**Ammut**

Ammut was a creature which dwelled in the Hall of Ma'at awaiting the judgement of the deceased that passed through there. Those souls who were found unworthy to dwell in the Afterlife were devoured by her. The process of judgement involved the weighing of the deceased person's heart against the feather of Ma'at. If the heart (the seat of the soul, according to the ancient Egyptians) was found to be heavy with sin and impurities and did not balance with the feather, Ammut would devour them. The goddess was depicted with the head of a crocodile, the forequarters of a lion, and the hindquarters of a hippopotamus.

  **Anuqet**

Anqet was originally a water goddess from Sudan. Her name meant, "to embrace" which was interpreted to mean that her embrace during the annual Nile floods fertilized the fields. Later, she became a goddess of lust.

**Bastet**

The goddess Bastet was usually represented as a woman with the head of a domesticated cat. However, up until 1000 BC she was portrayed as a lioness. Bastet was the daughter of Re, the sun god. It may have been through him that she acquired her feline characteristics. When Re destroyed his enemy Apep, he was usually depicted as a cat. As portrayed as a cat, she was connected with the moon (her son Khonsu was the god of the moon). When shown as a lioness, she is associated with sunlight. Bastet was the goddess of fire, cats, of the home and pregnant women. According to one myth, she was the personification of the soul of Isis. She was also called the "Lady of the East". As such, her counterpart as "Lady of the West" was Sekhmet. Bastet seemed to have two sides to her personality, docile and aggressive. Her docile and gentle side was displayed in her duties as a protector of the home, and pregnant women. Her aggressive and vicious nature was exposed in the accounts of battles in which the pharaoh was said to have slaughtered the enemy as Bastet slaughtered her victims.

 **Hathor**

The horned cow-goddess of love, she was also the deity of happiness, dance and music, and a protector of women. She is depicted as a cow, as a woman with the head of a cow, or as a woman with who wears the stylized cow-horns which hold in them the solar disk. Her symbols also included the papyrus reed, the snake and a rattle called a sistrum. Early in Egyptian mythology she was known has Horus' mother (later Isis assumed this role ) but later referred to as Horus’s wife. Proof of this is seen in her name, "Hathor" which means the "house of Horus". As wife of Horus, the queen of Egypt was identified with her. It was said that when a child was born, Seven Hathors came to his bedside to announce his fate. The Seven Hathors were believed to know the future and the moment of death for every Egyptian. A person's destiny depended on the hour of their death and the luck of ill-fortune was connected with it. It was believed that the Hathors would exchange a prince born to ill-fortune with a more fortunate child, therefore protecting the dynasty and the nation. The Hathors were shown as a group of young women playing tambourines and wearing the disk and horns of Hathor. During Ptolemaic times (when Greeks ruled over Egypt), they were identified with the Pleiades. In the Story of Re, she was created by her father Re as "Sekhmet" as a destroyer of men, who were disobedient to him. Later Re changed his mind, but even he could not stop her from killing men. He then disguised beer as blood and when Sekhmet became drunk, she could no longer kill and was known thereafter as Hathor, a goddess of love.

**Isis**

Isis is depicted as a woman wearing a vulture head-dress and the solar disk between a pair of horns (which is sometimes underneath the symbol of her name , the throne). Occasionally she wears the double-crowns of the North and the South with the feather of Ma'at, or a pair of ram's horns. Isis as a woman (not a goddess) is portrayed with the ordinary head-dress of a woman, but with the uraeus over her forehead. As the wife of Osiris, Isis assisted her husband during his earthly reign. In the Pyramid Texts, allusions are made that indicate that Isis foresaw her husband's murder. Following his death, Isis tirelessly searched for his body so that he may be properly buried and may rest in peace in the Underworld. Through her magic, she brought Osiris back to life so that he could impregnate her with their son Horus. Isis was a vital link between the gods and mankind. The pharaoh was her son, as the living Horus. In the Pyramid Texts the pharaoh suckles as Isis' divine breasts. There are numerous statues and imagery of Isis holding the young Horus in her lap. Often the images of the queen-mother and current pharaoh were styled in the same way. Isis protected Horus during his childhood from his uncle Seth who wished to murder him. It was her hole that he might one day grow up to avenge his father's murder. In the Book of the Dead, Isis is regarded as the giver of life and food to the dead. She may also be one of the judges of the dead. Another of her roles was to protect Imsety, one of the four sons of Horus, as he guarded over the liver of the deceased. Isis was a great magician and is famous for the use of her magical skills. For example, she created the first cobra and used it's venomous bite to coerce Re into revealing his secret name. From the beginning of Egypt's history to the end, Isis was the greatest goddess of Egypt. She was the beneficial goddess and mother whose love encompassed every living creature. Isis was also the purest example of the loving wife and mother and it was in this capacity that the Egyptian people loved her the most.

