



HATHOR AND ISIS IN BYBLOS IN THE SECOND AND FIRST MILLENNIA BCE¹

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ABSTRACT

The Egyptian goddesses Hathor and Isis both appear in Byblos under various guises and circumstances during the second and first millennia BCE. In fact, Hathor, who received cult in many foreign locales, is attested in Byblos in the third millennium. This discussion explores the presence of each of these deities in Byblos after describing their respective Egyptian backgrounds, the circumstances under which is attested in Byblos, how and why each arrived there, and instances when, despite some uncertainty, one or the other is assumed to have been present.

Isis, the ancient Egyptian goddess who became a savior deity in the Hellenistic world,² is well-known generally, and probably better known even among classical and biblical scholars than the older Egyptian goddess Hathor. Interestingly, though, it is Hathor, not Isis, who was best known outside Egypt prior to the first millennium BCE. In fact, Hathor, who eventually received cult in many foreign locales, first appears outside Egypt in Byblos in the third millennium (that is, EB II) on a Sixth-Dynasty alabaster offering plate of King Pepy I as “Hathor, Mistress of Dendera,”³ an ancient Egyptian epithet. More specifically, however, a statuette of a scribe dated to the time of Pepy I includes a papyrus on his lap clearly reading “Hathor, Mistress of Dendera, who lives in Byblos.”⁴ From a bit later, several copies of Coffin Texts Spell 61,⁵ from the corpus of texts inscribed on the insides and outsides of coffins beginning early in the Middle Kingdom (2061–1640 BCE), tell the deceased that “Hathor, Lady of Byblos (*nbt kbn*), makes the steering oar of your bark” (CT I, 262b), while a contemporaneous text from Kahun in Lower Egypt also refers to Hathor as “Lady of Byblos.”⁶ Thus it is clear that from the Egyptian point of view, Hathor, a deity who dates from at least the Second Dynasty (2800–2650 BCE) in Egypt, clearly carried the epithet of Lady or Mistress of Byblos by the very early part of the second millennium BCE. In contrast, Isis, who herself is not evident in Egyptian texts until the Fifth Dynasty (2465–2323 BCE), only appears in Byblos in the seventh century BCE, when she is known to have received cult there.⁷

To truly understand Hathor and Isis in Byblos, however, one must first look at them in Egypt in their oldest attestations, for not only do they appear at different times—Hathor late in the Early Dynastic period and Isis in the later Old Kingdom—but in sharply contrasting roles. Initially, Hathor was very much a goddess of this world and closely associated with the ruling king and queen, while Isis’s activities, so far as the evidence shows, occurred only in the mortuary world.⁸ As the Osirian belief in the afterlife achieved true prominence in the

Middle Kingdom,⁹ so did Isis, but not until the New Kingdom did she reach anywhere near the prominence of Hathor. In fact, at that time, Isis began to absorb and use the symbols that historically had been Hathor’s hallmarks, most notably the cow’s horns with sun-disk¹⁰ and the sistrum. And while Hathor’s name means “House of Horus” (presumably “the mother of Horus”¹¹), a separate genealogical tradition also presents Isis as the mother of Horus. The two Horuses are not the same, however. Hathor’s is Horus the Elder, the “original Horus,” related to the earliest kingship and appearing on the kings’ *serekhs*—the rectangular depiction, thought to be a palace façade, in which the name of the king was written—from the Early Dynastic period. Isis’s Horus is the Horus King, her son and the posthumous son of Osiris, the one who had to fight his uncle Seth for the throne, as related in the late New Kingdom story of the “Contendings of Horus and Seth” and discussed by Plutarch in *De Iside et Osiride*.¹²

As it turns out, Isis is not clearly attested until the earliest of the Pyramid Texts, those texts written on the walls of the sarcophagus chambers, antechambers, and connecting corridors of Old Kingdom royal pyramids, beginning with Unas, final king of the Fifth Dynasty, around 2325 BCE. At that time, this goddess, whose origins lie in her role as mourner in concert with her sister Nephthys, functions almost entirely as a mortuary deity who, with her sister, cares for and nurtures the royal deceased, thus assisting in his or her rebirth in the next world. Together these two goddesses, initially portrayed as kites¹³ (carrion birds), searched for, found, and then cared for the deceased, appearing in the Pyramid Texts in these roles.¹⁴ In non-royal contexts, a pair of mourning women served as their equivalent, often portrayed in the bow and the stern of the funerary bark.¹⁵ Thus, in the Pyramid Texts, Isis appears almost incidentally in her role as mother of Horus, the ruling king whom her husband-brother Osiris engendered in her.

