

# LIST OF EGYPTIAN GODS

*A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W Y Z*

A

**A'ah** - An early moon god who evolved into Iah (also known as Yah) and, eventually, Khonsu.

**Aken** - Custodian of the boat which ferried souls across Lily Lake to the Field of Reeds in the afterlife. He slept until he was needed by Hraf-Hef, the surly Divine Ferryman. His name only appears in the Book of the Dead.

**Aker** - The deified horizon, guardian of the eastern and western horizons of the afterlife. He protected the sun barge of Ra as it entered and left the underworld at dusk and dawn.

**Am-Heh** - A god in the underworld, "devourer of millions" and "eater of eternity" who lived in a lake of fire.

**Amenet** (Amentet) - A goddess who welcomed the dead to the afterlife with food and drink. Known as "She of the West", Amenet was the consort of the Divine Ferryman. She lived in a tree near the gates of the underworld. Daughter of Hathor and Horus.

**Ammit** (Ammut) - "Devourer of Souls", a goddess with the head of a crocodile, torso of a leopard, and hindquarters of a hippo. She sat beneath the scales of justice in the Hall of Truth in the afterlife and devoured the hearts of those souls which were not justified by Osiris.

**Amun** (Amun-Ra) - God of the sun and air. One of the most powerful and popular gods of ancient Egypt, patron of the city of Thebes, where he was worshipped as part of the Theban Triad of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu. Supreme king of the gods in some periods, though originally a minor fertility god. By the time of the New Kingdom he was considered the most powerful god in Egypt and his worship bordered on monotheism. Other gods were even considered mere aspects of Amun at this time. His priesthood was the most powerful in Egypt and the position of God's Wife of Amun, given to royal women, almost on par with that of the pharaoh.

**Amunhotep** (Amenhotep), Son of Hapu - God of healing and wisdom. Along with Hardedef and **Imhotep**, one of the few human beings deified by the Egyptians. He was the royal architect of Amunhotep III (1386-1353 BCE). He was considered so wise that, after death, he became deified. He had a major temple in western Thebes and a healing center at Deir el-Bahri.

**Amunet** - The female counterpart of Amun, member of the Ogdoad.

**Anat** - Goddess of fertility, sexuality, love, and war. She was originally from Syria or Canaan. In some texts she is referred to as the Mother of the Gods while in others she is a virgin and, in still others, sensuous and erotic, described as the most beautiful goddess. In one version of The Contendings of Horus and Set, she is given as a consort to Set at the suggestion of the goddess Neith. Often equated with Aphrodite of Greece, Astarte of Phoenicia, Inanna of Mesopotamia, and Sauska of the Hittites.

**Anta** - An aspect of the Mother Goddess Mut worshipped at Tanis as the consort of Amun.

**Andjety** - Early god of fertility associated with the city of Busiris (Andjet). His name means "He who is from Andjet" associated with the djed symbol. He eventually was absorbed by Osiris and his name became associated with that deity.

**Anhur** (Han-her) - Also known as Onuris by the Greeks. God of war and patron of the Egyptian army. See Onuris.

**Anqet** (Anukit or Anuket) - Goddess of fertility and the cataract of the Nile River at Aswan.

**Anti** - A Hawk god of Upper Egypt sometimes associated with Anat.

**Anubis** - God of the dead associated with embalming. Son of Nephthys and Osiris, father of Qebhet. Anubis is depicted as a man with the head of a dog or jackal carrying a staff. He guided the souls of the dead to the Hall of Truth and was part of the ritual of the Weighing of the Heart of the Soul in the afterlife. He was probably the original God of the Dead before that role was given to Osiris, at which time he was made Osiris' son.

**Anuke** - A war goddess originally and one of the oldest deities of Egypt, sometimes consort of Anhur, god of war. She came to be associated with Nephthys and, to a lesser degree, Isis and is referred to in some texts as their younger sister. Early depictions show her in battle dress with bow and arrow but she was transformed into a Mother Goddess and nurturing figure. The Greeks associated her with Hestia.

**Apedemak** - A war god depicted as a lion, originally thought to be from Nubia.

**Apep** (Apophis) - Apep, the celestial serpent assaulted the sun barge of Ra every night as it made its way through the underworld toward the dawn. Gods and the justified dead would help Ra fend the serpent off. The ritual known as Overthrowing of Apophis was performed in temples to help the gods and departed souls protect the barge and ensure the coming of day.

**Apis** - The Divine Bull worshipped at Memphis as an incarnation of the god Ptah. One of the earliest gods of ancient Egypt depicted on the Narmer Palette (c. 3150 BCE). The Apis Cult was one of the most important and long-lived in the history of Egyptian culture.

**Arensnuphis** - Companion to the goddess Isis and worshipped primarily at her sacred site at Philae. He was depicted as a lion or a man with a feathered headdress. Originally from Nubia.

**Asclepius** (Aesculapius) - A god of healing of the Greeks also worshipped in Egypt at Saqqara and identified with the deified Imhotep. His symbol, possibly derived from the god Heka, was a staff with a serpent entwined about it, associated in the modern day with healing and the medical profession, known as the Rod of Asclepius.

**Ash** (As) - God of the Libyan desert, a kindly deity who provided the oasis for travelers.

**Astarte** - Phoenician goddess of fertility and sexuality, often closely equated with Aphrodite of the Greeks, Inanna/Ishtar of Mesopotamia, and Sauska of the Hittites; referred to as Queen of Heaven. In Egyptian mythology, she is given as a consort to Set, along with Anat, by the goddess Neith.

**Aten** - The sun disk, originally a sun deity who was elevated by pharaoh Akhenaten (1353-1336 BCE) to the position of sole god, creator of the universe.

**Atum** (Ra) - The sun god, supreme lord of the gods, first god of the Ennead (tribunal of nine gods), creator of the universe and human beings. Atum (Ra) is the first divine being who stands on the primordial mound in the midst of chaos and draws on the magical forces of Heka to create all the other gods, human beings, and life on earth.

**Auf** (Efu-Ra) - An aspect of Atum (Ra).

B

**Ba'al** - Storm god originally from Phoenicia. His name means "Lord" and his was a major deity in Canaan only worshipped in Egypt in the later period of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE).

**Ba'alat Gebal** - Phoenician goddess of the city of Byblos, a protector deity, incorporated into Egyptian worship through her association with papyrus, which came from Byblos.

**Babi** (Baba) - He was a virility god depicted as a baboon and symbolizing male sexuality.

**Banebdjedet** - A fertility/virility god who appears as a ram or a man with a ram's head, associated with the city of Mendes, eventually another name for Osiris.

**Ba-Pef** - God of terror, specifically spiritual terror. His name translates as "that soul". He lived in the House of Woe in the afterlife and was known to afflict the king of Egypt. He was never worshipped with a temple but a Cult of Ba-Pef existed to help appease the god and protect the king.

**Bastet** (Bast) - The beautiful goddess of cats, women's secrets, childbirth, fertility, and protector of the hearth and home from evil or misfortune. She was the daughter of Ra and closely associated with Hathor. Bastet was one of the most popular deities of ancient Egypt. Men and women revered her equally and carried talismans of her cult. She was so universally adored that, in 525 BCE, the Persians used the Egyptian devotion to Bastet to their advantage in winning the Battle of Pelusium. They painted images of Bastet on their shields and drove animals in front of their army knowing the Egyptians would rather surrender than offend their goddess. She is depicted as a cat or a woman with a cat's head, and her major cult center was at Bubastis.

**Bat** - An early cow goddess associated with fertility and success. She is one of the oldest Egyptian goddesses dating from the early Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). Bat is depicted as a cow or a woman with cow ears and horns and is most probably the image at the top of the Narmer Palette (c. 3150 BCE) as she was associated with the king's success. She blessed people with success owing to her ability to see both past and future. Eventually, she was absorbed by Hathor who took on her characteristics.

**Bennu** - An avian deity better known as the Bennu Bird, the divine bird of creation and inspiration for the Greek Phoenix. The Bennu Bird was closely associated with Atum, Ra, and Osiris. It was present at the dawn of creation as an aspect of Atum (Ra) which flew over the primordial waters and woke creation with its cry. Afterwards, it determined what would and would not be included in creation. It was associated with Osiris through the imagery of rebirth as the bird was closely connected to the sun which died each night and rose again the next morning.

**Bes** (Aha or Bisu) - God of childbirth, fertility, sexuality, humor, and war, popularly known as the Dwarf god. He is one of the most popular gods in Egyptian history who protected women and children, fended off evil, and fought for divine order and justice. He is often represented as more of a spirit (a 'demon', though not at all in the modern-day understanding of that word) than a deity but was worshipped as a god and featured on a number of everyday items in the homes of the Egyptians such as furniture, mirrors, and knife handles. His consort was Taweret, the hippopotamus goddess of childbirth and fertility. Bes is depicted as a bearded dwarf with large ears, prominent genitals, bow-legged, and shaking a rattle. He is always shown in a front-facing position of protection watching over his charges.

**Beset** - The female aspect of Bes invoked in ceremonial magic. As a protective god, Bes also fended off dark magic, ghosts, spirits, and demons. His feminine aspect was called on to combat these forces.

**Buchis** - Aspect of the Ka (life force/astral self) of the god Montu in the form of a live bull. Depicted as a bull running.

## C

**Cavern Deities** - A group of nameless gods who lived in caverns in the underworld and punished the wicked and helped the souls of the justified dead. They are mentioned in Spell 168 of the Egyptian Book of the Dead and are represented as serpents or serpent-like. The spell is popularly known as 'Spell of the Twelve Caves' and makes mention of offerings which should be left for them. The people of Egypt would leave bowls of offerings by caves for them.

