

A Cock's Cult in Roman Egypt

Marwa Abd el-Maguid el-Kady
Faculty of Tourism and Hotels,
Alexandria University.

Abstract

The cock played a major role in many ancient religious beliefs. Nevertheless, it was not established as an Egyptian cult until the Roman period, when it played a great role in the Egyptian mythology and outspread into other religions and myths outside Egypt. Despite the great impact of this cult on religion, magic, and art in Roman Egypt; it has not been sufficiently studied by researchers; particularly in dealing with the Egyptian roots of this cult and its effect on the previously mentioned fields. The present research therefore focuses on two main points: the first is concerned with the major role which the cock played in the Egyptian mythology in the Roman period, to comprehend the reasons beyond using this fowl as a symbol of certain Egyptian deities. The second point deals with the cult of the Egyptian cock-headed god Abrasax that appeared in the Roman period to understand his functions, and his connection with magic and different Egyptian deities.

The male red Jungle fowl cock (*Gallus gallus*) is characterized by a prominent comb, a hackle on the neck, elongated tail-feathers drooping in a sickle-shaped curve⁽¹⁾. Due to the fact that the cock's crow is the first to be heard early in the morning, it was connected with the solar cult in ancient mythologies⁽²⁾. Its crow was considered to have warded off evil spirits that roamed free at night and bound during the day. Being related to the beginning of a new day and announcing the rise of the sun, it became also a symbol of resurrection⁽³⁾. This sort of fowls is of purely Asiatic origins⁽⁴⁾. Therefore, depictions of cocks are generally rare in early Egyptian art, as it was one of the birds that were introduced late into Egypt by way of Mesopotamia via trading⁽⁵⁾. The earliest certainly known representations of a red jungle fowl cock are mostly dated to the New Kingdom⁽⁶⁾. Among those is a fragment of an ostrakon excavated at the Valley of the Kings⁽⁷⁾. The fragment is depicted in black linear with a red jungle fowl cock⁽⁸⁾ facing right⁽⁹⁾, now at the British Museum (EA 68539) (fig.1). The ostrakon is dated from the mid-eighteenth to twentieth dynasty⁽¹⁰⁾. The way the cock is depicted in a strutting attitude of domestic fowl, indicates that domestication was already known in Egypt at that time⁽¹¹⁾. In addition, a very interesting representation of a cock from the same period is figured on a silver bowl found at Tell Basta dated to the late nineteenth/early twentieth dynasty at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, (Acc. No.07.228.223). The cock is represented next to a palm tree⁽¹²⁾ along with two hens⁽¹³⁾. Moreover, there is a fragment of a lintel from the tomb of Hapiu from the thirtieth dynasty depicted with a seated man playing a harp before the deceased, while a cock is shown between them facing the tomb's owner. This might be another indication that the cock was domesticated in ancient Egypt during the late period⁽¹⁴⁾. In the tomb of Petosiris at tuna el-Gabal,-whose date is still a debate⁽¹⁵⁾ - there are two representations of a cock among the offerings carried by the tomb bearers to the deceased (fig.2). However, the earliest certainly known representation of a cock from the Ptolemaic period is depicted on a papyrus sheet that is lined with squares to be used as a standard sketch for future depictions of cocks⁽¹⁶⁾. Among the excavations of Lord Carnavon at west Thebes during the years 1912-3, a number of red terra-cotta objects were found. There are made in forms of cocks and camels, certainly used as children's toys from the Ptolemaic period, the same period to which the vaulted graves occupying the upper stratum of the site (where the potteries were found) are dated⁽¹⁷⁾. Another example of terra cotta cocks used as toys for children is found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Acc. No. 17.194.2456), also dated from the Ptolemaic period⁽¹⁸⁾ (fig.3). The use of terracotta cocks as toys continued to be used as toys during the Roman period as