**Ma’at**

Ma'at was the goddess of the physical and moral law of Egypt, of order and truth. She said to be the wife of [Thoth](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/thoth.htm) and had [eight children](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/ogdoad.htm) with him. The most important of her children was [Amon](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/amon.htm). These eight were the chief gods of Hermopolis and according to the priests there, they created the earth and all that is in it. Ma'at is depicted in the form of a woman seated or standing. She holds the sceptre in one hand and the [ankh](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/ankh.htm) in the other. A symbol of Ma'at was the [ostrich feathe](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/feather.htm)r and she is always shown wearing it in her hair. In some pictures she has a pair of wings attached to her arms. Occasionally she is shown as a woman with an ostrich feather for a head. Another symbol of Ma'at is the primeval mound () upon which the creator god stood at the beginning of time. It was when the world was created and chaos was eliminated that the principles of Ma'at were set in place. The Egyptians believed that if the pharaoh ever failed to live by and maintain *ma'at* that chaos would return to Egypt and the world and all would be destroyed. When the dead were judged, it was the feather of Ma'at that their hearts were weighed against. If hearts of the deceased are as "light as a feather", they were granted eternal life in the Duat. The near-weightlessness of their hearts indicated that their souls were not burdened with sin and evil. If their hearts did not "measure up", the soul of the deceased was consumed by Ammut. The last role of Ma'at was to help guide the Sun-god [Re](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/re.htm) as he made his journey across the skies. It was she that determined the course that his boat took across the [sky](http://www.egyptianmyths.net/sky.htm) each day. It was sometimes said that she actually traveled in his boat with him, guiding its direction.

**Anput**

Anput (Input) was the personification of the seventeenth nome of Upper Egypt. Her name is merely the female version of the name of her husband, Anubis ("t" is the feminine ending and Anubis was known as Anpu or Inpu to the Egyptians) and she is not often referred to except in relation to the seventeenth nome. However, Anput was thought to be the mother of Kebechet the goddess of purification.She was depicted as a woman wearing a standard topped by a jackal, or as a large black dog or jackal. Probably the most notable example is that of the triad of Menkaure, Hathor and Anput. She was ocassionally depicted as a woman with the head of a jackal, but this is very rare.

 **Amentet**

The ancient Egyptian Goddess Amentet (also known as Ament, Amentit, Imentet and Imentit) was the consort of Aken (the ferryman of the dead). Her name means "She of the west". This was not just a geographical statement, although some scholars consider that she originated from Libya (west of Egypt). As the sun set in the west, it was associated with death and the netherworld. The name Amentet referred to both the west bank of the Nile and to the world of the dead, and the dead were sometimes known as "westerners". Originally, Amenti (or Amentet) was considered to be the place where the sun set at the entrance to the netherworld, but the name was soon applied to cemeteries and tombs across Egypt. As a goddess of the dead, Amentet is thought to have lived in a tree at the edge of the desert overlooking the gates to the underworld. She was often depicted in tombs and coffins, protecting the dead. However, she was also a fertility goddess. She met the souls of the recently deceased and offered them bread and water before ushering them into the realm of the dead. This sustenance revitalised them and prepared them for the rebirth of their souls and the trials they would face on their way to the "field of reeds" (paradise).She was sometimes merged with Hathor, Isis and Neith, Mut, and Nut. She was also closely related to Nephthys and Ma´at, and according to some myths was the daughter of Horus and Hathor.She was often depicted as a queen occassionally carrying a sceptre and the ankh of life. On her head she wears the sign representing the west (a semi circle on top of one long and one short pole) and a feather and or a hawk. In the depictions in coffins she is often given wings, and in her association with Isis and Nepthys she was depicted as a kite. The goddess was sometimes paired with Ra-Horakthy, who represented the rising sun while she represented the setting sun. She also appears with Iabet, (the goddess of the eastern desert) in the Book of the Earth. Her main centres of worship were the western Delta, Memphis, Abydos and Luxor and Karnak.

**Hatmehyt**

Hatmehyt (or Hatmehit) was a fish-goddess worshipped in the Delta area of [Ancient Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/index.html), particularly in Mendes (Per-banebdjedet or place of [Banebdjed](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/banebdjed.html)). The standard for the Nome was the symbol of a fish, confirming Hatmehyt as the pre-eminent deity of the area. However, in later times her position was usurped by [Banebdjed](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/banebdjed.html) (an aspect of [Osiris](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/osiris.html)) who was considered to be her consort and was worshipped in the female form of Banebdjedet. She was absorbed by [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html) (the wife of [Osiris](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/osiris.html)), leading to the view that she (as an aspect of [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html)) was the mother of [Harpocrates](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/horuschild.html) (Harpakhred, "Horus the child"). Her name can be translated as "she who is in front of the fishes" or "Foremost of the fish". This could either suggest that she was the most important of the (few) fish cults, or that she was considered to be the oldest fish deity. She was sometimes depicted as a fish (either a dolphin or a lepidotus fish) or a woman with a "Fish" emblem on her head.

 **Hededet**

Hededet was a scorpion goddess of [Ancient Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/index.html) who offered protection against scorpion and snake bites. Because of her skill against snakes, she was considered to be one of the deities who protected her father [Ra](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ra.html) from the dreaded serpent [Apep](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/apep.html) in the underworld. She was originally worshipped around Nekhen (second district of [Upper Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomesupper.html)). However, although she is referred to in the "Book of the dead" (from the [New Kingdom](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/newkingdom.html)) she was largely absorbed by another local scorpion goddess, [Serqet](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/serqet.html), and by the ever popular [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html).