**Celestial Ferryman** (Hraf-haf) - "He Who Looks Behind Him", the surly boatman who ferried the souls of the justified dead across Lily Lake to the shores of paradise in the Field of Reeds. Hraf-haf was rude and unpleasant, and the soul had to find some way to be courteous in response in order to reach paradise. Hraf-haf is depicted as a man in a boat with his head facing behind him.

## D

**Dedun** - A protector god of resources, specifically of goods coming from Nubia. Originally a Nubian deity.

**Denwen** - A serpent deity in the form of a dragon surrounded by flames. He held power over fire and was strong enough to destroy the gods. In the Pyramid Texts, he attempts to kill all the gods with his breath of fire but is overpowered by the spirit of the dead king who saves creation.

**Duamutef** - One of the Four Sons of Horus, a protector god of the canopic jar containing the stomach. He presided over the east, had the form of a jackal, and was watched over by the goddess Neith.

## E

**Ennead** - The nine gods worshipped at Heliopolis who formed the tribunal in the Osiris Myth: Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Nephthys, and Set. These nine gods decide whether Set or Horus should rule in the story The Contendings of Horus and Set. They were known as The Great Ennead. There was also a Little Ennead venerated at Heliopolis of minor deities.

## F

**Fetket** - The butler of the sun god Ra who served him his drinks, patron god of bartenders.

**Field of Offerings** - A region of the afterlife devoted to Osiris, located to the west. In some inscriptions it is synonymous with the Field of Reeds.

**Field of Reeds** - The Egyptian paradise in the afterlife which the soul was admitted to after passing successfully through judgment and being justified by Osiris. It was a direct reflection of one's life on earth where one continued to enjoy everything as before but without sickness, disappointment, or the threat of death.

**Forty-Two Judges** - The Forty-two deities who presided with Osiris, Thoth, and Anubis over the judgment of the soul in the afterlife. Once the soul had made the Negative Confessions (Declaration of Innocence) the Forty-Two Judges advised Osiris on whether the confession should be accepted. They had names like Far-Strider, Fire-Embracer, Demolisher, Disturber, Owner of Faces, and Serpent Who Brings and Gives, among others.

**Four Sons of Horus** - Four deities, Duamutef, Hapy, Imset, and Qebehsenuf, who watched over the viscera of the dead in the four canopic jars placed in the tomb. Each had his own cardinal point to guard, his own internal organ to protect, and was watched over by a specific goddess.

G

**Geb** - God of the earth and growing things. Geb is the son of Shu and Tefnut, husband of Nut, the sky.

**Gengen Wer** - The celestial goose whose name means "Great Honker". He was present at the dawn of creation and guarded (or laid) the celestial egg containing the life force. He is a protector god who was worshipped very early in Egypt's history. Followers of Gengen Wer identified themselves with his protective attributes and wore talismans reminding them to respect life and honor the earth.

H

**Ha** - A protector god, Lord of the Western Deserts also known as Lord of the Libyans. He was god of the desert to the west of Egypt, son of the god Iaa who was probably also a desert god. Ha provided protection from the Libyans and opened oases for travelers in the desert. Depicted as a strong young man with the sign of the desert over his head.

**Hapi** - A fertility god, god of the Nile silt and associated with the inundation which caused the river to overflow its banks and deposit the rich earth which the farmers relied on for their crops. Hapi was a very ancient god whose name may have originally been derived from the river and who was a personification of the river at flood. He is depicted as a man with large breasts and belly signifying fertility and success.

**Hapy** - Also known as Hapi, a protector god, one of the Four Sons of Horus who protected the canopic jar holding the lungs. He presided over the north, had the form of a baboon, and was watched over by Nephthys.

**Hardedef** - The son of King Khufu (also known as Cheops, 2589-2566 BCE) who wrote a book known as Instruction in Wisdom. The work was so brilliant it was considered the work of a god and he was deified after death.

**Haroeris** - The Greek name for the sky aspect of Horus the Elder (also known as Horus the Great who appeared in the earthly realm as a falcon.

**Harpocrates** - The Greek and Roman name for Horus the Child, son of Osiris and Isis. Depicted as a young winged boy with his finger to his lips. He was venerated in Greece as the god of secrets, silence, and confidentiality.

**Hathor** - One of the best known, most popular, and most important deities of ancient Egypt. She was the daughter of Ra and, in some stories, wife of Horus the Elder. A very ancient goddess, she was sent by Ra to destroy humanity for their sins. The other gods implored Ra to stop her destruction before no humans were left to benefit from the lesson. Ra then had a vat of beer dyed red, to resemble blood, and placed at Dendera which Hathor, in her blood lust, drank. She fell asleep and woke as the benevolent goddess who was a friend to all. She was the patron goddess of joy, inspiration, celebration, love, women, women's health, childbirth, and drunkenness. One of her names is "The Lady of Drunkenness". She was thought to live in sycamore trees and so was also known as "The Lady of the Sycamore." In the afterlife she helped guide the souls of the dead toward paradise and was one of the deities aboard the sun barge of Ra who defended it from Apep. She is further associated with gratitude and a thankful heart. The Greeks associated her with Aphrodite. She is depicted as a cow or a woman with a cow's head and evolved from the earlier goddess Bat. Her characteristics were later largely absorbed by Isis.

**Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet** - A Mother Goddess aspect of Hathor worshipped at Heliopolis. She represented the hand, the active part, of the supreme god Atum (Ra).

**Hatmehit** (Hatmehyt) - She was a fish goddess worshipped in the Delta region of Mendes. Her name means "Foremost of the Fish". She arose from the totemic symbol of the nome (province) of the region around Mendes, which was a fish.

**Haurun** - A protector god associated with the Great Sphinx of Giza. He was originally a Canaanite god associated with destruction who planted a tree of death. When he was brought to Egypt by Canaanite and Syrian workers and merchants, he was transformed into a god of healing. His association with the Sphinx of Giza comes from these foreign workers who believed the Sphinx represented Haurun and built a shrine to their god in front of the statue. He is known as "The Victorious Herdsman" for a popular spell recited in his name for protection before going hunting.

**Hedetet** - Goddess of scorpions and protectress against their venom, an early version of Serket.

**Heh and Hauhet** - God and goddess of infinity and eternity. Heh was depicted as a frog and Hauhet as a serpent. Their names mean "endlessness" and they were among the original gods of the Ogdoad.

**Heqet** (Heket) - Goddess of fertility and childbirth, depicted as a frog or a woman with the head of a frog.

**Heret-Kau** - A protective goddess whose name means "She Who is Above the Spirits". She was worshipped during the period of the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) as a life-giving spirit who also protected the souls of the dead in the afterlife. Her nurturing qualities were later absorbed by Isis.

**Heka** - One of the oldest and most important gods in ancient Egypt. He was the patron god of magic and medicine but was also the primordial source of power in the universe. He existed before the gods and was present in the act of creation although, in later myths, he is seen as the son of Menhet and Khnum and part of the triad of Latopolis. He is depicted as a man carrying a staff and knife, and physicians were known as Priests of Heka. Magic was an integral part of medical practice in ancient Egypt, and so Heka became an important deity for doctors. He was said to have killed two serpents and entwined them on a staff as a symbol of his power; this image (borrowed from the Sumerians, actually) was passed on to the Greeks who associated it with their god Hermes and called it the caduceus. In the modern day, the caduceus is frequently confused with the Rod of Asclepius in iconography related to the medical profession.

**Heryshaf** - A fertility god depicted as a man with the head of a ram. He is an ancient god going back to the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE). He was later associated with Atum (Ra) and Osiris who absorbed his qualities.

**Heset** - Goddess of food and drink associated with beer and enjoyment. She was an early goddess of Egypt depicted as a cow with a tray of food on her horns and milk flowing freely from her udders. Beer was referred to as "the milk of Heset". She was later absorbed into Hathor. She was part of the Triad of Heliopolis along with Mnevis and Anubis.

**Hetepes-Sekhus** - A personification of the Eye of Ra who appears as a cobra goddess in the afterlife and destroys the enemies of Osiris. She is depicted in the company of crocodiles.

**Horus** - An early avian god who became one of the most important deities in ancient Egypt. Associated with the sun, sky, and power, Horus became linked with the king of Egypt as early as the First Dynasty (c. 3150-2890 BCE). Although the name 'Horus' might refer to a number of avian deities it principally designates two: Horus the Elder, one of the first five gods born at the beginning of creation, and Horus the Younger who was the son of Osiris and Isis. Following the rise in popularity of the Osiris Myth, Horus the Younger became one of the most important gods in Egypt. In the story, after Osiris is murdered by his brother Set, Horus is raised by his mother in the Delta swamps. When he



comes of age he battles his uncle for the kingdom and wins, restoring order to the land. The kings of Egypt, with some exceptions, all linked themselves with Horus in life and with Osiris in death. The king was thought to be the living incarnation of Horus and, through him, the god gave all good things to his people. He is usually depicted as a man with the head of a hawk but is represented by many different images. His symbols are the Eye of Horus and the hawk.

**Hu** - God of the spoken word, personification of the first word spoken by Atum (Ra) at the dawn of creation which brought all into being. Linked with Sia and Heka. Sia represented the heart, Hu the tongue, and Heka their underlying force which gave them their power. Hu is often seen as a representation of the power of Heka or Atum and is depicted in funerary texts guiding the soul to the afterlife.

I

**Iah (Yah)** - A god of the moon who figures prominently in the Egyptian calendar. In the story of the creation of the world, Atum is angered by the intimate relationship between Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) and so separates them, declaring that Nut may not give birth to her children on any day of the year. The god Thoth appeared and gambled with Iah for five days worth of moonlight. He won and divided the moonlight hours into days which, because they were not part of the days of the year decreed by Atum, Nut could give birth in. She then gave birth to the first five gods: Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus the Elder in July. The Egyptians regulated their calendar with these five magical days. Iah was eventually absorbed into the god Khonsu.