well. A good example of those from the Roman time can be seen at the Louvre Museum in Paris⁽¹⁹⁾. In the Roman period and particularly in the fourth century, rose a cock's cult in Alexandria that became widespread in all Egypt under the name of Abraxas Ἀβράξας, or Abrasax Ἀβράσαξ. It is a name given to the Supreme God of Heaven and Lord of the Supernatural World that was founded by Basilides, who devised an Egyptian sect of Christian Gnostics⁽²⁰⁾ that flourished greatly under Trajan and Hadrian (end of first-beginning of second centuries AD). Basilides was an Egyptian from Alexandria who embraced Christianity and called himself a 'disciple of Apostle Matthew'. He combined the tenets of Christianity and the Gnostic philosophy, in addition to the Egyptian and Jewish notations⁽²¹⁾. However, it might be a mistake to say that this god (Abraxas/Abrasax) was first created by Basilides, as the name might have been invented earlier, despite the lack of material basis⁽²²⁾. It is possible that the word had been used by the ancient Egyptians and appropriated to the Lord of Heavens, and hence Basilides retained it from the religion of his own country⁽²³⁾. The numerical values of the Greek letters composing this name amount to 365 (ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ) (Α=1, Β=2, Ρ=100, Α=1, Σ=200, Α=1, Ξ=60)⁽²⁴⁾, which symbolizes the days of the Egyptian year⁽²⁵⁾, or in other words the number of days of the annual sun course⁽²⁶⁾, and therefore he was regarded as the god of the year and also the god of time⁽²⁷⁾. The origin of the word 'Abraxas' is a debate. According to Bellerman, it is derived from the Egyptian Coptic language⁽²⁸⁾. The last syllabus which the Greeks were obliged to convert into σαξ or ζαξ was used to express the Coptic Ξ, Σ or Ζ signifying 'word' and *abrax* meaning 'blessed, holy, and adorable', thus 'Abraxas' means 'adorable word'. Meanwhile, according to Beausbre, it could have been derived from the Greek ἄβρός which he renders 'magnificent'. Others find its meaning as 'Mystery of Trinity' or 'divinity of Christ', assuming that it is composed of the initial letters of Πατήρ (father), Υἱός (son), Πνεῦμα (spirit), Εἷς (one), Χριστός (Christ), Ἄνθρωπος (man), and Σωτήρ (savior)⁽²⁹⁾. Other opinions believe that this name might have been derived from the Hebrew *Ha-b' rakah* signifying 'blessing' or 'sacred name'⁽³⁰⁾. Abraxas or Abrasax has an *Anguipede* form⁽³¹⁾. He has a composite image representing the Supreme Being. He is represented by a human body wearing a cuirass, with a cock's head and terminated with serpent's legs instead of human ones⁽³²⁾ (fig.4). Such a god is denoted a cock's head making him god of the sun, while the serpent's legs make him god of the otherworld. Thus, he is given the character of a supreme and cosmic divinity⁽³³⁾. On the other hand, there is another interpretation made to the formation of this divinity. The head of the cock figures *phronesis* (intelligence), as the cock was the emblem of foresight and vigilance, while the two arms hold the

symbols of *sophia* (wisdom) represented by the shield, and *Dynamics* (strength) depicted as a whip. Meanwhile, the two serpents which spring from his body are interpreted as two inner senses; alternatively *Nous* (mind) and *Logos* (word). Thus, five symbols indicating the principal five emanations of the Supreme Being⁽³⁴⁾. A large number of amulets, known as 'Abraxas/Abrasax-gems' has been discovered in Egypt⁽³⁵⁾. Those were used as amulets or talismans hung around the neck⁽³⁶⁾ or mounted as rings, or carried about its owner⁽³⁷⁾ in his pocket or in a purse as a charm against diseases⁽³⁸⁾. Some of them are depicted with the image of Abrasax⁽³⁹⁾ god alone; others show him holding a shield, whip or other emblems of Gnostics origins. Some have Jewish words as well; like Adoni and Jehovah/Yahweh; others combine Egyptian, Persian and Greek symbols as well⁽⁴⁰⁾. The gems according to the depictions they bear are classified into seven categories as follows⁽⁴¹⁾:


- 1-With a cock's head.
- 2-With lion's head (expressing the heart of the sun) and the inscription of Mithras.
- 3-Serapis.
- 4-Sphinxes, apes, and other sacred animals.
- 5-Human figures with the names of Iao, Sabaoth, and Adoni (Jewish influence).
- 6-Inscriptions without figures.
- 7-Monstrous forms.

We are more concerned in this research with those of the first category that are represented by a cock's head. A good example of this type is a dark green gasper magical amulet found in Alexandria dated from the Roman period and now at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan (inv. 2.6054, Bonner no. 172). It is represented by a cock-headed snake-legged god (fig.4). He is wearing the Roman military costume and holding a whip. To his right are inscribed the magical names of the seven planets (Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn). In addition, there is an invocation of four angels Michael, Raphael, Gabriel and Ouriel to the left of his head as an indication of Jewish presence. On the shield itself, there are various variants of the Jewish name Yahweh. At the bottom of the gem is an illegible inscription functioning as a word of power to ward off evil⁽⁴²⁾. Of the same type, there is an ovoid red jasper gem dated from the fourth century AD., and now at the National Museum of Archaeology in Lisbon, Portugal (MNA E540) (fig.5). The piece is carved with Egyptian gods including Anubis seated on a stem, Akephalos⁽⁴³⁾ (The Headless One), Man, Harpocrates seated on a lotus flower, and Abraxas, all on one bark⁽⁴⁴⁾. They are arranged as follows: Anubis is the first figure on the left of the sacred bark, depicted as a jackal-headed god. Akephalos comes next to him. Harpocrates is then seated on a lotus flower emerging from the primeval waters holding a flail. Then, a man is rowing the sacred boat, perhaps referring to the owner of the gem, and finally the god Abrasax is represented as a cock-headed divinity with a human body ending with two serpents, wearing the Roman costume and holding his whip⁽⁴⁵⁾. In this manner, these gems combine Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Jewish religious traditions⁽⁴⁶⁾, often with rough engravings on both sides⁽⁴⁷⁾. In addition, Iao, Sabaoth, Adoni and Abraxas are all referred to in magical papyri⁽⁴⁸⁾ and engraved gems. They are inscribed in Greek, Demotic or Coptic to express mixtures of different religions, mostly Egyptian affected