**Anat**

Anat was an ancient Canaanite deity who became popular in ancient Egypt towards the end of the Middle Kingdom. Ramesses II adopted Anat as his personal guardian in battle and expanded the shrine to Anat when he undertook the restoration of Tanis. He also named his dog "Anat in vigor" and had a daughter (who later became his wife) called "Bint-Anat" ("Daughter of Anat").Anat was a goddess of fertility, sexual love, hunting and war, and as such was rather a paradoxical deity. She was considered to be the mother of the gods, but was also known as "the Virgin". She was sometimes known as "the Wanton" (because of her lust for sex and war), the Fairest daughter-sister of Baal, "the Lady", "the Destroyer", "Strength of Life", and "the Lady of the Mountain". She also had a number of epithets which seem to have been peculiarly Egyptian, most notably "Anat-her" ("Agreeable Anat"), "Herit-Anta" ("error of Anat") and around Elephantine ([first name](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomesupper.html#1) of [Upper Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomesupper.html)) the hebrew "Beth-El" ("House of God").The cuniform texts describe her as an aggressive and ruthless goddess who destroys the enemies of Baal and wades through pools of their blood. She even hunts down and kills Mot (death) when he slays Baal. However, she also had a more gentle side. As a goddess of sexuality she was considered to be the most beautiful of all of the gods, and as a fertility goddess she protected the people, animals and the crops. She was originally considered to be the daughter of El, and the sister and wife of Baal. In Egypt she was regarded as the daughter of [Ra](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ra.html) and the wife of [Set](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/set.html) (who was associated with Baal) along with her sister Astarte. However, in Memphis she was also thought to be the daughter of [Ptah](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ptah.html), and the hebrew workers of the eighteenth dynasty (New Kingdom) considered her to be the wife of Andjety, who was associated with Osiris. The Egyptians also associated her with Neith (a war goddess from the Delta who was also associated with weaving). Like Neith, Anat was often depicted bearing either a spear or a spindle. She was also associated with the precious dye known as Tyrian Purple (which despite the name was sometimes almost blood red in colour) and the murex snail from which the dye was made.She was worshipped in Memphis with all of the major gods and goddesses, but also had shrines in Tanis (the Hyksos capital) and Beth-Shan (in Palestine). Anat was also worshiped in the Temple of Yahweh by the Jewish settlers on the island of Elephantine.The Phoenecians generally depicted Anat as a naked woman with exaggerated sexual organs bearing a bow and arrow (sometimes exchanged for a spear or a weaving spindle). She was often accompanied by a lion, her sacred animal. In Egypt she was often given a plumed crown which resembled the White Crown and carried either a spear, battle axe and shield or a scepter and an [Ankh](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ankh.html).

**Hemsut**

Hemsut (Hemuset) was the Goddesses of Fate, destiny and protection in [Ancient Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/index.html). She was closely associated with the concept of the ka (life force or spirit) and could be seen as the female personification of the masculine ka. She could also be seen as the personification of the creative potential in the primeaval water from which everything was created. She was generally depicted as a women bearing a shield with two crossed arrows above it (the symbol of [Neith](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/neith.html)). Occasionally, she was also depicted as kneeling a women holding a child in her arms. Acording to the Memphite theology she were created by [Ptah](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ptah.html) but in Sais she was closely connected with [Neith](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/neith.html) who was said to have drawn her from the waters of [Nun](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nun.html).

**Kuaket**

In ancient Egyptian mythology, Kuaket (or Keket) was one of the eight primordial elements in the [Ogdoad](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ogdoad.html) creation myth. She represented darkness in combination with her male aspect [Kuk](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/kuk.html). She was associated with the dusk and given the epithet "bringer-in of the night".Kauket was a fairly obscure deity who was rarely referred to outside of the Ogdoad myths. In fact, she seems to have been considered as a representation of duality (with Kuk) rather than a distinct goddess. She was depicted as a snake or a snake-headed woman (like the other three female elements).

**Heqet**

Heqet (Heket) was a goddess of childbirth and fertility in [Ancient Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/index.html). She was depicted as a frog, or a woman with the head of a frog. The meaning of her name is not certain, but possibly derived from the word "heqa" meaning "ruler" or "sceptre". Frogs symbolised fruitfulness and new life, and it is thought that the her priestesses were trained midwives. According to one tradition, she was the wife of [Khnum](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/khnum.html), the creator god of Abu (Elephantine). He created each person on his potter's wheel, and she breathed life into them before they were placed in their mother's womb. Heqet and Khnum are depicted on [Hatshepsut's](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/hatshepsut.html) birth colonnade in her [Mortuary Temple](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/hatshepsutmorttemple.html) at [Deir el Bahri](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/deirelbahri.html). Heqet holds an [ankh](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ankh.html) (symbolising life) to the infant Hatshepsut and her ka. According to another tradition, She was the wife of Heh and it was he who crafted each person before she brought life to them. Finally, she was sometimes considered to be the wife of [Horus the elder](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/heru-ur.html), although as a form of [Hathor](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/hathor.html) she was also his mother. Pregnant women wore amulets depicting Heqet for protection, and during the [Middle Kingdom](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/middlekingdom.html) ritual ivory knives and clappers inscribed with her name were used to ward off evil during childbirth. She could also bring on labour and offer protection during labour. Heqet assisted in this manner in the deliverance of three fifth dynasty kings, according to a myth recorded in the [Westcar papyrus](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/westcar-papyrus.html) in the [Story of the birth of the three pharaohs](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/westcar-pharaohs-birth.html) which appears at the end of the tale of ["Khufu and the Magicians"](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/khufumag.html).She was also involved in the resurrection of the deceased. In the pyramid texts she assists the pharaoh as he makes his way to the eternal stars sky and is depicted beneath the funeral beir of the deceased [Osiris](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/Osiris.html) in Denderah. There was a [Ptolemaic](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/graeco.html) temple to Heqet at Qus, but only one pylon remains. There is also a reference to a temple at Her-wer in a tomb at Tuna el-Gebel, but so far this temple has not been found.