**Iabet** - Goddess of fertility and rebirth, known as "She of the East" and sometimes associated with Amenet ("She of the West"). Iabet presided over the eastern deserts and, in time, came to personify them. She was also known as "Cleanser of Ra" who bathed the sun before it appeared in the dawn sky and personified the freshness of the morning sun. She was eventually absorbed into Isis.

**Ihy** - God of music and joy, specifically the music of the sistrum. Son of Hathor and Horus the Elder. He was worshipped with Hathor at Dendera and invoked at festivals. His birth is honored in wall inscriptions at birth houses in Dendera in the belief that joy and music should welcome children to earth at their birth. Depicted as a child with a sistrum.

**Imhotep** - The vizier of king Djoser (c. 2670 BCE) who designed and built the Step Pyramid. He lived c. 2667-2600 BCE and was a polymath expert in many fields of study. His name means "He Who Comes in Peace" and, after his death, he was deified as a god of wisdom and medicine. He was identified by the Greeks with Aesculapius and was invoked in spells for healing. His medical treatises claimed, against conventional belief, that disease was natural in origin and not a punishment from the gods.

**Imsety** - A protector god, one of the Four Sons of Horus who protected the canopic jar holding the liver. He presided over the south, had the form of a human male, and was watched over by Isis.

**Ipy** - A Mother Goddess associated in some texts with the mother of Osiris, also known as Opet and "The Great Opet". She is depicted as a hippopotamus or a combination of hippo, crocodile, human female, and lion, most often with a lion's head, hippo's body, human arms, lion feet. She was known as "Mistress of Magical Protection" and is first referenced in the Pyramid Texts as protecting and nourishing the king.

**Ishtar** - The Mesopotamian goddess of love, sexuality, and war. She was originally Inanna of the Sumerians and Akkadians, who became Ishtar to the Assyrians and influenced the development of other similar goddesses such as Aphrodite of the Greeks, Astarte of the Phoenicians, Hathor of the Egyptians, and Sauska of the Hittites, among others. She was probably first introduced to Egypt through trade in the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) but definitely gained prominent standing after the Assyrian conquest of Egypt by Ashurbanipal in 666 BCE.

**Isis** - The most powerful and popular goddess in Egyptian history. She was associated with virtually every aspect of human life and, in time, became elevated to the position of supreme deity, "Mother of the Gods", who cared for her fellow deities as she did for human beings. She is the second-born of the First Five Gods (Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus the Elder), sister-wife of Osiris, mother of Horus the Younger, and symbolically understood as the mother of every king. Her Egyptian name, Eset, means "Goddess of the Throne" because of her association with the monarch. She was also known as Weret-Kekau, "The Great Magic", because of her incredible powers. She cared for people in life and appeared to them after death to help guide them safely to paradise. After the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, her worship traveled to Greece and then to Rome. During the time of the Roman Empire, she was worshipped in every corner of their realm from Britain through Europe to Anatolia. The Cult of Isis was the strongest opponent of the new religion of Christianity between the 4th-6th centuries CE, and iconography, as well as tenets of belief, of the Isis cult were incorporated into the new faith. Imagery of the Virgin Mary holding her son Jesus comes directly from Isis cradling her son Horus and the Dying and Reviving God figure of Jesus himself is a version of Osiris.

**Isis-Eutheria** - A later Greek version of Isis worshipped in Egypt whose tears, when she mourned for Osiris, were thought to cause the inundation of the Nile River.

**Iusaaset** - A very early Mother Goddess referred to as "Grandmother of the Gods" and linked to Atum at the creation of the world. She is depicted in the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) as a woman with the uraeus and solar disc on her head holding a scepter and the ankh, symbol of life, and was associated with the acacia tree, the Tree of Life, considered the oldest tree in Egypt. She was known as "Lady of the Acacia", an epithet later attributed to Hathor. She was known to the Greeks as Saosis.

**Iw** - A creation goddess worshipped at Heliopolis associated with Hathor and Atum, combining the qualities of Hathor, Nebet, and Hetepet.

## J

**Judgement Deities** - See Forty-Two Judges

**Jupiter-Amun** - The Roman version of Zeus-Amun, king of the gods, worshipped at the Siwa Oasis in Egypt.

## K

**Kabechet (Kebehwet or Qebhet)** - She was originally a celestial serpent deity who became known as the daughter of Anubis and a funerary deity. She provided pure, cool water to the souls of the deceased as they awaited judgment in the Hall of Truth. She was associated with Nephthys as a friend of the dead.

**Kagemni** - A vizier to the king Sneferu (c. 2613-2589 BCE) who wrote the wisdom text known as Instructions of Kagemni. The book was considered so important it was required instruction for children of the monarchy. He was deified after death and worshipped as a god of wisdom.

**Kek and Kauket** - Gods of obscurity and night, members of the original Ogdoad of Hermopolis. Kek and Kauket were the male/female aspects of darkness but not in any way associated with evil. Kek was the god of the hours before dawn and was known as "Bringer-in-of-the-Light" as he guided the sun barge of the god Ra toward the sky from the underworld. Kauket, his feminine balance, was depicted as a woman with the head of a serpent also called "Bringer-in-of-the-Darkness" who presided over the hours of twilight when the sun was setting and guided the sun barge into the underworld.

**Khentekhtai (Khente-Khtai)** - He was a crocodile god worshipped in the Fourth Dynasty (c. 2613-2498 BCE) at the city of Athribis. His name and protective qualities were later absorbed by Horus.

**Khentiamenti (Khentiamentiu)** - A fertility god of Abydos who became a funerary god. His name means "First of the Westerners" (also given as "Foremost of the Westerners") in reference to his role as a god of the dead (associated with the west). His name and attributes were later absorbed by Osiris.

**Khenmu (Khnum)** - Also known as "The Great Potter", Khenmu was an early god of Upper Egypt most probably from Nubia originally. In early myths, he was the god who fashioned human beings from the clay of the Nile River and then held them high so the light of Ra could shine upon them and give them life. Humans were then placed in a womb from which they were born on earth. Khenmu is depicted as a ram-headed god symbolizing virility and fertility. He formed a triad with the gods Anuket and Satis at Elephantine on the Egyptian border of Nubia. Linked to the god Kherty, another ram-headed god, though a completely different entity. He is the patron god of potters and those who work in ceramics.

**Khepri** - An aspect of Ra the sun god in his morning form, represented by the scarab beetle.

**Kherty** (Cherti) - He was a ram-headed god of the underworld who ferried the dead on their last journey into the afterlife. In the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) he was said to rule the afterlife with Osiris. Kherty reigned over the entrance and hallways leading to the Hall of Truth while Osiris had reign over the Hall and the Field of Reeds. The dead were greeted by other deities when they arrived in the afterlife and were then brought to the Hall of Truth for judgment by Kherty. In this role he was benevolent but some inscriptions suggest he was an enemy of order who threatened the deceased king on his entrance to the underworld. Conversely, he is also depicted as protecting the king.

**Khonsu** (Kons, Chonsu, Khensu, or Chons) - His name means "The Traveler" and he was god of the moon. He formed one of the most important and influential triads at Thebes along with his father Amun and mother Mut. He is depicted as a mummy holding the crook and flail with a uraeus and moon disc on his head. Khonsu replaced the earlier god Montu as son of Mut and also took on his protective qualities. By the time of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE) he was extremely popular and worshipped as the greatest among the gods after Amun. He was associated with healing and images of Khonsu were believed to have miraculous abilities to heal the sick instantly.

L

**Lady of the Acacia** - One of the names of the goddess Iusaaset, "Grandmother of the Gods", later given to Hathor.

**Lady of the Sycamore** - One of the names of Hathor who was believed to live in the sycamore tree which was sacred to her cult.

**Lake of Flowers** (Lily Lake) - The body of water in the afterlife which the souls of the justified dead crossed to reach paradise in the Field of Reeds. In the Book of the Dead, the justified souls are said to be able to swim and enjoy themselves by the shores of this lake.

**Lates-Fish** - The Nile perch sacred to the goddess Neith, worshipped as a divine entity as Esna.

M

**Maahes** (Mahes, Mihos, or Mysis) - He was a powerful solar god and protector of the innocent depicted as a lion-headed man carrying a long knife or a lion. His name is linked to the goddess of harmony and truth, Ma'at, and may mean "True Before Ma'at". This interpretation is likely as his other names include "Lord of Slaughter" and "The Scarlet Lord" referring to his punishment of those who violated the sacred order life presided over by the goddess. He was commonly understood to be the son of Bastet but is also referred to as son of Sekhmet, only natural since both were associated with cats/lions. He

possibly an aspect of the god Nefertum, also a son of Bastet, and formed a triad with Nefertum and Imhotep at Memphis. Linked by the Greeks with the Furies because of his vengeful nature.

**Ma'at** - Goddess of truth, justice, and harmony, one of the most important deities in the Egyptian pantheon. She set the stars in the sky and regulated the seasons. Ma'at embodied the principle of ma'at (harmony) which was central to the culture of ancient Egypt. Ma'at walked with one through life, was present in the form of the Feather of Truth at the soul's judgment after death, and continued as a presence in the paradise of the Field of Reeds. She is depicted as a woman wearing a crown with an ostrich feather. The word means "that which is straight" and the concept of harmony infused every aspect of an Egyptian's life. There is a time for every action and aspect of existence within ma'at but all must be recognized and acted upon at appropriate times.