by Hellenistic religious concepts⁽⁴⁹⁾. In many cases, the name of Abrasax ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ is engraved on the gems beside that of Iao, or Adoni, or Sabaoth as titles of the cock-headed deity⁽⁵⁰⁾. The divine cock also appears on rings as a protective motive. There is an example of a golden ring with a jasper gem at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, (Ac. No. 10.130.1425), dated to the second century AD. (fig.6). It is depicted with a bird that might be a cock of some magical device⁽⁵¹⁾. There is another ring found in Alexandria of the same type and now at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Antiquities Museum in Alexandria (BAAM serial 1035) (fig.7). It is a golden ring with a chalcedony precious stone represented with a cock. It is also dated to the Roman period, specifically the first century AD. It is represented with an open-mouthed cock, also figured as a magical craft to ward off evil⁽⁵²⁾. To understand the cock's cult in Roman Egypt, it is important to go through the details of this god and his functions. The first feature in this concern should deal with the nature of this fowl, the simple fact that the cockcrow announces the beginning of a new day. Due to this natural function of a cock, it was connected in ancient myths with the sun and its rise. The cock indicates the dawn and the eternal creation of the world every morning, when the sun god appears as a victor over his enemies. Being a solar symbol in the Egyptian tradition, it is highly emphasized by a bronze statuette found at Karnak which represents a cock surmounted by a solar disk⁽⁵³⁾ (fig.8), indicating that the cock was an embodiment of the rising sun and the solar cult in the Egyptian mind. The fact that the cock was connected in mythology with the sun can also be marked in the function of the cock-headed god as solar divinity. His name symbolizes the days of the Egyptian year⁽⁵⁴⁾, or the number of days of the annual sun course⁽⁵⁵⁾, and therefore he was regarded as the god of the year and god of time⁽⁵⁶⁾. Abrasax also had magical functions, as the word is often referred to in magical papyri as a kind of a formula to ward off evils⁽⁵⁷⁾, and thus he was regarded as a protector god. This function is well indicated by the great number of the amulet gems and rings (figs.5, 6, 7) that are depicted with the cock-headed god believing in his ability to protect their owners from all evils⁽⁵⁸⁾. In addition, the cock-headed god is usually depicted on gems holding a whip for this function, as being a supreme divinity over heaven and netherworld; he would protect from danger during life and after death⁽⁵⁹⁾. On the other hand, despite the fact that Abrasax, the cock-headed god was an Egyptian inventory, it is possible that he held some foreign influences as well. As the red jungle cock was a fowl of Asiatic origins, it was thus strongly found in Asiatic myths, particularly in ancient Iranian mythology⁽⁶⁰⁾, where it was regarded as a symbol of royalty and figured on the top of the king's scepters⁽⁶¹⁾. Moreover, it was connected with the cult of the Babylonian Nergal, god of the underworld⁽⁶²⁾. The latter is represented as a cock or with a cock's head as a sign of the sun⁽⁶³⁾. The name 'Nergal' itself is interpreted as 'returning light'. Thus the cock as a symbol was regarded as an allusive to the light, due to the fact of his daily crow welcoming of the sun at the appearing of the new day light every morning⁽⁶⁴⁾. In addition to Nergal, the cock was associated with the cult of Mithras⁽⁶⁵⁾ as a sun god⁽⁶⁶⁾. Particularly, the cock-headed god with the serpent's legs is found on the reverse of the Mithraic

amulets that have on the obverse the most common Mithraic representation, which is the bull-slaying scene⁽⁶⁷⁾. Mithras was at the same time the supreme power of being, the one who created the material world and had a demonic character as well in which light and darkness are united⁽⁶⁸⁾. The concept of a supreme cosmic deity and the mysteries of Mithras were appealing to the Egyptians⁽⁶⁹⁾. Therefore, this function as a supreme deity might be compared with that of the Egyptian Abrasax who was at the same time identical to the supreme divinity in the Old Testament Yahweh⁽⁷⁰⁾ or Iao⁽⁷¹⁾. Being closely connected with the cult of Mithras can be confirmed by the fact that the name of Abrasax appears with that of Mithras on some amulets⁽⁷²⁾. However, the notion of a divinity to be simultaneously a solar and a supreme deity is originally an Egyptian tradition applied to Re who held the two functions; a solar and a supreme god since the early Egyptian period⁽⁷³⁾. In the Greek world, the cock was regarded as a Persian import. The red jungle-fowl cock is known in lyric literature of ancient Greece as 'Persian bird' *Περσικός ὄρνις* or *Μηδος* 'Median'⁽⁷⁴⁾ which means that it was introduced into Greece by the Persians⁽⁷⁵⁾. Nevertheless, the cock was connected with Graeco-roman myths and gods. For the myths, there is the legend of *Ἀλεκτρυών* Alectryon⁽⁷⁶⁾, who is connected with the affair of Ares (Mars) and Aphrodite (Venus). He is a youth, a friend of Ares stationed by Ares during his interview with Aphrodite at the door to guard and warn him when the sun shines, as he was afraid that the sun would see him and tell Hephaestus, Aphrodite's husband. Having fallen a sleep, and did not warn his master of the rising sun⁽⁷⁷⁾, Hephaestus was informed about their affair and put them in his cage. When Ares was released, he changed Alectryon into a cock for his neglect of duty⁽⁷⁸⁾. Sometimes, the cock was also depicted as a sacred symbol of Ares (Mars) as an indication of his courage and vigilance⁽⁷⁹⁾. The cock was connected with many different Greek gods and goddesses, namely Apollo, Helios, Nyx, Asclepius, Athena (Minerva), Attis, Hermes, Priapus, and Zeus. In spring, it was connected with the myth of Persephone being a symbol of the renewal of life, and thus resurrection⁽⁸⁰⁾. It is obvious then that the cock was highly connected with the solar gods in the Graeco-roman mythology. Therefore, the cock was one of the sacred birds of Apollo, as he announced the rising of the sun⁽⁸¹⁾, and as an emblem of Apollo as a sign of coming of light and day⁽⁸²⁾. Apollo is figured in some statues holding a cock as an indication of the early morning⁽⁸³⁾. In addition, the cock was among the sacred sacrifices offered to Helios, and one of his sacred emblems⁽⁸⁴⁾. The cock was also connected with the cult of Nyx the goddess of the night and darkness⁽⁸⁵⁾; she manifested the dark aspect of life, and the cock was offered to her, as it announced with its crow the beginning of the day even in the presence of the night⁽⁸⁶⁾. The cock was also connected with healing divinities, as cocks were made as offerings presented to Asclepius, the god of healing to recover from diseases⁽⁸⁷⁾. Pilgrims used to visit the temples of Asclepius seeking remedies for their diseases. Those who were cured offered a cock or a goat as a sacrifice to him⁽⁸⁸⁾. Meanwhile, it was considered that when a cock was offered to Asclepius, it meant that death was welcomed as a cure for evil or as convalescence for the sick ones⁽⁸⁹⁾. It seems that the cock