In time, however, as the deceased king became increasingly identified with Osiris, Isis rose to greater and greater importance.

This activity is expressed in the Pyramid Texts of the Sixth Dynasty, as the officiating priest states to the deceased king:

Your sister Isis comes to you, rejoicing for love of you.
You have placed her on your phallus
and your seed issues into her, she being alert as
Sothis (*Spt*),
and Hor-Sopd (*Hr Spt*) has come forth from you as
Horus who is in Sothis.¹⁶

In this text, Osiris, who is in the mortuary world, acts as the initiator of the procreation of the next king. By the New Kingdom, however, it is Isis rather than Osiris who makes the moves, as the following text from the Great Hymn to Osiris (Louvre C 286) explains:

His sister was his guard,
She who drives off the foes,
...
Who jubilated, joined her brother,
Raised the weary one's¹⁷ inertness,
Received the seed, bore the heir,
Raised the child in solitude,
His abode unknown.¹⁸

By this time, Isis had clearly moved into a very active role with regard to the procreation of her son,¹⁹ and in so doing assumed a very strong and important role for Egyptians of the New Kingdom. Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that with this increased veneration Isis absorbed many of the symbols and roles of the important goddess Hathor, particularly the headdress of cow horns and sun-disk. This leading role was strengthened in the first millennium as the Greek and Roman worlds turned to Isis seeking, according to Robert Bianchi, a religion promising ecstatic salvation rather than “very cold, non-charismatic worship.”²⁰ But before considering the evidence linking these two deities to Byblos, we should clarify the importance of Byblos to the Egyptians.

Excavations at Byblos—known in ancient times as Gubla or Keben/Kepen—show significant building and occupancy at least by the beginning of the third millennium BCE.²¹ And from early on, Byblos served as a port to which Egyptians came for high-quality building wood, particularly for coffins, boats, and architectural elements. The wooded areas of north Syria provided these resources for Egypt in exchange for grain and other goods such as linen and precious metals. While evidence suggests such trade already occurred in the late fourth and very early third millennia BCE, it truly came to the fore in the mid-third millennium thanks to the stability of Egypt's third and the fourth dynasties and the rise of a strong, centralized kingship. This trend is demonstrated in the diminution of earlier trade with the southern Palestinian areas.²² Moreover, on the temple causeways of Fifth Dynasty kings Sahura and Unas, one finds depictions of the Byblos ships that facilitated such trade.²³

In Byblos itself, excavations have revealed the foundations of a temple dedicated to the Mistress of Byblos dated to no later than 2800.²⁴ The importance of this temple and its deity derives at least in some measure from the role of temples as safe havens and centers for trade in eastern Mediterranean civilizations including Egypt. This role derives not from traders' need to pay tribute to deities or to sell goods for sacrifices or other aspects of divine worship, but rather, as Silver has suggested, from the role that gods and their myths played in trade and keeping traders honest.²⁵ Hallo has suggested a similar idea.²⁶ Space constrains me from discussing this point in detail, but in his research, Silver has noted that in the ancient Near East, some deities were viewed as merchants, even to the point that the Old Babylonian gods Shamash, the sun god, and Enlil, the god of earth and air, carried the epithet *tamk̄aru*, “merchant.” What's more, Enlil's wife Ninlil was designated by the word *damkar*, “merchant of the wide world.”²⁷ It is the protection which the deity or deities of a temple offered the trader or merchant in his dealings which was important.²⁸ Having trade take place under the auspices of gods (just as deities witnessed treaties and covenants) led, among other things, to greater honesty among merchants.

