

THE WISDOM OF KEMET

A Deep Dive into Ancient Egyptian Beliefs, Philosophy, and Spirituality

Kemet -- the Black Land -- is what the ancient Egyptians called their home, named for the rich, dark soil of the Nile. What they built there was not just a civilization but a complete philosophy of existence: a map of the soul, a science of the afterlife, a code of ethics, a cosmology of staggering sophistication, and a set of teachings that quietly underpin much of modern mysticism, energy healing, and new age spirituality -- whether credited or not.

Cosmology

The Soul

Ma'at & Ethics

The Afterlife

The Deities

Hermeticism

For Hali Sarah Parsons • Haligrlicity Personal Reading Series • April 2026

"I am Yesterday and I am Tomorrow. I am the divine hidden soul who created the gods and who gives their meals to the denizens of the Duat."

-- The Book of the Dead -- Chapter 17

"Your heart is true, you have committed no crime against any god."

-- The Declaration of the Justified Soul -- Hall of Two Truths

"As above, so below; as below, so above."

-- The Emerald Tablet, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus -- synthesis of Thoth's wisdom

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THE LAND OF KEMET

Who Were the Ancient Egyptians?

Kemet -- meaning the Black Land in the ancient Egyptian language -- was the name the Egyptians gave their own civilization, named for the rich dark soil deposited by the annual flooding of the Nile. (Deshret -- the Red Land -- was the desert beyond, understood as chaotic and hostile.) They called themselves the remetch en Kemet: the people of the Black Land.

Ancient Egypt is not simply one period in history. It spans approximately 3,000 years of continuous, sophisticated civilization -- from the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt around 3100 BCE to the death of the last pharaoh Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE. For context: the distance in time between Cleopatra and us today is shorter than the distance between Cleopatra and the builders of the Great Pyramid. The pyramids were ancient history to Cleopatra.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Predynastic | Before 3100 BCE -- the formation of Egyptian culture and religion |
| Early Dynastic | 3100-2686 BCE -- unification under the first pharaohs |
| Old Kingdom | 2686-2181 BCE -- the age of the great pyramids |
| Middle Kingdom | 2055-1650 BCE -- literary and cultural flowering |
| New Kingdom | 1550-1070 BCE -- the age of Ramesses, Tutankhamun, Akhenaten |
| Late Period | 664-332 BCE -- foreign rule and Egyptian cultural revival |
| Greco-Roman Period | 332-30 BCE -- Alexandria, Cleopatra, the synthesis |

What made Egyptian civilization extraordinary was not merely its monuments but its philosophical and spiritual coherence. For 3,000 years, the Egyptians maintained a remarkably consistent worldview -- not because they were rigid, but because they had developed a framework flexible enough to absorb new ideas while holding its essential shape.

The Primordial Waters of Nun

Before anything existed -- before earth, sky, gods, or time -- there was Nun. Nun was the primordial ocean: formless, dark, infinite, and perfectly still. Not water in the physical sense but the potential from which all existence would emerge. The Egyptians understood this pre-creation state not as emptiness but as infinite latent possibility -- everything that would ever be, held in undifferentiated unity.

This concept of a primordial void from which creation emerges appears in virtually every ancient tradition: the Hebrew *tohu wa-bohu* (formless void) before creation in Genesis, the Hindu *akasha* (cosmic space) before manifestation, the Taoist *wu* (nothingness) that precedes the ten thousand things. Egypt was among the first to give this concept its most sophisticated philosophical treatment.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The concept of Nun -- infinite potential before manifestation -- is strikingly similar to the quantum vacuum in modern physics: the ground state of the universe from which particles emerge spontaneously, and to which they return. It is also directly parallel to the Advaita Vedanta concept of Brahman before creation, and to New Thought's 'infinite field of possibilities' described in *Real Magic* by Hali Sarah Parsons. The Egyptians arrived at this understanding 5,000 years before quantum mechanics.

The Heliopolitan Creation -- Atum and the Great Ennead

The most widespread Egyptian creation myth originated in Heliopolis (On in Egyptian) -- the city of the sun. In this account:

From the waters of Nun arose a primeval mound -- the *benben* -- the first solid land. On this mound stood Atum, the first god, who had willed himself into existence. Atum means both 'the All' and 'the Nothing' -- the completed whole. He was described as 'he who came into being by himself,' the self-created one, containing within himself both male and female principles.

Atum then created the first divine pair -- Shu (air) and Tefnut (moisture) -- through an act of self-generation. These two then gave birth to Geb (the Earth, depicted lying on his back) and Nut (the Sky, arching over him). Geb and Nut produced the four children who would shape all human

experience:

- **Osiris:** God of fertility, the underworld, and resurrection -- the principle of renewal
- **Isis:** Goddess of magic, healing, motherhood, and wisdom -- the principle of creative intelligence
- **Set:** God of chaos, storms, and the desert -- the principle of necessary disruption
- **Nephthys:** Goddess of protection and the liminal -- guardian of the threshold between worlds

Together with Atum, Shu, and Tefnut, these four formed the Great Ennead -- the nine deities of Heliopolis -- the foundation of Egyptian theological order.

The First Time -- Zep Tepi The Egyptians called the moment of creation Zep Tepi -- 'the First Time.' This was not merely a historical event but an eternally recurring moment. Every sunrise was a re-enactment of the First Time. Every dawn was Atum rising from the waters of Nun again. Every ritual performed in a temple was a restoring of the First Time's perfection. Time for the Egyptians was not linear but cyclical -- each cycle a return to origin.