had also a warlike aspect, as it was one of the emblems of the goddess Athena (Minerva) the goddess of war, as she usually appears with a helmet with a crest of that of a cock⁽⁹⁰⁾. The cock was also a symbol of Hermes as a sign of vigilance⁽⁹¹⁾ and was also connected with the cult of Zeus Velchanos, who appears on coins from Phaistos as a beardless man sitting among the branches of a tree with a cock on his lap⁽⁹²⁾. Attis was originally a Phrygian god identified with Adonis⁽⁹³⁾ in Syria. According to his myth, he was born by a young girl named Nana, a virgin who became conceived by an almond or a fruit which she put on her lap. Attis was a shepherd beloved by Cybele, the mother of gods. He castrated himself under a pine tree as he bled to death and changed into a pine tree after his death. The cults of Cybele and Attis were adopted by the Romans in 204 B.C. at the end of long struggle with Hannibal⁽⁹⁴⁾. Annually, a celebration was held for Attis for his death and resurrection. Attis was the god of vegetation, sky, fertility and resurrection⁽⁹⁵⁾. Cybele at first saw Attis lying by the river gallus⁽⁹⁶⁾ and priests of Attis were known as 'Gallus'. The cock was chosen as an emblem of the priests as a punning indication to the word 'Gallus' which means 'cock' in Latin⁽⁹⁷⁾ as well as priest of Attis⁽⁹⁸⁾. Priapus was the Greek god of fertility. He was linked with Hermes, as both were gods of boundaries. In some versions, Priapus is considered to be the son of Hermes by Aphrodite. He was also connected with the god Pan, and thus was a god of gardens, flocks, country people and shepherds. He is represented as a naked young man holding a cock, but also as a cock or as a young man with a cock's head⁽⁹⁹⁾. The god of fertility is connected with the cock due to the latter's great ability of fertilization⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. Priapus' main function was to ward off evil spirits and evil eye from harming the harvests⁽¹⁰¹⁾. According to Herodotos, he was also connected with Osiris, as Priapus was regarded as deification by Isis of Osiris' virility⁽¹⁰²⁾. This confirms the fact that the cock was connected in both Persian and Graeco-roman mythologies with solar divinities in addition to gods whose main functions are healing, protection from evil, and fertility. Similarly the same theory can be applied to the cock's cult in Egypt. The cock was connected in Egyptian mythology with supreme solar deities; he held protective and healing functions; like Harpocrates and Serapis. For Harpocrates, he was the god of the rising sun, and thus god of resurrection, while Serapis was the setting sun⁽¹⁰³⁾. The relation between Abrasax and Harpocrates is obviously indicated in the depiction of the red jasper gem at the National Museum of Archaeology in Lisbon (fig.5), although their combination on such gems is rare⁽¹⁰⁴⁾. It is possible here that both were connected together as solar supreme protective divinities, particularly that Harpocrates⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ was commonly recognized for his protective character. This is well recognized by the tablets widely known as 'Cippi of Horus' or the small stelai called 'Horus-on-the-Crocodiles', on which Harpocrates is represented stepping on two crocodiles, while holding wild animals like lions and scorpions with his two hands. This depiction reflects Harpocrates' function as a healer and at the same time a protector god, who protected the owner of the object from illnesses⁽¹⁰⁶⁾. Moreover, the lower part of the cock-headed god Abrasax is depicted with two serpents instead of two feet, which is an Egyptian feature strongly connected