**Mafdet** (Mefdet) - She was an early goddess of justice who pronounced judgment and meted out execution swiftly. Her name means "She Who Runs" for the speed with which she dispensed justice. She is the earliest feline deity in Egypt, pre-dating both Bastet and Sekhmet. She protected people from venomous bites, especially from scorpions, and predates Serket who later took on that role. All of Mafdet's qualities were later assumed by other female deities but Mafdet remained a popular goddess from the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) through the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE) when she appears as a judge in the afterlife. She is depicted as a woman with the head of a cat, cheetah, leopard, or lynx holding the rope and executioner's blade.

**Mandulis** (Marul or Merwel) - A Nubian solar deity worshipped by Egyptians at Philae and Kalabsha, both in far Upper Egypt near the Nubian border. The first temple to him was constructed at Kalabsha during the 18th Dynasty (c. 1550-1292 BCE). He was identified with both Ra and Horus and is depicted as a falcon wearing a horned headdress (the hemhem crown) or a human wearing the same crown with serpents. In his association with Ra he appeared as a child, symbolizing the morning sun, and as an adult representing later day.

**Mau** - The divine cat who, in some stories, is present at the dawn of creation as an aspect of Ra. Mau protected the Tree of Life, which held the secrets of eternal life and divine knowledge, from the evil serpent Apep. The story of Mau and the tree is told in Spell 17 of the Egyptian Book of the Dead where it is clear the cat is Ra personified. Spell 17 also claims that this is the origin of cats on earth.

**Mehen** - The serpent god who wrapped himself around Ra in the sun barge to protect him from Apep's attacks. In early myths he is shown protecting Ra while Set fights off the serpent.

**Mehet-Weret** - An ancient sky goddess and one of the oldest deities of Egypt. She is the celestial cow goddess who rose from the primordial waters of chaos to give birth to the sun god Ra at the beginning of time. Her name means "Great Flood" and she is associated with fertility and abundance. After giving birth to the sun, she placed it between her

horns and every morning lifted it into the sky. Her qualities were later absorbed by Hathor.

**Mehit** (Meyht) - She was a moon goddess from the Early Dynastic Period (c. 31250-2613 BCE) identified with the concept of the Distant Goddess who departs from Ra and returns to bring transformation. Usually depicted as a reclining lioness with three sticks protruding from behind her. Consort of Anhur.

**Mekhit** - Goddess of war, probably originally from Nubia, depicted as a roaring lioness and associated with the moon. She symbolized the vengeful aspect of the Eye of Ra. In one myth, the Eye of Ra departs for Nubia where it transforms itself into a lioness. The god Onuris hunts it down and returns it to Ra where it becomes (or gives birth to) Menhit who then becomes consort to Onuris. She was worshipped at Abydos in the cult center honoring her and Onuris. The story of Menhit, Onuris, and the Eye of Ra is an example of the Distant Goddess motif where the eye leaves Ra and returns or is returned, bringing transformation.

Menhit (Menhyt) - She was a solar deity who represented the brow of the sun god Ra, depicted as a reclining lioness. She was worshipped in the Delta region and associated with Neith and Wadjet as a protective goddess.

**Meretseger** - A protector goddess in the form of a cobra venerated at Thebes. Specifically, she guarded the necropolis of the Valley of the Kings.

**Merit** - The goddess of music who helped to establish cosmic order through musical means. She was a minor goddess who was eventually totally eclipsed by Hathor in regard to music. Hathor became associated with the sistrum specifically and music generally but, earlier, Merit was the goddess who "conducted" the symphony of order which accompanied creation.

**Meskhenet** - Goddess of childbirth and one of the oldest deities of Egypt. Meskhenet was present at one's birth, created one's ka (aspect of the soul) and breathed it into one's body. In doing so, she provided the person's destiny through their character. She was also present at the judgment of the soul in the afterlife as a comforter and so was with an individual at birth, through life, and after death. She is depicted as a birthing brick (the stone women would squat on to give birth) with the head of a woman or a seated woman with a birthing brick on her head. Her role of providing one's destiny was eventually taken over by the Seven Hathors but she continued to be venerated in homes throughout Egypt's history.

**Mestjet** - A lion-headed goddess worshipped at Abydos as one of the many aspects of the Eye of Ra. She undoubtedly was featured in stories of the Distant Goddess, as deities associated with the Eye of Ra usually are, but no stories have been found thus far. She is only known from a single stela at Abydos which shows her standing with the ankh in one hand and a staff in the other as a woman and her daughter approach to pay her homage.

**Min** - An ancient fertility god from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). Min was god of the eastern deserts who watched over travelers but was also associated with the black fertile mud of the Egyptian Delta. He is shown as the husband of Isis and father of Horus in early inscriptions and so is associated with Osiris. Min is depicted as a man holding his erect penis in one hand with the flail of authority in the other.

**Mnevis** (Mer-Wer or Nem-Wer) - Mnevis was the sacred bull of Heliopolis considered an aspect of the sun god Ra. He was a live bull selected from a herd for his completely black coat. Only one Mnevis bull could exist at any one time and another was chosen only after the first died. He was eventually absorbed into Apis.

**Montu** - A falcon god who rose to prominence in the 11th Dynasty at Thebes (c. 2060-1991 BCE). His name was taken by all three rulers of the dynasty in the form of Mentuhotep (Montuhotep) meaning "Montu is Pleased". He eventually became associated with Ra as the composite sun god Mont-Ra and was associated with Horus as a war god. The Greeks equated him with Apollo

**Mut** - An early mother goddess who most likely had a minor role during the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) but who later became prominent as the wife of Amun and mother of Khonsu, part of the Theban Triad. Mut was a protector deity associated with Bastet and Sekhmet. She guarded over people in life and, in Spell 164 of the Book of the Dead, is depicted as a savior of souls trapped by demons in the afterlife. She was also the divine protector of the king and state who roasted conspirators and traitors in her flaming brazier.

N

**Nebethetpet** - A goddess worshipped at Heliopolis as the personification of the hand of Atum, the active, feminine principle of the god.

**Nefertum** (Nefertem) - God of perfume and sweet aromas. Nefertum was born from the bud of the blue lotus flower at the dawn of creation and was originally an aspect of Atum. His name means "Beautiful Atum". He was later considered his own deity and became associated with sweet-smelling flowers. He is associated with rebirth and transformation through his link to the sun god and flowers. In Egyptian medicine he was called upon for healing aromas to cure disease and associated with incense.

**Nehebkau** (Nehebu-Kau) - "He Who Unites the Ka", was a protector god who joined the ka (aspect of the soul) to the body at birth and united the ka with the ba (winged aspect of the soul) after death. He is depicted as a serpent and, like Heka, has always existed. Nehebkau swam in the primordial waters at the dawn of creation before Atum rose from the chaos to impose order.

**Nehmetawy** - A protector goddess whose name means "She Who Embraces Those in Need". She was worshipped at Hermopolis where she was considered the wife of Nehebkau. In other regions, she was the consort of the god of wisdom and writing, Thoth.

**Neith** - One of the oldest and most enduring deities of ancient Egypt, worshipped from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) through the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last to rule Egypt before it was taken by Rome. Neith was a war goddess, creator goddess, mother goddess, and funerary goddess in her time and patron of the city of Sais in the Nile Delta. She was the most important goddess of Lower Egypt in early history and continued to hold a prominent position in worship for millennia. In early depictions she is seen with a bow and arrows and one of her epithets was "Mistress of the Bow". As a creator goddess she was identified with the waters of chaos (Nun) prior to creation and, in this role, she is called "Grandmother of the Gods" or "Mother of the Gods". She was thought to have invented birth and was closely associated with living and growing things. As a mother goddess, she is the mediator of the gods' disputes, most famously as the goddess who settles the question of whether Horus or Set should rule Egypt when the tribunal of the gods cannot decide. She also became prominent as a funerary goddess who watched over the dead. Her statue appears with those of Isis, Nephthys, and Serket in Tutankhamun's tomb. She is the guardian goddess over Duamutef, one of the Four Sons of Horus who watch over the canopic jars in the tombs and is also depicted as a just judge of the dead in the Hall of Truth.

**Nekhbet** - A protector goddess in the form of a vulture who guarded Upper Egypt. She was associated with Wadjet, protector of Lower Egypt. The two are referred to as "The Two Ladies".

**Nekheny** - A protector god in the form of a falcon who was patron of the town of Nekhen in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). His attributes were eventually absorbed by Horus.

**Neper** - God of the grains, son of the harvest goddess Renenutet. He was a personification of corn and associated with Osiris as a fertility god. Neper predates Osiris and may have been one of the earlier gods who prefigure the Osiris Myth. Coffin Text II.95 refers to him as the god "living after he has died" and inscriptions relate him with the Dying and Reviving God figure prior to Osiris' popularity.

**Nephthys** - A funerary goddess, one of the first five gods born of Geb and Nut after the creation of the world, wife of Set, twin sister of Isis, and mother of Anubis. Her name means "Mistress of the Temple Enclosure" or "Mistress of the House" referring to a heavenly house or temple. She is depicted as a woman with a house on her head. Nephthys is widely, and incorrectly, regarded as a minor deity when actually she was worshipped throughout Egypt from the earliest periods to the last dynasty to rule Egypt. She was considered the dark goddess to the light of Isis but this carried no negative connotation, only balance. Nephthys features prominently in the Osiris myth when she transforms herself into the form of Isis to seduce Osiris, when she betrays the location of Osiris' body to Set, and when she helps her sister revive the dead king. She was known as "Friend of the Dead" for her care of the souls in the afterlife and professional mourners at funerals, who encouraged the open expression of grief, were known as the "Kites of Nephthys". In the text *The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys* she calls the soul of Osiris



back from the dead. This text was recited regularly at festivals, services, and funerals throughout Egypt.

