason for “the flow of menstrual blood.” As a result of this defilement of the earth, Amma decided to “create living beings directly.” He modeled a womb and made a male organ of damp clay and they developed and separated until a human pair arose out of the “lumps of the earth.” At this point the Nummo pair intervened. They realized that twin births would not always happen and that might cause “errors” like those of the jackal to occur, which would not have happened had he not been alone.¹¹⁶

The Nummo pair drew on the ground outlines of a male and female, but the man took both of them for himself, and then the same thing was done for the woman. Thus, both man and woman were born with both male and female souls [another form of dual-souls?] with “two principles corresponding to two distinct persons. In the man the female soul is located in the prepuce; in the woman the male soul was in the clitoris.” The Nummo knew that “each person would have to merge himself in the sex for which he appeared to be best fitted.” In order to rectify this situation, the man was circumcised “removing from him all the femininity of his prepuce.”

With his prepuce removed “the man then had intercourse with the woman, who latter bore the first of two children of a series of eight, who were to become the ancestors of the Dogon people. In the moment of birth the pain of parturition was concentrated in the woman’s clitoris, which was excised by an invisible hand, detached itself and left her.
...”¹¹⁷

Thus, we see a cosmological explanation for the practice of circumcision and excision.

Of the eight offspring, mentioned above, from the first man and woman who became the ancestors from which the “eight Dogon families” descended, the first four were male and the later four were female. This is conceptually familiar to the ancient Egyptian concept of their “Oldest Company of the Gods” found in the temple of Heliopolis, mentioned in the previous chapter.¹¹⁸

It has also been mentioned previously that the cosmology of the Dogons was embodied in layers containing “deep knowledge.” In *The Pale Fox* by Griaule and Dieterlen, a much deeper insight into this cosmology is obtained. There we learn that the eight ancestors of man were also Nommo (spelled Nummo in *Conversions with Ogotommeli*). The fourth visited the earth and created disorder in the process and was changed into a pale fox (the jackal mentioned above) as punishment, and thus loses much of his divinely born characteristics, gifts, and abilities. The third Nommo, the twin of the fourth and father of mankind, was sacrificed to atone for his brother’s misdeeds. He was emasculated. His umbilical cord became alive and “changed into a tree, the kilena.” Amma stretched the Nommo’s two arms to a fork in the tree and executed him. The Nommo was sacrificed standing up because the Dogon believed that in this manner “the death agony inflicts the greatest suffering.” They believe that: “The man who dies lying down does not see (experience) much suffering.” The reason for this sacrifice, we must remember, was to

bring order and organization to the world. And according to a Dogon maxim, “If you wish to organize the world you must experience great suffering.”¹¹⁹

Amma then had the Nommo’s body divided up into sixty parts and spread them throughout the earth and universe in order to purify them. When this purification was accomplished, Amma recollected the Nommo’s body parts and resurrected him. The kilema tree, which also died, is resurrected through vegetation.¹²⁰

Of some of the noteworthy results of the Nommo’s sacrifice in Dogon philosophy, Griaule and Dieterlen write:¹²¹

Amma’s deed is currently recalled during sacrifices: the jaw and teeth of the [symbolized with animals] are saved so that the species may reproduce.

The role of dispenser of spiritual principles that was conferred of the victim presently devolves upon every individual after death; one successively gives portions of one’s life force to a certain number of descendants, and this allotment may span five generations ...

When a child is born, it receives a part of its spiritual principles from an ancestor who becomes its guardian and of whom the child itself is the living testimony ...

And later on they write:¹²²

For man as an individual, the sacrifice and resurrected signify the development of a being from the fetal to the adult stage. This development includes the evolution of the child who, until circumcision (male and female), is considered to be of either sex—the Nommo Anagonno sacrificed as a androgyny; then, after the operation, the child fully realized its masculine or feminine being—the mixed couple of the resurrected Nommo. Similarly, from a psychological and moral perspective the child will leave the ignorance of infancy behind and attain, with maturity, full awareness of himself, of other, and of the world, acquired through instruction and initiation ...

In their present day sacrifices the stages of the Nommo’s sacrifice are recalled:¹²³

- the chick (or small hen) slaughtered before the actual sacrifice, which has a divinatory value, represents the emasculation;
- the victim’s blood represents the blood at sacrifice;
- the throwing of the liver on the alter, the resurrection;
- the division of the body is recalled by the dismemberment of the victim and the regulated distribution of the pieces of meat to the participants, the consumption of which constitutes a communion of all the members of the group.

Thus, the Dogon say that the Nommo “showed man the first example of Sacrifice”: its value as a gift, its power, its extension, and its effect; for it seals all relations between people.

From the above discussions we see cosmological reasons for the practice of circumcision and excision unobtainable in the ancient Egyptian texts. We also see similarities between the “Pale Fox” (or jackal) and Anubis. Furthermore, like Osiris, the Nommo suffers death and his body is dismembered and scattered only to have it recollected and resurrected. We also gain some insight into the reverence paid to ancestors, especially those recently departed. And there is the similarity between the eight Dogon ancestors and the “company of eight gods” of the Egyptians. We even see the preservation of the jaw of the deceased practiced.

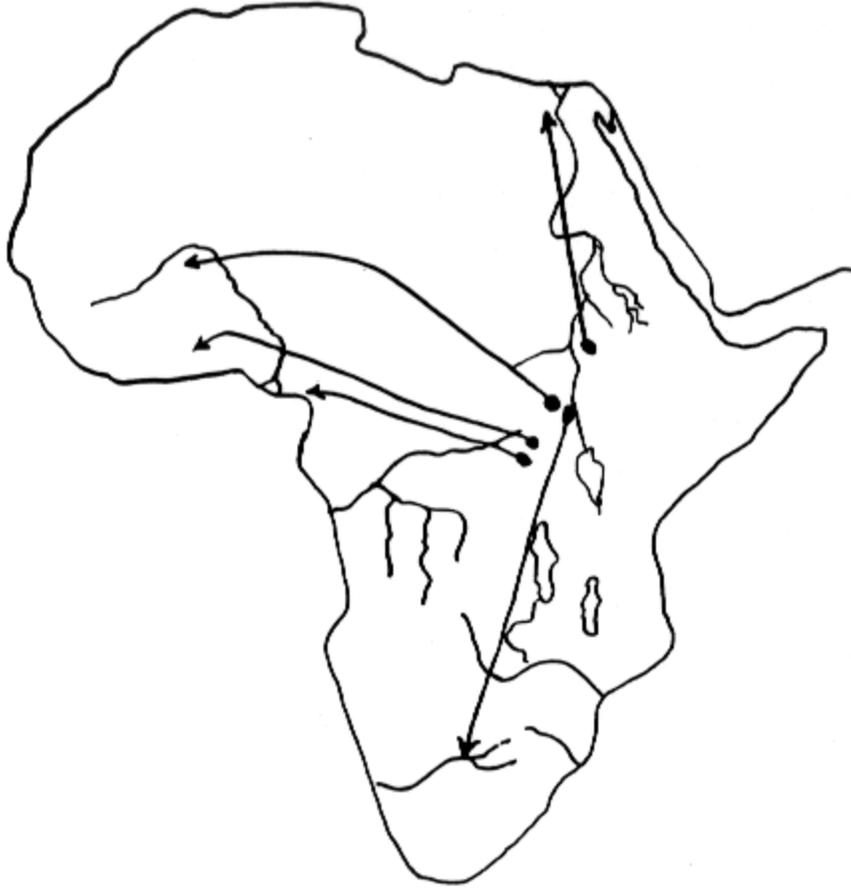
The Dogon had an incredibly complex and precise knowledge of the Sirius A and B star system. Their knowledge of this star system astonished astronomers, especially when they “confirmed the 50-year orbit the Dogon have given for another star circling Sirius. It is even more amazing when one realizes that Sirius B is invisible to the naked eye, and that this is the star that “the Dogon say ... , is the most important star in the sky.” For them it “is the egg of the world, the beginning and ending of all things seen and unseen.”¹²⁴

The star Sirius had a very significant role in the ancient Egyptian cosmology as well. In the aforementioned article, Adams writes:¹²⁵

In the book *The Sirius Mystery*, Robert Temple presents a massive amount of evidence, based on eight years’ research, which strongly suggest very close cultural and physical lineages between the Dogon, the ancient Egyptians, and the Sumerians. He convincingly demonstrates the striking similarities between many aspects of their mythologies.

Recall that Budge asserted that the reasons for the similarities between religious beliefs of ancient Egyptians and several modern Africans were that they emanated from the same source of indigenous people. A similar explanation for the similarities between the Dogon and the ancient Egyptians is presented by Diop who wrote:¹²⁶ “No matter where we collect legends on the genesis of a Black African people, those who still remember their origins say they came from the east ... Dogon and Yoruba legends report that they came from the east ...” See Figure 1.

Figure 1
Migrations of Ancient Africans



(See Precolonial Black Africa by Cheik Anta Diop, p. 218.)

Chapter Four

Of The Symbolism In The Mythology Of Ancient Egypt

Gerald Massey is one of a few Egyptologist who has delved into the depths of the ancient Egyptian mysteries to seek to understand its insights and wisdom from a cultural anthropological perspective. In what he considers his seminal work, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volumes I and II, Massey, who is also a spiritualist, discusses the origin, evolution, and the symbolism, and meanings of the mythologies and legends that evolved. This work is considered a primary source by many scholars and is referred to often. Massey's work delves into yet another arena in which we can learn much of, and from, the mythology of the ancient Egyptians. This we seek to do in this chapter.

Of Humankind's Primal years

In the beginnings of mankind, due to his mental capacity, he began to contemplate the wonders of nature, and characteristically of a true scientist, he "wondered why" and sought to make sense of it all. In the early years, man's lifestyle was akin to that of the animals, perhaps only slightly above. Man was not aware then of the role of the male in procreation, and was awestruck by the life-giving ability of the female. This naturally gave rise to a reverence of the female, and the assignment of female symbols to aspects of nature that similarly dealt with life producing activity. As life was highly valued, female deities would become dominant, with the earth itself being the "Great Mother."

Similarly, attributes of animals and plants that transcended those of man were noted, and those plants and animals that possessed these gifted aspects were used symbolically as representations of them. In time a type of sign language evolved as man expressed his understanding in various forms such as rock paintings, carvings, etc. Also, as language had not yet evolved, man used dance to communicate his thoughts, much akin to the way bees do. He used pantomime and gestures to express himself.

Language itself took a long time to evolve. It began to emerge as a product of the hunting and gathering activities of the first species of genus *Homo* over two million years ago. Richard Leakey, the paleontologist son of paleontologists Mary and Louis Leakey, discusses this evolution of language and its effect on human culture in a chapter entitled "The Art of Language" in his book *The Origin of Humankind*. He states "that the evolution of spoken language as we know it was a defining point in human prehistory."¹²⁷ And that language was "the engine of human brain growth."¹²⁸ That it enabled man to impose order, which according to "the archeological record" was a "glacially" slow process.