**Hesat**

Hesat (Heset, Hesahet or Hesaret) was a cow goddess of [Ancient Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/index.html) who was considered to be the earthly manifestation of [Hathor](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/hathor.html). was called "the creator of all nourishment" and her name has the same root the word for milk , ("hesa") which was known as the "beer of Heset". She was pictured as a divine white cow, either with a sun disc between her horns or carrying a tray of food on her horns and milk flowing from her udders. Hesat was seen as the wet-nurse of the other gods, minor patron of pregnant women and nursing mothers. She was also thought to be the mother of [Anubis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/anubis.html). Thus the creator of all nourishment also gave birth to a god of the dead (later the god of mummification). She was the wife of [Ra](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ra.html), whose earthly manifestation was the [Mnevis Bull](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/bullcult.html#mnevis). The triad of the Mnevis, Hesat and Anubis were worshipped in Heliopolis.

**Kebechet**

In ancient Egyptian mythology, Kebechet (also known as Qebehet, Kebhut, Kebehut, Qebehut, and Kabechet) was the goddess of freshness. She was the daughter of [Anubis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/anubis.html) (Anpu) and his consort [Anput](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/anput.html) and was thought to assist her father in his role as the god of embalming. She was particularly associated with embalming fluid used during the mummification process. Her name includes the root of the ancient Egyptian word "kbch" which means "to offer libations" or "to purify" and the root of the word "wt" which refers to the place of embalming (and appears in Anubis´ epithet "imy wt" - he who is in the place of embalming). However, her name also resembles the word "qebeshu", which means "cold water". As a result, her name is usually translated as "cooling water". Kebechet was often depicted as a snake, sometimes with a body of stars. She was also depicted as a woman with the head of a snake. Occasionally she takes the form of an ostrich, linking her to the goddess of [Ma´at](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/maat.html) who represented justice or balance and was involved in the judgement of the dead.

**Iabet**

Iabet (Abet, Abtet, Ab, Iabtet, or Iab) was the personification of the eastern desert, known as Khentet-Iabet ("Before the East" or "Foremost of the East"). She was often associated with [Amentet](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/amentet.html), the goddess of the west. Iabet was the mother and wife of the god [Min](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/min.html) (known as "The Bull of His Mother"), who was also a god of the Eastern Desert and fertility. She was also linked to [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html), [Nephthys](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nephthys.html) and to [Hathor](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/hathor.html), who all used the title Khentet-Iabet. Sometimes, in a funerary context, [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html) would replace Amentet and Iabet would be replaced by [Nephthys](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nephthys.html). Iabet was the goddess of fertility and rebirth. She often appears in [New Kingdom](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/newkingdom.html) tombs and funerary goods in scenes relating to the journey of the sun god, [Ra](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/ra.html), who she was believed to purify as he passed through the underworld, linking her closely to [Kebechet](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/kebechet.html) (the daughter of [Anubis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/anubis.html)) who purified the dead with water. However, she rarely appears in the tombs of the royal family. In the Amduat, Iabet is depicted as a woman with her arms by her sides, along with eleven other goddesses, including [Neith](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/neith.html), [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html) and [Tefnut](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/tefnut.html), collectively known as "Those who give praise to Ra as he passes over Wernes".

**Meretseger**

She was a protective deity, but was also greatly feared. The workmen of the necropolis left numerous stelae dedicated to her. They believed she would strike down anyone who desecreated a tomb as well as anyone who committed a crime or broke an oath. It was thought that she could cause immediate blindness or inflict a snake or scorpion bite on the guilty party. However, she was merciful and would cure anyone who repented and promised to atone for their actions. For example, a worker named Neferabu recorded that he had been punished by Meretseger for his sins. However, he confessed and did his best to make amends and the goddess forgave him and cured him of his affliction. These notions of "sin" and "repentance" were not common in Ancient Egypt. They believed in [Ma'at](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/maat.html) (balance or order) and chaos rather than "good" and "evil" and no other deity rewarded atonement and punished sin in this manner.

