

EGYPTIAN ORIGIN OF THE WORD "CHRIST."

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I CAN understand that the ordinary student should go to Sanskrit and to the slopes of the Himalayas for the origin of the word "Christ." I cannot understand why the learned Dr. Carus goes to such sources. My reference is to his article in the February number.

Our dear simple old Herodotus, who would have made a very second-rate newspaper reporter, but on whom we must lean for much that we get from no other, tells us that the Greeks derived the names of nearly all their deities from Egypt. It could scarcely be otherwise. No people before or since have searched after God through so many labyrinths; none have left so many and such substantial memorials of their religious devotion. That they symbolized Deity and his accessories in every conceivable way, indeed in ways which are far beyond our modern conceptions or appreciation, excited the contempt of Cambyses and invoked the satires of Juvenal; but to the liberal and philosophic intellect, which recognizes religion in its every manifestation as a cry from the depths, as gropings of the finite for the Infinite, there can be no contempt and no satire; it is only a question of crude ideals and refined ideals.

But I did not set out to apologize for the Egyptian religion. Those who have seen even the Seba-u or "propylons" of their magnificent temples, or who reflect that the Sphinx is as ancient as the period usually assigned to Adam and Eve, should know that such religious splendor in so many ages must have cast its light wherever that "land of the shadowy wings sent her ambassadors by the sea."

I dare to follow and supplement Herodotus. Let me suggest that the Egyptian verb Ṭa or Da, "to give," is the The-os of the Greek and the De-us of the Latin. Others have correctly urged that the Latin word Natura, our word Nature, is the Egyptian word Neter, rendered "God," "Divine." I suggest that Ze-us is from the symbol "eye" of the Sun of Summer called Uza-t. Even Jupiter may be E-Gypt-Ur or "great Egypt," a name of the adored Nile.

I feel safe in asserting that A-Phrodite is Pha-Raa-Da-t, "gift-of-the-Sun," or Pha-Raa-Tut, "vestal-of-the-Sun," with A or E prosthetic; and long ago her probable shrine at Bethlehem was called E-Phera-ath-ah, for Naomi asks to be called Mar, and Mar-y in Egyptian means "beloved." Paradise, the Hebrew Paredes or "orchard," I suggest to be the Egyptian Pa-Rud or "the growing"; hence the town Arad was on the verge of the desert. The Hebrew Dad or "David" seems to be Osiris-Dadd-u or Ṭaṭṭ-u; hence "City of David" or Kir-Dad bore the same name as Daddu or "Mendes"; and so Kar Thad-ah or "Carthage" is "City of Diḏ-o" or Thad-ah; which diversity arises from there being no letter D in Egyptian save the Ṭ or Ṭh. I must also advance the opinion that Hades is a form of Ho Dua or "the Dua-t" or Ṭua-t, a frequent name in Egyptian for the Unseen World; and I call attention to Ho-Du or "India" (Esth. i. 1) into which Hadas-ah or Eseter made her descent at the order of Marduk to rescue the beloved Jehudah; there meeting the giant Haman, the I-Gig-i or "archangel," the Latin Gig-as, son of Ha-Medath or "the tall," and whose roof covered a gallows fifty feet high, and who as A-Gag had to be hewn in pieces at one time in order to be handled; but the Ezekiel begins the story of Haman-Gog or Og, and there is much of it; the name originating probably from the Egyptian word Kek or Geg, "night," "dark."*

But more important to the present purpose is the Latin name Mercury, the Greek Herm-es, who as ḥHera of Tyre built the temple without noise of axe or hammer. In Egypt he was Taḥhut, the Greek "Thoth," and in Hebrew Taḥhut means "under," "beneath." He was in Egypt also called Ap Reḥ-ui or "Judge of the Combatants," Horus and Set, and Ab Rech (Gen. xli. 43) may be identical with Joseph. "Thoth" was lord of Maa, or "truth," and of Maa ḥHeru or "true words," and from Maa ḥHeru we perhaps have "Mer-Cur-y," who was messenger or herald of the gods. Thoth was lord of speech. His oracle at Delphi was associated with his name Pa-Iḥib or "the Ib-is," hence Ph-Oeb-os or Phœbus.

Now Dr. Carus advances the very startling and astute proposition that when the writers of the Septuagint rendered Meshiaḥ by Christos they did not mean a translation of the former word, but an identification of the person meant by that title with some similar concept. His position is grounded on arguments which seem to me hard to gainsay.

* In Chaldean mythism or folk-lore the Iḡig-i were heavenly archangels, and the Anunak-i were the earthly, but the Aanak-im at least were men of Med-ath (Num. xiii. 32) to Bene Ḥsraēl, and Haman was a son.