**Nu** (Nun) and Naunet - Nu was the personification of the primordial chaos from which the world arose. Naunet is his female aspect and consort. Nu is commonly regarded as "Father of the Gods" while Naunet is only referenced regarding the Ogdoad, the grouping of eight primordial gods, four males matching four females, who represent the original elements of creation. In some later myths, the goddess Neith is associated with Nu.

**Nut** - The primordial sky goddess who personified the canopy of the heavens, wife of Geb (earth), mother of Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus the Elder. After the primordial mound rose from the waters of chaos at creation, Atum (Ra) sent his children Shu and Tefnut out to create the world. When they returned, he was so happy he shed tears of joy which became human beings. These creatures had nowhere to live and so Shu and Tefnut mated to give birth to Geb (earth) and Nut (sky). Their relationship was so intimate that it disturbed Atum who pushed Nut high above Geb and fixed her there. He also decreed that she could not give birth on any day of the year. Thoth, the god of wisdom, gambled with Iah, god of the moon, and won five days worth of moonlight which he transformed into days. Nut was able to then give birth to her five children on five consecutive days in July which were not part of Atum's original. In some versions of the story it is Khonsu who loses the gamble with Thoth.

O

**Ogdoad** - The eight gods representing primordial elements of creation: Nu and Naunet (water); Heh and Hauhet (infinity); Kek and Kauket (darkness); Amun and Amaunet (hiddenness, obscurity). The concept of balance, so important to Egyptian culture, was epitomized in the various ogdoads of Egyptian gods/sprits of place.

**Onuris** (Anhur) - He was a god of war and hunting. His name means "He Who Brings Back The Distant One" which is a reference to the story about his retrieval of the Eye of Ra from Nubia. In this tale, the Eye of Ra goes forth from Egypt and transforms itself into a lion. Onuris hunts the lion, captures it, and returns it to Ra where it transforms into the goddess Mekhit who then becomes his consort. This story is an example of the Distant Goddess motif in which the Eye of Ra departs from the sun god and then is returned (or returns itself) bringing transformation. Onuris was considered a son of Ra and associated with the god Shu. His image (as Anhur) appeared on the banners of the Egyptian army as he led them to war, protected them in battle, and brought them safely home. He was the patron god of the Egyptian army and of hunters.

**Osiris** - Lord and judge of the dead, one of the First Five gods born of Nut at the dawn of creation, and one of the most popular and enduring gods of Egypt. His name means "Powerful" or "Mighty". Osiris was originally a fertility god who grew in popularity and influence through the Osiris Myth in which he is killed by his brother, Set, brought back to life by his wife Isis, fathers sky god Horus, and descends to the underworld as Judge of the Dead. In the Egyptian Book of the Dead he is mentioned frequently as the just judge

in the Hall of Truth who weighs the hearts of the souls of the dead against the white feather of ma'at. He is an early example of the Dying and Reviving God figure in mythology who leant himself to the later version of this figure, Jesus Christ. Egyptian kings identified themselves with Osiris in death and he is usually depicted as a mummy (symbolizing death) and with green or black skin (symbolizing the fertility of the Nile region and life). He was so popular that people in ancient Egypt paid to have their bodies buried at Abydos near his cult center and those who could not afford that would pay for memorials to be erected to them or their loved ones at Abydos believing that proximity to Osiris on earth guaranteed easier access to paradise after death. His cult naturally merged with that of his wife and the Cult of Isis, with its symbolism of salvation, eternal life, the dying and reviving god, and the divine son born of a virgin mother, would later influence the development of early Christianity.

**Osiris-Apis** - The Apis bull, traditionally associated with the god Ptah, became linked to Osiris as the latter god grew more popular. At Saqqara, the priests began to worship a hybrid god they called Osiris-Apis who was the god in bull form. As with the traditional Apis bull, a live bull was considered an incarnation of the god. When the sacred bull died it was mummified with the same care given a king.

P

**Pakhet** - A hunting goddess in lioness form, her name means "She Who Scratches" or "Tearer". She was a consort of Horus and associated with the vengeful aspects of Sekhmet and the justice of Isis. She was thought to hunt at night and terrify her enemies.

**Panebtawy** - The child god, personification of the king as divine son of Horus and also of Horus as a child. He was depicted as a young boy with his finger to his lips, prefiguring the later image of Harpocrates, the Greek version of the child Horus. His name means "Lord of the Two Lands". He was the son of Tasenetnofret, a local goddess of Kom Ombo who was a manifestation of Hathor.

**Pataikos** - Minor amuletic deities who represented the power of the god Ptah. They were depicted as dwarf-gods and worn for protection.

**Peak** - Known as "Peak of the West", the personification of the highest peak of the cliffs which overshadowed the Valley of the Kings and worshipped by the workers at Deir el-Medina as a protective power.

**Peteese and Pihor** - Two human brothers known as "the sons of Kuper" who drowned in the Nile River near Dendur. They were deified for their association with Osiris, stemming from their death in the river, and served as local deities of protection. Augustus Caesar built a temple in their honor at Dendur which is now on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The temple's reliefs show the god-brothers offering gifts to Isis.

**Ptah** - One of the oldest Egyptian gods who appears in the First Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) but most likely dates from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). Ptah was the great god of Memphis, creator of the world, lord of truth, and chief god of the city of Memphis and its surrounding area c. 3000 BCE. Ptah was originally the figure who stood on the primordial mound of the ben-ben at the creation of the world. He was probably an early fertility god and is associated with the moringa tree which, in an early myth, he liked to rest beneath. He was the patron god of sculptors and craftsmen as well as builders of monuments as he was thought to have sculpted the earth. He was sometimes known as Ptah-Nun or Ptah-Naunet in his creative aspect, linking him with the primordial substances of the Ogdoad. He is depicted as a mummified man wearing a skull cap holding the Was scepter of authority with the ankh and djed symbols at the top.

**Ptah-hotep** - Author of one of the more famous Wisdom Texts, who was deified after his death and honored with his own cult.

**Ptah-Sokar-Osiris** - A hybrid god of these three associated with creation, death, and rebirth. Worshipped in the period of the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE).

## Q

**Qebhet** - See Kabechet

**Qebhsenuf** - A protector god, one of the Four Sons of Horus who protected the canopic jar of the intestines. He presided over the west, had the form of a hawk, and was watched over by Serket.

**Qudshu** (Qadesh) - Syrian goddess of love, consort of the war god Reshep, assimilated into Egyptian worship during the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE). She was the goddess of sexual pleasure and sacred ecstasy who was associated with Hathor, Anat, and Astarte. Her name means "Holy" and she is always depicted as a slim naked woman holding the symbols of eroticism and fertility; lotus blossoms in her right hand and snakes or papyrus stems in her left. She was widely venerated throughout Egypt. Her cult reenacted the sacred marriage between Qudshu and Reshep, a ritual long associated with the Cult of Ishtar/Inanna in Mesopotamia and Astarte in Phoenicia.

## R

**Ra** (Atum or Re) - The great sun god of Heliopolis whose cult spread across Egypt to become the most popular by the Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BCE). The pyramids of Giza are associated with Ra as the supreme lord and creator god who ruled over the land of the living and the dead. He drives his sun barge across the heavens by day, showing another aspect of himself with each advance of the sun across the sky, and then dives into the underworld at evening where the barge is threatened by the primordial serpent Apep (Apophis) and must be defended by the other gods and souls of the justified dead. Ra was among the most important and popular gods of Egypt. Even when the god Amun rose in

prominence, Ra's position was undiminished and he merged with Amun to become Amun-Ra, the supreme god.

**Raettawy** (Raet or Raet-Tawy) - She was the female aspect of Ra. She is associated with Hathor and is depicted as closely resembling Hathor with the uraeus on her head holding the solar disk, sometimes with two feathers over the disk.

**Ra-Harakhte** (Raharakty or Ra-Harakhty) - A falcon god amalgam of Ra and Horus who personified the sun at the two horizons, sunrise and sunset. 'Harakhte' means "Horus of the Horizon". He is depicted as a man with a hawk's head wearing the solar disk as a crown.

**Renpet** - A goddess who personified the year. She is represented in inscriptions by a notched palm branch signifying the passing of time, the hieroglyphic image for 'year'. She had no formal cult or temple but was an integral part of the Egyptian's understanding of time: that it was imbued, like everything else, with personality and vitality.

**Renenet** (Renenet or Ernutet) - A very important goddess depicted as a cobra or a rearing cobra with the head of a woman. Her name means "Snake Who Nourishes" and she was goddess of nursing and rearing children. In time, she became closely associated with Meskhenet, goddess of childbirth and destiny, and even superceded her to determine the length of a person's life and significant events which would befall them. Along with Meskhenet, she was also associated with Neith and sometimes portrayed as the mother of Osiris, with Isis as the wife of Osiris and mother of Horus, as Atum's wife or consort. In the afterlife she appeared as the "Lady of Justification" linking her with the goddess Ma'at. She was thought to protect the clothing worn by the king in the afterlife and so was also known as "Lady of the Robes". In this capacity, she appeared as a fire-breathing cobra who drove away the enemies of the king. She was also a grain goddess known as "Lady of the Fertile Fields" and "Lady of the Granaries" who protected the harvest and was the mother of Nepri, god of grain. As a fertility goddess, she was further linked to the Nile River and the inundation and so with Hapi, the god of the fertile mud of the Nile.

**Reret** - A protector deity in the form of a hippopotamus whose name means "Sow". She represented the constellation Draco and was a protectress of the sun barge as it made its way through the underworld. As the constellation, she is sometimes known as Reret-weret ("The Great Sow") and was referred to as Mistress of the Horizon. She is associated with the better-known Hippopotamus goddess Taweret and, as a sky goddess and protective force, with Hathor and Nut.

