

AN EGYPTIAN PANTHEON

Ancient Egypt has provided the world with one of the best recognized and most intricate pantheons in existence; one which continues to fascinate and influence even today, some 5100 years beyond its emergence from prehistory. This page is intended as a reference guide for students of Egyptian mythology. When completed, it will hopefully be a compilation of all the known deities of the [pharaonic](#) Egyptians. The format will consist of a Name and a description of the divinity. The description will include areas of authority, attributes, images, appearance, and selected comments or stories which might help characterize the divinity better. As I implied above, this is an ongoing work which, at the moment, is incomplete. I most certainly solicit comments and [contributions](#) and I don't charge any [merchant services](#) fees to access my site; if you have additional information for me (or complaints, for that matter), I ask only that you try to supply documentation in [support](#) of what you have to say.

A note on names. A number of Egyptian divinities are now known by the most recent version of their name or, especially, a Greek transcription of that name. Nevertheless, earlier versions in the native language exist, and where there is a significant difference I have tried to provide a note on the original form, while retaining the most common form for familiarities sake. Such notes must be viewed as somewhat tentative, because of the nature of the ancient Egyptian language. Like all Semitic tongues, Egyptian was written without vowel signs, leaving later transcribers to guess at what words sounded like, or utilize foreign (usually Greek) versions of those words to form an idea of their true pattern.

A note on animal iconography. The Egyptian divinities are well-known for being portrayed with the heads and visages of various beasts. The relationship between the divinities and such creatures is complex, and beyond the scope of this article. Nevertheless, it should be noted that these creatures were not necessarily the only animals sacred to the God or Goddess they are connected with, or that they were the exclusive figure used to image the divinity - in some cases the God or Goddess claimed more than one animal, and in some cases the God or Goddess was portrayed with any of several different creatures faces. Even so, in most cases a particular creature was almost always used to image a divinity, and I have provided a note indicating what beast icon was utilized commonly or exclusively.

This page is intended as a reference guide for students of Egyptian mythology, and is a catalogue, hopefully reasonably complete, of known Egyptian God-forms. The information here is necessarily brief; a full accounting of all these entities would be a massive book in its own right.

What is included here is:

a Name (**original form of the Name**), (**beast icon**), any important epithets or sobriquets that are associated with the Name, and a basic description of spheres of influence, attributes, and/or descriptive stories.

Amaunet (Serpent) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Amon** as co-spirits of Hidden Powers. She is a fertility Goddess, and is considered a protectress of the nation, especially during times of royal succession.

Ammut (Crocodile) Eater of souls, she is the final destination for those whose hearts have been found weighted down with guilt in the Hall of the Two Truths.

Amon (Amun) (Serpent) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Amaunet** as co-Spirits of Hidden Powers. Spoken of as being omnipresent but concealed, the source of mystery and enigma. Regarded as a creator deity, and Lord of the Sun, he is also a source of masculine vitality and sexual energy. His cult rose to great prominence, being only briefly eclipsed by **Aten** in the 14th century BCE. Often combined with **Ra** to form the solar divinity **Amon-Ra**, in late classical times He also became syncretized with the Roman **Jupiter** to a certain degree.

Anubis (Inupu) (Jackal) Protector and Patron of mortuaries, and overseer of the judgement of the dead in the Hall of the Two Truths; He is also the guide and presiding spirit of the embalming process in particular and the journey of departed souls to their final destiny in general.

Anukis (Anuket) (Gazelle) Goddess of the Lower Nile, connected fertility of the fields, and also with birth, and midwifery.

Apepi (Serpent) The eternal enemy of **Amon-Ra**, and the personification of evil and malignancy. Mythologically He plays out His role by attempting to prevent the Solar Boat's passage across the sky. Thus, He is also a patron of Shadow and Darkness.

Apis (Bull) The intermediary between the Human and Divine worlds, son of **Isis** and the living incarnation of **Ptah**. He appeared on earth in successive incarnations as a bull, entirely black save for a small white spot on the forehead, and dwelling in His temple at Memphis in great state. Each successive bull was mummified and buried in the royal necropolis at Saqqara.

