

EGYPTIAN SYMBOLOGY



The official name of Egypt is “The Arab Republic of Masr”
 Egyptians may call their country Egypt or Masr
 Aramaic texts used Mizraim
 Ugaritic Hebrew texts refer to Msrm
 Assyrians and Babylonians called it Musur
 The Arabic word for Egypt is Masr

PALEOLITHIC	
CONTINUOUS HABITATION	
160,000 BC	▶ Early Tools were Hand Axes & Scrapers
100,000 BC	▶ Tent Rings at Wadi Halfa
53,000 BC	▶ Earliest Grave Found Near Luxor
42,000 BC	▶ New Types of Tool Making
16,000 BC	▶ Other Cultures Appear in Egypt
13,000 BC	▶ Farming (hoe & sickle) for wheat & barley
10,000 BC	▶ Fifty-nine graves at Gebel Sahaba with flint arrow and spear points lodged in bones
	▶ Climate Change arrives and Farming disappears for 900 years

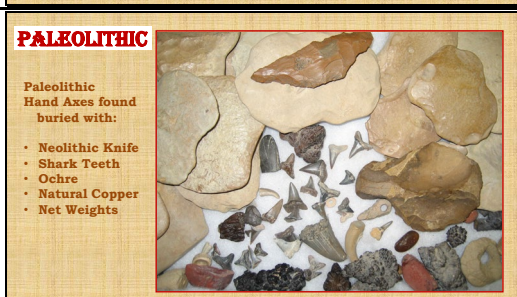
Nomadic people annually followed and hunted migrating herds into Egypt
 (The Sahara desert was a savanna with rain)
 Small farming communities arose from 13,000 ~ 10,000 BC
 10,000 BC **Climate Change** came and annual rains stopped
 Farming disappeared for 900 years until about 9,000 BC



For thousands of years Egypt has been called “The Gift of the Nile”
 Boats float North with the current and sail South with the wind
 Two rival communities appear -- Fayoum and Qena [later Naqada]

2500 BC to 1500 BC -- Egypt went through periods of weakness and unity
 under 170 Pharaohs within 30 Dynasties
 many wars and Climate Changes
 Periods of extensive Trade

EGYPT CLIMATE CHANGES	
12,900 To 11,700 - Global Glacial after Gradual Global Warming	
AGRICULTURE RETURNS	
9100 BC - Return to Warming	
EARLY BRONZE AGE BEGINS	
7400 BC - Sudden Global Cooling	
6200 BC - Sudden Cooling Lasted 200 to 400 Years	
END OF THE EGYPTIAN OLD KINGDOM	
3900 BC - Monsoon Rains in Sahara Desert	
3500-3000 BC - Sahara Desert Covered in Grass, Trees, Lakes	
IRON AGE	
2200 BC - Warming with Long-Term Drought	
800 BC - Cold Epoch	
600 AD - Late Antique Little Ice Age	
1500 AD - Little Ice Age	



Paleolithic hand axes found buried with sharks teeth, ochre, net weights, and natural copper nodules
 Cached with a Neolithic knife at top
 The stone hand axes are many millennia older

NEOLITHIC	
▶ Early Settlements Reintroduce Farming & Weaving	
▶ Domestic Cattle used for Milk & Blood	
9000 to 7180 BC	▶ Wells were Dug and Pottery was Decorated
▶ Nomadic Stone-Age Hunter-Gathering Disappears	
7180 - 6100 BC	▶ Birket Qarun Farming Culture --> Faiyum B Arrowheads
6100 - 3200 BC	▶ Neolithic Bronze Age
5000 to 4200 BC	▶ Huts, pottery, stone tools, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, wheat, sorghum, barley
4200 to 3000 BC	▶ Pre-Dynastic Towns up to 5,000 people
MEDIA	
3600 BC	▶ First Drawings on Jars of Men Drawing Their Bows

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PRE-DYNASTY

4000-3800 BC

Badarian (Fayoum B) Arrowheads



Late Neolithic arrow head and bird points
They are serrated like shark teeth at center
Used as tools, spears, and arrowheads