Leakey asserts that evidence from art and upper Paleolithic burial rituals indicate that fully modern language and consciousness, which fed each other, existed perhaps 35,000 years ago.¹²⁹ Clearly with the advent of spoken language, I submit, there rose the desire,

which gave rise to the need, to recall events, activities, and how to accomplish certain tasks, etc. Those individuals who best mastered this ability would surely attain a priestly status. And I would suggest that the latter day African griot is in keeping with this tradition.

Of Ritual and Order

In those primal years man was as promiscuous as other social animals. And one of the dire consequences of that activity was the death of young girls due to their inability to handle the sexual act with adult males. Because of this the women introduced rites of passage at puberty, making it taboo to have sex before then and only after young virgin girls had been excised (i.e. the opening rite of intocision which made penetration possible) and boys circumcised. And only circumcised boys were allowed to have sex.¹³⁰ Thus one of man's earliest rituals was instituted, which was also a major step toward civilization.

This also introduced the concept of two types of women: the virgin, or the one who conceives; and the mother and nurturer, or the one who gives birth. Through the evolving Egyptian mythology and legends they would take on various forms, e.g. mother and daughter, or two sisters, most notably, Isis and Nephthys.

In addition to this, when a young girl reached puberty and began to menstruate, this signaled the arrival of her time to be able to produce life. Hence, blood began to take on mystical and mythical qualities. All children were viewed as the offspring of the mother and family groupings were centered around her. In time, clans would form wherein group marriages were the norm, which set the stage for the evolution of family relationships that we now have.

In those times the bloodline of the mother was key and she would become a Eucharist whereby she would be sacrificed and her flesh would be eaten and her blood drunk so that her essence could be passed on. Later, as man became knowledgeable of the role of the male in procreation, it would be the male symbol of the god or supreme leader who would be sacrificed. Osirianism, a cult of vegetarianism, would eventually cause this human sacrificing to be replaced by the eating of bread and the drinking of wine as the symbolic representation of the flesh and blood of the sacrificed god.

On the Triumph of the Younger Brother

We also have in those earliest of times the eldest son being the dominant male figure and he was also the consort of the mother. Obviously there was no concept of incest then. All this was done to keep the bloodline in tact. Later this would take the form of the eldest son and daughter mating. The Great Mother, "she who existed with no one before her, the only one mightier than all of the gods, who were born of her."¹³¹ In this earliest of periods she was called Sekhet-Bast, and in one of her aspects was the goddess of passion. She would also be symbolized as Apt in Nubia, a form which "preceded Hathor ...as Mother-earth ... and who was 'mama' or mother of the Inner Africans."¹³²

Deep within equatorial Africa lies the two Great Lakes that give birth to the White Nile. It is in this region that humankind began to evolve. From these beginnings, the wee folks, the pygmies, the dwarfs were observers of nature and the heavens, and the world around them. Their primary food came from the abundance of papyrus reeds which formed the “great oasis” about the Great Lakes. This was like a paradise or heaven on earth, which they called Uat and later imaged as the “isle of the blessed.” That which produces life was symbolic of a mother. And Uat, “was divinized in the goddess Uati as a mother of all things fresh, flourishing, and evergreen.”¹³³

For most locations on the earth, the stars in the universe fall into one of three categories: 1) non setting stars that circulate around a pole star, 2) rising and setting stars, 3) and non rising stars that cannot be seen from that location. See Figure 2. However, at the equator, where the universe seems to revolve around the earth’s axis, all stars rise and fall except two, and the heavens seem to revolve around these two pole stars: one at the southern extension of the earth’s axis and the other at the northern. The southern region was the domain of Set, and the northern region was that of Horus.

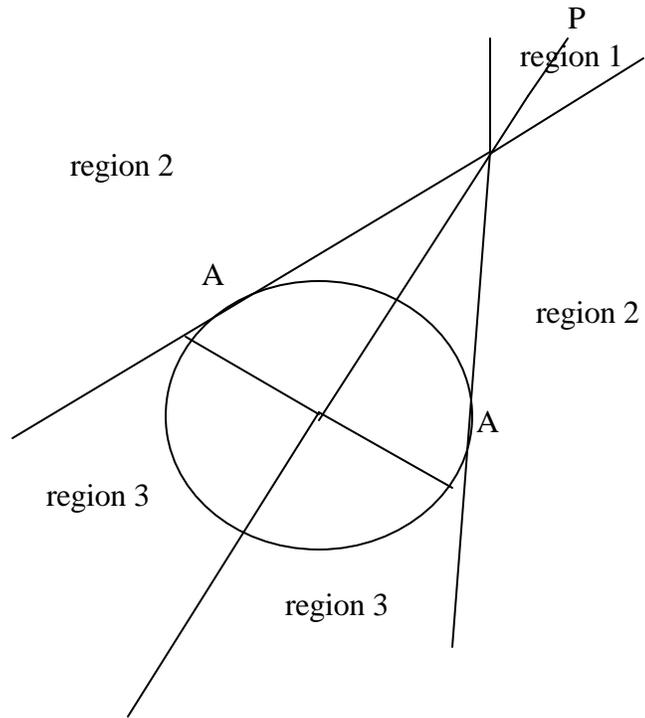
In Equatoria the nights and days were evenly divided. And time, such as it was reckoned, was in regard to this turn around which divides this first great circle. This phenomenon would be represented as the twins Set and Horus. Set was considered the power of night or darkness, and symbolized by a black bird (crow); and Horus, the power of day or light, by the golden hawk.¹³⁴

‘Tanga’ means thigh and ‘nyika’ means water. Hence, we get Tanganyika which means the Lake of the Thigh. The ancient Egyptians referred to Equatoria as the highest point, which they called Apta. This was also looked upon as a birthplace and was symbolized by the water-cow (hippopotamus), which they called Apt. The thigh was a symbol that denoted birth. And Apt, divinized as another form of the great mother, is said to have given birth to Set and Horus near Tanganyika, at the mount of the earth.¹³⁵

For the Equatorians the heavens or sky rested upon the earth. The sky, viewed as celestial waters, was symbolized as two great lakes; one in the south and the other in the north. The stars were thought to rise vertically with there being two fixed poles or pole stars. The land of Tanganyka was just south of the equator, and to the ancient Egyptians the south was considered the “land of the first time” and Set, the first born of the twins (the southern pole star was observed first) was traditionally considered the inventor of astronomy, who erected the pillar of the pole star.¹³⁶

The White Nile flowed northward. And so did the migration of some of the Equatorians. (As they approached the equator the second pole star became visible to them.) With their northward migration the heavens they had “fixed” in Apta began to rise up. This they imaged as Shu, the breathing force divinized as a male god uplifting the female god Nu or Nut, which means “up-heaven.”¹³⁷ As this heaven rose the northern pole, which in

Figure 2



If you are located on the earth at 'A', the tangent lines correspond to your horizontal views. The stars in region '1' would contain the non-setting stars from your point of view. Region '2' would contain the stars that rise and set. The stars in region '3' would be unviewable to you. The polestar is located along line of the axis of rotation, for example at 'P'.

Equatoria remained forever fixed on the mount, began to ascend, while the southern pole sank. As the southern pole sank, the heavens or constellation configured with it disappeared. This was mythologized as a great flood, a deluge, a drowning of a paradise lost.

In other words, Set falls from heaven as Horus rises. The primacy of the god Set suggests that mankind had its beginning slightly below the equator, where there would be but a single pole star. As mankind traveled to the equator, two pole stars would be apparent. Which they would mythologize as twins, with Set being the first born. At this stage the twins would symbolize balance and complementarity, ie. Horus and Set got along in harmony. As the trek proceeded northward, the second son, Horus, would be seen as triumphing over, or conquering, the first son, Set.

Set was identified with the night, darkness, drought, and dryness. Horus was identified with the day, light, moisture, and rain. “In Central Africa the year is divided into two seasons of rain and drought. The winds of the north and south follow suit. The wind from the north in the rainy season is warm and wet and beneficent; on the other hand, the wind that comes up from the South Pole is witherly dry, the wind therefore of Sut [Set], the power inimical to man and animal in physical nature. ... Thus Sut versus Horus imaged the south versus north. Sut was deadly as the drought; Horus was ight as ‘rain’.”¹³⁸ Over time this would be characterized as a struggle between the forces of good and evil.

An aspect of the struggle is mythologized in the death of Osiris, by Set being helped by an Ethiopian queen in his murder. Harold P. Cooke in his book *Osiris: A Study in Myths, Mysteries and Religion* shares the following:¹³⁹

The conspiracy and tyranny of Typhon [Set] means the power of drought getting the better of and destroying the moisture that both generates and augments the Nile: and his helper, the Queen of the Ethiopians, signifies the south winds from Ethiopia; for when these prevail over the Etesian winds (which drive the clouds towards Ethiopia), and hinder them from dissolving into rains and swelling the Nile, then does Typhon take possession and burn; and at that time he has completely mastered the Nile, which through weakness is contracted and shrunk up within itself; and drives it out, hollow and humble, into the sea; for the shutting up of Osiris in the coffer probably means nothing else than the concealment and disappearance of the water; for which reason they say that Osiris vanished in the month of Athyr [“when the sun is passing through the scorpion”¹⁴⁰], at which time, the winds having entirely ceased, the Nile recedes, the country is laid bare, and night lengthening, darkness is increased, and the power of light wastes away and is subdued, ...

The aspect of Set as the power of drought and dryness also assigns to him the dessert as his domain. And the redness of the dessert caused Set to be depicted as red in complexion. Set comes to be cast as the “treacherous opponent of Horus,” the betrayer of

his brother, Osiris. And as he was also the deity over the least liked and harmful forces of nature he became the personification of evil.

On Time Reckoning

Among the first periods of time that early man recognized was the menses of women and the inundation of the Nile. In time the menses would be associated with the moon cycles. But the inundation's of the Nile was noticed early on to occur following the helical rising (i.e. just before sunrise) of the star Phact in the southern heavens. This was before the northward trek, after which the inundation's was observed to be announced by the star Sirius, also of the southern constellation.

Early man was an avid stargazer. "In these early times," writes astronomer J. Norman Lockyer in his book *The Dawn of Astronomy*, "the stars would be the objects which would first commend themselves to the attention of temple builders, for the reason that the movements and rising- and setting-places of the various planets by night, and of the sun by day, would appear to be so erratic, so long as the order of their movements was not known." He adds further, "It is clear in the first place that no one would think of orientating a temple to the moon, as there is so little constancy about its path in the sky, and, therefore, in its place of rising and setting."¹⁴¹

And so it was by the stars that man developed some of the early methods of reckoning time, erecting temples, and fostering myths. This stellar orientation would be followed in turn by the lunar and the solar.

As the Equatorians migrated northward toward the Nile Valley, there appeared in the northern skies seven non-setting stars, with one of them serving as the pole star. The old pole star would give way to a new one as the Great Year proceeded through the precession of the equinoxes. And when a change would occur, it too would be mythologized as a great flood, as was the case of the disappearance of the southern pole star. Also, as Set had been the god of darkness, he was assigned the northern *night-time* constellation as his domain.