While the merchant concept apparently does not relate to Hathor, Egyptian traders would have gained a level of comfort and trust in having their chosen deity with them—and clearly, in the Old Kingdom, this was Hathor, at times designated as “Hathor of Dendera who lives in Byblos.”²⁹ It is important to note, however, that this epithet, which foregrounds Hathor's association with the Upper Egyptian area of Dendera even as she lives in Byblos, suggests she was not the original Mistress of Byblos. In fact, the date of the oldest foundations supports this observation unequivocally, as the mistress of Byblos is known from these foundations³⁰ and predates Hathor's earliest known presence in Egypt in the second quarter of the third millennium, for as noted, she does not come on the Egyptian scene unequivocally until sometime in the Second Dynasty (2775–2650 BCE).³¹

By the Fourth Dynasty (2575–2465 BCE), with the rise of the cult of sun god Ra—evident particularly in relation to the king, whose titulary began to include a “Son of Ra” name—Hathor, a sky deity often seen as a cow-goddess and both wife and daughter of Ra,³² truly came into prominence.³³ In fact, she replaced Neith, previous goddess of importance in relation to the royal house, so decisively that she appears significantly in the famous triads of Menkaure, owner of the smallest of the three Giza pyramids. Exactly what role she may have filled in these triads is not clear, but as mentioned earlier, at least one interpretation of her name, *Hwt Hr*, “House of Horus,” identifies her as mother of Horus and hence of the Horus king (that is, the ruling king prior to the rise of Isis as the mother of Horus).³⁴ Interestingly, the Sixth Dynasty king Pepy I deemed himself “Son of Hathor” in his titulary,³⁵ as did Nebhepetra Mentuhotep II of the Eleventh Dynasty,³⁶ although both also bore the “Son of Ra” name (as did other kings beginning regularly with Unas, final king of the Fifth Dynasty).³⁷

Given that the temple at Byblos lies on the north Syrian coast, far from Egypt, one questions how and why Hathor came to Byblos such that she was identified with the Mistress of Byblos by the Egyptians who traveled and traded there. In other words, what is there about Hathor that led to her going to Byblos rather than another Egyptian deity? While any absolute answers to these questions must remain open, I will offer here some tentative suggestions.

One possibility lies in Hathor's common iconographic appearance as a cow-goddess in several variants: as a cow; as a wild cow; as a human with horns, often if not usually bearing the sun-disk between them;³⁸ and as a face with cow's ears, facing front, itself most unusual in ancient Egyptian iconography. In this latter form she generally is coifed with what is commonly known as the Hathor headdress. Although she appears with such bovine imagery from her early manifestations—and there are those who suggest she was primarily manifested as a cow³⁹—the earliest appearances of a cow goddess (on several predynastic palettes, most notably on the top of the Narmer palette, as well as on a bowl⁴⁰ and at least one cylinder seal⁴¹) probably refer to Bat, another cow goddess⁴² or cow spirit. The importance of this goddess, who in time appears to have been assimilated to Hathor, lies, in my opinion, in her probable relation to cattle herding in and around the oases and playas of Egypt's desert areas.⁴³ These cattle were moved into and out of the settled Nile valley area according to the availability of water in these areas. With such an association—and cattle were venerated and perceived as wealth as well as providing a source of protein in their supply of milk and blood (not flesh)⁴⁴—the Egyptians could well have understood an associated cow deity to be able to function as protector or supporter outside of the generally settled areas.⁴⁵ One may then surmise that the Egyptians understood that a cow goddess could also function in other areas beyond the immediate Nile Valley and its near deserts. Indeed, while current evidence shows Byblos to be the oldest known foreign area with a cult for Hathor, she was generally viewed and venerated as the goddess of foreign areas, and she received cult in many other foreign locales throughout Egyptian history, beginning with the Middle Kingdom, as noted earlier.⁴⁶ In fact, a clear example of her “Lady of Byblos” designation in New Kingdom Egypt appears on a black granite statue of Mimosi, butler and foreman of works under Thutmose III, found at Medamud in Upper Egypt near Luxor. Mimosi notes that he was commanded to direct the construction works of three temples of Hathor, among which was one for Hathor, Lady of Byblos.⁴⁷

Hathor's presence in Byblos might also derive from her connection to boats and navigation. As noted, she appears in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts in a passage that addresses the deceased with the words: “Hathor, Lady of Byblos (*nbt kbn*) makes the steering oar of your bark” (CT I, 262b). From the Middle Kingdom context of Beni Hassan in Middle Egypt comes the personal name, a theophoric one, *nfr hpwt Hwt-Hr*, “Beautiful are the oars of Hathor.”⁴⁸ This connection with

boats is further supported by Hathor's relation to wind, exemplified in an epithet from the Sixth Dynasty tomb of Meraruka stating that the deceased received a gift of *t3w nfr n Hwt-Hr*, “the beautiful wind of Hathor.”⁴⁹ Hathor is also known as “the Mistress of the Port,” clearly another feature connecting her to boats and shipping.⁵⁰

Finally, with Hathor already related to areas outside Egypt, traders involved in trading ventures, which always occurred under royal direction, might well have seen her as the natural deity for protection because of her close relationship to the royal house, especially the king, symbolic son of Hathor. Thus, to view her as the Mistress of Byblos would make great sense to the Egyptians: she was already a deity who had proved effective providing protection outside Egypt's Nile Valley.