**Reshep** - A Syrian war god assimilated into Egyptian worship during the period of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE). He was the consort of the goddess of sexual pleasure and sacred ecstasy Qudshu (Qadesh) and was worshipped with her in a triad which included the fertility god Min. The sacred marriage of Qudshu and Reshep was reenacted by their followers linking the cult to that of Inanna/Ishtar of Mesopotamia which had long practiced the same ritual. Reshep is further linked to Mesopotamia through his identification in iconography with the Mesopotamian war god Nergal. As a god of

pestilence, he is also linked to Set, god of chaos and the arid wastes. Reshep is uniformly depicted as a strong warrior holding a raised war club and wearing a skirt and long Mesopotamian-styled beard.

**Ruty** - The twin lion gods who represented the eastern and western horizons. The name means "Pair of Lions". They were originally associated with Shu and Tefnut as sky deities and eventually became linked with Ra and the solar barge.

## S

**Sah** - An astral god, personification of the constellation Orion, usually paired with Sothis (Sopdet) as representations of the astral forms of Osiris and Isis. He is referred to as "Father of the gods" in the Pyramid Texts and was an important aspect of funerary rites where he welcomed the king to the afterlife. Known also as the "Dweller in Orion", Pyramid Text chapter 186 welcomes the soul, "In the name of the Dweller in Orion, with a season in the sky and a season on earth" which can be understood as, "with a season in the sky after a season on earth". He is depicted as a man holding the ankh and was sceptre standing in a boat surrounded by stars in a night sky.

**Satis** (Satet or Satit) - Goddess of the southern border of Egypt with Nubia and associated with Elephantine in the region of Aswan. Her name first appears on stone jars at Saqqara which were placed inside the lower chambers of Djoser's Step Pyramid (c. 2670 BCE) and she is thought to be an older goddess from the Predynastic Period of Egypt (c. 6000-3150 BCE). She is sometimes seen as the consort of Khnum, god of the Nile at Elephantine where the Egyptians believed the river originated and is associated with the Eye of Ra and Distant Goddess motif in some tales where she returns from a great distance to bring transformation. In this capacity, she is linked to the inundation of the Nile. She is also linked to Sothis (Sopdet), the personification of the star Sirius whose appearance in the night sky heralded the inundation. She is depicted as a woman wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt with antelope horns.

**Sebiumeker** - A guardian god who was a major deity in Meroe, Kush as god of procreation and fertility. Sebiumeker is associated with Atum as a creator god and may have been the supreme god of the pantheon in the region which is modern-day Sudan. His statuary, along with another god named Tabo, has often been found near doorways giving rise to the interpretation that he was a guardian god. He may not have been, however; his placement at doorways could have had some meaning touching on transformation, especially when placed at the doorways of temples.

**Sed** - An ancient jackal deity whose name first appears on the Palermo Stone from the Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BCE) but who was most likely much older. He was the protector of kingship and the individual king. He presided over the Sed Festival (also known as the Heb-Sed Festival) which was held every thirty years of a king's rule to rejuvenate him. He was eventually absorbed by Wepwawet or it could be that Wepwawet (whose name means "Opener of the Ways") was simply one of Sed's epithets which became more

popular. As protector of the divine king, Sed was associated with justice and so linked to the goddess Ma'at.

**Sefkhet-Abwy** (Safekh-Aubi) - See Seshat.

**Sekhmet** - One of the most significant goddesses of ancient Egypt. Sekhmet was a leonine deity usually depicted as a woman with the head of a lion. Her name means "Powerful" and is usually interpreted as "The Female Powerful One". She was a goddess of destruction and healing, of desert winds and cool breezes. She was the daughter of Ra who appears in one of the most important stories concerning the Eye of Ra/Distant Goddess motif. When Ra became tired of the sins of humanity, he sent Sekhmet to destroy them. She ravaged the land until the other gods implored Ra to stop her before humans were destroyed completely. Ra had a vat of beer dyed red to attract Sekhmet's blood lust and left it at Dendera where she drank it and fell into a deep sleep; when she woke she was the benevolent Hathor. Sekhmet continued to exist in her leonine form, however, and was the patron deity of the military for her powers of destruction and vengeance. She was known as "Smiter of the Nubians" in this regard but she also brought natural disaster. Plagues were known as "Messengers of Sekhmet" or "Slaughterers of Sekhmet". In the same way that she could bring the desert winds, she could deflect them, and the same with pestilence; just as she had brought the plague, she could cure it and was known as "Mistress of Life" in this capacity (and so was frequently invoked in healing spells and incantations by ancient doctors). She was closely associated with other leonine deities such as Bastet and Pakhet and was thought to be the aggressive, violent aspect of the goddess Mut.

**Sepa** - A protector god in the form of a centipede with the head of a donkey or horns, known as "The Centipede of Horus". He was worshipped as the deity who protected one from snake bites and some form of Sepa was venerated in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). He had his own temple at Heliopolis where he was associated with Osiris in a mummified form symbolizing his protective powers in the afterlife.

**Serapis** - The hybrid god created by Ptolemy I Soter of Egypt (r. 323-283 BCE), first ruler of the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last dynasty to rule Egypt before it was taken under Roman governance. Serapis was a blend of Osiris and Apis but his character and attributes were a blending of these two Egyptian deities with the Greek gods Zeus, Helios, Dionysius, Hades, and Asklepius. He was the supreme deity worshipped at the famous Serapeum nearby the Library of Alexandria. Ptolemy I wanted to create the kind of multi-cultural society his late commander and role model Alexander the Great had attempted and Serapis was an important component in this. Serapis was a complete blend of Egyptian and Greek ideals who suited the kind of society Ptolemy I encouraged.

**Seret** - A leonine protective goddess probably from Libya. She is only mentioned in a Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BCE) inscription as a goddess of a region of Egypt inhabited mainly by Libyans - the 3rd Lower Egypt nome (province). Like the other leonine deities, she is a fierce protector of her followers and avenges wrongs done to them.

**Serket** (Selket, Serqet or Serkis) - She was a protective and also an important funerary goddess probably originating in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) and first mentioned during the First Dynasty of Egypt (c. 3150-2890 BCE). She is best known from her golden statue found in the tomb of Tutankhamun. Serket was a scorpion goddess depicted as a woman with a scorpion on her head and arms outstretched in a protective pose. She may have been an early Mother Goddess who evolved into a deity who protected people (especially children) from scorpion venom and then to one who protected from all venom. A story known as Isis and the Seven Scorpions tells of how Isis was insulted by a rich woman once and Serket, who had sent her seven scorpions along as Isis' bodyguards, instructed one of them to sting the woman's son. The boy was going to die from the venom but Isis saved him and forgave the woman. Afterwards, Serket followed Isis' example of forgiveness and protected other children from scorpions. Her priests were largely physicians who invoked her name in healing. In the afterlife she helped guide the souls of the dead to paradise and protected a certain dangerous section of travel. Along with Isis, Neith, and Nephthys, she watches over the Four Sons of Horus as they guard the viscera of the dead in tombs.

**Seshat** (Sefkhet-Abwy or Safekh-Aubi) - She was the goddess of writing, books, notations, and measurements. Her name means "The Female Scribe" and she was the consort of Thoth, god of wisdom and writing (though sometimes she is depicted as his daughter). She is the patroness of libraries, both public and private, and was known as "She Who is Foremost in the House of Books". She was also the patron goddess of scribes. As goddess of measurements she ensured the king measured correctly in commissioning the building of temples and monuments and assisted him in measurements for rituals. She is first mentioned in the Second Dynasty (c. 2890-2670 BCE) as helping king Khasekemwy in this regard. Her association with measurements eventually made her the patroness of builders, architects, and those who dealt in accounting for cattle, other animals, and captives seized in war. Although she never had a temple of her own, as R.H. Wilkinson observes, "by virtue of her role in the foundation ceremony she was a part of every temple building" (167). She is depicted as a woman wearing a leopard skin over a robe with a headband holding a stick with a star on top. She holds a writing implement in her right hand and the notched palm stalk representing the years' passage in her left.

**Set** (Seth) - God of war, chaos, storms, and pestilence. His name is translated as "Instigator of Confusion" and "Destroyer". He is depicted as a red beast with cloven hooves and a forked tale and is the prototype for the later iconography of the Christian Devil. Set was originally a hero-god who drove away the serpent Apep (Apophis) from the barge of the sun god and killed it nightly. He was a desert god who brought the evil winds of the dry lands to the lush Nile Valley and was associated with foreign lands and people. His consorts were Anat and Astarte, both goddesses associated with war and both from foreign countries, as well as Taweret, the benign protective goddess of childbirth and fertility. Set is often characterized as "evil", and did manifest many evil qualities, but was not regarded by the ancient Egyptians as an embodiment of evil or darkness. He was rather seen as a necessary balance to gods like Osiris and Horus who represented all things noble and good, fertility, vitality, and eternity. Set is best known as the world's

first murderer in the Myth of Osiris where he kills his brother to usurp the throne. Isis returns Osiris to life but, because he is incomplete, descends to the underworld as Lord of the Dead. Isis gives birth to Osiris' son, Horus, who grows up to challenge Set for the throne. Their battles, which lasted for eighty years, are described in the text *The Contendings of Horus and Set* and were resolved in one version by Isis while, in another, by Neith with Horus declared rightful king and Set banished to the desert lands.

**Shay** (Shai) - The personification of fate. Shay presided over one's personal destiny and so was associated with goddesses like Meskhenet and Renenutet. Similar to The Fates of the ancient Greeks, no one could resist or alter Shay's decisions. The scholar Wilkinson cites a text known as *Instructions of Amenemopet* which states, "None can ignore Shay" (128). This statement epitomizes Shay's chief characteristic: inevitability. He is depicted as being present at the weighing of the heart of the soul in the afterlife or as a man standing in a posture of patience. During the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), when Egyptian gods were hellenized, he was known as Agathadaimon, the serpent deity who could tell one's future.