The Memphite Creation -- Ptah and the Power of Thought

While Heliopolis taught that creation emerged from a physical act, the priests of Memphis offered something philosophically revolutionary: Ptah created the world through thought and speech alone. The Shabaka Stone (circa 710 BCE, based on texts far older) records what Egyptologists call the Memphite Theology:

Ptah -- the craftsman god -- conceived of the world in his heart (which the Egyptians understood as the seat of both thought and feeling) and then spoke it into existence with his tongue. The Memphite Theology explicitly states that Ptah's creative thought and speech caused the formation of Atum and all the gods. Ptah is described as 'he who made heaven and who gave birth to craftsmanship.'

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Memphite Theology -- that reality is created through thought and word -- is the exact philosophical foundation of New Thought's Law of Mind (thought is cause, reality is effect) and the I AM Activity's teaching that the I AM declarations create reality. The Gospel of John's 'In the beginning was the Word' (Logos) is directly descended from this Egyptian theological tradition, transmitted through the Alexandrian synthesis of Egyptian and Greek philosophy. The Word as creative force is Ptah's teaching, thousands of years older than the Gospel.

The Hermopolitan Creation -- The Ogdoad

In Hermopolis (the city of Thoth), the creation myth began with the Ogdoad -- eight primordial deities representing the forces of chaos that existed before the world. Four frog-headed male gods and their serpent-headed female counterparts:

- **Nun and Naunet:** Water -- the primordial ocean
- **Amun and Amaunet:** Hiddenness -- the invisible force
- **Heh and Hauhet:** Infinity -- endless time and space
- **Kek and Kauket:** Darkness -- the formless void before light

From the explosive interaction of these eight forces, a cosmic egg was created on the primeval mound. From this egg, the sun was born -- bringing light, order, and the possibility of life. One Theban version describes Amun's act of creation as the call of a goose that broke the stillness of the primeval waters, causing all to form. Amun was understood as the hidden force behind all things -- transcending all other deities, 'beyond the sky and deeper than the underworld.'

THE FIVE PARTS OF THE SOUL

The Five Parts of the Soul

One of ancient Egypt's most extraordinary contributions to human thought is its understanding of the soul -- not as a single entity but as a complex of five distinct components, each with its own function, nature, and journey after death. This is far more sophisticated than the simple body/soul dualism of most Western traditions.

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|--------------|---|
| Ka | Life force / vital energy -- the animating power |
| Ba | Personality and personal spirit -- the individual self |
| Akh | The glorified, immortal spirit -- achieved through a righteous life |
| Ren | The sacred name -- one's identity and continued existence |
| Shout | The shadow -- the dark double, also carrying one's essence |

Ka -- The Life Force

The Ka was understood as the vital life force -- the animating energy that distinguished the living from the dead. It was given to every person at birth by the god Khnum, who fashioned both the physical body and its Ka on his potter's wheel simultaneously.

The Ka was depicted as a person's double -- identical in appearance, a kind of energetic twin that accompanied the person throughout life and remained attached to the body after death. This is why Egyptian tombs were provisioned so elaborately: the Ka needed food, drink, clothing, and all the necessities of life even after the physical body died. When tomb visitors left offerings of bread, beer, incense, and linen -- they were feeding the Ka.

The Ka also represented the person's connection to their ancestors -- the Ka was understood as the spiritual inheritance passed from parents to children, linking the living to the line of all who had come before them.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Ka is functionally identical to the concept of life force that appears in virtually every mystical tradition: prana in Sanskrit, qi in Chinese, ki in Japanese, mana in Polynesian. The Egyptian understanding that the Ka requires sustenance even after death directly parallels Haligricity's ancestor altar practice -- leaving offerings of water, food, and beloved objects to nourish the continuing presence of those who have passed.

Ba -- The Personality and Personal Spirit

The Ba was the aspect of the soul that was uniquely individual -- the sum total of a person's characteristics, personality, preferences, and personal attributes. Where the Ka was universal life force, the Ba was what made you distinctly you.

The Ba was depicted as a human-headed bird -- the bird's mobility representing the Ba's freedom to travel, while the human face represented the individual personality. After death, the Ba was believed to leave the body each morning (as a bird takes flight) and return each night to reunite with the mummy. This is why preservation of the body was so important -- the Ba needed a recognizable physical anchor to return to.

The Ba could also visit the world of the living, communicate with the living, and travel to the presence of the gods. During the New Kingdom, it became increasingly believed that the Ba could also magically affect events in the world of the living -- a teaching that directly influenced ancestor veneration practices across cultures.

Akh -- The Glorified Immortal Self

The Akh was not something a person was born with but something they earned -- or failed to earn -- through the quality of their life and the success of their journey through death. The Akh was achieved when the Ka and Ba successfully reunited after death in the Hall of Two Truths, and the heart was found lighter than the feather of Ma'at.

The word Akh means 'to be effective' or 'beneficial spirit' -- and it is sometimes translated as 'glorified' or 'transfigured.' The Akh was depicted as a shining, luminous being -- often shown as an ibis (the bird of Thoth) or simply as brilliant light. It represents the completed, perfected form of the soul: the individual who has been through death and emerged transformed.