The presence in the Syro-Palestinian area of seals with Egyptian and Egyptianizing scenes—many of deities, and dating to the Middle Bronze Age, or very roughly the Egyptian Middle Kingdom—illustrates something of the relationship between the two areas in the first part of the second millennium BCE. Among the depicted deities in this time period were Isis and Hathor, the latter virtually always with her horns and sun-disk, but Isis with simply a sun-disk.⁵¹ Not surprisingly, Isis does not appear with Hathor's horns and disk on such seals until the New Kingdom, the point in Egyptian history by which she had taken on attributes formerly associated primarily with Hathor.

The importance of Egypt and its deities for the Syro-Palestinian area is also apparent in the Amarna letters of the later Eighteenth Dynasty/fourteenth century BCE (Late Bronze Age), written in forms of Akkadian and Babylonian.⁵² Relatively well-known in both biblical and Egyptological circles, several of these nearly four hundred⁵³ letters—addressed to one of the pharaohs of the period (Amenhotep III, Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten, or Tutankhamen⁵⁴) from various potentates and petty Canaanite leaders—open with a blessing for the pharaoh by the Mistress of Byblos.⁵⁵ Most who have read these letters have likely assumed *b't gbl*, “lady/mistress of Byblos,” was Hathor. Yet when one checks carefully, Hathor's name simply does not occur at all in this corpus!⁵⁶ How to explain this situation, given the history of Hathor and the Mistress of Byblos, is open to speculation. Perhaps her role there was so clear that her name was simply omitted; perhaps *b't gbl* was considered her name at that time;⁵⁷ perhaps the open epithet allowed both the recipient and the writer to fill in the name as desired; or perhaps leaving the explicit name out was a diplomatic move. Particularly during the Amarna period proper under Akhenaten, gods other than the Aten sun-disk were foresworn, so the pharaoh was no longer related to Isis or Hathor as in earlier (and later) times, appearing exclusively as the son of the Aten. The better part of diplomacy would thus have been to omit the name of a specific deity; to have included one might have risked substantial offense.

Given Hathor's presence in Byblos as known through artifacts and epithets, it is natural to ask if she appears explicitly in any of the various ancient Egyptian narratives that included

episodes of activity in the Syro-Palestinian areas—among which are the Middle Kingdom narrative of Sinuhe and three New Kingdom tales, “The Prince and His Fates, or the Doomed Prince,” “The Tale of Two Brothers,” and “The Report of Wenamen.” While it would be wonderful to see the females in these tales as representatives of Hathor or even Isis, that would represent modern desire more than ancient reality (although the relation of hair to the nameless females within the “Tale of Two Brothers,” along with the wives’ behaviors in that tale, makes such an identification very tempting⁵⁸). Furthermore, only one of the tales, “The Report of Wenamen,” includes any episodes that occur explicitly in Byblos, and in this case it is the god Amun who takes stage center for the divine world. We are thus left with Hathor attested in Byblos only by epithet and artifact, both suggesting the reception of cult in that locale.

Isis, however, does appear explicitly in a narrative in Byblos, but not until the second century CE.⁵⁹ As noted earlier, however, there is evidence that Isis received cult there around the seventh century BCE, obviously much later than Hathor, even as she appears later than Hathor on the Egyptian scene itself. And as in Egypt, her importance in Byblos increased over time, during which she absorbed many of the symbols and roles of Hathor, among which was her association with shipping. In fact, Isis even reached the point of stating, “I am the mistress of navigation.”⁶⁰ Thus, one should not be surprised that she appears in Byblos, but when she does, receiving cult there, it occurs notably as a form of Hathor⁶¹ as Isis-Hathor or Hathor-Isis,⁶² though not, so far as I know, as Isis, Mistress of Byblos. And so, on the fifth-century BCE stele of the Byblite ruler Yehawmilk depicting his offering to the Mistress of Byblos, one understands her to be Hathor-Isis.⁶³ Indeed, Lipinski has suggested that this “symbiosis of Isis-Hathor...is probably also at the origin of the mythical voyage of Isis to Byblos related by Plutarch.”⁶⁴

Plutarch’s *De Iside et Osiride* presents Isis very explicitly in Byblos. Of course, in working with this narrative from around 120 CE, our discussion moves well beyond the stated time frame of the second and first millennia BCE. As justification, however, note that references to many of the work’s main points appear in Egyptian sources from all periods, some as early as the third millennium BCE Pyramid Texts.