At the period when the Septuagint was prepared, say B. C. 100, all the schools of speculative thought around the Mediterranean were discussing the Logos. Under its personality as Ta^hut the Egyptians had evidently ended such metaphysics long before Cadmus is supposed to have come into Greece. They invariably placed after the name of the deceased on the funeral papyri the words Maa ^kHer-u. These papyri contained one or more chapters of books believed to have been written by Ta^hut, and which were to guide and shield the soul in its journey through the Shades till it reached Aalu. Without these ^kHeru the soul would be lost. In classic mythology we often find Hermes or Mercury escorting the soul, while in Egypt the word of Ta^hut not only shielded the dead, but had created the world. He was the personified Logos or "Word"; the ^kHeru or "voice" that consecrated the living and the dead, and gave them the true ^kHeru.

It is not necessary to use the word Meshia^h in the strict sense of "anointed" any more than in its original sense of "sweeping-over." Saul and Cyrus are each called Meshia^h, but it is rather in the sense of a representative, messenger, intermediary, through or by whom Jehoah would speak or act. This was the function of "Thoth" the divine Se^khai, and of Hermes and Mercurius. Indeed, as "writer" or Se^kh, we may have the word Me-Sia^h, as the syllable Me or Ma is often in Hebrew merely enunciative, adding nought apparent to the sense, and as the Egyptian "scribe" or Se^kh he would connect with the Greek Log-os. Nay, more: Se^kh was also Egyptian for "tongue," which is yet more to the point; and we have the fiery tongues at Pentecost which taught the disciples new languages; though this teacher seems to have been what the Hebrew calls the holy Rua^h, which at the creation "rubbed" or "softened" a Peth or "hole" in the face of the waters; and perhaps the Re^kh or "counsellor" of the Egyptian, for Ma-Ra^h, "rubbed," "softened," means also "to persuade," and in Arabic it means "to anoint" with oil, so that I suspect not only its connection with the Egyptian word but also with Me-Shia^h, which would thus be much the same as Rua^h or "spirit," "breath," "wind."

It must be allowed that the Egyptian word Me^hu or "crowned" may give us the Hebrew word Meshia^h or "anointed," but for reasons here stated I question if the idea of "crowned" entered into the name Christos of the Septuagint. But I must confess that the Egyptian word She^khaa presents more difficulties, as it means "crowned."

The Egyptian letter ^kH is a highly aspirated H, and is usually

transcribed by the Greeks as X, and vice versa. The value of the Greek X in English is usually Ch. The ^kHeru of the Egyptian would thus be Cheru, or Ch-R. These latter two letters form the famous XP cryptogram of the early Christians. That this referred to Christ is generally accepted, but perhaps as the "Word" that the Greek John Gospel said was made flesh, and which was in the beginning, and was God. A Greek or Jew, writing at Alexandria when the Septuagint was prepared, and while the Log-os was subject to many ramifications of thought, would have a different view of the Mesia^{ch} from the Galilean of a century or two later. The Galilean would understand from rhapsodists, like Joel and Malachi, that the great day of Jehoah was to be preceded by some warning messenger, such as the fiery charioteer Elijah, the ti-Shib-i or "returner," but that Jehoah himself (Juaa in Egyptian means the "Coming-One") would in person re-establish his kingdom. On the contrary, the scholar at Alexandria, with few illusions, and environed by the mystical and metaphysical ideas of Egypt and Greece, would construe Mesia^{ch} as some agent or agency emanating from the Divine Order or Supreme Intelligence, and working as noiselessly in nature as did ^eHeram or Herm-es at building the temple; and this is seen in the Greek Gospel of John, where Jesus is called the Logos, is made to speak of the Paraklete or "Comforter," and to say (xvii. 17) of God "thy word is truth," in the sense of Maa ^kHeru, since it was to sanctify them. The Jewish concept was practical, and grew out of a condition of oppression which called for a deliverer, and it is curious that the man who began the revolt which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus was Me-Na^{ch}em or "Comforter." The Greek or Egyptian idea was psychologic or phrenic, and Paraklete to them must have represented the inward monitor which we call by the curious name "conscience," though personified as a divine message and messenger or adviser, such as Ta^hut was to the gods and Athene to Ulysses.

It was this warning "voice" or ^kHeru, which as Cheru we may have as Christos, the substitute for Messia^{ch} in the Septuagint; an Egyptian word for Log-os. Dr. Carus may thus have firm foundation for his opinion if he would only seek it in the nearest field, though I am aware that the word in proximate forms has relative meanings in several languages. It was only in Egyptian eschatology, however, that we find the ^kHeru or "words" of Ta^hut given as pass-words to the soul in the realms of the dead.