- 9- Houlihan, P. F., (1988), p.79.
- 10- Carter, H. (1923), p.1.
- 11- Carter, H. (1923), p.4.
- 12- Houlihan, P. F., (1988), pp.80-81.
- 13- Bard, K. A., (1999), p.363. Kantor assures that the motives in this vessel are completely of Egyptian origins with no foreign influences, Kantor, H. J., (1999), *Plant Ornament: Its Origin and Development in the Ancient Near East*, Unpublished Ph.D., diss. 1945, revised and made available by the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, p.719, <http://oi.uchicago.edu/pdf/HJKXVII.pdf>.
- 14- Houlihan, P. F., (1988), p.81.
- 15- Discovered in 1919, Lefebvre, M. G., (1924), *Le tombeau de Petosiris, Première partie, Description*, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Cairo, III-IV. For the argument of dating the tomb see, Picard, M. C., (1931), 'Les influences étrangères au tombeau de Petosiris: Grèce ou Perse?', *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie Orientale* 30, .202-227; Montet, M. P., (1926), 'Note sur le Tombeau de Petosiris', pour servir à l'histoire des Perses en Égypte. *Revue archéologique* 23, pp.161-181; Cavaignac, M. E., (1928), 'La date du tombeau de Pétoisiris', *Revue de l'Égypte Ancienne* 2, pp. 56-57; Lefebvre, M. G., (1920), 'Le tombeau de Petosiris', *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 20, p.44.
- 16- Houlihan, P. F., (1988), p.81.
- 17- Carter, H. (1923), p.4
- 18- http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/egyptian_art/aryballos_in_the_form_of_a_cock/objectview.aspx?page=1&sort=6&sortdir=asc&keyword=cock&fp=1&dd1=10&dd2=0&vw=0&c ollID=10&OID=100032046&vT=1&hi=0&ov=0
- 19- See Dunand, F., (1990), *Catalogue des terres cuites gréco-romaines d'Égypte*; Musée du Louvre, département des antiquités égyptiennes, Paris, pp.295-6
- 20- Westropp, H. M., (2003), *Handbook of Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Archeology*, Montana, p. 399; Krause, M., (1991), 'Abraxas', *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Ed. Atiya, A. S., vol.1, New York, p.14.
- 21- King, C.W. (1887), *The Gnostics and their Remains: Ancient and Medieval*, 2nd ed., London, p.33.
- 22- Veiga, P., (2008), 'Preliminary Study of an Unusual Graeco-Roman Magical Gem (MNA E540) in the National Museum of Archaeology in Lisbon, Portugal', *Current Research in Egyptology* 8, p.148; Wathen, G. H., (1843), *Art, Antiquities and Chronology of Ancient Egypt: from Observations in 1839*, London, p. 25.
- 23- Mosheim, J. L., (1832), *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History: Ancient and Modern in Four Books*, vol.1, New Haven, p.175.
- 24- Krause, M., (1999), p.14. Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.400.
- 25- Hornung, E., (2001), *The Secret Lore of Egypt: Its Impact on the West*, Translated from the German by David Lorton, Cornell University Press, p. 58.
- 26- Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.400.
- 27- Seyffarth, G., (1859), *Summary of Recent Discoveries in Biblical chronology*, Universal History and Egyptian Archaeology, 2nd ed., New York, p.202.
- 28- Generally, fowl birds were recognized in ancient Egyptian as Apdwt from at least the fifth dynasty, Behrens, P. (1977) 'Geflügel', *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, vol. 2, Ed. Eberhard Otto, Wiesbaden, col.503;  Apdwt, Grapow, H. and Erman A.,(1982), *Wörterbuch der ägyptische Sprache*, vol.II, 7th ed., Belegstellen, p.9, n.10.
- 29- McClintock, J. and Strong, J., (1889), *Cyclopedia of biblical, Theological and ecclesiastical Literature*, vol.I, New York, p.33.
- 30- Veiga, P., (2008), p.148.
- 31- Anguipede is a serpent-footed god, Dorey, C., (2008), *The Nummo: The Truth about Human Origins*, Indiana, p.38; Lurker, M., (2004), *The Routledge Dictionary of Gods, Goddesses, Devils and Demons*, London, p.1.
- 32- Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.400.
- 33- Veiga, P., (2008), p.148.
- 34- King, C.W., (1887), p. 35.
- 35- McClintock, J. and Strong, J., (1889), p.33, Bonner, C.,(1950),*Studies in Magical Amulets: Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian*, University of Michigan Press, p.134.
- 36- Wathen, G. H., (1843), *Art, Antiquities and Chronology of Ancient Egypt: from Observations in 1839*, London, p.25.
- 37- Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.400.
- 38- Wathen, G. H., (1843), p. 25.
- 39- El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), 'The Cocks, the Cat, and the Chariot of the Sun', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 55, p.217.
- 40- McClintock, J. and Strong, J., (1889), p.34.
- 41- McClintock, J. and Strong, J., (1889), p.34.
- 42- Haas, C., (1997), *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict*, London, p.135, fig.12.
- 43- Akephalos: are headless demons. They are originally beheaded men for criminal offences and became ghosts in magic practice. In magic papyri, he is referred to as a god perhaps as a manifestation of the dismembered Osiris, Lurker, M., (2004), p.7. It is considered as a solar form of Osiris as in the Book of the Carvens it is mentioned that the heads of the blessed dead accompany the sun, as he is considered the headless giant of the eastern horizon, Darnell, J. C., (2004), *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian Unity: Cryptographic Compositions in the Tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramsesses VI and Ramsesses IX*, Göttingen, p.115, 173. For more details, see Preisendanz, K., (1926), *Akephalos der Kopflose Gott*, Leipzig.
- 44- Veiga, P., (2008), p.141.
- 45- Veiga, P., (2008), pp.145-6.
- 46- Veiga, P., (2008), p.141.
- 47- Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.398.
- 48- The Graeco-Egyptian magic blends combinations of meaningless letters or numerical values, coptic and daemonic names and offshoots, and Jewish sacred names and Greek names, Nock, A.D., (1929), 'Greek Magical Papyrus', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 15, p.229.
- 49- Veiga, P., (2008), pp.143-4.
- 50- Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.400.
- 51- http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/egyptian_art/ring_with_a_gem_with_mag