Plutarch, a Delphic priest, wrote and dedicated the eighty chapters of *De Iside et Osiride* for Clea, a Delphic priestess and initiated devotee and priestess of Isis. Chapters 12–20 focus particularly on the Egyptian myth of Osiris and Isis, with Chapter 15 discussing Isis’s presence in Byblos. After opening Chapter 12 with Plutarch’s well-known genealogy of the gods, drawing clear relationships between the Greek deities and those of Egypt,⁶⁵ the narrative proceeds to describe tension among the male deities Osiris, Seth, and Horus, a tension that appears in many earlier sources. In this section, Plutarch tells how Osiris “forced the Egyptians from their primitive and brutish manner of life,”⁶⁶ showing them how to grow crops, establishing their laws, and teaching them to worship. Plutarch also states that

Osiris “civilized the whole world.”⁶⁷ In other words, in this narrative, Osiris served as a culture-bringer. During his absence, Isis oversaw the land. On his return, however, his brother Seth plotted again him and, with the help of others, built a chest that fit him and him only, tricking him into lying down in it. Immediately, Seth and his cohorts shut Osiris in the chest, sealed it, and set it into the sea via the Tanitic branch of the Nile.⁶⁸ Eventually the sealed chest fetched up on the coast of Byblos, where it became enfolded in a tree which was then incorporated by the king of Byblos as a pillar supporting the roof of a building.⁶⁹ While native Egyptian sources do not specifically tell of this Byblite episode,⁷⁰ they do relate Osiris to water and vegetation,⁷¹ and there is evidence that Osiris received cult in Byblos as early as the New Kingdom.⁷² Thus while we may critique Plutarch for the specifics of Byblos, we must acknowledge his veracity in these relationships.

Once Plutarch’s narrative has placed Osiris in Byblos, it proceeds to tell of Isis’s devastation at the loss of her spouse. Mourning wildly, she was told by some children that they had seen the chest go out a Nile branch, and searching for it, she found it in Byblos. As Isis sat near a fountain in Byblos, handmaids of the queen of Byblos approached her and visited with her, absorbing the divine fragrance characteristic of Isis and carrying it back to their mistress, the queen. The latter, enchanted with the perfume on her maids, befriended Isis, not knowing who she was, and made her the nurse of her young son. Isis nursed this child by putting her finger in his mouth while she also burned the mortal parts of his body, a story surely recalling to its audience the Homeric Hymn to Demeter.⁷³ As in the Greek hymn, the queen of Byblos became terribly upset at Isis’s behavior, at which point Isis revealed herself, demanded the tree-pillar, and cut the chest—that is, Osiris’s coffin—from it. Leaving the tree-pillar in Byblos, Isis took the coffin back to Egypt, and the rest is history, of a sort.

Clearly, Plutarch provides his audience with some ideas about Isis as a strong, even ruling figure in Osiris’s absence. This might appear surprising at first, but over the course of Egyptian history, a number of queens—among them Hatshepsut of the Eighteenth Dynasty and Cleopatra VII of the Ptolemaic period—came to provide strong female leadership in the absence of an adult male ruler. In addition, the activities of Seth as an opponent appear in earlier narratives, most notably the Twentieth-Dynasty “Contendings of Horus and Seth” and the slightly earlier tale of “Truth and Falsehood,” as well as in the mortuary texts. Thus, Seth’s role in Plutarch’s narrative is not entirely new. Similarly, the demise of Osiris at the hands of Seth occurs in earlier writings, albeit generally obliquely, while the posthumous engendering of Horus is present from the Pyramid Texts onward, as noted previously. One sees, therefore, that Plutarch, while bringing in some extraneous material, relates a variant of the Isis-Osiris myth known to Egyptologists from piecing together references from many

parts of the Egyptian literary corpus but that never appears in Egypt itself as a coherent narrative.