Aten (none) The solar disc, as distinct from **Amon-Ra** (Lord of the Sun). He is portrayed as a Hand extending from a radiant solar disc, never by humanoid or animal imagery. The cult of Aten dates back to the late 3rd millennium BCE, but the pinnacle of His influence was felt in the 14th century when a political rivalry between the priesthods

of Amon and Aten culminated in the establishment (1346 BCE) of Aten as a genuinely monotheistic cult (all the other divinities being suppressed) during the reign of Akhnaten (1350-1334 BCE). Following the death of Akhnaten, the cult of Aten was in turn suppressed (although not outlawed as such), most of his temples and all of His influence being destroyed.

Atum (**Human**) A Solar deity, a self-created Primordial Being who in turn created [Su](#) and [Tefnut](#). Often combined with [Ra](#), under the style of Atum-Ra, He is the Aspect of the sun as it sets in the west.

Banebdjedet (**Ram**) Consort of [Hatmehet](#), He is a fairly obscure Deity whose best-known tale involves His (unsuccessful) mediation between Horus and Seth.

Bastet (**Cat**) A female Aspect of the Sun God, usually [Ra](#), sometimes [Amon](#), either of whom She is ascribed as being the daughter of in various texts. She personifies the retributive element of the Sun, and is seen as the bringer of divine vengeance to Amon-Ra's enemies. In early times She was portrayed as having the head of a lioness, but later images show the smaller ancestor of today's housecat. She was Patroness of domestic cats, and in that role continues today to enjoy a certain vogue among New-Age believers. See also, [Mafdet](#).

Benu (**Heron**) A solar deity, usually considered an aspect of [Atum](#) and, like Him, self-created in Primordial times. His function seems to have been connected with rebirth in the afterlife. That, and His avian character, may have influenced later cultures, especially Hellenic, in the development of the Phoenix story.

Bes (**Humanoid**) A grotesque-appearing dwarf, but of protective and benign character. He is a male Guardian of womankind in childbirth, and also is a Ward against dangerous creatures of all sorts; his ugliness is a primary attribute in frightening evil away.

Buto (**Wadjet**) (**Cobra**) A solar Goddess, the personification of [Ra's](#) retributive power and, as such, an Aspect of the cleansing and purifying power of the sun's heat. She is regarded as a primary defender of authority, especially royal, and She is a tutelary Goddess of Lower Egypt. She also has some connections with maternal powers, in that She is considered the wetnurse of [Horus](#), as well as the mother of [Nefertum](#).

Geb (**Human**) An Earth-God, normally depicted in a green hue (note a parallel with the [Green Man](#)), He is a Lord of vegetation and the vitality of the soil. He is also a Patron of herbalism, and is considered a healer. Son of [Su](#) and [Tefnut](#), brother and consort of [Nut](#), father of [Osiris](#), [Isis](#), [Seth](#), and [Nephthys](#).

Hapy (**Nile Goose (two-headed)**) God of the Nile, and director of the annual inundation, without which the Nile civilization could not endure. As such, He is a fertility figure and, in fact, is often portrayed androgynously.

Hatmehet (**Fish**) Consort of [Banebdjedet](#), She is the Guardian and Patron of fishermen and the fishing industry.

Hathor (**Cow**) Daughter of **Ra**, and Goddess of love and sexuality; She was considered the mother of all the Pharaohs, and Royal princesses automatically were Her priestesses by birth. Enormously popular, She has many and diverse functions, including oracular knowledge of every child's destiny, and a patronage of music and dance. One of the few Egyptian divinities to transcend the culture, She found favour in the Graeco-Roman world as well, where Her image affected to one degree or another contemporaneous imagery of **Aphrodite**.

Hauhet (**Serpent**) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Heh** as co-Spirits of Infinity.

Heh (**Frog**) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Hauhet** as co-Spirits of Infinity.

Heket (**Frog**) A Goddess concerned with birth, particularly with alleviating the dangers and pain of the birth process.

Heretkau (**Human**) Cthonic mortuary Goddess concerned with protection of souls in the afterlife. Images often associate Her as a servant or assistant to **Isis**.

Hesat (**Cow**) Goddess of pregnancy and Source of nursing milk (the "beer of Hesat"). The mother of **Anubis**.

Horus (**Haru**) (**Falcon**) Son, posthumously, of **Osiris** by **Isis**, and symbol of divine vengeance. Mythologically He is the originator of the Egyptian state and its first sovereign, the land of which He wrested from Seth when He avenged the slaughter of Osiris. Successive Pharaohs were regarded as the Earthly incarnations of Horus. Thus, Horus represents the core of national and dynastic stability, and as such is the divine Source of sovereignty.