This precession of the equinoxes has another effect on the stars. It causes their apparent stability to only last about two to three hundred years. In myth the ancient Egyptians would declare in one of their legends that: "... the children of Nut, that is the stars, have failed in keeping proper time, and been the cause of confusion and strife."¹⁴² And Thoth, the moon god, superseded Sut, the star god.

The moon has a cycle of 29 & 1/2 days. Supposedly the month had been assigned 28 days because of its divisibility. From which we get a 7-day week. In the mythology it is said that Horus and/or Osiris rises for fourteen days and then decays for fourteen days, and Osiris' body is cut up into fourteen pieces. There are thirteen, twenty-eight day months in a year. As 13 was the number of Set, when the 28 day month was replaced by the 30

day month, Set's prominence was overthrown along with it, and 13 was viewed as an unlucky number.

There is a question as to what kind of year the Equatorians brought into the Nile Valley. The belief among some scholars is that it originally consisted of 360 days composed of twelve 30 day months. Perhaps the divisibility of 360 played an important role in the decision also. Which is 5 & 1/4th days too short. The inundation of the Nile was of crucial importance to the ancient Egyptians for the obvious agricultural reasons. But its regularity was not absolutely certain. And besides it occurred earlier in the northern regions than it did in the southern. These inundations were determined early on by the helical rising of the star Sirius. But due to the precessions of the equinoxes, the time of its occurrence would shift. And here too, the difference in latitude of various locations would matter.

When the ancients discovered the solstices and the equinoxes, they were able to devise a calendar that is, with the exceptions of a few alterations, still with us to this day. (Julius Caesar named the month of July after himself. And being the important person that he was, it naturally had to have 31 days. Augustus Caesar, not to be outdone, also designated a 31 day month to bare his name – August.) As we have seen in the mythology, it was Thoth who was responsible for having the five extra days added on to the 360 day year.

The Temple Builders

Stellar Temples

When the French astronomer, Jules Janssen observed a total solar eclipse in 1868, he noticed a yellow line in the spectrum of light from the sun which he attributed to a heretofore unknown chemical element. Janssen's discovery was later confirmed by Joseph Norman Lockyer, who suggested the name of "helium," from the Greek *helios* – the sun.¹⁴³ Lockyer became interested in the astronomical influence on the orientation of temples and has written the book mentioned earlier addressing that effect on the design and layout of ancient Egyptian temples. This section draws mainly from his work.

Among the temples Lockyer discusses are those of Thebes, Karnak, and Denderah in Upper Egypt. Of these, the southern most temple was the one at Thebes. It was dedicated to the goddess Amen-t, the wife of Amen. Recall that Amen means "hidden," and we also note that the underworld of the ancient Egyptians, through which the sun and deceased souls must pass, was called Amenta. This points to the significance of the night-time, and hence, to that of the stars. The star to which "The Temple of Amen-t" was dedicated was Phact. Lockyer writes the following with regards to this star:¹⁴⁴

This star, although so little familiar to us northerners, is one off the most conspicuous of the stars in the southern portion of the heavens, *and its heliacal*

rising heralded the solstice and the rise of the Nile before the heliacal rising of Sirius was useful for that purpose! (emphasis his)

Lockyer offers probable dates for observations of this and other stars:¹⁴⁵

As a matter of fact, there is distinct evidence of the cult of the southern stars coming down the [Nile] river in the region we can get at; α Centauri, e.g., seems to have been observed at Gebel Barkal before [i.e. south of] Thebes – Sirius is too modern to be considered – and above all *there is the remarkable series of temples, apparently oriented to Canopus before 6000 B.C., which came down no lower than Edfu.* (emphasis mine).

... The south-star temples to Phact at the summer solstice, and α Centauri at the autumnal equinox, begin about 3799 B.C.

The temple at Karnak was dedicated to the god Khons and the star Canopus. Lockyer:¹⁴⁶

The setting of Canopus marked the autumnal equinox about 5000 B.C. We have found the first temple at Karnak was possibly built as late as 2000 B.C., when the utility of observations of Canopus from this point of view had heretofore ceased; but [he argues that there is] ... evidence that the worship was introduced from the south, where it had been conducted when the condition of utility held.

At Denderah there were two temples of interest. The larger one dedicated to the goddess Hathor and to the star α Ursae Majoris, which the Arabians called Dubhe. And the lesser one dedicated to Isis and to the star Sirius. These two temples are at right angles to each other with the larger one oriented $71^{\circ} 30'$ North of East and the smaller one $18^{\circ} 30'$ South of East.

Lockyer analyzed the orientation of these temples, inscriptions, and calculations and tables of the star positions to arrive at projected dates for their erections. Reasoning that the temples were oriented to observe risings of stars, he discounted the candidacy of circumpolar ones. From astronomy it was determined that α Ursae Majoris had the proper declination to be observed by the temple of Hathor in 5000 B.C. But it became circumpolar at Denderah in 4000 B.C. And this would render this temple useless for any further observation of this particular star's rising. However, there was another star, γ Draconis, which Lockyer offers as being the non-circumpolar star that was chosen to replace the role of α Ursae Majoris at the temple of Hathor.

Lockyer notes that this was near the reign of Pepi I who was found to be discussed in the crypts as probably the one who restored the temple to observe γ Draconis, the replacement star. The dates offered for this period is around 3300 to 3200 B.C. This would be around the times of "the Hor-Shesu, the dimly-seen followers of Horus or sun-

worshippers, before the dawn of the historic period.” Thus Hathor, who was “personified” as α Ursae Majoris, was rehabilitated.¹⁴⁷

The importance of the star Sirius to the ancient Egyptians has been discussed previously. Its facility in heralding the inundation of the Nile near the summer solstice, which marked their new year’s beginning was an important function for the priests, astronomers and agriculturists and others. And just how long their ceremonial observances of this phenomenon “went on before the dawn of history we, of course, have no knowledge.”¹⁴⁸ Using methods similar to the ones he used for determining the dates when the temple of Hathor was built, and drawing also from the works of other scholars, Lockyer says, “... it seems abundantly clear that the rising of Sirius at the solstice was carefully watched certainly as early as 3285 B.C.”¹⁴⁹ He also arrives at 700 B.C. as a date that Sirius could be observed at the temple of Isis rising at the same time as the sun rose. This type of star rising is referred as a cosmical rising. At the earlier date Sirius rose heliacally. He cites an inscription found in the temple that translates: “She [i.e. her Majesty Isis] shines into her temple on New Year’s Day, and she mingles her light with that of her father Ra on the horizon.”¹⁵⁰ The mingling refers to the fact that the star Sirius and the sun, i.e. Ra, were rising at the same instant of time. The temples were so constructed to allow the light of the star to shine into the sanctuary in such a way as to illuminate an object placed there. It is also noticed that sometimes both Hathor and Isis are “referred” to as Sirius.

Lockyer:¹⁵¹

We are, then, astronomically on very firm ground indeed. We have got one step into the domain of mythology. I assume it is agreed that we have arrived at the certain conclusion that the goddess Hathor or Isis personified a star, Sirius, rising at the dawn; and that the temple of Isis at Denderah was built to watch it.

The dates in the above discussion recall the questions concerning the antiquity of the ancient Egyptian civilization. I would only reiterate that it is one thing to infer the time when Menes united the Two Lands establishing the First Dynasty, and quite another to infer the antiquity of the ancient Egyptian civilization. It has been noted that the ancient Egyptian civilization is much older than the uniting of the Two Lands by Menes, establishing the First Dynasty.

In a television series entitled “History’s Mysteries,” broadcasted on The Learning Channel, a program was aired called “Secrets of the Pyramids.” In it they discussed how the three pyramids were laid out in correspondence with certain stars.

According to Egyptologists, the pyramids were built during Egypt’s IVth Dynasty, which they put about 2500 B.C. The two largest were aligned with each other, whereas the smaller one was slightly offset. By analyzing astronomical data and using computer simulation of the constellation Orion as it appeared in 2500 B.C., they were able to show that the shaft of the king’s chambers pointed to the star Orion, the star of Osiris known as the Deliverer who came with wine because it rose when the grapes were ripe. And they showed that the shaft from the queen’s chamber pointed to Sirius, the star of Isis.

In the astro-mythology of ancient Egypt the Nile corresponded to the Milky Way. They reasoned that the three pyramids corresponded to the three stars in Orion's belt. By using computer simulation, again, and the knowledge of the precession, they were able to show that the pyramids were in perfect alignment to match the arrangement of the constellation Orion as it was oriented around 10,500 B.C.

They suggest that the pyramids were built by relying on knowledge and information inherited from an earlier, perhaps lost, civilization; and in particular for the precision, scientific knowledge, and mathematics embedded in the construction of the Great Pyramid. If this seems far fetched, consider the following quote of Charles S. Finch, taken from his introduction of Gerald Massey's *Ancient Egypt Light of the World*: "Recent work with the patterns of water damage affecting the Great Sphinx of Giza, for example, suggests that it may be as old as 9,000 years instead of the 4,500 years customarily given."¹⁵² There are estimates by some investigators that place that illusive date more anterior than that. It has been suggested that what happened 4,500 years ago was a restoration of the Great Sphinx. It is well known that this was done with some of the temples.

The above discussions shows the stellar relationship of Osiris with the star Orion. It is well known that in the early times he was a moon god. Perhaps it was when the southern pole star disappeared from view as the Equatorians migrated north, and Set, a pre-eminent star god, was superseded by Osiris that stellar worship was supplanted by lunar worship.

As the ancient Egyptians became more knowledgeable of the sun's movements, they also became aware of its regularity in determining the summer solstice. Because of the precession, the positions of the stars were always changing. But the sun was consistently much more precise in its ability to predict when the Egyptian new year was to begin. This rising significance of the sun was expressed in the mythology by solar worship becoming dominant.

Solar Temples

There is little doubt that the stars were the first observed heavenly bodies. This speaks to the primacy of stellar worship. However it would make no sense to orient a temple to the moon. Its path was just too "irregular." The same thing would be true with the planets. But the years of observing ecliptical stars would cause the secrets of the sun's annual journey to gradually reveal themselves. The value of a *star* for predicting the beginning of the Egyptian year would last for only a few centuries. But once the *sun's* behavior was figured out, its value for determining the solstices and equinoxes was virtually everlasting. (It is not entirely permanent because there is a gradual change between the angle of the ecliptic and the equatorial plane of the earth, called the obliquity, caused by the gravitational attraction of the planets. Since 5000 B.C. it has decreased about 1°3'). And with this, the shift to the sun's reverence was as inevitable as it was eminent.