The Akh could move freely between all realms -- the underworld, the sky, and even the world of the living. An Akh could assist the living as a beneficial ancestor spirit, or travel with Ra on his solar journey, or dwell eternally in the Field of Reeds.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Akh concept is strikingly similar to the Ascended Master tradition of the I AM Activity -- beings who completed their spiritual evolution and exist in a glorified state from which they guide those still in the cycle. It also parallels the Buddhist Bodhisattva who has achieved liberation but remains available to assist others. The Haligric understanding of those who have passed -- that they are 'now everywhere, in everything' -- is essentially describing the state of the Akh.

Ren -- The Sacred Name

The Ren was the person's sacred name -- and for the Egyptians, a name was not merely a label but a living part of the soul itself. To know a being's true name was to have power over them. To speak a name was to call that being into presence. To erase a name was to destroy a being's existence in the most fundamental possible way.

This is why Egyptian pharaohs who fell from favor had their names systematically chiseled out of all monuments -- it was understood as a form of spiritual annihilation, not merely political erasure. And it is why the Egyptians were so careful to speak the names of the dead in prayer, in offering, and in ceremony: to speak the name was to sustain the Ren, and therefore the soul.

The Ren was eternal -- as long as someone's name was spoken, their Ren continued to exist in some form. This made the inscription of names in stone not merely a memorial practice but a spiritual act of life-extension.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Egyptian understanding of the Ren is the philosophical foundation of the Haligric practice of speaking the names of ancestors at the altar. It is also the root of Haligricity's teaching: 'The longer we keep the memory of those we have lost, we still give their direct essence life.' Speaking the name IS sustaining the soul. This is Ren.

Sheut -- The Shadow

The Sheut was the shadow -- the dark double of the person, understood as carrying the person's essence just as the Ren and Ka did. The Sheut traveled with the person always, even into the afterlife. To lose one's shadow was considered deeply dangerous; it could be used by magicians to affect the person it belonged to.

The Sheut is the least understood of the five soul components in modern scholarship, but it suggests a sophisticated Egyptian understanding of the unconscious dimension of the self -- the part that accompanies us everywhere, that we cannot see directly, and that carries our essence even in shadow form.

MA'AT -- TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND COSMIC ORDER

What Is Ma'at?

Ma'at (also spelled Maat or M[■]'at) is the most important concept in all of ancient Egyptian thought -- and perhaps the most misunderstood by those approaching Egypt through its surface layer of temples and tombs. Ma'at was not merely a goddess. She was an entire philosophical principle: the foundation of Egyptian law, governance, medicine, cosmology, and daily ethics.

Ma'at represents truth, balance, justice, cosmic order, and right relationship -- between humans and humans, between humans and the divine, between humans and the natural world, and between all things and the fundamental order of existence. Ma'at was what kept the Nile flooding on schedule. Ma'at was what kept the sun rising each morning. Ma'at was what made a king's reign legitimate. Ma'at was the quality that made a heart light enough to pass judgment. Without Ma'at, chaos (Isfet) would consume everything.

Ma'at was depicted as a woman with an ostrich feather on her head -- or simply as the feather itself. She was present in the Hall of Two Truths at every weighing of the heart, embodying the standard against which every soul was measured.

Ma'at in Everyday Life For ancient Egyptians, living in Ma'at was not merely religious compliance -- it was a practical philosophy of alignment. The pharaoh's primary duty was to uphold Ma'at. The priest's primary duty was to maintain Ma'at through ritual. The individual's primary duty was to live Ma'at through ethical action. The very word for 'government' in ancient Egypt was related to Ma'at. It was simultaneously ethics, law, cosmology, and daily practice -- a total philosophy of how to be.

The 42 Laws of Ma'at -- The Declarations of Innocence

The 42 Laws of Ma'at -- also called the Negative Confessions or Declarations of Innocence -- were the spiritual and ethical statutes by which every Egyptian aspired to live. They appear in Chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead (particularly in the Papyrus of Ani) and were recited by the soul upon arrival in the Hall of Two Truths, before a panel of 42 divine judges corresponding to Egypt's 42 nomes (districts).

Each declaration took the form: 'I have not [transgression].' The soul affirmed its innocence of each violation before the relevant deity. Together, the 42 confessions constitute one of the world's oldest written ethical codes -- predating the Ten Commandments and covering a remarkably comprehensive range of moral, social, environmental, and ritual conduct.

A Selection of the 42 Declarations I have not committed sin against any person. I have not robbed with violence. I have not spoken lies. I have not slain men or women. I have not stolen food. I have not encroached upon fields. I have not spoken against anyone. I have not been angry without just cause. I have not polluted the water. I have not killed the cattle of the gods. I have not caused pain to another. I have not caused weeping. I have not been eavesdropping. I have not ignored the truth. I have not been impatient. I have not acted with insolence. I have not been excessively proud. I have not stirred up strife. I have not acted deceitfully. I have not made myself deaf to the words of truth.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The 42 Laws of Ma'at are widely recognized by scholars as historical predecessors to the Ten Commandments of Judeo-Christian tradition -- though the Ma'at declarations are older and more comprehensive. They are also notable in that they were not commandments issued by a deity from above, but affirmations of personal integrity made from within the individual. This is deeply aligned with Haligricity's understanding that ethics is not imposed from outside but arises from the recognition of one's divine nature.

The Weighing of the Heart

The most dramatic moment in the entire Egyptian afterlife journey is the Weighing of the Heart -- the psychostasia -- depicted in the Book of the Dead with extraordinary detail.

