

Tale From Egypt's Past

Story of Nut, Goddess of the Sky

**N**UT was the personification of the heavens and the sky, and of the region wherein the clouds formed, and in fact of every portion of the region in which the sun rose, and travelled from east to west. She was represented as a woman bending over the earth touching the western and eastern horizons with her hands and feet. In this attitude her legs and arms represent the four pillars on which the sky was supposed to rest and work the position of the cardinal points. Her body is studded with stars, since she represents the sky.



Nut : Personification of the heaven.

Geb, her husband, and raised herself from the earth in the form of a cow. She bore Re with his boat, while Shu her father dutifully supported her belly with the assistance of eight small deities two for each leg. In the Coffin Texts (Spell 76) Shu says "I lifted up my daughter Nut from upon myself, so that I might give her to my father Atum in his

realm, and I have set Geb under my feet".

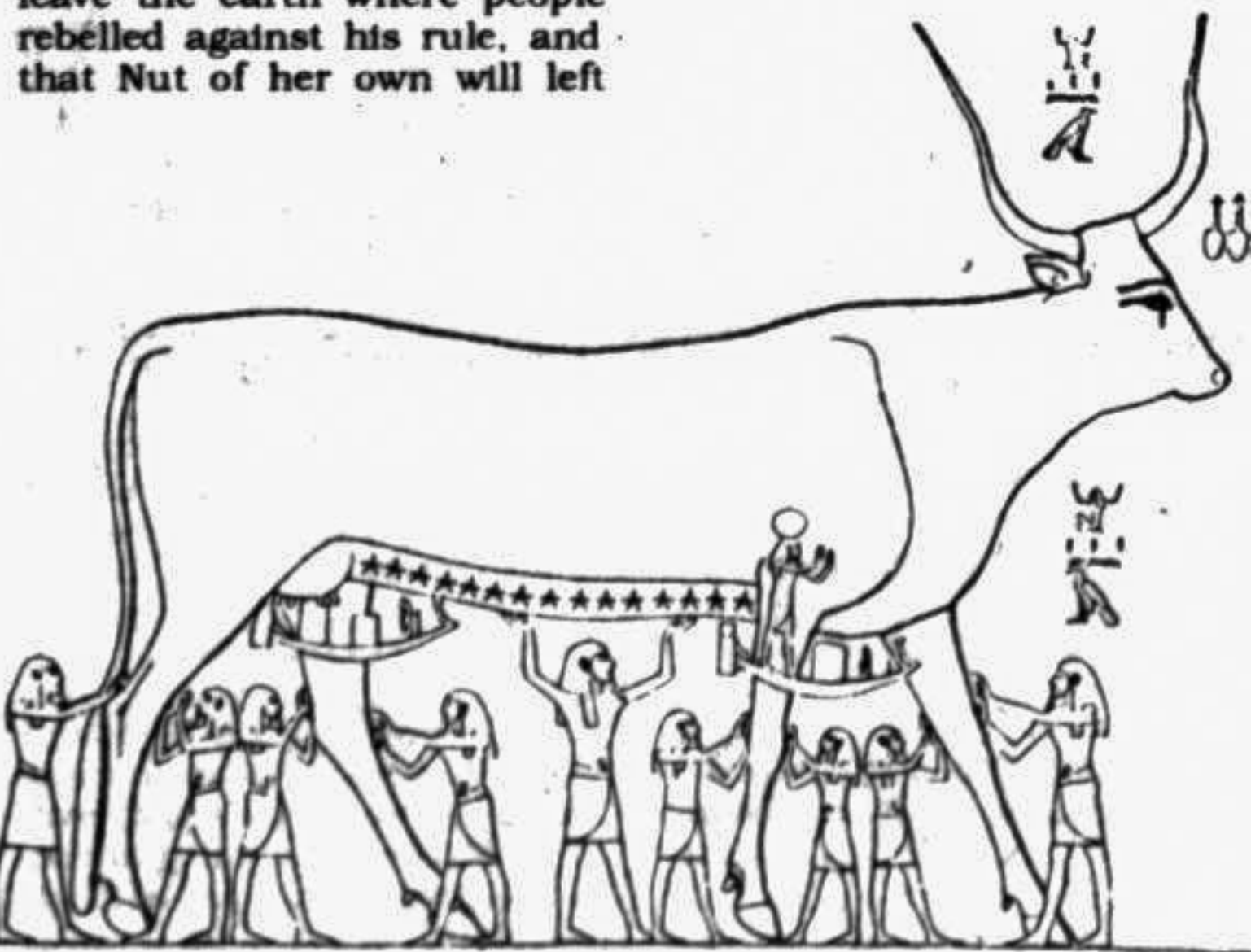
Nut was called sometimes "the female pig who eats her piglet" and was variously represented as a suckling sow.

As a goddess of resurrection Nut played an important role in funerary beliefs.

In the Coffin Texts (Spell 850) it was said to the deceased "Your Mother comes, see, Nut has come so that she may join your bones together, up your sinews, wake your members firm, take away your corruption and take hold of your hand, so that you may live in your name of Living One".

The sarcophagus inner lid and the ceiling of the tomb chamber were decorated with stars or an image of the sky goddess. "Words spoken by Nut to the deceased, I am your mother, I am Nut, and I have come so that I may enfold and protect you from all evil things" (from Coffin Texts, Spell 792). The coffin itself was the heavens, i.e. Nut from which the deceased awoke to new life.