- ical_device_of_a_bird_cock/objectview.aspx?page=1&sort=6&sortdir=asc&keyword=cock&fp=1&ddl=10&dd2=0&vw=0&collid=10&OID=100004738&vT=1&hi=0&ov=0
- 52- <http://antiquities.bibalex.org/Collection/Detail.aspx?lang=en&a=1035>
- 53- El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), p.222. This fact is reflected in a late Coptic lamp found at Abydos confirming the solar character of the cock; see Naville, E., (1914), 'Abydos', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 1, p.7.
- 54- Hornung, E., (2001), p.58.
- 55- Westropp, H. M., (2003), p.400.
- 56- Seyffarth, G., (1859), p.202.
- 57- Veiga, P., (2008), p.143.
- 58- The Greek *Ἀλεκτρυών* Alectryon 'cock' is of north Greek type formation and its first meaning is 'Averter of Evil' from others, or 'defender' of others, Macurdy, C. H., (1918), The Derivation and Significance of the Greek Word for 'Cock', *Classical Philology* 13, no. 3, p.311. It is possible that in late Hebrew a pun occurred between the word for 'soldier' and 'cock' and as a consequence the cock is seen as a warrior, El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), p.217.
- 59- Turcan, R., (1996), *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, Oxford and Massachusetts, P.263.
- 60- Brentjes, B., (1962), *Wildtier und Haustier in alten Orient*, Lebendiges Altertum 11, Berlin, p.32.
- 61- Werness, H. B., (2006), p.89.
- 62- Leick, G., (1998), *A dictionary of Near Eastern Mythology*, New York, p.127; Chopra, R., (2005), *Academic Dictionary of Mythology*, Delhi, p.204.
- 63- Werness, H. B., (2006), p.89. Nergal was the god of war identified with the Greek Ares and the Roman Mars, Cochrane, E., (1997), *Martian Metamorphoses: The Planet Mars in Ancient Myth and Religion*, Iowa, p.30.
- 64- Calmet, A., (1908), *Calmet's Dictionary of Holy Bible*, vol.III, New York, p.396.
- 65- Guiley, R. E., (2009), *The Encyclopedia of Demons and Demonology*, New York, p.2.
- 66- Franklin, A., (2003), *Magical Celebrations Midsummer of the Summer Solstice*, Minnesota, P.177. Concerning Mithras and his relation with the sun myths, see Sick, D. H., (2004), Mit(h)ra(s) and the Myths of the sun. *Numen: International Review for the History of Religion*, 51, no.4, pp.432-467.
- 67- Walters, V. J., (1974), *The Cult of Mithras in the Roman Provinces of Gaul*, Ledien, P.94
- 68- Guiley, R. E., (2009), p.2.
- 69- El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), p.217.
- 70- It is the Jewish name of the supreme god in the Old Testament, Navas, P., (2007), *Divine Truth of Human Tradition: A Reconsideration of the Roman Catholic-Protestant Doctrine of the Trinity in the Light of the Hebrew and Christina Scriptures*, Indiana, p.523; Zimmerli, W., (1978), *Old Testament theology in Outline*, Kentucky, p.59; Smith, A. P., (2009), *Dictionary of Gnosticism*, Illionis, p.259.
- 71- Iao is the Greek translation of Yahweh, Veiga, P., (2008), p.143.
- 72- An amulet bearing the two names of Mithras and Abraxas was discovered in the Athenian Agora in 1932, see Elderkin, G.W., (1933), 'Agnostic Amulet', *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 2, no.4, pp.475-9.
- 73- Traunecker, C., Translated from French by D. Lorton, (2001), *The Gods of Egypt*, New York, p.9; Littleton, C. S., (2005), *Gods, Goddesses and Mythology*, New York, p.1206; Lesko, B. S., (1999), *The Great Goddesses of Egypt*, University of Oklahoma Press, P.14; Lichtheim, M., (1976), *Ancient Egyptian Literature: vol.II, The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, p.89; Frankfort, H., (1975), *Ancient Egyptian Religion: An Interpretation*, Toronto, p.22.
- 74- *Μῆδος*, *Μηδικός* refers to the war with Medes, the name given to the Great Persian War, Liddel and Scott, (1994), *An intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, 7th ed., Oxford, p.508.
- 75- Carter, H. (1923), p.3.
- 76- Alectryon is the Greek word for a cock, Liddel and Scott, (1994), p.34.
- 77- Woodcock, P.G., (1953), *Short Dictionary of Mythology*, New York, p.10; Grimal, P., (1996), *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, Oxford, p.33.
- 78- Smith, W., (1855), *A New Classical Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography, Mythology, and Geography*, New York, p.41; Kent, C., (1870), *A Mythological Dictionary*, London, p.9; Glaser, J., (2005), *Mars*, Minnesota, p.11; Guerber, H. A., (2007), *The Myths of Greece and Rome*, New York, pp.83-85.
- 79- Scull, S. A., (2003), *Greek Mythology Systematized*, 2nd ed., Montana, p.141.
- 80- Werness, H. B., (2006), p.89.
- 81- Andrews, T., (2004), p.128.
- 82- Scull, S. A., (2003), p.152.
- 83- El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), p.216.
- 84- Scull, S. A., (2003), p.254.
- 85- Guerber, H. A., (2007), p.2. Nyx is the daughter of Chaos, regarded by Greeks as mother of mystery, death, sleep and dreams. She resided in a dark place in the other world. She is represented as lady dressed in black robe riding a chariot drawn by two white horses, Berens, E. M., (2007), *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome*, London, p.142. She gave birth to Aether (brightness) and Hemera (day), Roman, L, and Roman, M., (2010), *Encyclopedia of Greek and Roman Mythology*, New York, p.340.
- 86- Scull, S. A., (2003), p.312.
- 87- Clark, P.M., (1952), 'A Cock to Asclepius', *The Classical Review* 2, No. 3/4, p.146.
- 88- Schmitz, L., (1844), *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, vol.I, Ed. W. Smith, London, p.46.
- 89- Scull, S. A., (2003), p.158.
- 90- Scull, S. A., (2003), p.133.
- 91- Scull, S. A., (2003), p.171.
- 92- Dietrich, B. C., (2004), *The Origins of Greek Religion*, Chicago, p.15; El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), p.215.
- 93- Adonis was originally Tammuz, the Sumerian god of vegetation, the lover of Ishtar who died every year to revive in the underworld to where Ishtar journeyed in quest of him and returned back together to the upper world. His worship spread to Greece under the name of Adonis who was a lover of Aphrodite, Jeffrey, D. L., (1992), *A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature*, Michigan, p.21.