Upon death, the soul was guided by Anubis to the Hall of Two Truths -- the Hall of Ma'at. There, in the presence of Osiris and 42 divine judges, the deceased's heart was removed and placed on one side of a great balance scale. On the other side was placed the feather of Ma'at -- a single ostrich feather, representing the weightlessness of a life lived in truth.

Thoth stood nearby, recording the result on his scribal tablet. If the heart was equal to or lighter than the feather, the soul was declared *maa-kheru* -- justified, true of voice -- and was welcomed by Osiris into the eternal Field of Reeds. The triumphant declaration was spoken: 'Your heart is true. You have committed no crime against any god.'

If the heart was heavier than the feather -- burdened by unresolved wrongdoing, deception, harm done to others -- it was fed to Ammit.

Ammit -- The Devourer of Hearts Ammit was a composite being -- part lion, part hippopotamus, part crocodile -- who crouched beside the scale. Her function was to consume the hearts of those who failed the weighing. This was not understood as eternal punishment in the Christian sense -- rather, the consumption of the heart meant the soul ceased to exist. This second death (the death of the soul) was the final, complete ending -- not punishment but dissolution. The soul that was devoured by Ammit did not go to hell. It simply ceased to be.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Weighing of the Heart is the Egyptian version of the teaching that appears across all mystical traditions: your life is measured not by what you believed but by what you did, how you treated others, and how much truth you lived. It is also a direct parallel to the energy currency principle in Haligricity: a heavy heart is a depleted energetic field. A light heart is a clear field. The entire Haligric practice of living in Ma'at -- truth in feeling, thought, speech, and action -- is the practice of keeping the heart light.

THE AFTERLIFE JOURNEY

The Duat -- The Egyptian Underworld

The Duat was the Egyptian realm of the dead -- not a simple 'underworld' in the sense of a place below the earth, but a complex, multi-layered dimension of existence that the Egyptians understood with remarkable precision. The Duat was simultaneously: the place where the sun traveled during the night, the realm where the dead journeyed toward judgment, and the dimension from which all life force ultimately originated.

The journey through the Duat was understood as genuinely perilous. The soul had to navigate through 12 gates (corresponding to the 12 hours of night), each guarded by divine beings who demanded that the soul know their names and speak specific magical words to pass. The purpose of this navigation was not arbitrary obstacle -- it was the process of purification and transformation through which the Ba and Ka were tested, purified, and prepared for reunion as the Akh.

The Book of the Dead existed precisely to equip the soul with the knowledge, words, and magical spells needed to navigate every challenge of the Duat successfully.

The Book of the Dead -- Pert Em Hru

The Book of the Dead -- more accurately translated as the Book of Coming Forth by Day, or Pert Em Hru in ancient Egyptian -- is not a single uniform text but a collection of around 200 spells, declarations, and hymns that evolved over more than a thousand years.

These texts provided the deceased with: the words to speak at each gate of the Duat, the names of the divine guardians who must be appeased, the 42 Declarations of Innocence to recite before the divine judges, transformation spells allowing the soul to take the form of various animals, protective spells against the dangers of the Duat, and hymns of praise to Ra and Osiris.

The texts were written on papyrus scrolls buried with the deceased, painted on the walls of tombs, and inscribed on coffins and sarcophagi. The most famous and best-preserved version is the Papyrus of Ani, now in the British Museum, dating from approximately 1250 BCE. Its illustrations are among the most detailed and beautiful depictions of Egyptian afterlife belief ever made.

The Evolution of Egyptian Funerary Texts Pyramid Texts (2400-2300 BCE): The oldest religious texts in the world. Written on the walls of pyramids for pharaohs only. Concerned primarily with the pharaoh's solar journey and ascension to the stars. Coffin Texts (2100-1700 BCE): Democratized to the noble class. Written on coffins. Introduced the concept of the Field of Reeds (Aaru). Book of the Dead (1550-50 BCE): Further democratized. Available to anyone who could afford a scribe. The most detailed map of the afterlife journey ever produced. Amduat ('What Is in the Underworld', New Kingdom): Exclusively royal. The most detailed map of the sun's 12-hour journey through the Duat.

The Field of Reeds -- Aaru

For the soul that passed the Weighing of the Heart, the destination was Aaru -- the Field of Reeds -- the Egyptian paradise. But Aaru was not the passive, blissful heaven of some later traditions. It was understood as an idealized version of Egypt itself: fertile fields, clear water, abundant crops, reunion with loved ones who had passed before -- but requiring work.

In the Field of Reeds, the justified soul would farm the divine land -- but this work was understood as joyful rather than burdensome, as it had been in the best seasons of earthly life. This is why Egyptians were buried with shabti figures -- small servant statuettes who could be activated by spell to do the agricultural work in Aaru on behalf of the deceased if needed.

Mummification -- Why the Body Mattered

The practice of mummification -- for which Egypt is most famous -- arose directly from the Ba's need to return to the body each night. The Ba was understood as requiring a recognizable physical anchor to return to in the afterlife, just as the Ka required the physical form as a dwelling place. Without a preserved body, the soul's journey would be compromised.

This is why the Egyptians invested extraordinary resources in preserving the physical body: not out of a materialistic attachment to the body itself but out of a sophisticated understanding of the soul's multi-layered nature and the conditions required for its successful continuation.

Mummification also reflected the Osiris myth: Osiris was killed, his body dismembered by Set, and the pieces gathered by Isis, who reassembled and mummified him -- enabling his resurrection. Every mummy was an Osiris undergoing the same sacred process.