The solar temples were oriented to either a solstice or an equinox. Among the temples oriented toward a solstice are the ones at Thebes, Karnak and Abydos, in Upper Egypt, and one in Annu or Heliopolis (City of the Sun), in Lower Egypt. Of those three neighboring cities in Upper Egypt, Diop writes: “... for all Egyptians without exception, the sacred region par excellence was the Thebiad in Upper Egypt.”¹⁵³ There are pyramids oriented toward equinoxes in Bubastis, Sais and Tanis, in the Pyramid Plains of The Delta, and one in Memphis, in Lower Egypt. The Sphinx of Gizeh, in Lower Egypt, watches for the rising sun at an equinox. And the temples there are similarly oriented. Lockyer writes:¹⁵⁴

We have either Temples of Osiris pointing to the sunset at the equinox, or Temples of Isis pointing to the sunrise at the equinox, but in either case built in relation to the Pyramids. As an indication of the importance of the considerations with which we are now dealing, I may mention that it is suggested by them that the building near the Sphinx is really a crypt of a temple of Isis or Osiris. This is a view which may change the ideas generally held with regard to its age to the extent of something like a thousand years. ... However this may be, the important thing is that when we pass from Thebes, and possibly Abydos, to the Pyramids at Memphis, to Sais and Tanis, we find a solstitial orientation changed to an equinoctial one. *There is a fundamental change of astronomical thought.* (emphasis his)

What was the reason for the shift in astronomical thought? We know that the inundation of the Nile began at or near the summer solstice in Upper Egypt. And this caused for both celebrational ceremonies and the agricultural preparation. It is also known that the rise of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers took place at or near the spring equinox. Consequently, this may very well have dominated the thought that went into the making of the Babylonian calendar. Among the immigrants into Lower Egypt were the peoples from this area. It is also well documented that the Egyptians had colonies throughout this region as well as the Mediterranean. And as cultural influence and sharing always takes place when peoples encounter, trade, and interact with each other, this may be, as Lockyer states, “a valuable hint as to the origin of the equinoctial cult at Gizah and elsewhere, which in all probability was interpolated after the non-equinoctial worship had been founded at Annu, Abydos, and possibly Thebes.”¹⁵⁵

Inside the Temples

Great care went into the construction of the Egyptian temples, which sometimes took decades to build. Their uses were ceremonial, worship, academic, and for the initiation into their “mysteries.” Within their walls were the priests, the master craftsmen, sages, astronomers, scholars, scientist, mathematicians, scribes, disciples, and initiates. They were depositories of the knowledge of the Egyptians, their learning, and their wisdom. They housed their tremendous libraries that were later destroyed by unenlightened invaders.

The Thebiad contains what has been described as “the most extraordinary group of architectural ruins anywhere in the world.”¹⁵⁶ In particular, there were two related temples of Amen-Ra, one at Thebes and the other at Karnak. Lockyer describes the temple at Thebes as “beyond question the most majestic ruin in the world” and the *great* temple at Karnak as “one of the most soul-stirring temples which has ever been conceived or built by man.”¹⁵⁷

The temple at Thebes has a sort of stone avenue in the center that opens towards the north-west, and is about five hundred yards long. With regards to this axis, Lockyer writes:¹⁵⁸

The whole object of the builder of the great temple at Karnak ... was to preserve that axis, ... absolutely, straight, and true. The axis was directed towards the hills on the west side of the Nile, in which are the tombs of the kings. From the south-eastern outlook through the whole of the temple, and we see at the very extremity of the central line a gateway nearly six hundred yards away. This belonged to a temple pointing towards the south-east. ... [These two] temples [are] in the same line back to back, the chief one facing the sunset at the summer solstice, the other probably the sunrise at the winter solstice.

... It seems to be a general rule that from the entrance-pylon the temple stretches through various halls of different sizes and details, until at last, at the extreme end what is called the sanctuary, ... the Holy of Holies, is reached. The end of the temple at which the pylons are situated is opened, the other end is closed. ...

From one end of the temple to the other we find the axis marked out by narrow apertures in the various pylons, and many walls with doors crossing the axis.

In the temple of Amen-Ra there are 17 or 18 of these apertures, limiting the light which falls into the Holy of Holies or the Sanctuary. This construction ... limits the light which fell on its front into a narrow beam, and ... carries it to the other extremity of the temple—into the sanctuary, so that once a year when the sun set at the solstice the light passed without interruption along the whole length of the temple, finally illuminating the sanctuary in most resplendent fashion and striking the sanctuary wall. ...

...We find that a narrow beam of sunlight coming through a narrow entrance some 500 yards away from the door of the Holy of Holies would, provided the solstice occurred at the absolute moment of sunrise or sunset according to which the temple was being utilised, practically flash into the sanctuary and remain there for about a couple of minutes, and then pass away. The flash would be a crescendo and diminuendo, but the whole thing would not last above two minutes or thereabouts, ...

In order to evaluate the age of the great Temple of Karnak, Lockyer took under consideration many key factors, including; the latitude of Karnak, the temple’s

orientation, the height of the hills, the path the sun would have to travel, refraction, and the obliquity of the ecliptic. He determined that the year when these considerations could be met was 3700 B.C. And he declared, “this is therefore the date of the foundation of the shrine of Amen-Ra at Karnak, so far as we can determine it astronomically with available data; but,” he adds, “about these there is still an element of doubt, for, as far as I learn, the recent magnetic readings have not been checked by astronomical observations.”¹⁵⁹

It should be noted that similar type observations were made with stellar temples with regard to rising and setting stars, in particular the one dedicated to Hathor in Denderah.

The various temples and cities emphasized different sets of gods. This evolved over the years as the form of worship evolved from stellar, to lunar, and to solar. But the term “god” does not really capture what is truly meant in the ancient Egyptians cosmology. They used the term “Neter,” often translated as “god,” which actually refers to something more like a fundamental principle of nature, or a sort of causal agent. An analysis of the “apparent” differences of the use of Egyptian gods is offered by Isha Schwaller de Lubicz who, under the direction of her husband and teacher, R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, lived for fifteen years among the temples and tombs of Luxor and Karnak, in order to try and “penetrate the secret symbolism of the hieroglyphs.” Isha has written a two volume work of a fictionalized account, based on her research, of an Egyptian initiate progressing through the stages of initiation to attain “self knowledge and cosmic wisdom.”¹⁶⁰ She explains in her works that if one were to focus on the principles underlying the concepts of the gods, i.e. the Neters, of ancient Egypt, then one would readily see the commonality of the concepts running throughout the differing expressions of their cosmology.

Isha explains that there are two parts of the temple; the outer temple where the beginning initiates are allowed to come, and the inner temple where one can enter only after proven worthy and ready to acquire the higher knowledge and insights. Her saga of Her-Bak takes place between the Twentieth and Twenty-First Dynasties in the Thebiad in the Temple of Mut in Thebes, and the Great Temple of Amen-Ra in Karnak. Isha reveals her discovery of the wisdom acquired by the Egyptians over the millennia through the instructions that Her-Bak undergoes and the conversations he has with the sages and masters of the temple. One of the concepts that the Egyptians held was that man was the microcosm of the universe – the macrocosm. This is the reason for the saying: “know thyself.” Their spiritual aspect of this concept held that within man (which they symbolized as a five-pointed star) is the divine essence of the Creator and the Heavens. And this finds expression in their teaching: “The kingdom of heaven is within you; and whosoever shall know himself shall find it.”¹⁶¹

Below are some of the teachings, proverbs, and maxims gleaned from her works, many of which relate directly to these concepts, and are reflections others:

From the Outer Temple¹⁶²

- The best and shortest road towards knowledge of truth [is] Nature.

- For every joy there is a price to be paid.
- If his heart rules him, his conscience will soon take the place of the rod.
- What you are doing does not matter so much as what you are learning from doing it.
- *It is better not to know and to know that one does not know*, than presumptuously to attribute some random meaning to symbols.
- If you search for the *laws of harmony*, you will find *knowledge*.
- If you are searching for a *Neter*, observe *Nature*!
- Exuberance is a good stimulus towards action, but the inner light grows in silence and concentration.
- Not the greatest Master can go even one step for his disciple; in himself he must experience each stage of developing consciousness. Therefore he will *know* nothing for which he is not ripe.
- The body is the house of God. That is why it is said, “Man know thyself.”
- True teaching is not an accumulation of knowledge; it is an awaking of conscio usness which goes through successive stages.
- The man who knows how to lead one of his brothers towards what he has known may one day be saved by that very brother.
- People bring about their own undoing through their tongues.
- If one tries to navigate unknown waters one runs the risk of shipwreck.
- Leave him in error who loves his error.
- Every man is rich in excuses to safeguard *his* prejudices, *his* instincts, and *his* opinions.
- To know means to record in one’s memory; but to understand means to blend with the thing and to assimilate it oneself.
- There are two kinds of error: *blind credulity* and *piecemeal criticism*. Never believe a word without putting its truth to the test; discernment does not grow in laziness; and this faculty of discernment is indispensable to the Seeker. Sound skepticism is the necessary condition for good discernment; but *piecemeal criticism is an error*.
- Love is one thing, knowledge is another.
- True sages are those who give what they have, without meanness and without secret!
- An answer brings no illumination unless the question has matured to a point where it gives rise to this answer which thus becomes its fruit. Therefore learn how to put a question.
- What reveals itself to me ceases to be mysterious—for me alone: if I unveil it to anyone else, he hears mere words which betray the living sense: Profanation, but never revelation.
- The first concerning the ‘secrets’: *all cognition comes from inside*; we are therefore initiated only by ourselves, but the Master gives the keys.
- The second concerning the ‘way’: the seeker has need of a Master to guide him and lift him up when he falls, to lead him back to the right way when he strays.
- Understanding develops by degrees.
- As to deserving, know that the gift of Heaven is free; this gift of Knowledge is so great that no effort whatever could hope to ‘deserve’ it.
- If the Master teaches what is error, the disciple’s submission is slavery; if he teaches truth, this submission is ennoblement.
- There grows no wheat where there is no grain.

- The only thing that is humiliating is helplessness.

From the Inner Temple¹⁶³

- An answer is profitable in proportion to the intensity of the quest.
- Listen to your conviction, even if they seem absurd to your reason.
- Know the world in yourself. Never look for yourself in the world, for this would be to project your illusion.
- To teach one must know the nature of those whom one is teaching.
- In every vital activity it is the path that matters.
- The way of knowledge is narrow.
- Each truth you learn will be, for you, as new as if it had never been written.
- The only active force that arises out of possession is fear of losing the object of possession.
- If you defy an enemy by doubting his courage you double it.
- The nut doesn't reveal the tree it contains.
- For knowledge ... you should know that peace is an indispensable condition of getting it.
- The first thing necessary in teaching is a master; the second is a pupil capable of carrying on the tradition.
- Peace is the fruit of activity, not of sleep.
- Envious greed must govern to possess and ambition must possess to govern.
- When the governing class isn't chosen for quality it is chosen for material wealth: this always means decadence, the lowest stage a society can reach.
- Two tendencies govern human choice and effort, the search after quantity and the search after quality. They classify mankind. Some follow Maat, others seek the way of animal instinct.
- Qualities of a moral order are measured by deeds.
- One foot isn't enough to walk with.
- Our senses serve to affirm, not to know.
- We mustn't confuse mastery with mimicry, knowledge with superstitious ignorance.
- Physical consciousness is indispensable for the achievement of knowledge.
- A man can't be judge of his neighbor's intelligence. His own vital experience is never his neighbor's.
- No discussion can throw light if it wanders from the real point.
- Your body is the temple of knowledge.
- Experience will show you, a Master can only point the way.
- A house has the character of the man who lives in it.
- All organs work together in the functioning of the whole.
- A man's heart is his own Neter.
- A pupil may show you by his own efforts how much he deserves to learn from you.
- Routine and prejudice distort vision. Each man thinks his own horizon is the limit of the world.