In conclusion, Hathor, although clearly not the original Mistress of Byblos (a deity who yet lacks a specific name), played an important role for Egyptians and others alike in Byblos beginning in the last half of the third millennium BCE; Isis, who appeared later in Egypt than Hathor, only began to receive cult in Byblos in the second quarter of the first millennium BCE. Even then, Isis appeared as a deity syncretized with Hathor, only gaining an independent role in relation to the area by the time of Plutarch's second-century-CE *De Iside et Osiride*. Finally, it should be noted that other deities also filled the role of Mistress of Byblos—not just Isis or Hathor-Isis, but also the Canaanite Astarte⁷⁴ and Aphrodite, a deity with whom Isis was also identified in the Hellenistic world.⁷⁵

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented as part of an invited panel at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Washington, D.C., November 19, 2006. The author thanks this version's peer reviewer for some constructive and thought-provoking comments.
2. Rory B. Egan, "Isis: Goddess of the Oikoumene," in Larry Hurtado (ed.), *Goddesses in Religions and Modern Debate* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 123–142; J. Gwyn Griffiths (ed., trans., commentary), *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride* (Cambridge: University of Wales Press, 1970), 253.
3. Harold H. Nelson, "Fragments of Egyptian Old Kingdom Stone Vases from Byblos," *Berytus* (1934). Accessed March 4, 2002, <http://almashriq.hiof.no/ddc/projects/archaeology/berytus-back/berytuso1/19.html>.
4. Maurice Chéhab, "Noms de personnalités égyptiennes découverts au liban," *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth* 22 (1969): 1–47; Maurice Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos, 1926–1932* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Guenther, 1934).
5. All examples found in de Buck derive from Deir el-Bersha in the southern portion of northern or Lower Egypt, for which see Adriaan de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939).
6. Francis Llewellyn Griffith, *Hieratic Papyri from Kabun and Gurob (Principally of the Middle Kingdom): Plates* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1898), Plate XXVIII, 5; Griffith, *Hieratic Papyri from Kabun and Gurob (Principally of the Middle Kingdom): Text* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1898), 69–70.
7. For a discussion of Isis on seals in the second millennium in the Levant, see Beatrice Tessier, *Egyptian Iconography on Syro-Palestinian Cylinder Seals of the Middle Bronze Age* (Fribourg, Switzerland: University Press, 1996), 76.
8. Note that in the Pyramid Texts, Hathor appears only three times, while Isis, either alone or with her sister Nephthys, appears nearly one hundred times.
9. Griffiths, 36.
10. Rudolf Anthes, "Das Sonnenauge in den Pyramidentexten," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache* 86 (1961): 1–21. Page 8 suggests the sun disk may in fact be a star, based on the pre-dynastic artifacts identified by A. J. Arkell, "An Archaic Representation of Hathor," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 44 (1958): 5 and plates VIII and IX; Arkell, "An Archaic Representation of Hathor," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 41 (1955): 125–126; E. Martin Burgess and A. J. Arkell, "The Reconstruction of the Hathor Bowl," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 44 (1958): 6–11.
11. This name has a number of possible interpretations. Beyond the literal hieroglyph, which may point to the location at which the early Horus king was acclaimed as such as suggested by Rudolf Anthes, "Egyptian Theology in the Third Millennium B.C.," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18 (1959): 169–212, possible meanings include the following: the heaven in the falcon-god Horus flies; the womb from which the god Horus the Elder emerged; the house where princes are raised, as suggested by Wolfgang Helck, "Herkunft und Deutung einiger Züge des frühägyptischen Königsbildes," *Anthropos* 49 (1954): 961–991; and kin of the house of the Horus King, the Distant One (falcon).
12. For translation and commentary see Griffiths. See also Anthes, "Egyptian Theology in the Third Millennium B.C."
13. See, for example, Pyr. Utt. 532 (§1255–1256), 532 (§1280–1282), 230 (§230), 250 (§308), and 259 (§312).
14. Griffiths, 35; Susan Tower Hollis, *Isis Until the End of the Old Kingdom*. Paper presented at the 41st Annual Meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt, 1990.
15. Anthes, "Egyptian Theology in the Third Millennium B.C.;" Henry G. Fischer, "Representations of *Dryt*-Mourners in the Old Kingdom," in Fischer (ed.), *Egyptian Studies I: Varia* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976), 39–50; Hollis 1990.
16. Pyr. Utt. 366, §§632a–633b [T, P, M, N], my translation. See also James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 81 and 95, n. 27; R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts: Supplement of Hieroglyphic Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 120–121.
17. A common ancient Egyptian euphemism for the deceased Osiris.
18. Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings, Volume I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 83.
19. In a text from the Ptolemaic Period (304–180 BCE), she states that she "acted as a man" to make the deceased Osiris's name "live upon earth." (From Pap. Louvre 3079 I, col. 110, lines 9–10, my translation.) See Jean Claude Goyon, "Le cérémonial de glorification d'Osiris du papyrus du Louvre I. 3079 (Colonnes 110 à 112)," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 65 (1967): 89–108; Fayza Mohamed Hussein Haikal, *Two Hieratic Funerary Papyri of Nesmin. Part One: Introduction, Transcriptions and Plates* (Bruxelles: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1970), 49; Haikal, *Two Hieratic Funerary Papyri of Nesmin. Part Two: Translation and Commentary* (Bruxelles: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1972), 51.