THE MAJOR DEITIES AND THEIR TEACHINGS

The Major Deities -- Understanding Egyptian Theology

Before exploring individual deities, it is essential to understand how Egyptian theology worked. The Egyptians were not polytheists in the naive sense of believing in many separate gods with entirely different natures. They understood the divine as ONE ultimate reality expressing itself in many forms, each form emphasizing a different aspect or quality.

A single deity could merge with another (Ra could become Ra-Atum, Amun could become Amun-Ra), and the same deity could be simultaneously present in many places. Artistic depictions of gods were explicitly understood as symbolic -- not literal portraits but expressions of divine qualities. Egyptian theology was, at its core, a sophisticated form of what we might now call pantheism or panentheism.

Ra

The Solar Force -- Lord of All That Is

Ra (also Re) was the sun god -- but this barely begins to describe his theological significance. Ra was not the sun as an astronomical object but the principle of solar energy itself: light, warmth, life, creative power, and the daily renewal of the world.

Each morning, Ra was born as the scarab Khepri (the rising sun), traveled across the sky as Ra at noon, and descended as Atum (the setting sun) into the Duat. Through the 12 hours of night he traveled the underworld, merging with Osiris at midnight to create the source of all new life, before rising again at dawn. The cycle was endless, perfect, and sacred.

"I am Ra who never sets. I am the light that illumines the Two Lands."

-- Hymn to Ra, Book of the Dead

Connection to Modern Mysticism Ra's solar journey -- descent into darkness, union with the underworld principle, and resurrection at dawn -- is the template for virtually every death-and-resurrection narrative in Western religious history. The Christian resurrection story, the death and return of Dionysus, the descent and return of Inanna -- all follow the Ra/Osiris pattern. Ra is also the direct ancestor of the sun-honoring practices in Haligricity: the sunrise earthing practice, Litha (summer solstice) as the peak of solar power, and the understanding of light as a healing and sacred force.

Osiris

Death, Resurrection, and Eternal Life

Osiris is perhaps the most influential Egyptian deity in terms of his impact on subsequent religious traditions. Originally a god of vegetation and fertility, Osiris became the supreme deity of the afterlife and the most beloved god in the Egyptian pantheon.

The Osiris myth: Osiris was the first king of Egypt, bringing civilization and agriculture to humanity. His brother Set -- embodying chaos and jealousy -- murdered him, dismembered his body, and scattered the pieces. Isis, Osiris's devoted wife, searched the entire world, recovered the pieces, and with the help of Anubis, reassembled and mummified Osiris. Through her magic, she conceived their son Horus with the mummified body. Osiris was resurrected -- not back to earthly life but to eternal life as ruler of the afterlife.

This myth encoded the most fundamental Egyptian understanding of existence: death is not the end but a necessary transformation. The seed must die in the earth to give new life. The sun must descend into the Duat to be reborn at dawn. The human soul must pass through death to achieve the glorified state of the Akh.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Osiris resurrection story is the direct template for the Christ resurrection narrative -- a connection scholars have documented extensively. Osiris was also depicted as a green-skinned figure, connecting him to plant life, seasonal renewal, and the principle that from death comes life. The Wheel of the Year in Haligricity (particularly Samhain, the thinning of the veil, and the cycle of planting and harvest) carries the Osiris pattern at its heart.

Isis

Magic, Healing, and the Great Mother

Isis (Aset in Egyptian) is the greatest magical practitioner in all of Egyptian myth and arguably the most influential goddess in the ancient world. Her cult eventually spread throughout the entire Roman Empire, making her one of the most widely worshipped deities in human history.

Isis is the embodiment of the principle that love is the highest magic. Her devotion to Osiris -- gathering his scattered body, restoring him through her knowledge and her grief, her determination that death would not be the end of the one she loved -- is one of the most powerful stories of sacred love in all of human literature.

Isis was the consummate healer, the great enchantress, the mother of Horus, the protector of the dead, and the goddess of magic (Heka). She was often depicted with outstretched wings -- her wings sheltering the dead, her breath capable of restoring life. Her image directly influenced the Christian

iconography of the Madonna and Child -- Isis nursing the infant Horus is visually almost identical to Mary nursing the infant Jesus.

Thoth

Wisdom, Writing, and the Moon

Thoth (Djehuty in Egyptian) was the god of wisdom, writing, magic, the moon, measurement, science, and the recording of truth. He was the divine scribe who recorded the result of the Weighing of the Heart, the messenger of the gods, and the keeper of all sacred knowledge.

Thoth was depicted as ibis-headed or as a baboon -- the baboon being associated with the moon's light and with the dawn, when baboons are known to greet the rising sun with sounds of greeting. He was believed to have invented hieroglyphic writing, mathematics, science, medicine, and the mystical arts.

Thoth's role as the god of writing carries a profound philosophical implication: writing, in Egypt, was not merely a practical communication tool. It was magic. Words written down had the power to create reality. This is why the texts of the Book of the Dead were so carefully composed and so precisely written -- every word was an operative magical formula.

Connection to Modern Mysticism Thoth is the direct ancestor of Hermes Trismegistus -- 'Thoth the Thrice Great' -- the syncretic figure from whom Hermeticism, alchemy, astrology, and the Western magical tradition all descend. The Seven Hermetic Principles (as in The Kybalion) are Thoth's wisdom filtered through the Alexandrian synthesis. Thoth also directly supports Haligricity's understanding that words are spells -- that speech and writing are creative acts with real effects on reality.

