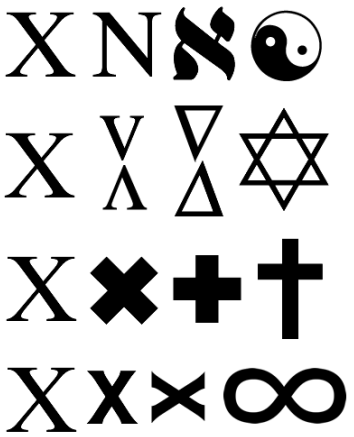
The Mystery Religions of the Ancients

http://www.GnosticStudies.org/Mysteries

Part 2 – Egyptian Mysteries

Ancient Egyptian Religion: Its Mysteries, Philosophy and Symbolism

- The Two-fold Division of the Mysteries
- An Account of the Elementary Ordeals in Egypt
- The Egyptian Mysteries and their Studies
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- The Teachings of Hermes and the "X" or 'Chain of Gold' (The Condensation and Purification of the Sacred Fire)

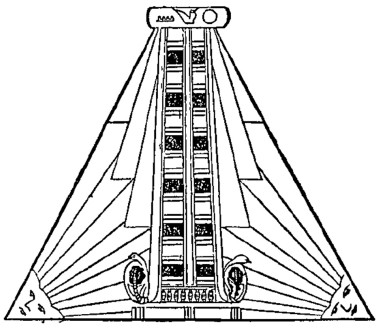


Symbols for the intersection of two opposing directions

Some Symbols from their Mysteries

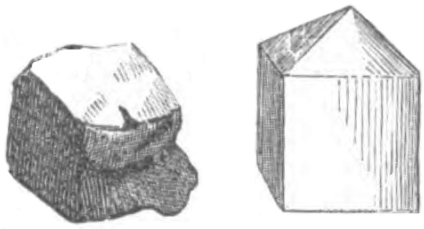


The "Ankh", Egpytian Tau Cross, or *Crux Ansata* of the Egyptian Mysteries



Apron of the Egyptian Mysteries





The "Brute" Stone (left) and the Cubic Stone (right)

The Legend of the Death of Osiris

Osiris having become king of Egypt, applied himself to civilizing his countrymen by *turning them from their former indigent and barbarous course of life.* He taught them how to cultivate and improve the fruits of the earth, and he gave them a body of laws whereby to regulate their conduct, and instructed them in the reverence and worship which they were to pay to the gods. With the same good disposition he afterwards traveled over the rest of the world, inducing the people everywhere to submit to his discipline, not compelling them by force of arms, but persuading them to yield to the strength of his reasons, which were conveyed to them in the most agreeable manner, in hymns and songs, accompanied with instruments of *music.*

While Osiris was away from his country, his evil brother Set (or Typhon) plotted against the Sun God to destroy him. Gathering seventy-two persons as fellow conspirators, he attained his nefarious end in a most subtle manner. He had a wonderful ornamented box made just the size of the body of Osiris. This he brought into a banquet hall where the gods and goddesses were feasting together.

All admired the beautiful chest, and Typhon promised to give it to the one whose body fitted it most perfectly. One after another lay down in the box, but in disappointment rose again, until at last Osiris also tried. The moment he was in the chest: Typhon and his accomplices nailed the cover down and sealed the cracks with molten *lead*. They then cast the box into the Nile, down which it floated to the sea.

Now, it so happened that some children had seen what Typhon's accomplices had done with the body, and they accordingly told Isis by what mouth of the Nile it had been conveyed to the *sea*. At length Isis discovered that the chest had floated to the coast of Byblos. There it had lodged in the branches of a *tree*, which in a short time miraculously grew up around the box. This so amazed the king of that country that he ordered the tree to be cut down and a pillar made from its trunk to support the roof of his palace.

These were made known to Isis by a supernatural voice, so she went to Byblos, and sat down silently to weep by the side of a fountain, when she was accosted by the damsels of the queen, who happened to arrive at the same place. On this occasion, it is related that the goddess suddenly diffused from her person a miraculous odor, of wonderful fragrance, all around her. The queen heard of this supernatural phenomenon and sent for her, and then appointed her to be a nurse to one of the king's children. Isis fed the infant by giving it her finger to suck, instead of her breast; *she likewise put him every night into the fire, to consume his mortal part*. At the same time she transformed herself into a swallow, and hovered round the pillar, and lamented her sad fate.

It happened that some circumstance excited a suspicion in the queen respecting the conduct of the nurse. So she secretly observed Isis, and, upon seeing the infant surrounded by flame, was seized with terror, cried out, and thus deprived the child of immortality. Being discovered, the goddess then requested that the pillar which supported the roof of the palace be given to her. She took it down, and, cutting it open with care, took out the enclosed sarcophagus of Osiris... She returned to Egypt and brought the body of her husband with her. Some time after her arrival, she went to visit her son Horus the Elder (who was at Boutos) and deposited the chest in a remote place; but Typhon, hunting by moonlight, happened to meet with it, and recognizing the corpse, divided it into *fourteen pieces*, which he scattered about the *earth*.

Isis, in despair, began gathering up the severed remains of her husband, but found only *thirteen pieces*. The fourteenth part (the phallus) she reproduced in *gold*, since the original had fallen into the river Nile and had been swallowed by a *fish*. Isis then took the form of a bird and fanned the body of Osiris with her feathers, and produced *air*, and that at length she caused the inert members of Osiris to move, and drew from him *his essence*, wherefrom she produced her child. Isis brought forth from her union with Osiris, after his death, Harpocrates (this name is Heru-pa-khart in Egyptian and means 'Horus the Younger').

After these things Osiris returned from the other world, and appeared to his son Horus, and encouraged him to fight, and at the same time instructed him in the exercise of arms (or how to use weapons). He then asked his son what he thought was the most glorious action a man could perform, to which Horus replied, "*To avenge* the injuries offered to his father and mother".

The Science of the Sacred Fire and the 'Chain of Gold'

According to *Hermes* and his disciples, the universal spirit originated from the center of the highest heaven. This universal spirit is an inexhaustible source of light and fire. It flows continuously and without interruption, passing through all the celestial spheres and is gradually found condensed in the earth.

In our solar system, this universal spirit emanates from the Sun (the *central fire*). On our planet, the *condensed* fire becomes air, air becomes water, and water contains earth. In order to elevate or return the universal spirit to its source, this same earth is purified and (in the same style) converts itself into water, then the sublimated water escapes as air, and the exalted air disseminates itself into *fire*.

Hermes represented the science as the *sacred fire* that his disciples consumed and that they could not put out *under penalty of death*. This is the bright *chain of gold* which, according to the ancient allegory, binds all bodies to the earth. This is ordinarily represented by the sign of an **X**: the **Λ** expresses the effluvium[1] of the igneous atoms from heaven to earth, and the **V** depicted their return.

[1] The Latin word 'effluvium', means "An unpleasant or harmful odor, secretion, or discharge".