Isis ('Aset) (**Human, sometimes Hawk**) Daughter of **Geb** and **Nut**, sister and consort of **Osiris**, mother of **Horus**. An enormously popular and enduring figure in the pantheon, Isis is one of the few Egyptian divinities to find widespread worship outside of Egypt as well. She is to Her people the female Aspect of national stability and sovereignty, as well as being a primary symbol of nurturance and motherhood. During Osiris' battles with **Seth**, She twice restored him, impregnating herself upon his remains to give birth to His heir and avenger, Horus. Regarded as paramount in magical power, Her Name figured in all manner of incantations, especially those of healing. To the Ptolemaic and Roman worlds, She became an important symbol of divine sanction for rebirth and reincarnation, and several mystery cults were formed around her tale. Iconography portraying Her with the infant Horus strongly influenced contemporary images of the Virgin Mary and infant Jesus.

Kauket (**Serpent**) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Kek** as co-Spirits of Darkness.

Kek (**Frog**) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Kauket** as co-Spirits of Darkness.

Khenty-Imentiu (Wolf) A lesser war God, associated with [Osiris](#) in His battles, also seen as pilot of the Solar Boat.

Kheper (Scarab) An Aspect of [Ra](#), the divinity responsible for maintaining the sun's course across the sky.

Khnum (Ram) Craftsman and especially potter among the Gods. He created life upon His potter's wheel at the command of the Primal deities.

Khonsu (Human, sometimes Falcon) Moon God. Originally regarded as the child of [Amon](#) and [Mut](#), in the Late Kingdom He is often referenced as the offspring of [Sebek](#) and [Hathor](#). Aside from His strong lunar association, He was also a divinity invoked in exorcisms and in rites of healing.

Mafdet (Cat) Goddess of judicial authority and divine patroness of executions. She is normally shown bearing, or leaping up onto a gallows, and She is also spoken of as a functionary within the Hall of Two Truths. See also [Bastet](#).

Ma'at (Human) Goddess of law, truth, and cosmic order. She personifies the scales in the Hall of Two Truths upon which [Osiris](#) weighs the heart of deceased souls for its burden of guilt. Every Pharaoh was considered the "Beloved of Ma'at", and in that sense She is the pillar around which orderly society can flourish.

Min (Human) The male divinity most closely concerned with sexuality and male virility. A son of [Isis](#), He represents the vigour of each successive Pharaoh. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, He is also a Patron of mines as well.

Montu (Hawk) A war God, originating in Upper Egypt, and syncretized with [Ra](#) to a strong degree.

Mut (Human sometimes Lion) Tutelary Goddess of Thebes and a parallel to [Sakhmet](#). At times considered the consort of [Amon-Ra](#) and mother of [Khonsu](#).

Naunet (Serpent) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with [Nun](#) as co-Spirits of Emptiness.

Nefertum (Lion) Regarded in Lower Egypt as the son of [Buto](#), He is a lesser primordial being, and personifies the Blue Lotus of [Ra](#).

Nehebkau (Serpent) A minor God of healing, specifically a protector against snakebite and scorpion sting.

Neith (Cow) A primordial Goddess, self-created and self-creating; in some tales She is the Tracer of the Nile's course and the foundress of the city of Sais, established when She brought the Nile to the sea. She has many functions in addition; one of the most prevalent is that of Patroness of the Loom, and of spinning.

Nekhbet (Vulture) Tutelary Goddess of Upper Egypt, regarded as a protectress and

ministrant to childbirth.

Nephthys (Nebhet) (Human) Youngest daughter of **Geb** and **Nut**, and often regarded as the consort of **Seth**. She is also sometimes considered the mother of **Anubis**. Her primary function is that of mortuary protectress, in which role She serves as guide to the spirits of deceased Pharaohs

Nun (Frog) One of the eight Primal Beings of the Ogdoad, being paired with **Naunet** as co-Spirits of Emptiness.

Nut (Human) An Aerial Goddess of sky and wind, daughter of **Su** and **Tefnut**, Sister and consort of **Geb**, mother of **Osiris** and **Isis**, **Seth** and **Nephthys**. She is the arching vault of the heavens, Her body sparkling with starlight. Through Her mouth the Sky-boat of the Sun passes each evening, from her vulva the it re-emerges and the day is reborn each morning. She retains some weatherworking functions; the thunder is Her voice. She is the special Patroness of the Pharaohs in their transition from Horus to Osiris.