**Menhet**

Menhet (also known as Menhit or Menkhet) was a Lion Goddess from Nubia. Her name means "the one who sacrifices" but she was also known as "the slaughterer". As a war goddess she led the pharaohs troops into battle, but in her calmer aspect she was associated with the Nebty ("the two ladies" who represented the pharaohs rule of [Upper](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomesupper.html) and [Lower](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomeslower.html) Egypt), and was also a personification of the north wind. She was associated with [Neith](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/neith.html) (an ancient war Goddess) in Esna and was also compared with the ["Eye of Ra"](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/eye.html) (particularly [Tefnut](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/tefnut.html), [Sekhmet](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/%20Sekhmet.html) , or [Hathor](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/hathor.html)). In [Upper Egypt](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/nomesupper.html) she was worshiped as the spouse of [Khnum](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/khnum.html) and the mother of [Heka](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/heka.html) (Hike), while in Thinis she was the consort of [Anhur](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/anhur.html) (Onuris). In Heliopolis she was identified with [Isis](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/isis.html) and in Leotopolis she was considered to be an aspect of [Tefnut](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/tefnut.html). In fact, It is likely that the story in which Tefnut runs away to Nubia and is brought back by [Shu](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/shu.html) and [Thoth](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/thoth.html) was originally written about [Menhet](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/menhet) and [Anhur](http://www.ancientegyptonline.co.uk/anhur.html) (particularly as the latter´s name actually means "he who brings back the distant one".

**Naunet**

Naunet was the feminine form of Nun, who represented the primeval waters of chaos in the Ogdoad theology of Hermopolis. She was rarely described as a personified deity, and is not often mentioned without her partner Nun. She was sometimes described as the mother of the sun god along with the composite deity Nun-Ptah

**Nehmetawy**

Nehmetawy (Nehmetawi, Nechmetawaj) was a fairly obscure goddess whose name translates as "(one who) expels evil" but is also thought to imply "(one who) recovers stolen goods". She was goddess of justice, with the epithet "She that Rescues the Plundered".The first reference to her so far recovered dates to the New Kingdom but the majority of references to her are from the Graeco-Roman Period. She was worshipped in Hermopolis as the wife of Thoth but was also occasionally though to be the wife of Neheb-Kau. She was generally depicted as a woman nursing a child wearing a headdress in the form of a sistrum, (associating her with Hathor). In fact, it is often suggested that she was simply a form of this popular goddess as she often uses the same epithets. Furthermore, in the temple of Amun at Karnak, Hathor and Thoth appear together and Hathor is also given the name "Nehmetaway". It is also possible that Nehmetaway was a form of Seshat, the goddess of wisdom who was married to Thoth and was also considered to be an aspect of Hathor.

**Meskhenet**

Meskhenet was a goddess of childbirth, a divine midwife and protector of the birthing house. She was personified as the birthing brick on which ancient Egyptian women squatted while giving birth. Child mortality was high in the ancient world, and the Egyptians were very family orientated people so the birth of a child was a time of great celebration but also a nervous time for the parents. As a result they called on the assistance of a bewildering number of gods including Meskhenet. For example, In the tale of Raddjedet and her triplets (also known as Khufu and the magician), the birth was attended by Khnum, Isis and Nephthys but it was Meskhenet who proclaimed that each child would become pharaoh. Thus, Meskhenet was not simply a midwife. She was also a goddess of fate who could determine a person's destiny. This connects her with Shai (the god of destiny who determines the length of a person's life) and indeed the two are often depicted together along with Renenutet (who gave the child his or her secret name).She had the power to protect newborn babies and their mothers. Hatshepsut also claimed that Meskhenet promised to protect her "like Ra". Meskhenet also appears in the Halls of Ma'at (with Shai and Renenutet) where she was thought to testify to the character of the deceased. This suggests that she offered her protection from birth to death and beyond and that she could also assist in the deceased's symbolic rebirth in the Afterlife. Inscriptions in the temple of Khnum at Esna refer to "four Meskhenets" who accompanied Khnum and used magic to drive away evil spirits. Meskhenet was not particularly associated with any region or city, and no temples specifically dedicated to her have been discovered. However, she appears on birth bricks found all over the country and seems to have been a popular and respected deity. She was associated with the cow goddess Hathor, another goddess who was often depicted on the brith brick and was closely associated with childbirth. Furthermore, Meskhenet's symbol was composed of two loops at the top of a vertical stroke thought to represent the uterus of a heifer. Her name means "birthing place" and she was generally depicted as a birthing brick with a human head, or as a woman wearing the headdress of a cow's uterus.

**Nekhbet**

Nekhbet was the patron of Upper Egypt, appearing as one of the "Two ladies" in the Nebty name of the pharaoh (with her counterpart Wadjet). She was often called "Hedjet" (White Crown) in reference to the crown of Upper Egypt and regularly appears as a heraldic device representing Upper Egypt. She was also a protector of royal children and, in later periods, of all young children and expectant mothers. There is evidence that she was already popular in Predynastic Egypt but was specifically associated with the town of Nekheb ( her name actually means "she of Nekheb"). However, by the Early Dynastic Period Nekheb and Nekhen (cult center of Horus the Elder) had merged and she and Wadjet were combined to form the Nebty name of the pharaoh; her position as a representative of Upper Egypt was fully established. References in the Pyramid Texts (from the Fifth Dynasty) confirm that Nekhbet was also considered to be a creator goddess with the epithet "Father of Fathers, Mother of Mothers, who has existed from the beginning, and is Creator of this World". She was represented on the king´s Nemes headdress as a vulture or a snake and from the Forth Dynasty vulture headdress for great royal wife. Nekhbet was known as "pr wr" (Lady of the Great House - the Upper Egyptian "state" temple). During the Eighteenth Dynasty she and Wadjet offered their protection to all of the women of the royal family. This was indicated by the addition of two uraei (royal serpents) to their headdress. Unlike Heqet and Taweret, she was initially only thought to protect royal mothers and children. She was occasionally depicted as the divine mother or wet-nurse of the pharaoh and often appeared in vulture form hovering above the king holding the "shen" (representing eternity) and the royal flail (representing pharaonic authority). However, during the New Kingdom she seems to have extended her protection beyond the royal family to the common people. Nekhbet was thought to be the wife of Hapi, in his role as a patron of Upper Egypt, but was also associated with Horus (who was also associated with Upper Egypt). Because she often took the form of a griffon vulture and was associated with childbirth, she was closely associated with the goddess Mut. She was also associated with the bovine goddess Hathor and given the epithet "Great White Cow of Nekhb".