**Shed** - A protective god who guarded against personal harm from wild animals or mortal enemies. He was invoked by hunters and soldiers and known as "He Who Rescues" and "The Enchanter". He was lord of the wild animals and weapons and so could control both to protect a person who invoked his name. He was also sought in protection against magic spells cast by one's enemies and possibly against demons or ghosts. He is depicted as a young man with shaved head except for the sidelock denoting youth and carries a quiver of arrows. He often grasps serpents in his hands as though crushing them. Eventually his attributes were absorbed by Horus although he was still venerated by people in their homes and through amulets.

**Shentayet** - An obscure protective goddess whose name means "Widow" and who was associated with that aspect of Isis who lost her husband and then brought him back to life. This aspect was referred to as Isis-Shentayet. Quite likely invoked as a protectress of widows but references to her are rare and Isis fulfilled that role as she did so many others.

**Shepet** - A protective goddess who was an aspect of the hippopotamine deities Reret or Taweret worshipped at Dendera. In iconography she appears like either of these two but with a crocodile head.

**Shesmetet** - A protective leonine goddess known as "Lady of Punt" and most likely an important goddess brought to Egypt through trade with Punt. She is generally regarded as an aspect of Bastet or Sekhmet but quite possibly she was a much older deity whose attributes were absorbed by later leonine goddesses. Her name is mentioned as early as the First Dynasty (c. 3150-2890 BCE) and lent itself to the Shesmetet girdle, a belt of beads, worn by the kings of that time. She is depicted as a woman with the head of a lion.

**Shezmu** - God of wine and, later, of perfume and plenty who personified the positive and negative aspects of drunkenness. Shezmu is depicted in the Pyramid Text 403 killing and cooking the gods for the king's pleasure and, by the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE)



was seen tormenting the souls of the dead as he "lassoes the damned and corrals them for slaughter, squeezing their heads like grapes in a bloody image of destruction" (Wilkinson, 129). His image was softened by others showing his benign and peaceful side as lord of the wine press and this was softened further as he became associated with oils and perfumes.

**Shu** - The primordial god of the air whose name means "Emptiness". He was born at the beginning of creation of Atum (Ra) and sent to create the world with his sister Tefnut (goddess of moisture). The two were gone so long that Atum came to miss them and sent his eye (the Eye of Ra) in search of them. When the eye returned with them, Atum was so happy he cried and his tears created human beings. She and Tefnut then mated and gave birth to Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) who Atum pushed high apart from each other, providing a place for humans to live. Mist was attributed to him as "Lakes of Shu" and the clouds as "Bones of Shu" and he was also associated with light and brightness. In this regard he came to be linked to Thoth and Khonsu, both associated with the moon, because of moonlight.

**Sia** - The personification of perception and thoughtfulness who represented the heart (seat of emotion, thought, and character). Sia formed a dyad with Hu (representing the tongue), personification of the authority of the spoken word, and a triad with Hu and Heka, god of magic and medicine but also the primordial force in the universe which empowered life and sustained ma'at. Sia represented the intellect while Hu symbolized the word of Ptah (or Atum) which brought thought into reality and Heka was the underlying force which gave them power. Sia is depicted as a man standing at the right side of Ptah (later, Atum/Ra) and held his papyrus scroll. In the Valley of the Kings he is seen in paintings as a member of the crew aboard Ra's sun barge.

**Sky Bull** - The deity who presided over the heavens and the afterlife as a protector, also known as "Bull of the West" for his association with the afterlife. Commonly understood to be the husband of the seven cows which are seen with him.

**Sobek** - An important protective deity in the form of a crocodile or a man with a crocodile's head, Sobek was a god of water but also associated with medicine and particularly surgery. His name means "Crocodile" and he was lord of marshes and wetlands and any other wet areas of Egypt. In the Pyramid Texts he is claimed to be the son of Neith and was worshipped widely from the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) onwards. As god of wetlands he was associated with fertility and procreation but, as the crocodile god, also with unexpected death. He was said to separate wives from their husbands at a whim. Sobek lived on a mythical mountain at the horizon which he ruled from and so was linked to the authority of the king as he, himself, was lord of a domain. This link with the horizon associated him with Ra and led to the form of Ra known as Sobek-Ra. Sobek is one of the best known gods of ancient Egypt and was extremely popular in his time. His priests kept live crocodiles in the temples who were fed lavishly on the best cuts of meat and treated better than many human beings of the time. When these crocodiles died they were mummified and buried with all the care given to a person. He was also associated with the Nile which was said to issue forth as the sweat of Sobek.

**Sokar** (Seker) - A protective falcon god of Memphis who was originally an agricultural deity and one of the oldest in Egypt. His festival was one of the earliest observed and, merged with the Khoiak Festival of Osiris, continued to be celebrated throughout Egypt's history. He evolved from a god of agriculture and growth to the god of craftsmen and guardian of the Memphis necropolis after Osiris became more popular. Sokar is often depicted as a funerary mound surrounded by falcon heads, as a falcon, or as a falcon-headed man. He is associated with the afterlife as guardian of the entrance to the underworld and the god who carries the deceased king's soul in his barge to paradise. In time, he became associated with Ptah and then Osiris to eventually combine by the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) into Ptah-Sokar-Osiris who was a hybrid funerary deity presiding over the afterlife.

**Sons of Horus** - See Four Sons of Horus.

**Sopdu** (Soped or Sopedu) - A protective god of the eastern border of Egypt who guarded over the outposts and soldiers on the frontier. He is depicted as a falcon with a flail over the right wing or as a bearded man with a crown featuring two feathers. Sopdu was associated with Horus and the deified king in his astral form. Wilkinson writes, "The deceased king, in his role as Osiris-Orion, is said to impregnate Isis as the star Sothis and to produce Horus-Sopdu" (211). In the earthly realm, he ensured the proper resources reached the eastern border garrisons and helped the king control native populations in those regions.

**Sothis** - The personification of the star Sirius (the "dog star") whose appearance heralded the annual inundation of the Nile. She was worshipped as a cow-goddess in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) associated with Sirius. She was the consort of Sah, who personified the constellation Orion, and the two were associated with Osiris and Isis. In this role, she was the mother of Sopdu and so appealed to as a protective influence. She was also associated with Satis who was linked to the inundation of the Nile as consort of Khnum. Early depictions of Sothis represent her as a cow with a plant between her horns while later images show her as a woman wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt with horns on her head or feathers with a five-pointed star above her. She became increasingly identified with Isis and was eventually absorbed into that goddess completely. Isis refers to herself as Sothis in a copy of the text of The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys from the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE) showing how the assimilation was almost complete by that time.

**Souls of Nekhen and Pe** - Protective spirits who were considered the ancestral souls of the city of Nekhen in Upper Egypt (also known as Hierakonopolis) and the city of Pe in Lower Egypt (also known as Buto). These spirits symbolically united Upper and Lower Egypt and served the king in life and through death. While the king lived he was identified with Horus, who the souls encouraged, and when the king died he became associated with Osiris, whom the souls mourned and honored. The souls of Pe are depicted as men with falcon heads and those of Nekhen as jackal-headed. Both are seen

in tomb inscriptions of the kings kneeling to honor the deceased king's arrival in the afterlife.

**Star Deities** - Gods and goddesses identified with the night sky. By the time of the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) the Egyptians had identified five of the planets which they referred to as "Stars That Know No Rest" and associated with gods: the called Mercury 'Sebegu' (a form of the god Set); Venus ("The One Who Crosses" and "God of the Morning"); Mars ("Horus of the Horizon" and "Horus the Red"); Jupiter ("Horus Who Limits the Two Lands"); Saturn ("Horus Bull of the Heavens"). Further, the star Sirius was associated with Sothis and then Isis while Orion represented the god Sah, "Father of the Gods". The appearance of Sirius heralded the inundation of the Nile, the promise of fertility, and represented the cyclical nature of existence and so came to be linked to Osiris, the dying and reviving god, and Isis, the one who revived him. The stars then were called "Followers of Osiris" who sailed across the night sky in accordance with divine pattern. Sah and Sothis in the heavens reflected the divine couple Osiris and Isis and the god Sopdu, (son of Sothis), the astral form of Horus. Thus the night sky told the stories of the most meaningful stories of the Egyptian culture and assured the people of an eternity in the gods' presence when they looked up at the stars.

**Sutekh** - The Semitic name for the god Set (Seth) which the people known as the Hyksos introduced during the Second Intermediate Period (c. 1782-1570 BCE). The Hyksos identified Set with the warlike aspect of their god Baal. Set was referred to as Sutekh through the reign of Ramesses II (1279-1213 BCE) and invoked as a vanguard in war.

T

**Ta-Bitjet** - A protective goddess specifically against poisonous bites and stings. She is frequently invoked in healing spells and associated with the goddess Serket. Eventually she was absorbed into Isis.

**Tasenetnofret** - A protective goddess of Kom Ombo whose name means "The Good Sister" or "The Beautiful Sister". She was a local manifestation of the goddess Hathor, consort of Horus, and mother of Panebtawy.

**Tatenen** - An earth god who personified the primordial mound at creation and symbolized the land of Egypt. He is most likely the same god referred to as Khenty-Tjenenet in the period of the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE). He was worshipped at Memphis during the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) and continued to be venerated primarily in that region through the rest of Egypt's history. His association with the primordial mound linked him with Ptah and, through Ptah, with Atum and Ra, the other names for the creator god/sun god. Tatenen was a bisexual god, referred to as "Mother of All the Gods" in one text.