The Ogdoad A collection of eight Primal Beings who emerged out of Chaos to define the universe and begin the flow of time. See **Amaunet**, **Amon**, **Hauhet**, **Heh**, **Kauket**, **Kek**, **Naunet**, and **Nun**.

Onuris (Anhuret) (Human) A warrior God with solar aspects, considered by some as an aspect of **Ra**, especially as an image of the active principal of solar power against enemies. He is also a patron of hunters and the chase.

Osiris (Ausar) (Human) Eldest child of **Geb** and **Nut**, posthumous father of **Horus**, Osiris is the most widely known and most deeply revered of the pantheon. He represents, first and foremost, the Path of Destiny, and the Life beyond life. He is the Judge of departed souls in the Hall of Two Truths, and He is the general guardian, guide, and ruler of the afterworld of departed spirits. The ancient Egyptians were obsessed with the problem of what occurs in the way of an afterlife and what the ultimate spiritual destiny of mankind is. Thus Osiris represents the promise of eternal life and the triumph of order and meaning over chaos. Defeated by his nemesis (and younger brother) **Seth**, He rises once again in an eternal cycle symbolized in the material world by the cyclical rising of the Nile and in the astral world by the passage of Amon-Ra, the holy sun and the cyclical appearances of **Sothis**, the star Sirius. Osiris is thus Friend, Saviour, and ultimate master of mankind. In Egyptian Royal tradition, as each Pharaoh is the living incarnation of Horus in life, so in death they are transfigured into Osiris.

Ptah (Human) A primary creator divinity, Patron of Memphis and the focus of a powerful priesthood there. He is said to be self-creating and self-creative, bringing the Primal Chaos (in this version represented by Nun) into order and form by the sound of His voice. Additionally, He is patron to all the crafts and sciences, inspiring both practical invention and fine art. He is the consort of **Sekhmet** and presumably the father of **Nefertum**.

Ra (Hawk) One of the primary solar deities, often (especially in later times) conflated with **Amon** to form the composite solar entity Amon-Ra. Ra is in essence the spirit of the sun in its glory and fullest strength, a noontide divinity embodying heat, light, and majesty. He was not especially popular, in that He represents the retributive and lightning swift blaze of power, striking down enemies with his gaze alone. The phrase, often encountered in Egyptian religious and magical writings, "Eye of Ra", represents His pitiless and omnipresent knowledge of all beneath the sun.

Sarapis (Human or Bull) A very late addition to the Egyptian pantheon, He emerged out of early Ptolemaic thought as a conflation of **Osiris** with **Apis**, representing the fertility of the land with the sanctity and promise of an immortal afterlife. His cult became a fixture during Roman times, and competed with both Mithraism and early Christianity for a predominant role in the Empire as a whole.

Satet (Human) Consort of **Khnum** and mother of **Anukis**, She was tutelary Goddess of the Nubian frontier, in the far south of Upper Egypt.

Sebek (Crocodile) Son of **Neith**, Consort of **Hathor**, father of **Khonsu**. He represents the power and strength of the Pharaohs, and is a Patron of all reptilian forms. He is occasionally conflated with Seth, and in rare instances is regarded as the Source and personification of Evil.

Sepa (Centipede) A minor protector divinity, called upon to defend against wild animals and evil spirits. He is also associated with the necropolis, and is regarded as a helper of **Osiris** and **Anubis** within the mortuary.

Seker (Hawk) A lord of Darkness and Shadow, and the divine essence of burial and decay. He is thus connected with an aspect of the cycle of rebirth.

Sekhmet (Lion) Daughter of **Ra** and consort of **Ptah**, She is a war goddess and a divine Aspect of the power and majesty of the Pharaoh against his enemies.

Seshet (Human) Goddess of scribes, of writing, of history (and thus the orderly flow of time), and the special Patroness of libraries and archives. She is regarded as the foundress of temples and halls of worship, and She retains a considerable aura of magical patronage, in that writing was a secret system of knowledge known only to an elite few. Not surprisingly, She is the consort of **Thoth**.