**Neith**

Neith (Nit, Net, Neit) was an ancient goddess of war and weaving. She was the patron goddess of the Red Crown of Lower Egypt and the city of Zau (Sais, in the 5th Nome of Lower Egtpt) in the Delta. According to the Iunyt (Esna) cosmology, Neith was the creator of the world and the mother of the sun, Ra. This made her the mother of all of the gods and connected her with Nun (a member of the Ogdoad of Hermopolis who was the personification of the primeaval waters of chaos from which Ra emerged at the beginning of time). However, she was also credited with creating Apep, the great serpent and the sworn enemy of Ra, by spitting into the waters of Nun. She was associated with two different emblems; a shield crossed with two arrows, or a weaving shuttle. It seems that the crossed arrows was her symbol during the predynastic period when she was considered to be a goddess of hunting and war known by the epithet, "Mistress of the Bow, Ruler of Arrows". The crossed arrows also formed the emblem of the town of Zau (Sais) and the name of the nome of which her city was the capital. The earliest recorded example of Neith being written using the crossed arrows is in the name of Queen Nihotep (thought to be the wife of Hor Aha, Early Dynastic period). It is not clear when the arrows were replaced by the weaving shuttle, or whether this was the result of confusion or an attempt to re-align Neith as a goddess of weaving. One creation myth suggested that she created the world by weaving, and it was sometimes suggested that she was connected to funerary rites because she was responsible for weaving the mummy wrappings (linking her to Nephthys). Neith was a powerful and popular deity who the other gods apparently consulted when they could not settle a dispute. For example, according to myth is was Neith who eventually ruled that Horus would be king of Upper and Lower Egypt instead of Set. In compensation she gave Set land and blessed his wedding to two foreign goddeses (Anat and Astarte). Her family relationships were typically confusing. During the Old Kingdom, she was regarded as the wife of Set (making it unlikely she would be called to rule against him and grant him extra wives!). However, her association with Set was dropped as he was re-interpreted as a force of evil. She was often considered to be the mother of Sobek, the crocodile god. In the Pyramid texts in Unas' tomb she is given the epithet "Nurse of Crocodiles". Yet, in later times she was considered to be the wife of Sobek rather than his mother. In addition, she was sometimes described as the wife of Khnum in Upper Egypt. In the form of a cow, she was linked to both Nut and Hathor and in late dynastic times she was regarded as a form of Hathor. She was also linked to Tatet (the goddess who dressed the dead). Herodotus described the annual festival in honour of Isis-Neith. Lamps and torches were kept burning until the morning, while everyone enjoyed a feast. Neith was associated with Anubis and Wepwawet (Upuaut), because of her epithet "Opener of the Ways". She was also one of the four goddesses (along with Isis, Nephthys and Serqet/Selket) who protected the deceased and the canopic jars (which were topped by the four sons of Horus ). Neith guarded the east side of the sarcophagus and protected Duamutef (the the jackal-headed god) as he watched over the stomach. Neith was usually depicted as a woman wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt, but was occasionally depicted as a cow in connection with her role as the mother of Ra (linking her with Hathor, Hesat and Bat). Her name links her with the crown of Lower Egypt which was known as "nt" . However, her name is also linked to the word for weaving ('ntt') and to one of the words used for water ("nt"). When she is refered to as the creator of the world her name is written using the hieroglyph of an ejaculating phallus, indicating that she was considered as an androgynous creator.