- 94- Frazer, J. G., (1907), *Adonis Attis Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion*, London, pp.263-6.
- 95- Frazer, J. G., (1907), pp.277-281.
- 96- Macmullen, R. and Lane, E. N., (1992), *Paganism and Christianity 100-425 C.E.: A Sourcebook*, Augsburg Fortress Press, Minnesota, p.275; Alvar, J., (2008), *Romanizing Oriental Gods: Myth, Salvation and Ethics in the Cults of Cybele, Isis and Mithras*, translated and edited by Gordon, R., Leiden, p.38
- 97- Alvar, J., (2008), p.253.
- 98- Frazer, J. G., (1907), p.279. Gallus (priest of Adonis) is known to have cut off his gentile and settled at the Terias river that named after him Gallus. From him those who cut their gentiles were called *galli*, Lane, E. N., (1996), 'The Name of Cybele's Priests the "Galloi"', *Cybele, Attis and Related cults: Essays in Memory of M J. Vermaseren*, Ed. Lane, E.N, Leiden and New York, p.129. Gallus is a tributary of the river Sangarios in Phrygia, associated with the Latin word of 'cock' in the Roman Empire. This bird became the sacred attribute of Cybele and her consort Attis, and a symbol of *galli*, Daly, K. N. (2009), *Greek and Roman Mythology A to Z*, 3rd ed., New York, p.23.
- 99- Redfield, J. M., (2005), 'Priapus', *Gods, Goddesses and Mythology*, Ed. Littleton, C., New York, pp.1168-1169; Bonnefoy, Y., (1992), *Greeks and Egyptian Mythologies*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p.131.
- 100- Andrews, T., (2004), *Animal Speak: The Spiritual and Magical Powers of Creatures Great and Small*, Minnesota, p.127.
- 101- Grimal, P., (1996), p.391
- 102- Grimal, P., (1996), p.393.
- 103- El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), p.217.
- 104- Veiga, P., (2008), p.143.
- 105- His cult was popular during the Graeco-roman period. He is represented as a nude young child holding a finger to his mouth and holding the cornucopia, Marcovich, M., (1988), *Studies in Graeco-roman Religions and Gnosticism*, Netherlands, p.42; Woodcock, P. G., (1953), *Short Dictionary of Mythology*, New York, p.65.
- 106- Hall, E. S., (1977), 'Harpocrates and Other Child Deities in Ancient Egyptian Sculpture', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 14, P.56; Pinch, G., (2002), *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, California, p.39; Frankfurter, D., (1998), *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance*, New Jersey, p.47; Armour, R. A., (1986), *Gods and Myths in Ancient Egypt*, 3rd ed., New York, p.71. See also Seele, K. C., (1947), 'Horus on the Crocodiles', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 6, no.1, pp.43-52.
- 107- El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), pp.217-8.
- 108- Kaper, O. E., (2003), *The Egyptian God Tutu: A Study of the Sphinx-God and Master of the Demons with a Corpus of Monuments*, Leuven, P.299; Forrest, M. I., (2004), *Isis Magic: Cultivating a Relationship with the Goddess of 10,000 Names*, 2nd ed., Minnesota, p.90.
- 109- Prichard, J. C., (1819), *An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology: to which is subjoined A Critical Examination of the Remains of the Egyptian Chronology*, London, P.94.
- 110- For coins connecting the serpent of agathosdaemon with Serapis, see Poole, R. S., (2006), *Catalogue of the coins of Alexandria and the Nomes*, 2nd ed., London, p.lxxxvi. For terracotta of Serapis Agathos Daimon, see Török, L., (1995), *Hellenistic and Roman Terracottas from Egypt*, Rome, p.96, 122, Pl.LXIII.
- 111- Pinkham, M. A., (1997), *The Return of the Serpent of Wisdom*, Illinois, pp.260-1.