Anubis

Guardian of the Threshold

Anubis (Anpu in Egyptian) was the jackal-headed god of embalming and the guardian of the threshold between life and death. He guided souls through the Duat, supervised the mummification process, weighed the heart against the feather of Ma'at, and protected the integrity of the body in the tomb.

The jackal was associated with Anubis because jackals were seen near cemeteries in ancient Egypt -- scavenging at the edge of life and death. The Egyptians transformed this association: rather than a threatening scavenger, Anubis became the compassionate guide who escorted the soul with care and precision through the most important journey of its existence.

Connection to Modern Mysticism Anubis is honored in modern eclectic paganism and Haligricity as an archetype of the compassionate guide at the threshold -- relevant in any practice involving working with death, grief, major life transitions, and the process of release. He teaches that every ending requires a skilled, caring guide and that the transition between states is sacred, not to be rushed.

Bastet

Protection, Joy, and the Feline Sacred

Bastet (Bast) began as a fierce lioness deity before evolving into the cat-headed goddess associated with home, protection, joy, music, dance, fertility, and the protection of women and children. She was one of the most beloved deities in Egypt, with her major festival at Bubastis described by Herodotus as among the most joyful in the world.

Cats were sacred in Egypt largely because of Bastet -- they were protected by law, mourned at death, and sometimes mummified. The domestic cat was understood as a vessel of divine protective energy: capable of seeing in the dark (and therefore into the spirit world), able to detect and kill snakes (including the serpent Apophis who threatened Ra's solar journey each night), and carrying the fierce protective energy of the lioness in a beautiful, approachable form.

Connection to Modern Mysticism Haligricity's understanding of cats -- their near-UV vision, their ability to see aspects of the human energy field, the documented healing frequency of their purr -- is the modern scientific confirmation of what the ancient Egyptians understood through direct observation and spiritual insight: cats are not ordinary animals. They carry a different quality of perception and a genuine healing capacity. Bastet is their patron.

Sekhmet

The Fierce Healer

Sekhmet -- the lioness-headed goddess of war, pestilence, and healing -- is one of the most paradoxical and powerful figures in Egyptian mythology. She was simultaneously the bringer of disease and its cure, the destroyer and the healer. Her priests were also Egypt's physicians.

The theological wisdom of Sekhmet is subtle and profound: the force that can destroy is the same force that can heal. Disease and its treatment share the same origin. The shadow contains the medicine. This is the same understanding found in homeopathy, in the Jungian shadow work, and in the shamanic concept of the wounded healer. Sekhmet's priests understood that to heal, one must first understand the nature of the wound.

Hathor

Love, Beauty, and the Mirror of Heaven

Hathor was the goddess of love, beauty, music, dance, joy, and fertility. She was often depicted as a woman with cow horns holding the solar disk -- the nurturing mother who also contained the sun. She was the divine feminine in its fullest expression: welcoming, generous, sensual, and life-giving.

Hathor was associated with mirrors (the mirror as a portal to divine truth), with the sistrum (a sacred rattle used in ritual music -- shaking it was believed to repel evil and please the gods), and with turquoise and malachite (the green colors of fertility and joy). She welcomed the dead into the afterlife with bread and water, and her embrace represented the joy of reunion with the divine mother.

Set

Chaos as Necessary Force

Set is perhaps the most misunderstood deity in the Egyptian pantheon. Often translated as the god of evil (and later conflated with the devil by early Christian writers), Set was understood by the Egyptians themselves as a necessary force -- not evil but chaotic, disruptive, and ultimately essential to the maintenance of cosmic order.

Set represented: storms, the desert, foreign lands, change, disruption, strength, and the force of entropy that prevents stagnation. He was not worshipped as evil -- there were temples to Set, and several pharaohs bore his name (Seti I, for example). The combat between Horus and Set -- representing the tension between order and chaos -- was understood as an ongoing dynamic, not a war that would ever finally be won. Both were necessary. Too much order becomes calcification. Too much chaos becomes destruction.

Connection to Modern Mysticism Set's theology directly parallels the Hermetic Principle of Polarity and the Taoist understanding of yin and yang. Order without chaos stagnates. Chaos without order dissolves. The creative tension between them is what keeps the universe alive. This is also Haligricity's understanding of shadow work and trauma: what appears destructive is often the necessary force that breaks up what has calcified so new life can emerge.

Heka -- The Original Magic

Heka was the Egyptian word for magic -- but not magic in the sense of tricks or illusions. Heka was understood as the fundamental creative force of the universe: the primordial energy through which the creator brought the world into existence and through which both gods and humans could affect reality. Heka was deified as a god -- present at the creation of the world, described as existing 'before duality had yet come into being.'

Every priest, physician, and skilled craftsman in Egypt was considered a practitioner of Heka. The physician healed through Heka. The priest maintained cosmic order through Heka. The scribe created reality through Heka by writing sacred words. The mother protected her child through Heka by speaking protective incantations. Heka was available to all -- it required not priesthood but knowledge, intention, and alignment with Ma'at.

Words as Creative Force

In Egyptian theology, spoken and written words were understood as the primary technology of Heka. A word was not a sound describing reality -- it was a creative act that shaped reality. This is why hieroglyphic writing was called *medu netjer* -- 'the words of the gods' -- and was understood as a divine gift. When a spell was spoken with correct pronunciation, correct rhythm, and correct intention, it was not merely a request to the divine -- it was itself an act of creation.