**Nephthys**

Nephthys was an ancient goddess, who was referenced in texts dating back to the Old Kingdom. She was a member of the Ennead of Heliopolis as the daughter of Geb and Nut and the sister of Osiris, Isis and Horus and the sister and wife of Set. When the Ennead and Ogdoad merged, Nephthys was given a place on Ra's boat so that she could accompany him on his journey through the underworld. Nephthys is the Greek pronunciation of her name. To the Ancient Egyptians she was Nebthwt (Nebhhwt or Nebthet) meaning "the Mistress of the House". The word "hwt" ("house") may refer to the sky (as in Hwt-hor, the "House of Horus" - the name of Hathor), but it also refers to either the royal family or Egypt as a whole. The latter makes a great deal of sense as she was described as the head of the household of the gods and was thought to extend her protection to the head female of every household. She was sometimes associated with Ptah-Tanen in representing Lower Egypt, while Khnum and Isis represented Upper Egypt. It seems that she was originally conceived of as the female counterpart of Set. He represented the desert, while she represented the air. Set was infertile (like the desert that he represented) and was frequently described as either bisexual or gay and so Nephthys was often considered to be barren. As a goddess of the air, she could take the form of a bird, and because she was barren she was associated with the vulture - a bird which the Egyptians believed did not bear children. The Egyptians thought that all vultures were female (because there is very little difference in the appearance of a male vulture), and that they were spontaneously created from the air. While the care shown by a mother vulture for her child was highly respected, the Egyptians also recognised that vultures fed on carrion and associated them with death and decay. As a result, Nephthys became a goddess of death and mourning. Although she was technically infertile, later myths claimed that she was the mother of Anubis by either Osiris or Set (depending on the myth). This came about because Anubis' position as the god of the dead was usurped by Osiris when the theologies of the Ennead and the Ogdoad merged. According to one myth Nephthys disguised herself as Isis to get the attention of her neglectful husband Set, but instead seduced Osiris (who apparently did not realise that it was Nephthys). An alternative myth made it clear that Nephthys intended to seduce Osiris from the beginning and drugged his wine to make her task easier, while a less common myth held that she did trick her husband into a brief daliance in order to concieve Anubis. It is suggested that this tale also explained the flowering of a plant in a normally barren area because Set apparently discovered the adultery when he found a flower left by his brother Osiris. Isis and Nephthys were very close despite Nephthys' alleged infidelity with Osiris (the husband of Isis) and her marriage to Set (the murderer of Osiris). Nephthys protected the body of Osiris and supported Isis as she tried to resurrect him. The goddesses are so similar in appearance that only their headdresses can distinguish them and they always appear together in funerary scenes. Together Isis and Nephthys could be said to represent day and night, life and death, growth and decay. In Heliopolis, Isis and Nephthys were represented by two virginal priestesses who shaved off all of their body hair and were ritually pure. Nephthys was usually depicted as a woman with the hieroglyphs of her name (a basket on top of the glyph representing the plan of an estate) on her head. She could also be depicted as a mourning woman, and her hair was compared to the strips of cloth used in mummification. She also occasionally appears as a hawk, a kite or a winged goddess in her role as a protector of the dead. Her major centers of worships were Heliopolis (Iunu, in the 13th Nome of Lower Egypt), Senu, Hebet, (Behbit), Per-mert, Re-nefert, Het-sekhem, Het-Khas, Ta-kehset, and Diospolites.

 **Nut**

Nut was the personification of the sky and the heavens. She was the daughter Shu and Tefnut and the granddaughter of the creator god (Atum or Ra). Her husband/brother was Geb the earth god. However, she could also be said to be the mother of Ra. In one myth Nut gives birth to the Sun-god daily and he passes over her body during the day before being swallowed at night only to be reborn the next morning. According to another myth Ra used the Atet (or Matet) boat to travel across her body until noon and then used the Sektet boat until sunset. She was thought to be the mother of five children on the five extra days of the Egyptian calendar known as the "epagomenal days of the year". Apparently, Ra became annoyed because Geb and Nut were locked in a perpetual embrace so he asked Shu to sperarate them. He also decreed that Nut should not bear children on any day in the calendar, but Thoth won the five "epagomenal" days days from the moon and Nut had five children: Osiris who was born on the first day, Horus the Elder on the second, Set on the third, Isis on the fourth, and Nephthys the last born on the fifth day. These days were a time of celebration all over Egypt. She was a cow goddess who adopted some of the attributes of Hathor. When Ra became tired of ruling, she up into the heavens on her back in the form of a cow. However, she generally takes the form of a naked woman covered with stars, holding her body up in an arch, facing downwards. Her arms and legs were the pillars of the sky, and hands and feet were thought to touch the ground at the four cardinal points on the horizon. Geb is often depicted beneath her (sometimes ithphallyically). She was just portraid as a woman wearing one of the hieroglyphs that made up her name, a round Egyptian pot. Because of her role in the rebirth of the sun, she became a mother-like protector of the dead who was often painted on the inside lid of the sarcophagus, protecting the mummy. There were many festivals to Nut through the year, including the "Festival of Nut and Ra" and the "Feast of Nut" and she appears in numerous depictions, yet no temples or specific cult centres are linked to her.

**Qadesh**

Qadesh (originally a Semitic deity whose worship was imported into Egypt during the New Kingdom) was a goddess of nature, beauty and sexual pleasure. Originally her husband was the god Reshep, a Syrian deity whose worship was introduced to Egypt during the Middle Kingdom. When her worship spread to Egypt she was associated with the fertility god Min. Min and Reshep were worshipped as a triad with Qadesh in which she was either the wife of both gods or the wife of Reshpu and the mother of Min.Qadesh was originally depicted as a naked woman standing on the back of a lion (outside Egypt it is sometimes a horse) with a crescent moon on her head. After her adoption into the Egyption pantheon she was more commonly depicted wearing the headdress of Hathor or a pair of cows horns and a sun disc (also linked with Hathor and the "Eye or Ra") and a tight-fitting sheath dress. She was often shown holding snakes (thought to represent male genetalia) or a papyrus plant (representing Reshep) in her right hand and lotus flowers (representing either female genetalia or Min) in her left hand. Like Bes and Hathor, she is always pictured facing forward rather than in profile.Her name is possibly related to the hebrew word "qedesh". The meaning of the word is problematic. It is often translated as "holy woman" and (according to some) refers to the sacred prostitutes of the cult of Asherah known as Quedeshot (the Semitic nature goddess who was associated with Hathor in Egypt). In fact, Qadesh is sometimes thought of as an aspect of Asherah rather than a distinct goddess. However, other scholars have suggested that she was a distinct goddess and that the connection with prostitution is due to early mistranslations of biblical texts. They suggest that actually the word related to temple staff, and held no sexual association.