Seth (Composite Creature) Child of **Geb** and **Nut**, sibling of **Osiris**, **Isis**, and **Nephthys**. Seth is a complex figure who seems in the main to be adversarial in nature. The most typical mythologies have Him at war with his brother Osiris, a war in which He defeats Osiris but is in turn defeated by Osiris' heir, **Horus**. Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that several times during the Pharaonic period in Egypt His cult was widespread and highly honoured, supplanting on occasion the identification of the Pharaoh with Horus/Osiris. His beast imagery is also unusual, being composed of diverse elements culled from several sorts of creatures; the usual image is that of rather long-snouted, stiff-eared beast that vaguely reminds one of a wolf or armadillo.

Sia (**Human**) Divine Patron of sense perception. Child of **Ra**, He accompanies His father on the Sky Boat which bears the sun along its course.

Sothis (**Sopdet**) (**Human**) The star Sirius, which appears above the horizon at just the time of the summer inundation of the Nile. Thus, She is Herald and Harbinger of this most vital seasonal occurrence.

Su (**Human**) Primordial divinity created by **Atum** or, in some mythologies **Ptah**. As Consort to His sister **Tefnut**, He is the ancestor of all the remaining Gods and Goddesses through their offspring **Geb** and **Nut**. He is an aerial divinity, and a lord of the sky.

Taurt (**Hippopotamus**) Goddess of childbirth and Protectress of womankind, a very commonly represented and popular divinity among the ordinary folk of Egypt.

Tefnut (**Lioness, sometimes the Uraeus Serpent**) Primordial divinity created by **Atum** or, in some mythologies **Ptah**. As Consort to Her brother **Su**, She is ancestress of all the remaining Gods and Goddesses through their offspring **Geb** and **Nut**. Her primary Attribute is as Patroness of water.

Thoth (**Djehuti**) (**Ibis**) Tutelary divinity of knowledge and understanding. He is Patron to scribes, and protector of archives, as well as being the inspiration for all knowledge-based arts and sciences. He is said to have created writing for the use of mankind. Regarded as scrupulously honest, He is the scribe of the Hall of Two Truths, recording the deeds and accounts of each soul facing judgement, as well as taking a hand in judging. He has lunar associations, and is the Consort of **Seshet**.

The Hall of the Two Truths

As mentioned above, the ancient Egyptian culture was obsessed with the idea of an eternal life beyond death, and the need to avoid absolute personal extinction. As a result, the culture exerted enormous resources in the direction of mortuary science, embalming, and the development of theological and philosophical underpinnings of a belief in the migration of a soul from the material world to Tuat, the spiritual world.

Preservation of the physical body was paramount, for without a home, the soul wandered and would be lost forever. Magickal formulae which revealed the passwords and spells required to gain admittance to the afterworld needed to be learned, so Books of the Dead which revealed such lore were deposited with the corpse. From the 18th Dynasty (15th-14th century BCE), a standardized belief in otherworldly judgement took center stage. In this notion, each soul had to approach the Hall of Two Truths, hear their deeds pronounced by **Thoth**, and have their hearts weighed by **Osiris** upon the scales of **Ma'at**, all in the presence of 42 Judges. If their hearts were light with purity, so be it; but if they were heavy with guilt, then the fires of the pit and the tender ministrations of **Ammut** would be their lot. What follows is a list of those 42 Judges, together with translation of the name in instances where I know it. That there are, in fact, 45 names in the list should surprise no-one; the Egyptian religion is very old, and differences in interpretation by various scribes do creep in given an active period of some 3500 years.

Aati; Ahi; Amkhaibitu (Eater of Ghosts); Amsnef (Eater of Blood); Anaf (Bringer of His Arm); Anhotep; Anty; Arimabef; Basty; Fenty; Hai (Phallus); Heptshet; Herfhaf (He With His Face Behind Him); Heriuru (Chief of the Great Ones); Hetchabehu; Kenemty; Khemy; Maa-Anuf; Maatifemkhet (He Whose Two Eyes Are as Fire); Maatifemtes (He Whose Two Eyes Are as Knives); Neba; Neb Heru (Lord of Faces); Neb Nebu (Lord of Lords); Nehaher; Nehebnefert; Nekhenu; Qerty; Rerty; Sekheriu; Sertiu; Setqesu (Bone-Breaker); Shetkheru; Taret; Tchesertep; Temsep; Teni; Thenemy; Thenret; Tutu; Uamemty; Uatchnesert (Green Flame); Usekhnemmet (He of the Long Stride); Utunesert; Uturekhit

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