عبادة الديك في مصر الرومانية

مروة عبد المجيد القاضى

كلية السياحة و الفنادق - جامعة الإسكندرية

لعب الديك دوراً هاماً في الحضارات و الديانات القديمة، فبسبب صياحه في الفجر أصبح يرتبط بشكل وثيق في المعتقدات القديمة بعبادة الشمس. و بالنسبة للفن، لم يظهر الديك في الفن المصري إلا في عهد الدولة الحديثة و بالتحديد من عصر تحتمس الثالث، خاصة وأن الديك (ولا سيما الديك المعروف بالديك الأحمر (جاللوس جالوس)) يعد أحد الطيور ذات الأصل الآسيوي. ونرى الديك ممثلاً على جدران مقبرة بتوزيرس بتونة الجبل كأحد القرابين المقدمة للمتوفى، بينما وجد عدد كبير من التماثيل الفخارية الصغيرة تمثل الديك و استخدمت كلعب للأطفال في العصر البطلمي. أما بالنسبة للديانة، فقد كان الديك رمزاً هاماً للآلهة الكبرى التي ارتبطت عبادتها بالشمس مثل الإله ميثرا عند الفرس و الإله أبولو و هيليوس عند اليونانيين. و في مصر أصبح الديك رمزاً للإله رع و حروبقرات و سرابيس و أيزيس و جميعها آلهة كبرى ارتبطت بعبادة الشمس. و لم يقف دور الديك في الديانة المصرية على كونه رمزاً للآلهة الكبرى فقط، بل أن الديك أصبح له عبادة خاصة به متجسدة في الإله ابراسكس الذي مثل في شكل خرافى عبارة عن جسم انسان برأس ديك و الجزء السفلى منه ينتهى في شكل ثعبانين بدلاً من رجلين، وظهر بشكل واضح على عدد كبير من التماثيل السحرية. ظهرت هذه العبادة في العصر الرومانى، و بالتحديد في القرن الثانى الميلادى على يد باسيليدس فى الإسكندرية، ومنها انتشرت تلك العبادة فى العالم الرومانى. و يقوم البحث بالتركيز على نقطتين: الأولى تتمثل فى الدور البارز الذى لعبه الديك فى الديانة فى مصر و لا سيما فى العصر الرومانى و الوقوف على أسباب اعتباره رمزاً لآلهة بعينها و مظاهر ذلك. أما النقطة الثانية من البحث فهى تركز على عبادة الإله الديك ابراسكس، الإله المصرى الأصل الذى ظهر فى العصر الرومانى و معرفة أهميته و وظائفه و مدى ارتباطه بالسحر و بالآلهة المصرية الأخرى فى تلك الفترة.

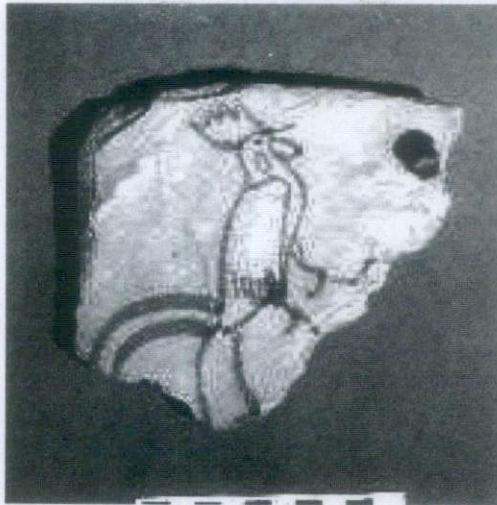


Fig.1 An ostrakon depicted with a cock from the valley of the Kings
British Museum, EA 68539
http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/



Fig.2 An offering bearer carrying a cock from the tomb of Petosiris
After: Houlihan, P. F., (1988), *The Birds of Ancient Egypt*, The American University in Cairo Press, p.80, fig.114



Fig.3 A terracotta red jungle fowl cock from the Ptolemaic period, Metropolitan Museum of Art, (Acc. No. 17.194.2456)
After: http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/egyptian_art/



Fig.7 A golden ring with a gem depicted with a cock, Bibliotheca Alexandrina Antiquities Museum in Alexandria (BAAM Serial 1035)

After: <http://antiquities.bibalex.org/Collection/Detail.aspx?lang=en&a=1035>

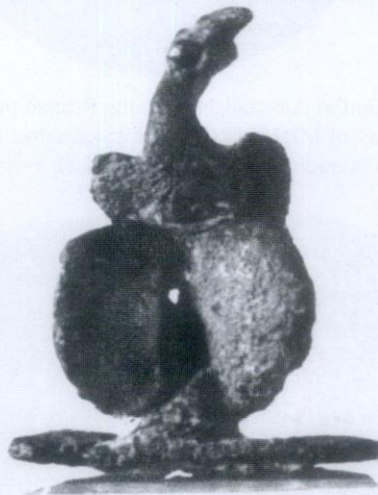


Fig.8 A bronze statuette from Karnak representing a cock surmounting a solar disk

After: El-Khashab, A. el-M., (1984), 'The Cocks, the Cat, and the Chariot of the Sun', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 55, Tafel XIV, 5.