- You will free yourself when you learn to be neutral and follow the instructions of your heart without letting things perturb you. This is the way of Maat.
- Judge by cause, not by effect.
- Growth in consciousness doesn't depend on the will of the intellect or its possibilities but on the intensity of the inner urge.
- Every man must act in the rhythm of his time ... such is wisdom.
- Men need images. Lacking them they invent idols. Better then to found the images on realities that lead the true seeker to the source.
- Maat, who links universal to terrestrial, the divine with the human is incomprehensible to the cerebral intelligence.
- Have the wisdom to abandon the values of a time that has passed and pick out the constituents of the future. An environment must be suited to the age and men to their environment.
- Everyone finds himself in the world where he belongs. The essential thing is to have a fixed point from which to check its reality now and then.
- Always watch and follow nature.
- A phenomenon always arises from the interaction of complementaries. If you want something look for the complement that will elicit it. Set causes Horus. Horus redeems Set.
- All seed answer light, but the color is different.
- The plant reveals what is in the seed.
- Popular beliefs on essential matters must be examined in order to discover the original thought.
- It is the passive resistance from the helm that steers the boat.
- The key to all problems is the problem of consciousness.
- Man must learn to increase his sense of responsibility and of the fact that everything he does will have its consequences.
- If you would build something solid, don't work with wind: always look for a fixed point, something you know that is stable ... yourself.
- If you would know yourself, take yourself as starting point and go back to its source; your beginning will disclose your end.
- Images are nearer reality than cold definitions.
- Seek peacefully, you will find.
- Organization is impossible unless those who know the laws of harmony lay the foundation.
- It is no use whatever preaching Wisdom to men: you must inject it into their blood.
- Knowledge is consciousness of reality. Reality is the sum of the laws that govern nature and of the causes from which they flow.
- Social good is what brings peace to family and society.
- Knowledge is not necessarily wisdom.
- By knowing one reaches belief. By doing one gains conviction. When you know, dare.
- Altruism is the mark of a superior being.
- All is within yourself. Know your most inward self and look for what corresponds with it in nature.

- The seed cannot sprout upwards without simultaneously sending roots into the ground.
- The seed includes all the *possibilities* of the tree. ... The seed will develop these possibilities, however, only if it receives corresponding energies from the sky.
- Grain must return to the earth, die, and decompose for new growth to begin.
- Man, know thyself ... and thou shalt know the gods.

The initiates spent years in the temples, decades even and sometimes lifetimes. The Egyptians priests took great care in the selecting and accepting candidates into their temples. George G. M. James has listed the attributes that the Neophyte was required to manifest.¹⁶⁴

- 1? Control of thought, and
- 2? Control of action, or *Justice* (the unswerving righteousness of thought and action).
- 3? Steadfastness of purpose, which was equivalent to *Fortitude*.
- 4? Identity with a spiritual life or the higher ideals, or *Temperance* an attitude attained when the individual had gained conquest over the passional nature.
- 5? Evidence of having a mission in life, and
- 6? Evidence of a call to spiritual Orders of the Priesthood in the Mysteries: the combination of which was equivalent to *Prudence* of a deep insight and graveness that befitted the faculty of Seership.
- 7? Freedom from resentment, when under the experience of persecution and wrong, i.e. courage.
- 8? Confidence in the power of the master (as Teacher), and
- 9? Confidence in one's own ability to learn; both attributes [i.e. 7 & 8] being known as Fidelity.
- 10? Readiness or preparedness for initiation.

(Emphasis James', who asserts that the italicized words are the four virtues of Plato.)

There has always been this principle of the Ancient mysteries of Egypt, James points out:

“When the pupil is ready, then the master will appear.”

The Underworld

The phase of the Egyptian mythology that gives rise to their eschatology is the advent of their Underworld. The ancient Egyptians refer to this place as Amenta, from “Amen” which means ‘hidden’ and “Ta” which means ‘earth’. Amenta is the nether world where the sun makes its nightly journey through a path that Ptah, the pygmy, and his seven helpers opened up. It is through here where the spirits of the deceased must also pass. And it is also here where the stellar and solar myths merge.

In the stellar mythos heaven or paradise is located at the northern pole-star, “the top of the mount.” In the solar mythos, “the top of the mount” was situated at the point where the sun rose at the vernal equinox. When Ptah created a pathway for the sun, or Ra, through the earth, where the sun set was considered “the gateway of the west,” and where the sun rose was likewise considered “the gateway to the east,” also looked upon as the mount where Ra’s daily path was launched. For in the stellar myth, the sun passed around the earth. Whereas in the solar, it passed through the earth. “In the mythology, Amenta is the subterranean country of the sun by night. The dawn and sunset were its gates of glory.”¹⁶⁵

When someone died, that person’s soul entered Amenta through the gateway of the west. “The chief object of the deceased on entering Amenta is the mode and means of getting out as soon as possible. ... Before the mortal Manes [body of the deceased] could contain the ultimate state of spirit in the image of Horus the immortal, he must be put together part by part as was Osiris, the dismembered god. ... Every member and part of the Manes in Amenta has to be fashioned afresh in a new creation. The new heart is said to be fashioned by certain gods in the nether world, according to the deeds done in the body whilst the person was living on the earth.”¹⁶⁶ There was a double judgment. One in Maat of Amenta, and the other in the Great Celestial Hall of Maat above. For Amenta was a place where the Manes had a last chance to make restitutions and try and get things right. If found guilty there, the deceased suffered a second death. “They went no further, but were extinguished in the tank of flame or annihilated on the highways of the damned.”¹⁶⁷

For the Egyptians, salvation was for the *soul* to not suffer a second death. There were three worlds in which life was to be lived; on earth, in Amenta, and in heaven. The books of the divine words of Thoth contained the knowledge of how things were to be done, and life was to be lived, on earth and in Amenta. This “truth” was made known by Horus. The knowledge of this was all-important. “There was no life for the soul except in knowing, and no salvation but in doing, the truth.” As Thoth says: “The wickedness of the soul is ignorance. The virtue of a soul is knowledge.” It is knowledge that provides the light that enables one to find his way in the dark.¹⁶⁸

The concept of Amenta is much too complicated to cover here, if anywhere. But it is here where it is judged whether one’s life on earth followed “the way” enough to be permitted to continue the journey to the next phase. The successful ones were allowed to pass through the gateway of the east, where they proceeded to the Great Celestial Hall of Maat to face the judgment with Osiris. After the success of which, the Manes ascended to the very “summit of the mount, up which the spirits climbed to reach the region of eternal rest among the stars that never set.”¹⁶⁹

This is an account of a set of challenges, tasks, and trials that the Manes or Spirits must undergo after they have entered ‘the gateway of the west’; and proceeded through Amenta; and to emerge from the night of the nether world into the light of day at ‘the gateway of the east’. For the righteous souls, Amenta was a lower paradise, imaged as a land of gold due to the night sun. However, the difficulties of successfully making it to the gateway of the east was insurmountable for mere mortals. The help of a higher

power, or Neter, was needed. And it was Horus who provided The Way, just as he had done for his father Osiris. *The Book of the Dead*, which gives an account of this sojourn is a misnomer. It is readily seen from the fact that it is an account of such a journey of a deceased soul to “emerge with the sun at dawn.” The proper name of the account is, in actuality, *The Coming Forth By Day*.

Chapter Five

Some Discussion of Parables For the Present From the Osirian Legend

In the preceding discussion we covered how humankind had begun in the Equatorial region around the Great Lakes of Central Africa. We pointed out how civilization began there as well and its evolution paralleled the human evolution. As humans acquired language, and with it, the ability to remember and recall much better. The first teachings were, of course, oral. Oral culture began to grow and flourish. It was also discussed how the early Equatorians followed the flow of the Nile northward, eventually populating the entire Great Nile Valley. In the first phase of culture, they learned from the practical, from their natural surroundings. They emphasized it, developed ritual around it, that gradually evolved into a primitive symbology.

The second phase the ritual and symbology passed into mythology. It evolved from the observation of terrestrial to noticing periodicity in the heavens. In the first form of the mythological phase was stellar, as the regularity of the stars was the easiest to determine. The stellar mythos passed into the lunar, then the solar. Temples were erected to observe the rising and setting of the stars to forecast the inundation of the Nile, which was so important for agriculture, among other things. In time, the secrets of the behavior of the moon and sun were revealed. And with it a better method of predicting the commencement of the new year, which for the Egyptians began at the summer solstice when the mighty Nile began to overflow.

The final phase of the evolution of Egyptian culture was the establishment of their eschatology. Throughout it all were the lessons drawn from the principles of nature, i.e. the Neters, of the phenomena of both the terrestrial and the astronomical. Included in the discussion were some proverbs of the Egyptian's teachings and some of the characteristics the priests looked for in potential candidates for initiation.

It is well known that the mythologies the world over, since time immemorial, have played a vital role in mankind's quest to understand reality and his own essence. They evolve over the years, centuries, and millennia, in an ever changing and expanding effort to address current needs. We have seen this with the Osirian Legend as discussed in the prior sections of this work. But that was for then, and this is now. How does the Osirian Legend speak to us in our times? And what are its parables for the present? Some of these concepts will be explored presently.

Charity Begins at Home and Spreads Abroad

We recall that the father of Osiris was Seb, the earth god. Hence, Osiris had a natural affinity for conditions on earth. After a while, Osiris decided to take his divine knowledge and go there and bring civilization to mankind. Thus, the Kemites had Osiris

as their ancestor, master-teacher and sage. Only after he had successfully accomplished his objectives in Kemit did he decide to try and spread civilization to the rest of the earth.

The lesson here is that one (or a people) should endeavor to secure his home base first. For only then will he be in a position to help anybody else. Too often people try and help others without, doing this, only to ultimately lose out as a result. One can easily get used up or be taken advantage of, and end up vulnerable by not heeding B. B. King's warning: "Don't make your move too soon."

Pass the Torch to a Capable Successor

Before Osiris struck out to spread civilization to other lands, as he had done in Kemit, he turned over the reins of authority and power to his capable wife, Isis, who also had the counsel of Thoth to call on. Thus, Osiris did not simply up and leave, figuring his work was done in Kemit. He knew that in order to sustain and maintain what he had accomplished, the land must be left in the hands of a competent successor. The legend plainly reveals that Isis was more than equal to the task. Her wisdom was such that Kemit was able to withstand all of the schemes of would be usurpers, in particular Set.