RECORDED HISTORY

▶ Egyptian hieroglyphs & Symbols began in use on pottery

▶ Symbols were used until Roman era

3200 BC
Scorpion King II

▶ 3,000 years

▶ 300 Pharaohs

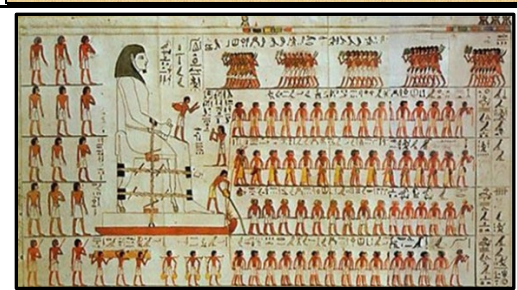


2500 BC to 1500 BC -- Egypt went through periods of weakness and unity under 170 Pharaohs within 30 Dynasties.
Extensive trade with Mesopotamia
Boats float North in the current, and sail South with the winds.

SCARAB



A Scarab [Kheper] symbolized forces to move the sun across the sky -- a reminder of creation, rebirth, and renewal of life after death
Just as a Scarab grub enters a sarcophagus [cocoon in dung] -- then emerges as a winged being emerging daily from morning sand -- to face [worship] the rising Sun and collect a drink of dew
Scarab amulets were worn on necklace jewelry
The backs are inscribed with prayers, gods, or names




No Ancient Aliens, Only Hard Work
Massive projects need thousands of workers to move huge objects
1900 BC Papyrus from Tomb of Djehutihotep shows 172 men
They pull a 25 ton statue on a skid
The men in front are pouring water ahead of the sled and 172 men
To compress the sand and slide the sled
The Great Pyramid at Giza has 2.3 million limestone blocks
Each weighing 25 to 80 tons each

▶ Egyptians were obsessed with life after death

- Deeply religious

- Life continued into their second life

▶ 2,000 Local and National gods



Amulets carried a symbolic element of a god's Virtue
Amun was the creative power behind the existence of all life and creator of all gods
For a period, Amun was combined with sun-god Ra
Then became the national god
The worship of Amun at Luxor continued for 1,000 years
After a High Priest became Pharaoh

MERCHANT SEALS & SIGNET RINGS

Collection



Signet rings and seals were used to seal papyrus scrolls, and jars of merchant goods
Nobles, wealthy and merchants have their own

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EGYPTIAN MONOTHEISM

1545 - 1295 BC	Pharaoh appoints himself 'High Priest of Amun'
1350 - 1332 BC	Akhenaten ▶ Abolished all other gods but the ATEN
1332 - 1327 BC	Tutankhamun returns to the worship of Amun ▶ Amun the 'Hidden One' - The one cosmic power present in the whole of creation
1400 - 1200 BC	Exodus 13:19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him out of Egypt

High Priests at Luxor rivaled the power of Pharaoh Amenhotep IV [300 years after Moses]

- Imposed monotheism to worship Aten only
- Abolished all other gods, temples and priests
- Destroyed hundreds of local shrines

1350 BC - ANKHNATEN

Collection

Ankhnaten
Father of
Tut-Ank-Amun

Son later
changed his name to
Tut-Ankh-Amun



After his death, his son TutAnkhAten

- Returned the worship of Amun as the national god
- Changed his name to TutAnkhAmun
- Returned power to the High Priests at Luxor

TUTANKHAMUN



Son of Amun-Ra
Living Image of Amun



Cairo
Museum →



TutAnkhAmun breastplate shows "NebKheperuRa"
[Son of Amun Ra]

Bead at left was often thrown to crowds during parade ceremonies

MA'AT = A NATURAL ORDER

- ▶ MA'AT -- 'The way things should be'
- ▶ A natural order in the universe
- ▶ Justice = Proper relationship between humans
- ▶ Between gods and people
- ▶ Between ruler and ruled
- ▶ Everyone is not equal, but privilege brings responsibility
- ▶ Power must ensure justice for the weak.
- ▶ Day of Judgment: Your heart is weighed against Ma'at
- ▶ Not to measure goodness or sin, but balance
- ▶ Without a heart there is no home for Ka or Ba

Everything has two natures

- The Ba on Earth and the Ka in afterlife
 - The Ka follows the Ba around as one's shadow
 - Life on Earth is spent preparing for that eternal afterlife
- A Mother gives her baby a Ba name on Earth,
yet might keep the Ka name secret
to prevent a curse into the afterlife

BOOK OF THE DEAD

British
Museum



Toth reads Hunefer's life etched by Toth on a clay tablet

[Where no tears can wash away even a word of it]