This understanding is the philosophical root of Haligricity's teaching that words are spells -- that spelling is spell-casting -- and that the quality of our daily language shapes our reality. The Egyptians knew this 5,000 years ago and built their entire civilization on this recognition.

Amulets and Energetic Objects

The Egyptians were sophisticated practitioners of what we would now call object-based energy work. Amulets were understood as concentrations of Heka in physical form -- objects charged with specific protective or healing intentions through the ritual words and actions of a priest.

- **The Ankh:** The cross with a loop -- the symbol of life. Held by gods when granting life to pharaohs. One of the most recognizable symbols in human history.
- **The Djed Pillar:** The backbone of Osiris -- representing stability, endurance, and resurrection. Often placed in tombs for protection.

- **The Wedjat Eye:** The Eye of Horus -- the eye damaged in battle with Set and restored by Thoth. Symbol of healing, protection, and restored wholeness.
- **The Scarab:** The dung beetle (Khepri) -- symbol of transformation, solar renewal, and self-creation. The most common amulet in all of Egypt.
- **The Tyet:** The Knot of Isis -- associated with the blood of Isis and her protective power. Often placed at the neck of the mummy.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Egyptian understanding of amulets as charged energetic objects is the direct ancestor of Haligrlicity's crystal practice, the Patua tradition's protective scroll, and the I AM Activity's practice of investing objects with specific intention. The principle is identical: physical objects can be charged with conscious intention and act as anchors for that energetic field over time. The Egyptians simply called this Heka.

HERMETICISM -- EGYPT'S GIFT TO THE WORLD

Thoth Becomes Hermes Trismegistus

When Alexander the Great conquered Egypt in 332 BCE and the Ptolemaic dynasty began the long period of Greek-Egyptian synthesis, something remarkable happened: the Egyptian god Thoth merged in the popular imagination with the Greek messenger god Hermes, producing the syncretic figure known as Hermes Trismegistus -- 'Hermes the Thrice Great,' or 'Thoth Three Times Great.'

This figure became the attributed author of a body of philosophical and mystical texts known as the Hermetic literature -- including the Corpus Hermeticum, the Emerald Tablet, and various technical texts on astrology and alchemy. These texts combined Egyptian cosmology, Greek philosophy, and Jewish mysticism into a synthesis that would profoundly influence the Renaissance, Western occultism, alchemy, Freemasonry, and eventually the entire new age movement.

The Emerald Tablet

The Emerald Tablet (Tabula Smaragdina) is one of the most influential short texts in all of Western esoteric history. Attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, it purports to contain the secret of the philosopher's stone and the nature of creation in a few concentrated lines.

Its most famous sentence -- 'As above, so below; as below, so above' -- is the Hermetic Principle of Correspondence, and it has shaped the worldview of alchemists, astrologers, metaphysicians, and spiritual seekers for over a thousand years. It means: the pattern of the cosmos is reflected in the individual. What happens in the heavens affects the earth. What happens within you is reflected in your outer world. Every scale of reality mirrors every other scale.

Connection to Modern Mysticism The Hermetic Principle of Correspondence is the philosophical foundation of astrology (the planets affect earthly life), of holographic thinking (every part contains the whole -- the root concept of Haligrlicity), of energy healing (the state of the energy field affects the physical body), and of the Law of Correspondence in Haligrlicity: as within, so without.

The Seven Hermetic Principles in Full

As preserved in The Kybalion (1908) and rooted in the ancient Hermetic texts, the Seven Hermetic Principles form a complete philosophical system for understanding reality:

I. The Principle of Mentalism

'The All is Mind; the Universe is Mental.'

All that exists is a mental creation of the ultimate reality. Everything you experience is a mental construct within the infinite Mind. This is the philosophical basis of New Thought's Law of Mind, the I AM Activity's teachings on consciousness as creator, and Haligricity's understanding that thought creates reality.

II. The Principle of Correspondence

'As above, so below; as below, so above.'

Every scale of reality mirrors every other scale. The pattern of the cosmos is the pattern of the atom. The pattern of your inner world is the pattern of your outer world. Understanding this principle allows mastery of both simultaneously.

III. The Principle of Vibration

'Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates.'

Everything in existence vibrates at a specific frequency. Matter is simply energy vibrating slowly enough to be dense. Thought, emotion, and spirit vibrate at frequencies beyond matter. Raising one's vibrational frequency is the practical work of all mysticism.

IV. The Principle of Polarity

'Everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites.'

Hot and cold are not different things but the same thing at different degrees. Love and hate are the same emotion at different poles. Good and evil are the same force directed differently. This principle is Yin and Yang, expressed in Hermetic language.

V. The Principle of Rhythm

'Everything flows out and in; everything has its tides.'

Every pendulum swing has its counterswing. Every rise has its descent. Every season follows a season. Understanding rhythm allows the practitioner to move with cycles rather than being swept by them.

VI. The Principle of Cause and Effect

'Every cause has its effect; every effect has its cause.'

Nothing happens by chance. Everything is karma. The universe is a perfect system of cause and effect -- at every scale from atomic to cosmic. The Hermetic master understands this and acts accordingly.

VII. The Principle of Gender

'Gender is in everything; everything has its masculine and feminine principles.'