20. Jonathan Cott, "Isis and Osiris: A Conversation with Robert S. Bianchi." *Isis and Osiris: Exploring the Goddess Myth* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 85–95.
21. Maurice Dunand, *Byblos: Its History, Ruins, and Legends*, trans. H. Tabet, 2nd ed. (Beruit: Librairie Adrien-Maisonnette, 1964), 20; Nina Jidejian, *Byblos Through the Ages* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq Publishers, 1968), 15–16.
22. Amnon Ben-Tor, "New Light on the Relations Between Egypt and Southern Palestine During the Early Bronze Age," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 281 (1991): 3–10; Edwin C. M. van den Brink, "Late Protodynastic–Early First Dynasty Egyptian Finds in Late Early Bronze Age I Canaan: An Update." In C. J. Eyre (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Egyptologists, Cambridge, 3–9 September 1995*. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 82 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1998), pp. 215–223.
23. Muntaha Saghieh, *Byblos in the Third Millennium B.C. A Reconstruction of the Stratigraphy and a Study of the Cultural Connections* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1983), 129–131.
24. Jidejian, 15–16.
25. See Morris Silver, *Economic Structures of Antiquity* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), especially Chapter 1, "Gods as Inputs and Outputs of the Ancient Economy."
26. William W. Hallo, "Trade and Traders in the Ancient Near East: Some New Perspectives," in D. Charpin and F. Joannès (eds.), *Las Circulation des Biens, des Personnes et des Idées dans le Proche-Orient Ancien. Actes de la XXXVIII Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (Paris, 8–10 juillet 1991)* (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1992), 351–356.
27. Silver 1995, 3.
28. Silver 1995, 18–23.
29. Silver 1995, 7.
30. Corinne Bonnet, *Astarté. Dossier documentaire et perspectives historiques*. Contributi alla Storia della Religione Fenicio-Punica II (Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, 1996).
31. T. G. H. James, *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Inscriptions in the Brooklyn Museum I*. (Brooklyn, NY: The Brooklyn Museum, 1974), 7 and 22, and pl. 24. Her name occurs on a cylinder seal belonging to a man (so identified by James) named Hathor-Neferty, the provenance of which is unknown.
32. Richard Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 139–140; Deborah Vischak, "Hathor," in Donald B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt 2* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 82–85; C. J. Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth: Two Key Figures of the Ancient Egyptian Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 22–24, 30–34; Bleeker, "Isis and Hathor, Two Ancient Egyptian Goddesses," in Carl Olson (ed.), *The Book of the Goddess Past and Present* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 29–48; Helck 1954, 976.
33. For an alternative view of the reasons for the rise of Hathor, see Robyn A. Gillam, "Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 32 (1995): 211–237.
34. Schafik Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches)*. Münchner Ägyptologische Studien 4 (Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1963); Wilkinson 2003, 141–142.
35. Jürgen von Beckerath, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen*, 2nd ed. (Mainz am Rhine: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1999), 62–63.
36. Beckerath 1999, 78–79.
37. Beckerath 1999, 25–26, 62–63, and 78–79.
38. Anthes 1961, 8, has suggested this disk may represent rather a star.
39. Vischak. Furthermore, although Vischak suggests she was a prehistoric goddess, my current work suggests otherwise.
40. Arkell 1955; Arkell 1958; Burgess and Arkell 1958.
41. James, 7, #22 and pl. 24.
42. Fischer, "The Cult and Nome of the Goddess Bat," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 1 (1962): 7–23; Fischer, "Bat in the New Kingdom," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 2 (1963): 50–51.
43. Alex Applegate, Achilles Gautier, and Steven Duncan, "The North Tumuli of the Nabta Late Neolithic Ceremonial Complex," in Fred Wendorf, Romuald Schild, and associates (eds.), *Holocene Settlement of the Egyptian Sahara* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2001), 468–488; Mary M. A. McDonald, "Dakhleh Oasis in Predynastic and Early Dynastic Times: Bashendi B and the Sheikh Muftah Cultural Units," *Archéo-Nil* 12 (2002): 109–120; McDonald, "Neolithic Cultural Units and Adaptations in the Dakhleh Oasis," in C. S. Churcher and A. J. Mills (eds.), *Reports from the Survey of the Dakhleh Oasis Western Desert of Egypt 1977–1987* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 117–132; Harry Thurston, *Island of the Blessed: The Secrets of Egypt's Everlasting Oasis* (East Mississauga, Ontario: Doubleday Canada, 2003), 87; David Wengrow, "Rethinking 'Cattle Cults' in Early Egypt: Towards a Prehistoric Perspective on the Narmer Palette," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 11 (2001): 91–104.
44. McDonald 2002; Fred Wendorf and Romuald Schild, "Conclusions," in Fred Wendorf, Romuald Schild, and associates (eds.), *Holocene Settlement of the Egyptian Sahara* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2001), 648–675. Both sources, as well as a number of others, note that cattle were wealth on the hoof and thus not slaughtered on a regular basis for their meat.
45. Hollis, "Hathor, Mistress of Byblos." Paper presented at the Tenth International Congress of Egyptologists, Rhodes, Greece, 2008.
46. Geraldine Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 1993).
47. Barbara Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty. Fascicle II*. (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1984), 140, #1443.
48. Hermann Ranke, *Die altägyptische Personennamen* (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1935), 198, 195.
49. Prentice Duell and Sakkarah Expedition, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), pl. 134, Chamber A 113, 132. See Allam, 132, n. 134.
50. Allam, 132, n. 134.
51. Tessier, 66.