Anubis weighs Hunefer's heart against the Feather of Truth [Ma'at]

[and moves a scale balance for each of his good deeds]

Above him, many Judges measure each virtuous deed

Under the scale, Ammit [chaos] waits to devour an unjust heart

-- [then a Ka become restless forever with weeping & gnashing of teeth]

WORSHIP OF AMUN

High Priests of Amun at Luxor

- 1150 BC
- ▶ Temple was 2 miles square with 10,000 statues
 - ▶ Employed 80,000 men in the worship of Amun
 - ▶ Owned 85 villages and all agricultural product
 - ▶ Owned ½ million cattle, and shipyards

- 1182 - Ramses III was the last great pharaoh
1151 BC
- ▶ Successors were dominated by Priests of Amun

1080 BC High Priest of Amun seized the throne as Pharaoh

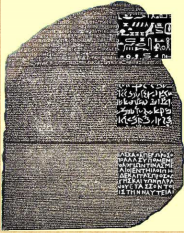
After Joseph, immense power & wealth grew for the High Priests of Amun
They sometimes dominated Pharaohs

In 1080 BC, the High Priests became Pharaohs


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THE ROSETTA STONE



British Museum



Egyptian Demotic writing was a shorthand used by scribes to represent hieroglyphs
 It was in use when Saint Mark arrived in Alexandria Egypt
 The Rosetta Stone is a 196 BC a decree in three languages
 -- Hieroglyphs, **Demotic** and Ancient Greek
 It was deciphered in 1822 by Champollion
 -- using the cartouche of Alexander as the key

WORSHIP OF AMUN


► Worship of Amun during 1,000+ years of foreign rule:

- 954 BC Libyans
- 728 BC Nubians
- 674 BC Assyrians
- 639 BC ► Period of Egyptian rule with Communities of
 - Libyans, Greeks, Phoenicians, & Jews
- 569 BC Babylonians – Nebuchadnezzar builds 'Babylon'
- 525 BC Persians
- 332 BC Macedonia/Greece -- Alexander the Great
- 30 BC Roman Empire – Cleopatra - last Egyptian Queen

Egyptian worship of Amun continued despite a thousand years of foreign domination and presence of foreign gods
 Amun was worshiped until the arrival of Saint Mark in Alexandria [six years after Christ's crucifixion].
 Elements continued within early Coptic Christian rituals
 Note: Egypt remained under foreign rule for 2,600 years until Gamal Abul Nasser overthrew British rule in 1952

COPTIC CHRISTIANS

41 AD ► St Mark arrived in Alexandria
 Bishop of Africa – Coptic Church



Coptic Museum

Room 1 of Coptic Museum
 Early Christians used Demotic writing
 Used the Ankh for gravestone as a symbol for Christ [Eternal Life]
 Ankh used for Christ until 120 AD
 Later a Maltese Cross replaced the top loop
 Greek alphabet used today by Copts [with 7 Demotic characters]
 Copts ended their prayers with "**Amun**"







Coptic Museum

Early Christians known as Copts, trace their belief in Jesus from the Disciple Mark who arrived in Alexandria after Jesus died. Copts developed their language from Demotic hieroglyphs.
 They still use similar language with old Greek & Demotic characters.
 Coptic music was memorized by Cantors for millennia before being written down in the 19th century.

COPTIC CHRISTIANS



► Chi Rho (XP) = Kristus
 ► 321 AD - Constantine chose this symbol

These artifacts are from the fourth century, Holy Roman Empire
 The Coptic Cross evolved in the second century from the Ankh to replace the top loop into the shape of a cross
 Coptic amulets, a broken cross, vestments, and bronze Chi-Rho ring [symbol used by Emperor Constantine 306–337 AD]
 Coptic Christian calendar uses the names of ancient gods
 250 AD ► Emperors Decius and Valerian persecute Christians
 ► Emperor Diocletian was most severe
 303 AD ► Christian monasticism starts in the desert

THE WEIGHT OF HISTORY



Egyptians often say they feel the weight of history upon them.
 Keep in mind these fish hooks and lice combs:
 The ones on the left are 2,500 years old
 – the next ones are 1,000 years old
 – the next are 400 years old
 – and those on the right are from a Cairo market
 If useful objects like these do not change over millennia, then perhaps some religious thinking may also not change.