In striving to build institutions, which for many may be a life's work, one must be vigilant in the development of successors. For there have been many worthwhile programs that have gone awry or simply faded into oblivion, all because the successors, or the next generation if you will, were not sufficiently prepared with enough knowledge and insight to carry on the desired objectives, let alone take things to another level, which is ideally what should happen.

Beware of Something-for-Nothing "gifts"

During Osiris' absence, Set tried many schemes to take over the land. And according to some of the texts, he also tried to win over Isis' heart. But try as he may, he failed on both accounts. Isis was too wise and vigilant for him to take over the land, and her love for Osiris was too great for him to win over her heart.

Set realizing that his only recourse was to get rid of Osiris, devised an ingenious plan. Set resorted to a tactic that has been employed with more than a fair amount of success throughout the ages. He set a trap for Osiris, and baited it with a 'gift', a 'prize', a 'reward', which in effect was essentially 'something-for-nothing'. This stratagem was, and probably always will be, the type of plan that even a "god" will fall for. And unsuspectingly, with his guard down, Osiris did just that.

Individuals, as well as groups or organizations, especially, those that are community based, often fall victim to these "gifts," just as Osiris did. In almost all cases these gifts will be offered by someone of organization feigning friendship (some of them may actually mean well). Only those who are close to you can get you to let your guard down.

Remember that Set was the twin brother of Osiris. These enticements can come to organizations in the form of grants or services rendered. When they come with certain strings attached, one should beware. If they can lull the organization into a state of dependency or complacency, its people should beware. For there are always those who could like to either usurp or sabotage what you have.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Set had good intentions for Kemit. (Recall that he was not always considered evil.) It is also reasonable to assume that Set had a different direction and vision from that of Osiris and Isis. This gives yet another reason why one should carefully groom one's successor, lest such a result occur. In addition to this, oftentimes people and other organizations actually mean well, but their lack of insight and understanding of certain realities involved in the situation, along with the arrogance and self-righteousness that they often possess, causes their well-meaning efforts to do more harm than good. And unless one is very careful and vigilant, the program can suffer irreparable damage.

Wisdom Combined With Knowledge Can Yield Profound Results

The aspect of the legend that deals with the birth of Horus can convey a higher principle. We can view Isis as analogous to that state of wisdom attained as a result of knowledge acquired; and Osiris as being analogous to that state of wisdom that results when knowledge and understanding has been internalized to the point where creativity can flow naturally from one's own insight and inner vision. (Recall the Dogon distinction between 'common knowledge' and 'deep knowledge'.) That later state is reached only after one has worked diligently at it for a while. This is reminiscent of Isis' tireless search for Osiris. And again, only after she had not only found him, but had taken custody of his body could she unite with him and "draw from him his seed." One can accomplish many great things and perform many wondrous tasks by applying the knowledge one has acquired, as symbolized by the work Isis did before the time of Osiris' death. But in order to be creative, to produce paradigm shifting results, one needs to be able to draw from deep within one's own self. To do this one has to move beyond the level of merely acquired knowledge. That knowledge and its uses must be virtually second nature to you for you to generate this kind of thought, but what is more important, to act upon it to the point of accomplishment. Which the conception and *birth* of Horus can be viewed as symbolizing.

Osiris is killed and sent away from Isis. Symbolically, we have the situation where we have knowledge with out wisdom. This happens when wisdom dies, is lost, lies dormant, or when one has had wisdom denied him. But just as Isis loved Osiris profoundly enough to go to great pains to seek him out, true knowledge will do the same in order to quench its thirst for wisdom. When Isis did find Osiris, she "drew from him his seed," which enables it to become creative and produce profound results. Here, Horus is symbolic of the "profound result" that is produced when knowledge is united with wisdom.

This part of the legend is metaphoric of the condition Africa's descendants, as a group, find themselves in today. Many have acquired much knowledge. But they have had the wisdom and understanding that they need in order to fulfill their potential, indeed their destiny, separated from them. The sages and wise ones among them have diligently sought it out to "draw from it its seed." And like Isis, they too produce "Horus" whose missions are to set things aright. But it is a long and arduous process, for these Horuses must be patiently prepared and nurtured with care, just as Isis did for her charge.

Single Motherhood

After Isis conceived Horus, she birthed and raised him alone. Thus, she became, mythologically speaking, "the first single head of household." And there is much in her character and experience that many of today's single parents could learn from.

Parental Vision and the Accompanying Responsibility

Isis was well aware of just how special her child was; that he was a child of destiny, and had a mission in life to fulfill. And she raised and nurtured him in such a manner as to instill in him a sense of purpose. This means that Isis had a vision of what her child was to become, which guided her directions in his rearing. Parents are apt to be the first to recognize their child's attributes, and having done so, their mission is set. Their responsibility becomes to raise their child in such a way as to insure that it receives the best possible nurturing that they can provide for it, so that when the child's time comes, it can rise to the occasion and fulfill its potential.

It Takes a Night of Nurturing to Prepare for the Day of Reckoning

Isis did not have it easy, just as no parent does. Recall that Set had locked her up and she had to call upon Thoth for help. Now Set was no ordinary person (god). He was her brother and the uncle (double uncle at that) of Horus. Which illustrates how sometimes one has to beware of even those who are closest to him; those whom one ought to be able to have confidence and trust in and to rely on. That is, one (or a people) must be ever vigilant, especially with a clearly identified adversary, particular those who are close to him.

African Americans have a historical parallel to this. For they have been "locked up and separated" (physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually) from their ancestral culture. And complicit in this are those whom they befriended and many who claim to be their friends, as well as some of their own kith and kin.

Thoth's advice to Isis was to escape and hide the child, and he further reiterated the child's destiny. Why hide the child? Clearly, if there is a known adversary (in this case, Set), one should not expose one's child (i.e. budding plans or embryonic programs,

projects, and institutions) before he can fend for himself, that is, before he is ready. (Recall: “Don’t make your move too soon.”)

For African Americans, they must escape from the “Locked Up” (mental, etc.) , and go in retreat and prepare themselves to fulfill their potential; much like an athletic team does when it holds a closed practice to prepare for a formidable adversary (task). This is the night of nurturing referred to that must be made “in the still of the night” to ready oneself for the challenges of the dawning day.

The Role of the Extended Family

Even if one does everything right, there is no guarantee that everything will go right. Set finds out where Horus is, after hearing of him from “loose lips.” And in the form of a scorpion, Set stung him to death. Similarly, many African-American Horuses have been ferreted out and anesthetized into a mental and spiritual death. While Isis was out securing provisions for Horus and tending to the needs of other people as well, her son gets killed. Mothers cannot always protect their children against the forces aligned against them. They cannot be with them at all times. Hence, there will be those times when children are vulnerable to negative influences, especially when they are out from under the aegis of their parents.

Nothing is as painful to a parent, especially the mother, as the death of a child. Here we find Isis, whose words and wisdom were able to help virtually everybody else, unable to use any of her abilities to help her own child. Although many came to see what they could do, none could help her. It was her sister Nephthys, loyal, faithful, reliable Nephthys, who flew to her assistance with the scorpion goddess, Serqet, with the insight, constructive advice, and words of wisdom that helped her in this darkest of hours. Here Nephthys is symbolic of the extended family and her actions are demonstrative of how it can be a vital supporting entity. (It should also be remembered that it was Isis who searched for, found and raised Anubis, the son of Nephthys.)

Isis was told by Nephthys and Serqet in effect to lift her voice to the heavens so that Ra (and his entourage) would hear a mother’s cries. When Isis heeded her sister’s advice, the sun stood still at the place where Horus was. And then came Thoth who “besought Isis not to fear, and Nephthys not to weep.” And he “spake the words which restored Horus to life.”¹⁷⁰

Here we have a situation that has an incredible parallel to situations in today’s life. Many of our homes are headed by single females. And like Isis, many are experiencing great difficulties raising their children, especially their sons. And what is even more like Isis, many of them have had the tragic experience of losing their sons to the “sting of scorpions,” which people “close to them take the form of.”

The actions and experience of Isis are instructive in how to deal with these situations in which the young have been mentally, psychologically and spiritually “stung to death.”

First of all we find that it was through her sister (extended family) that she realized what she had to do. Also, we note that Nephthys did not wait for Isis to call upon her. As soon as she realized that Isis was in dire straits, she went straight to her aid. This is what sisters (brother and the extended family) should do. Often the ones who are entangled in trouble's web cannot see their way clearly enough, and need assistance from those close to them who are not as emotionally enthralled. Nephthys beseeched Isis to transcend herself, that is to "lift her voice to the heavens" for help. (Note: The extended family can help, but the ultimate responsibility and work fall on the parents.) And when she did, the help she needed came forth in Thoth. Notice that it was always Thoth whom Isis could count on to set things aright and save the day.

The Value And Role of the Sage

It was Thoth that the Egyptians, writes Budge,¹⁷¹ "held to be both the heart and tongue of Ra, that is to say, he was the reason and the mental powers of the gods, and also the means by which their will was translated into speech. ... In every legend in which Thoth takes a dominant part we see that it is he who speaks the word that results in the wishes of Ra being carried into effect, and it is evident that when he had once given the word of command that command could not fail to be carried out by one means or another." And it was Thoth who taught man, i.e. the priests, how to use words of power. Budge expounds:¹⁷² "To words uttered under certain conditions the greatest importance was attached by the Egyptians, and in fact the whole efficacy of prayer appears to have depended upon the manner and tone of voice in which the words were spoken." (Notice the similarity with respect to the goddess of song, especially those referred to earlier: i.e. Billie, Dinah, Sarah, And Aretha. They too were able to "utter words" with the proper tone, phraseology, style, etc. to produce the desired effect. To which "the greatest importance was attached by" their fans.)

Budge summarizes:¹⁷³ The character of Thoth is a lofty and a beautiful conception, and is, perhaps, the highest idea of deity ever fashioned in the Egyptian mind, ... Thoth, ... as the personification of the mind of God, and as the all-pervading, and governing, and directing power of heaven and of earth, forms a feature of the Egyptian religion which is as sublime as the belief in the resurrection of the dead in a spiritual body, and the doctrine of everlasting life."

It is through the symbolism of Thoth that we find the key. He can be regarded as a metaphor of our great sages, mentors, and teachers both past and present. But in order to gain any benefit from their insight one must first seek help from the correct sources, i.e. "lift one's voice to the heavens." That is to say, one must seek "Thoth" (i.e. the wisdom of wise elders and ancestors) where he is, lest one ends up with a "false prophet." When this is done and the time is right, Thoth will appear, just as it is stated in the maxim of the ancient Egyptian Mysteries: "When the pupil is ready, then the master will appear."