52. William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), xviii–xxii.
53. Moran 1992, xiv–xv.
54. Possibly one or more went to Semenkhhara, depending on how one translates the royal name Huriya (*Huriy^o*) according to Moran 1992, xxxi.
55. Letters 68:4, 69–70, 73–79, 81, 85, 87, 89, 92, 95, 101, 105, 107–110, 112, 114, 116–19, 121–25, 130, 132; also 83:54–55; 84:42–43; 85:85–86; 86:25–26. Moran 1992, 386.
56. Moran 1992, index.
57. Thanks to the peer reviewer of this article for this suggestion.
58. For further discussion, see Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian “Tale of Two Brothers”: The Oldest Fairy Tale in the World* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 167–168; Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian Tale of Two Brothers: A Mythological, Religious, Literary, and Historico-Political Study*, 2nd ed. (Oakville, CT: Bannerstone Press, 2008), 192; Sally L. D. Katary, “The Two Brothers as Folktale: Constructing the Social Context,” *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 24 (1994 [1997]): 39–70.
59. The seals discussed above have no clear relationship to Byblos, only to the Syro-Palestinian area, and Tessier questions whether any of the pre-New Kingdom seals lacking clear identity refer to Isis in Tessier, 76.
60. Edward Lipinski, *Dieux et déesses de l’univers phénicien et punique* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters & Departement Oosterse Studies, 1995), 72.
61. Bonnet, 20–22; Lipinski 1995, 72–73; see Maria Münster, *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis vom Alten Reich bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches* (Berlin: Verlag Bruno Hessling, 1968), 119–120.
62. Allam; Griffiths, pp. 54 & 322; Münster.
63. See also Richard J. Clifford, *Phoenician Religion* (1990): 61; Lipinski, 72.
64. Lipinski, 73.
65. Griffiths, 19.
66. Griffiths, 137.
67. Griffiths, 137.
68. Griffiths, 139.
69. Griffiths, 141.
70. J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and His Cult* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 28.
71. Griffiths 1980, 151 ff; Hollis 1990, 127–130; Hollis 2008, 143–146. See PT §1002a–1003a.
72. Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 54 and 321.
73. For example, Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 324–325.
74. Bonnet, 19–20 and passim.
75. Bonnet, 27–28.
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