The masculine and feminine principles manifest at every level of existence -- not as biological sex but as the active/receptive, initiating/gestating principles that together create all new things. Yin and Yang. Shiva and Shakti. The union of opposites as the source of creation.

SACRED TEXTS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

The Sacred Texts

The Pyramid Texts (c. 2400-2300 BCE)

The oldest religious texts in the world -- inscribed on the walls of the inner chambers of five pyramids at Saqqara, beginning with the pyramid of Unas. Written exclusively for the pharaoh's journey to the afterlife. Contain hymns to Ra, spells for the pharaoh's resurrection, and the earliest detailed descriptions of the afterlife. First formal documentation of the Ba, Ka, and Akh concepts.

The Coffin Texts (c. 2100-1700 BCE)

The democratization of the Pyramid Texts -- adapted for the nobility and written inside coffins. Introduced the concept of the Field of Reeds (Aaru) as the afterlife destination. More personal and accessible than the Pyramid Texts. The bridge between the royal-only texts and the universal Book of the Dead.

The Book of the Dead (c. 1550-50 BCE)

Pert Em Hru -- 'Coming Forth by Day.' The most comprehensive map of the afterlife journey ever produced. Available to any Egyptian who could afford a scribe. Contains the 42 Declarations of Innocence, the Weighing of the Heart, transformation spells, protective spells, and hymns to the gods. The Papyrus of Ani (c. 1250 BCE) in the British Museum is the best-preserved copy.

The Maxims of Ptahhotep (c. 2400 BCE)

One of the oldest philosophical texts in human history -- a collection of wisdom instructions attributed to the Vizier Ptahhotep. Practical ethics for daily life: how to speak, how to listen, how to treat others, how to govern oneself. Remarkably modern in its emphasis on personal integrity, the value of the wise counselor, and the dangers of pride. Contains teachings on Ma'at as lived daily philosophy.

The Corpus Hermeticum (1st-4th century CE)

The collection of Greek philosophical texts attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, written in Alexandria during the Greco-Roman period. Contains teachings on the nature of God, the cosmos, and the human soul that blend Egyptian, Greek, and Jewish wisdom. Direct source of the Western mystical tradition including alchemy, astrology, Kabbalah (partially), Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, and modern new age thought.

What Egypt Gave New Age Spirituality

The influence of ancient Egypt on modern spirituality is vast, often unacknowledged, and deeper than most practitioners realize. Here is a direct lineage map:

- **The Law of Attraction and New Thought:** The Memphite Theology: Ptah created the world through thought and word. The understanding that mind is the ultimate creative force is Egypt's philosophical contribution to Western mysticism, transmitted through the Hermetic texts and then through Renaissance Hermeticism into the 19th-century New Thought movement.
- **Crystal and object-based energy work:** Egyptian amulet practice: objects charged with Heka carry specific protective and healing intention. The principle is identical.
- **Astrology:** The Egyptian priestly tradition of observing celestial patterns and their earthly effects, combined with Babylonian star-lore in the Alexandrian synthesis, produced Hellenistic astrology -- the direct ancestor of all modern Western astrology.
- **The Seven Chakras and energy body work:** The Egyptian understanding of the soul's five components (Ka, Ba, Akh, Ren, Sheut) is an energy body model. Egyptian priests understood the body as a multi-layered energetic system requiring maintenance and ritual care.
- **Shadow work and the psychology of opposites:** Set and Horus. Osiris and Set. Order and chaos as necessary paired forces. Carl Jung's concept of the shadow -- the unintegrated aspects of the self -- draws directly on Egyptian mythological imagery.
- **The I AM Activity's I AM Presence:** The Egyptian concept of Atum -- 'I AM' as the self-creating divine -- and the Ren (the sacred name as the soul's living essence) both underlie the I AM Activity's teaching that the words 'I AM' are the name of God within you.
- **The ancestor altar:** The Egyptian understanding of the Ka's need for sustenance, the Ba's ability to visit the living, and the Ren's continued existence through the speaking of the name -- all are the philosophical foundations of ancestor altar practice worldwide.
- **As above so below / Hermetic Correspondence:** The central principle of Hermeticism, transmitted directly from Egyptian cosmology through Thoth/Hermes Trismegistus. The foundation of astrology, homeopathy, energy healing, and the holographic understanding of the universe.

Recommended Reading

For those who wish to go deeper into Egyptian wisdom:

- Budge, E.A. Wallis. The Egyptian Book of the Dead (The Papyrus of Ani). Dover Publications. The classic English translation with full illustrations.
- Pinch, Geraldine. Magic in Ancient Egypt. University of Texas Press, 1994. The definitive study of Heka.
- Allen, James P. The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts. Society of Biblical Literature, 2005. Full translation of the oldest religious texts.
- Wilkinson, Richard H. The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt. Thames & Hudson, 2003. The standard reference for all major and minor deities.
- Assmann, Jan. The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs. Metropolitan Books, 2002. The deepest philosophical reading of Egyptian civilization.
- Hornung, Erik. Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many. Cornell University Press, 1982. On Egyptian theological sophistication.
- The Three Initiates. The Kybalion. Yogi Publication Society, 1908. The Hermetic Principles in accessible modern form.
- Salaman, Clement, et al. The Way of Hermes: New Translations of the Corpus Hermeticum. Inner Traditions, 2000. The best modern translation of the Hermetic texts.

Nuk Heka.

I am Magic. I am Heka.

Said by Egyptian priests before performing sacred work

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