Often in the process of "seeking Thoth," one also finds Maat, who was often regarded by the Egyptians as his female counterpart. For Thoth (the lord of knowledge and

understand) and Maat (the goddess of truth, justice, and righteousness) were inseparably connected; and Maat, writes Budge,¹⁷⁴ “was the highest conception of physical and moral law and order known to the Egyptians.” When one finds such sages and mentors (Thoths) and imbibes of their wisdom and insight (draw from them their seed) then a form of enlightenment (Maat) evolves that puts one more in tune with reality and oneself. This enables one to make more enlightened decisions and to take truer actions, which usually yields positive, and sometimes profound, results.

After Isis received help from Thoth, Horus was revived. She then proceeded with the long, arduous task of child-rearing; in particular, the raising of Horus to fulfill his destiny of avenging the murder of his father. The legend picks up when Horus is grown, and Osiris “appeared to him in a form he could recognize and encouraged him to take up the battle with Set to avenge him,” and he instructed Horus “in the use of arms.” This was the final preparation of Horus for the great battle with Set. Again: “When the pupil is ready, then the master will appear.”

Good and Great Works are Validated by the Subsequent Generations

When the battle began, it swayed back and forth for quite sometime, but Horus eventually emerged the victor. He avenged his father’s murder and caused Osiris to be placed in heaven among the other gods with a special significance reserved just for him.

The symbolism here points out that it is the son, or a subsequent generation, that avenges the father, or validates the work of a prior generation. A contemporary example of this is the re-emergence of the popularity of Malcolm X among the young. They are the ones who brought his name back from “oblivion,” and caused his memory and teachings to be “resurrected.” Because of the youth of this generation (or his “sons”), Malcolm “lives” again, and is now held in as high esteem as our other ancestral leaders and sages, i.e. he has been given his “special place in heaven” among the other “gods.” Also, just as Osiris had his body dismembered and scattered, Malcolm had his character attacked and his image torn asunder. And also like Osiris, it was Malcolm’s “sons” who reassembled his image and brought the pieces of his character back together.

Knowing Oneself Enables Fulfillment of Potential

According to some accounts the struggle between Horus and Set lasted years, centuries even. It is said that the reason this battle lasted so long, a virtual stalemate, inclining sometimes to Set and sometimes to Horus, was that Horus had not yet begun to ‘know his true self’. He had been relying on acquired knowledge he had been taught. All of which was crucial and necessary, but not sufficient for the task at hand. Horus had not yet obtained the wisdom and understanding to turn inward so that he could use his own unique inner insights in order to intuit strategies, and summon his inner strengths so that he could amass the wherewithal to conquer his adversary. It was after he had sought and received guidance from Thoth that Horus understood that he had to tap into his inner

resolve and self (i.e. this is yet another illustration of need to “know thyself”) in order to reach his maximum potential. And only after having done so was Horus able to finally subdue his formidable foe.¹⁷⁵

This episode of the legend clearly illustrates the adage, “If you do what you’ve always done, you’ll get what you always got.” In the ever advance of time and civilization, there inevitably comes a point when new approaches, methods, etc. have to be created to meet the current challenges. And it is usually the Horuses among us, who following the dictates of the Thothis, are the ones who obtained these insights.

The Struggle for the Future, and Generational Tension

Recall the conflict between Isis and Horus during the battle with Set. This is symbolic of the tensions between the generations as the struggle for the future wages. For both generations have their world views, preferred approaches, techniques, tactics, and strategies for addressing societal ills that often generate these tensions.

Now Isis had raised and nurtured Horus from birth for the expressed purpose of “ushering in a new era” by avenging his father’s death. But the unknown future can be foreboding, and when the day of reckoning came and Isis stood face to face with this foreboding unknown future, the great goddess blinked. To see Set, who after all was her brother, in chains was too much for her to take. This particular price for atonement for the past and ushering in the future was too much for her to pay. And out of compassion she released him. This action can be viewed as symbolic of a desire of some, in this case some members of the older generation, to cling on to certain aspects of the old order, even though they too had striven to bring about its down fall. Or perhaps this act can be viewed as excessive caution; or maybe it is indicative of hesitancy or residual resistance, or anxieties and nervousness that many people possess when confronted with the vanishing of an old era and the onset of a new one.

Horus had given his all in the battle with Set. He had fought long, hard, and valiantly. It was a strenuous and arduous effort. And when he found out that Set had been released after all that he had gone through, Horus went into a rage like “a panther from the south.” When one takes into account the ancient Egyptian’s love for the mother, one gets an appreciation for the depth of the outrage that caused Horus to attack Isis, his own mother, “the mother of all mothers,” especially when one reflects upon how much Isis had gone through with and for Horus, and his obvious love for her.

The tearing off of the royal emblems from Isis’ head (some accounts say Horus cut off her head) analogizes the uncompromising, and in some cases brutal, attacks that proponents of the unfolding revolution, symbolized by Horus, level at the old guard. Again, it is Thoth who intervened in Isis’ behalf and gave her a new helmet (or replaced her head with a cow’s head). This is indicative of how it is the sages who are the ones that reveal to the “keepers of the old faith” how to regard, cope, and deal with the new order. It was the old ideas, ways, etc. that came under attack, and many of them will

have to be replaced with new ones that reflect the new day that is dawning, or perhaps ones that reflect the sun that has already risen. Symbolically, the old royal emblems (head) will have to be replaced by a new helmet (head).

The Settling in of a New Paradigm

Even though Set had lost the battle, the war was not totally over. Set still refused to accept defeat and devised new schemes. He proceeded to slander Isis and Horus in order to get the rest of the gods to deny Horus and Osiris their just due and rightful places. This is reflective of how some elements of the old guard never give up, and will sometimes resort to all manner of name calling, character assassination, and other tactics in order to hold on to their ebbing power and influence. (Recall the argument that this struggle was over the right to inheritance.) And once again it was Thoth who interceded and convinced the gods of the correctness of the words and claims of Horus and Osiris, just as it is the sages who enlighten the “pundits of power” on the validity of the new order and the ideas it is rooted in.

Osiris, as the Lord of the Underworld, can be view as the prevailing paradigm of the older order on the verge of being replaced by the new order established by Horus. For the deceased to be received by Osiris, they will have their deeds measured against his standards. Likewise, the works of man are evaluated in the light of the existing paradigms. Osiris is given his place among the gods of the spiritual world and Horus lives to be the lord of the living. When one recalls that Osiris was viewed as ‘yesterday’ and Horus represented ‘today (or the future)’, then it is seen how this symbolically accounts for the changing of the guards, or the establishment of new paradigms and the accompanying “deification” of their exponents and champions, as inevitably happens in an ever changing world.

Unification Enables Ascension

The unification of the body of Osiris can be viewed several ways. Normandi Ellis writes in her book *Awaking Osiris*:¹⁷⁶ “In psychological terms Osiris represents the recollection of the diverse aspects of oneself into a unified whole.” On a sociological level this can symbolize the unification of varied individuals into a group and/or varied groups into a whole all working together for their mutual benefit. Afrocentrically the reunification of the body of Osiris can be seen as a metaphor for the desired reunification of Africa’s descendants which has had members torn from their motherland and scattered all over the globe. With the tombs or temples built by Isis, wherever she found a part of his body, symbolic of the collective will and wisdom of each constituency of Africa’s descendants to make a statement of their presence by creating a culture and life for themselves wherever they happened to be.

The phallus of Osiris, the transmitter of his essence, could not be recovered as it was eaten by fish. Isis, consequently, decided to fashion one herself. Fortunately, before

Osiris' phallus was lost, Isis had been able to "draw from it his seed," which allowed her to produce an heir and avenger for him. Before African cultures and civilizations were attacks and dismantled, their wise ones and sages had been able to draw from them enough of their essence to produce some Horuses among their heirs to wage the battles to set things aright.

According to Ellis¹⁷⁷ the war lasted years (some accounts say centuries). It was so fierce and horrible that "the gods wept and looked away, all but Thoth who ... was unafraid of the truth. ... As the battle waged on even the warrior gods lost strength and they were no more than two angry mists entwined," All of this can be viewed as a metaphor of the war that the "Horuses" among Africa's descendants have waged, are waging, and will wage for the purpose of avenging the honor of their ancestors, and the restoration of their stature in the world order. These Horuses too have grown old and weary of battle and have seen their strength wane. They will pass on to become Osirises and the struggle will be continued by younger Horus warriors. These battles have likewise been fierce on all levels; physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, etc. They have similarly been ugly and horrible enough to make some people, "leaders" and governments, like the gods, look away; that is all except the sages and wise ones who, like Thoth, were unafraid of the truth. And it will be the sages and wise ones who, like Thoth, will play a prominent and pivotal role in ensuring things get set aright.

In the meantime, the African world can be likened to Osiris, longing to be unified in order to ascend into his rightful place in heaven. For like Osiris, only until such unity, or at least some semblance of it is attained will the African world achieve its longed for ascension. This takes place when *smaller sub-units* coalesce and in turn begin to network, forming even *larger units* in the process. The extent to which this dynamic continues to expand and fortify is the extent to which the desired unification necessary for the desired ascension takes place.

APPENDIX

The Ancient Egyptians left their records in hieroglyphs wherein vowels, for the most part, were not present. Consequently, to verbalize the names and terms vowels were inserted. The common usage we are all familiar with comes down to us mainly through Greco-Roman sources. With Plutarch being primary among these. Below is a table of the terms and names given in their original, verbalized original, and commonly used forms.

<u>Original</u>	<u>Verbalized</u>	<u>Common</u>
KMT	Kemet	Egypt
Wsir	Wosir, Asar, Ausar	Osiris
Ast	Aset, Auset	Isis
Hr	Hor, Heru	Horus
Stkh	Setekh	Set, Sat, Seth, Sut
Djhwty	Djehewty, Tehuti	Thoth
Nbthwt	Nebethewet, Nebt-Het	Nephthys
Inpw	Inpu, Inpew, Anpu	Anubis

Notes

Introduction

- ¹ See R. T. Runnel Clark, *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt*, p. 98.
- ² See E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume I, p. 97.
- ³ See E. A. Wallis Budge, *Egyptian Religion: Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life*, p. 185.
- ⁴ See E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 103.
- ⁵ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume. I, p. 98.

Chapter One

Some Historical Background of the Osirian Myth

- ⁶ See John G. Jackson, *Man, God and Civilization*, p. 215.
- ⁷ See *The Ancient Egyptians* by A. Rosalie David, p. 13.
- ⁸ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origan of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p. 22.
- ⁹ See Michael A. Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, p. 51.
- ¹⁰ See Michael A. Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, pp. 218 - 219.
- ¹¹ See Ivan Van Sertima, *Blacks In Science*, p. 56.
- ¹² See Ivan Van Sertima, *Blacks In Science*, p. 20.
- ¹³ See Michael A. Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, p. 82.
- ¹⁴ See Michael A. Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, p. 164.
- ¹⁵ See *The Ancient Egyptians* by A. Rosalie David, p. 14.