**Taweret** (Tauret) - A protective goddess in the form of a hippopotamus, the most famous hippopotamus deity from ancient Egypt, associated with both Isis and Hathor. Taweret is a goddess of childbirth and fertility who was very popular throughout Egypt's history.

She was invoked regularly for protection of children and help during pregnancy and birth. The ancient Egyptians observed the female hippopotamus to be extremely protective of her children which led to the form of this goddess. The male hippopotamus was very aggressive and considered one of the most dangerous animals in Egypt so he was associated with the god Set resulting in images of Taweret as consort of Set even though the two deities had nothing in common. Taweret is closely associated with Hathor and called "Follower of Horus" both of which distance her from Set. She is further identified as the consort of Bes, the dwarf god of childbirth, sexuality, humor, and war. Like Bes, Taweret was featured on household items such as furniture, cosmetic cases, pots, spoons and in fertility images in the home.

**Tayet** (Tait) - Goddess of weaving who provided the clothes for the king. She was worshipped from the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) where she was represented as guarding the king's head, protecting him after death, gathering up his bones, and assuring him welcome by the other gods in the afterlife. She later became associated with embalming and was said to weave the cloth for the embalming tents and, later, the bandages used for wrapping the mummy which were known as "wrappings from the hands of Tayet" which associated her with Nephthys.

**Tefnut** - Goddess of moisture, sister of Shu, daughter of Atum (Ra) at the creation of the world. Shu and Tefnut were the first two gods Atum created either by mating with his shadow or by spitting. R. H. Wilkinson notes that her name represents the sound of spitting and she was often represented "by a pair of lips, spitting, in late texts" (183). She is goddess of the atmosphere of the lower world, the earth, just as Shu is god of the upper atmosphere above the earth. Tefnut is the mother of Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) who were born so human beings could have somewhere to live. She is most often depicted as a woman seated with a lion's head or a serpent with a lion's head.

**Tenenit** (Tenenet or Tjenenet) - Goddess of beer, brewing and childbirth. Her name comes from "tenemu" which means "beer". She was the consort of the god Montu and associated with Meskhenet as a goddess of royal births. She is the patron goddess of brewers.

**Tetrads** - Representations of completeness corresponding sometimes to the four cardinal points of the compass and best represented by the Four Sons of Horus. Balance was an important concept to the ancient Egyptians and the numbers two, four, and eight figure significantly in representations of the deities (as do three, six, and nine). Every male god has a female counterpart or a feminine aspect, the four goddesses Isis, Neith, Nephthys, and Serket watch over the Four Sons of Horus, and the Ogdoad was the grouping of the eight gods of creative substances.

**Thoth** - God of writing and wisdom, truth and integrity, one of the most important deities in the Egyptian pantheon worshipped from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) on to the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last to rule Egypt. He was probably originally a lunar god, son of Atum (Ra) but later texts represent him as the son of Horus. Thoth is depicted in some texts as a baboon but mostly as a man with the head of an ibis

holding a writing implement. He is credited with inventing writing and was the record-keeper of the gods. He was known as "Lord of Time" and "Reckoner of Years" because he marked the passage of time and, through the powerful magic of his divine knowledge of words, gave the king a long reign so he could maintain order on earth. He was the patron god of libraries and of scribes. In every story told of him, Thoth is the divine friend and benefactor of humanity who gave people understanding through the gift of the written word. He appears in one story as gambling for the five days required for Nut to give birth to the First Five Gods and in others as mediating between the gods and delivering messages. In the afterlife he stands with Osiris and keeps records in the Hall of Truth at the ritual of the Weighing of the Heart. His consort was Seshat, his daughter or his wife, who was his female counterpart and also patron deity of libraries and books.

**Tjenenyet** - A protective goddess from the 12th Dynasty (1991-1802 BCE) who was most likely worshipped earlier. She was consort of the god Montu and was primarily worshipped at Hermonthis (Armant) near Thebes.

**Tree Goddesses** - A number of well-known Egyptian goddesses were associated with trees, most notably Isis, Hathor, and Nut. Male gods were sometimes linked to a certain tree but it seems only in specific myths or imagery. Hathor was famously associated with the sycamore tree and known as "Lady of the Sycamore" but Isis was also linked to this tree. The practice of burying a body in a wooden casket was thought to be a return of the deceased to the womb of the Mother Goddess.

**Triads** - Important groupings of three deities, usually a father-god, mother-god, and child-god, the two best known being the Theban Triad of Amun, Mut, and Khons and the Abydos Triad of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. There are examples of other triads, however, which did not follow this pattern such as the Amun-Ra-Ptah Triad where all three gods represented the same celestial power (the sun). Triads are also seen in depictions of the afterlife where ram, lion, and jackal-headed gods are grouped together.

**Tutu** - A protective god known as "He Who Keeps Enemies at a Distance", worshipped during the latter part of Egypt's history. He warded off demons and black magic and was depicted as a striding lion with the head of a man, large wings, and a snake for a tail.

U

**Uat-Ur** - The personification of the Mediterranean Sea. See Wadj-Wer.

**Uajyt** (Wadjet or Uto) - Associated with Nekhbet, a protective goddess of Lower Egypt. She is depicted as a serpent with a woman's head. She is an aspect of Wadjet, sister of Nekhbet, in later images from Lower Egypt.

**Unut** (Wenet or Wenut) - A protective goddess worshipped at Hermopolis and known as "The Swift One". She was depicted as a woman with a rabbit's head or a serpent with a rabbit's head and is often referred to as "the rabbit goddess". She was associated with the

god Wenenu, depicted as a man with a rabbit's head, who was an aspect of Osiris or sometimes Ra. She is known primarily from amulets showing her image.

W

**Wadjet** - A great protective goddess and patroness of Lower Egypt, one of the oldest deities in the Egyptian pantheon, represented as the rearing cobra which became the king's insignia (the uraeus). She was also referred to as Uajyt in her aggressive form and was the counter-balance to the more motherly Nekhbet, her sister. Wadjet was worshipped as an important goddess in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) and by the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) was the supreme deity of Lower Egypt represented frequently with Nekhbet who symbolized Upper Egypt. She was the daughter of Ra and one of the goddesses featured in stories about the Eye of Ra. At the dawn of creation she was sent forth by Ra as his eye to find Shu and Tefnut when they had gone off to create the world. She planted the first papyrus plants, laid out the papyrus fields in the swamps of the Nile Delta, and helped Isis raise Horus there when they were hiding from Set. Among her titles is Weret-Hekau, meaning "Great of Magic" and she was regularly invoked for protection against demons, bad luck, or ghosts.

**Wadj-Wer** (Uat-Ur) - The personification of the Mediterranean Sea whose name means "The Great Green". Recent scholarship has changed the traditional view of this god and he is now believed to have personified the lakes, swamps, and lagoons of the Delta region near to the Mediterranean. Wilkinson notes inscriptions which reference "crossing the great green" by foot which would indicate a land-crossing through the Delta region instead of the sea. He was worshipped as early as the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) and continues to be referenced through the rest of Egypt's history, especially through protective amulets and tomb inscriptions.

**Waset** (Wosret) - A protective goddess of the city of Thebes whose name means "The Powerful Female One". She was the personification of the city which was also known as 'Waset'. She was originally an aspect of Hathor but emerged with her own distinct character and iconography by the time of the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040-1782 BCE). She is depicted as a woman holding the Was sceptre and ankh and a staff adorned with ribbons but is also shown with a bow and arrows and an axe representing the military might of Thebes.

**Weneg** - A protective god first referenced in the Old Kingdom period (c. 2613-2181 BCE) who held up the sky and maintained order between the heavens and the earth. He is closely associated with ma'at the concept and Ma'at the goddess who personified harmony in that he served as a just mediator between the gods in their disputes.

**Wenenu** - A protective god, aspect of Osiris or sometimes Ra, consort of Unut. He is depicted as a rabbit-headed man.

**Wepset** - A protective goddess whose name means "She Who Burns" who destroys the enemies of Osiris. She is usually represented as a serpent but later as a woman wearing

the uraeus with horns and the sun disk overhead. She features in stories concerning the Eye of Ra and is one of the personifications of the Distant Goddess motif where the Eye of Ra departs from the god and is returned, or returns itself, bringing transformation.

**Wepwawet** (Wepiu or Wepuaut) - One of the most ancient gods of Egypt and the oldest depiction of a jackal god, pre-dating Anubis, with whom he is often confused. His name means "Opener of the Ways" and this has been interpreted as opening the way for king in battle, opening the way to the afterlife, and opening the way at one's birth. He is depicted on the Narmer Palette (c. 3150 BCE) and associated with Wadjet. He eventually became closely associated with Horus and, as Wepwawet-Ra, with the sun god Ra. He is depicted as a jackal, sometimes wearing a scarf with a falcon before him.

**Werethekau** (Weret-Hekau) - An important protective goddess or, more often, an epithet applied to other female deities such as Isis. The name means "Great of Magic" and is associated with the uraeus and the crown of Lower Egypt. Wadjet is known as Weret-Hekau, as is Isis, but the name seems to have also designated a specific goddess of protection depicted as a rearing serpent although this could simply be Wadjet in her aggressive form.

Y

**Yah** - See Iah.

**Yam** - The Phoenician god of the sea who battled the Lord Baal for control of the world. He entered the Egyptian pantheon through trade and made his way into Egyptian mythology through stories of his battles with Set. He was the personification of the raging sea and greatly feared. No temples were ever raised to him but he is referenced in some manuscripts which indicate he was a concern to seafarers who may have worn amulets with his image for protection.

Z

**Zenenet** - Another name for Isis in the city of Hermonthis (modern-day Armant) near Thebes.

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This Article has been reviewed for accuracy, reliability and adherence to academic standards prior to publication.

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