When she is pictured as a woman, Nut sometimes wears a rounded vase on her head, this being the hieroglyph of her name. The Greeks identified her with Rhea, their goddess of the sky.



Nut : The suckling cow.

Amenhotep, Son of Hapu

Amenhotep Son of Hapu was a viceroy of king Amenophis III (1381-1353 BC XVIIIth Dynasty). He achieved his position in this world through his personal intellectual and moral qualities.

He began his career on many official and religious occasions, as well on military recruiting but the position he really wanted and swiftly obtained was that of royal chief of works. Amenhotep became active as an architect and achieved the rank of "the King's chief architect". He was remembered by the Thebans for the superb edifices he had built. Among these, one of the most imposing was the funerary temple of Amenophis III, of which today there remain only the two statues that embellished the facade (looked at Memnon).

No man of his time better understood the mysterious science of the stars. From his inscriptions we can deduce that he also was a scribe and achieved the rank of "real first scribe of the king" a rank which we can describe as "minister of culture" for education, science, and cult.

Dedication was a favour seldom bestowed in Egypt. There are, however, a few examples. In the first place some kings became the object of worship by later generations. Also some persons for sentimental reasons were deified. Amenhotep son of Hapu was treated in a similar way. He became a god of healing in later times.

He provided the people with a kind of simple unadorned divinity, and he assured himself of a memory that lasted for centuries.

From the time of King Ptolemy I the Egyptians referred to Amenhotep for the first time as "the great god". The cult had come to be supported by a large number of followers. One of the great hopes of the Egyptians was to be united with Amenhotep in the after life.

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Enriching Man's Life And Making Him Happy

(From previous page) Egyptian heritage in sculpture, weaving printing on cloth, pottery, glass, jewellery and needle work. The young artist had to assimilate tradition until he became utterly cognizant of its intrinsic values then create and add values of his own. The experience was immensely successful. The Art and Life Group held an exhibition in Paris in 1979. It was visited by critic Renée Wieg, who wrote about the exhibitions in words that would have ignited the fire of pride in any artist.

Many Egyptian artists immersed in looking for styles, forgot about values. They brought in Western styles, which have meaning and thus value to the West alone. Each artist drew on his individuality to try to make these Western styles expressive of himself, but we Egyptians have different hopes and values, with which the Western styles can never integrate. Every meaning, every value, has its own style proper. Some artists have, nevertheless bestowed in Western styles some of their own private Egyptian-Oriental traits out of their proper context.

Egypt : Ties That Bind

By Ahmad Abdel Aziz

**W**hilst much has been written about Egypt, as a land speeded in ancient history with its perennial crowds of international visitors, little has, as yet, been said of the love of the land of Egypt.

Egypt, has been always an object of close and careful study since the days of Herodotus. Researchers, archaeologists and scientists of every description have delved into Egypt's culture & history in an effort to discover the secret of its creativity — the source of science, art, architecture, economics and politics that are the miracles of ancient Egypt.

All visitors of Egypt, regardless of their nationality, perceive a warmth and affection for the land, a feeling that arise naturally when the visitor immerses himself in sources directly linked to man's most creative moments. Hence an Egyptian proverb was generated stating: "whom who drinks from the Nile, must come back to its land".

If such sympathy is stirred in the hearts of the non-Egyptians, then that of their Egyptian is incalculably more profound — a clear manifestation of the strong ties that bind the Egyptian to his country.

This love of country, possessed by every Egyptian as if by birth right, is not a modern sentiment generated by nationalism, but one that is more fundamental and venerable.

To illustrate this deep rooted love of the Egyptian to his country, back in the roots of history, a story has been written in the 12th dynasty, 2000 B.C.: "The story of Sanuhi". This oldest piece of fiction in world literature was taught in ancient schools to deepen the love of the land as well as for its faithfulness to life. In modern times, in recognition of its importance in world literature and for its intrinsic literary qualities, this story has frequently been translated.

Sanuhi was an army leader during the era of king Simhotob. Due to his great success in all military missions, a sick feeling of jealousy spread among some of his colleagues. They seized the incident of the king's death to arrange an accomplice to accuse Sanuhi of treason. As the plan was successful, the

new king Senosert gave orders to kill him. Out of fear, Sanuhi escaped out of the land of Egypt, where he found refuge beside the king of a foreign land. In spite of the luxurious life he had led abroad, Sanuhi always feared to die in a foreign land where his words were:

"O mighty God that destined me to become estranged. Be merciful and return me to my country, my heart yearns for the land where I once lived, I want nothing else than to be buried in the land where I was born...".

His wishes, his words and his prayers reached the Egyptian king. He ordered his messenger to take Sanuhi back to the king palace. When he reached the palace, he expressed his happiness as follows:

"When reached, there I stopped to touch the earth with my forehead."

After clarification of the

incident, the king pardoned Sanuhi and compensated him until the day of his departure to the city of death.

This story is merely to emphasize the deep emotional attachment the ancient Egyptian felt for his country. Sanuhi is truly representative of the Egyptian person in his love for Egypt. He expresses the depth of feeling of a returning emigrant for his country.

The Egyptian today, like his ancestors, still prefers his own homeland to anywhere else in the world. This is the place Egypt has always occupied in the hearts of its people from the earliest times, and it is one that will never change therefore it is said in Egypt that "if I was not an Egyptian, I would have wished to be an Egyptian".

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Isis : Goddess.



The Giants : Ayyad in oil.

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