-
- ¹⁶ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origan of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p. 23.
- ¹⁷ See *The Ancient Egyptians* by A. Rosalie David, pp. 14 - 16.
- ¹⁸ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origan of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p.87.
- ¹⁹ See *Stolen Legacy* by George G. M. James, p. 50.
- ²⁰ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt The Light Of The World*, p. 581.
- ²¹ John G. Jackson in his book *Christianity Before Christ*, pp. 183-184, cites the English scholar George R. Goodman from an article in *The Freethinker*, Vol. LXXXV, p. 182, entitled “The Age of Unreason.”
- ²² See Charles S. Finch, III, M. D., *Echoes of the Old Dark Land*, pp. 117 - 126.
- ²³ See Charles S. Finch, III, M. D., *Echoes of the Old Dark Land*, p. 118.
- ²⁴ Also see Charles S. Finch, III, M. D., *Echoes of the Old Dark Land*, p. 123.
- ²⁵ See Charles S. Finch, III, M. D., *Echoes of the Old Dark Land*, p. 116.
- ²⁶ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume I, p. 9 and Finch, pp. 181 - 182.
- ²⁷ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume I, pp. xxvii - xxviii.
- ²⁸ See *Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I by E. A. Wallis Budge, pp. 74, 140, 141, and 145.
- ²⁹ See Finch, pp. 96 - 97.
- ³⁰ See Budge, *Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 471. Also, Diop states that the sphinx, which has obvious Negroid features, is a profile of the pharaoh Chephren, who was the son or brother of Cheops (the fourth dynasty pharaoh who built the great pyramid of Giza). See Diop, p. 240.
- ³¹ Jacob H. Carruthers, *MDW NTR: Divine Speech*, pp. 34–35 and 60–61.
- ³² E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book Of the Dead*, pp. xvii and 15.
- ³³ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 323.
- ³⁴ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. xiv - xv.
- ³⁵ See Budge, *Egyptian Religion: Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life*, p. 88.

Chapter Two

The Osirian Legend

- ³⁶ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 287, 288.
- ³⁷ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 294 and 295.
- ³⁸ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 295 and 296.
- ³⁹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 300.
- ⁴⁰ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 300 and 301.
- ⁴¹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 87.
- ⁴² See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 91.
- ⁴³ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 300, 301, and 302, except where otherwise indicated. Also, see pages 306 -307.
- ⁴⁴ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 299 and Volume II, pp. 185 -187.
- ⁴⁵ See Budge, *The Book Of the Dead*, pp. xiix.
- ⁴⁶ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 189.
- ⁴⁷ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, pp. 122 and 257.
- ⁴⁸ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 124.
- ⁴⁹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 190.
- ⁵⁰ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, pp. 191 and 192.
- ⁵¹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 150.
- ⁵² See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 209.
- ⁵³ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 193.
- ⁵⁴ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, pp. 205 - 208.
- ⁵⁵ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, pp. 208 - 211.
- ⁵⁶ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 211.
- ⁵⁷ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 12 - 14, except where otherwise indicated.
- ⁵⁸ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge’s *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 360 -363.
- ⁵⁹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 488.
- ⁶⁰ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 245.
- ⁶¹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 193.
- ⁶² See Carruthers, *MDW NTR: Divine Speech*, pp. 34–35 and 60–61.

-
- ⁶³ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 488, and Volume II, p. 193.
- ⁶⁴ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 9.
- ⁶⁵ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 96.
- ⁶⁶ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 126.
- ⁶⁷ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 74 and 75.
- ⁶⁸ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 90 - 91.
- ⁶⁹ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 74 - 80.
- ⁷⁰ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge's *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 151 -153.
- ⁷¹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 262, and Volume I, p. 150.
- ⁷² See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 490.
- ⁷³ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 305.
- ⁷⁴ See Budge, *Egyptian Religion: Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life*, p. 134.
- ⁷⁵ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 340 -343.
- ⁷⁶ See Budge, *Egyptian Religion: Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life*, pp. 135 - 165, and Budge, *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 337 -347 for the quotes in this paragraph.

Chapter Three

Of The African Roots Of Osirianism

- ⁷⁷ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. vii - viii.
- ⁷⁸ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. ix.
- ⁷⁹ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. vii.
- ⁸⁰ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 384.
- ⁸¹ The quotes in this paragraph are from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. xv and xvi, except where indicated otherwise.
- ⁸² See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. xvii and xix.
- ⁸³ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p. 1 - 2.
- ⁸⁴ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p. 89.
- ⁸⁵ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, p. 108.
- ⁸⁶ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 304 - 305.
- ⁸⁷ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. xiii.
- ⁸⁸ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. xiv - xv.
- ⁸⁹ Quotes from the preceding four paragraphs are taken from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 132 - 139.
- ⁹⁰ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. xviii.
- ⁹¹ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 130 - 131.
- ⁹² See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, p. 132.
- ⁹³ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 333.
- ⁹⁴ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 215, and 216.
- ⁹⁵ See W. E. B. DuBois, *Darkwater*, p.166.
- ⁹⁶ See Ivan Van Sertima, *Golden Age of the Moors*, p. 74.
- ⁹⁷ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 33 and 231.
- ⁹⁸ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, pp. 232 - 233, and Volume II, p.253.
- ⁹⁹ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 243.
- ¹⁰⁰ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 276 - 278..
- ¹⁰¹ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, p. 217.
- ¹⁰² Quotes from the preceding four paragraphs are taken from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 169 - 170.
- ¹⁰³ Quotes from the preceding four paragraphs are taken from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 170, 172, and 276.
- ¹⁰⁴ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 178 - 179.
- ¹⁰⁵ See E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. I, p. 324.
- ¹⁰⁶ Quotes from the preceding three paragraphs are taken from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 90 - 93.

- ¹⁰⁷ Quotes from the preceding paragraph are taken from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 90 - 95.
- ¹⁰⁸ Quotes from the preceding paragraph are taken from Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. II, pp. 95 - 96.
- ¹⁰⁹ See J. A. Rogers', *World's Great Men of Color*, Volume I, pp. 399 - 400.
- ¹¹⁰ See the liner notes by Robert Palmer on the album entitled "Dogon A.D." by Julius Hemphill; Arista, 1977.
- ¹¹¹ See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, p. 61.
- ¹¹² See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, pp. 71 - 73.
- ¹¹³ See Marcel Griaule's *Conversation with Ogotommeli*, p. 17.
- ¹¹⁴ See Marcel Griaule's *Conversation with Ogotommeli*, p. 18.
- ¹¹⁵ See Marcel Griaule's *Conversation with Ogotommeli*, pp. 20 - 21.
- ¹¹⁶ See Marcel Griaule's *Conversation with Ogotommeli*, pp. 21 - 22.
- ¹¹⁷ For the quotes in the preceding two paragraphs, see Marcel Griaule's *Conversation with Ogotommeli*, pp. 22 - 23.
- ¹¹⁸ See Marcel Griaule's *Conversation with Ogotommeli*, p. 24 and Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, pp. 282 - 283.
- ¹¹⁹ See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, pp. 39 - 30, 306 - 307.
- ¹²⁰ See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, pp. 324, 316 - 334 .
- ¹²¹ See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, p. 255.
- ¹²² See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, pp. 388 - 389.
- ¹²³ See *The Pale Fox* by M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, pp. 389 - 390.
- ¹²⁴ See the article "African Observers of the Universe: The Sirius Question" by Hunter Adams III in *Journal of Africal Civilizations*, Volume I, Number 2, November 1979; p. 3.
- ¹²⁵ See the article "African Observers of the Universe: The Sirius Question" by Hunter Adams III in *Journal of Africal Civilizations*, Volume I, Number 2, November 1979; p. 8.
- ¹²⁶ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origan of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p. 179.
- ¹²⁷ See Richard Leakey, *The Origin of Mankind*, p. 119
- ¹²⁸ See Richard Leakey, *The Origin of Mankind*, p. 128.
- ¹²⁹ See Richard Leakey, *The Origin of Mankind*, p. 156.
- ¹³⁰ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, pp. 75 - 76.
- ¹³¹ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 179.
- ¹³² See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, pp. 250 - 251.
- ¹³³ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 288.
- ¹³⁴ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 127.
- ¹³⁵ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 260.
- ¹³⁶ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, pp. 265 - 269.
- ¹³⁷ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 262.
- ¹³⁸ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, pp. 268 - 269.
- ¹³⁹ See Harold A. Cooke, *Osiris: A Study in Myths, Mysteries and religion*, pp. 24 -25.
- ¹⁴⁰ See Harold A. Cooke, *Osiris: A Study in Myths, Mysteries and religion*, p. 10.
- ¹⁴¹ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 60.
- ¹⁴² See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume II, p. 586.

Chapter Four

The Temple Builders

- ¹⁴³ See the article "The Discovery of Superfluidity" by Russell J. Donnelly in *Physics Today*, p. 30.
- ¹⁴⁴ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 224.
- ¹⁴⁵ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, pp. 351 and 354.
- ¹⁴⁶ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 224.
- ¹⁴⁷ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, pp. 205 - 210.
- ¹⁴⁸ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 198.
- ¹⁴⁹ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 200.
- ¹⁵⁰ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 194.
- ¹⁵¹ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 200.

-
- ¹⁵² See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, page 5 of the Introduction.
- ¹⁵³ See Cheik Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, p. 95.
- ¹⁵⁴ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 82.
- ¹⁵⁵ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 85.
- ¹⁵⁶ See George G. M. James, *Stolen Legacy*, p. 33.
- ¹⁵⁷ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, pp. 99 and 100.
- ¹⁵⁸ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, pp. 100 - 102.
- ¹⁵⁹ See J. Norman Lockyer, *The Dawn of Astronomy*, p. 119.
- ¹⁶⁰ The quotes are taken from the back cover booknotes of *Her-Bak: The Living Face of Ancient Egypt*, by Isha Schwaller de Lubicz.
- ¹⁶¹ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, page 438.
- ¹⁶² The quotes were taken from Isha Schwaller de Lubicz, *Her-Bak: The Living Face of Ancient Egypt*.
- ¹⁶³ The quotes were taken from Isha Schwaller de Lubicz, *Her-Bak: Egyptian Initiate*.
- ¹⁶⁴ See George G. M. James, *Stolen Legacy*, pp. 30 - 31.
- ¹⁶⁵ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 346.
- ¹⁶⁶ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 198.
- ¹⁶⁷ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, p. 348.
- ¹⁶⁸ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, pp. 195 - 196, for quotes and comments in this section.
- ¹⁶⁹ See Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Volume I, pp. 346 - 348.

Chapter Five

Some Discussion of Parables For the Present From the Osirian Legend

- ¹⁷⁰ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume II, pp. 210 - 211.
- ¹⁷¹ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 407.
- ¹⁷² See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 408.
- ¹⁷³ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 415.
- ¹⁷⁴ See Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Volume I, p. 421.
- ¹⁷⁵ See the book *Medu Neter by Ra Un Nefer Amen*.
- ¹⁷⁶ See Normandi Ellis, *Awaking Osiris*, p.22.
- ¹⁷⁷ See Normandi Ellis, *Awaking Osiris*, pp. 74 - 75.