**Renenutet**

Renenutet (also known as Termuthis, Ernutet, Renenet) was a cobra goddess from the Delta area. She was a powerful goddess, whose gaze destroyed her enemies. However, the ancient Egyptians had no reason to fear her as she offered them protection in many areas of their life. She was depicted either as a woman, a cobra or a woman with the head of a cobra wearing a double plumed headdress or the solar disk. She was also depicted with a lions head, like Hathor in her form of the "Eye of Ra". In the underworld she became a fearsome fire-breathing cobra who could kill with one gaze.Her name may derive from the words "rnn" (to bring up, or nurse) and "wtt" (snake), but others have suggest that "rnnt" can mean "fortune" or "riches". A further possibility is that the first syllable is "rn", translated as "name". This would certainly fit with her role in naming children, but those who support this view tend to translate her name as "She who is in the name" which doesn´t actually fit the rest of the hieroglyphs. This brings us to a further possibility. Some sources refer to a separate snake goddess named Renenet, who was a goddess of nursing. They may well be one and the same, or they could have become merged over time, but it is also possible that the two have simply become confused by historians.Renenutet was sometimes considered to be the wife of Geb (the earth god) and the mother of Nehebkau (the snake god who guarded the entrance to the underworld and protected Ra as he passed through every night), but other traditions held that she was married to Sobek or Shai, the god of destiny. She was the mother of Nepri, the personification of corn, who was closely associated with Osiris. However, as an example of perfect motherhood, she was merged with Isis (Osiris´s wife) as Isermithis or Thermounthis.To the ancient Egyptians, names were words of great power. As the Goddess of suckling, Renenutet gave each newborn baby a secret name along with its mother's milk. In this role she was given the epithet "She Who Rears". She also protected children from curses. In fact, the child was said to "have Renenutet upon his shoulder from his first day". In this role she was linked with Meskhenet, a goddess of childbirth, who actually oversaw the labour. The ancient Egyptians believed that in order for a person to enjoy eternal life, their image and their name must survive. As Renenutet gave each person their name, she was linked with Shai, as a goddess of fate. Ramsses II stated that he was the "Lord of Shai and Creator of Renentet" as an indication of his power to control his own fate. Renenutet and Shai were often depicted with Thoth and were sometimes named "the hands of Thoth". According to the Pyramid Texts, Renenutet was the goddess of plenty, and good fortune. Snakes were often seen in the fields around harvest time, hunting the rodents who would threaten the crop. As a result, Renenutet was considered to protect the harvest and given the epithets "Goddess of the Double Granary", the "Lady of Fertile Fields" and the "Lady of Granaries". Amenemhet III and Amenemhet IV dedicated a temple to Renenutet, Sobek and Horus at Dja (known to the Greeks as Narmouthis or Harmounthis and now called Medinet Madi) which was expanded during the Ptolemaic Period. In this temple an annual harvest festival was held in her honour during which a quantity of the best quality produce was dedicated to her, and throughout Egypt, shrines to her were built in areas where wine was brewed.She was also linked to the coming of the inundation and by the later period presided over the eighth month of the ancient Egyptian calendar known to us by the Greek name "Parmutit".From the early period, she was seen as protector of the pharaoh in the netherworld, with the epithet "Nourishing Snake". She imbued his clothing with power which repelled his enemies. By the New Kingdom her power extended to the mummification ritual during which she imbued the mummy wrappings with magical power, and in the Ptolemaic Period this role was honoured with the epithet "The Lady of the Robes".

**Renpet**

Renpet was the ancient Egyptian goddess who personified fertility, spring and youth. She was often known as the "Mistress of Eternity" and her name was used to express the term "year". She is depicted as a young woman wearing a palm shoot over her head. The palm shoot represented "time" and this glyph regularly appears on monuments and documents throughout Egyptian history as the beginning of the phrase recording the regnal year of the pharaoh.She was worshipped in Memphis and Crocodilopolis and was considered to be an aspect of Isis.

**Satet**

Satet (also known as Setet, Sathit, Satit, Sati, Setis or Satis) was an archer-goddess of the Nile cataracts. Her name comes from the term "sat" (to shoot, to eject, to pour out, to throw). It is often translated as "She Who Shoots (Arrows)" in relation to her aspect as a goddess of the h unt, or "She who Pours" with reference to her role in the innundation and her guardianship over the Nile cataracts. Her name was originally written with the hieroglyph for a shoulder knot (top left) but this was later replaced by the sign representing a cow´s skin pierced by an arrow.As a warrior goddess, she protected the pharaoh and the southern borders of ancient Egypt and in her role as a goddess of fertility she caused the innundation and purified the deceased with water from the underworld (the mythical source of the Nile). Satet is described in the Pyramid Texts performing this service for the king.Her most important role was as the goddess of the inundation (yearly flooding of the Nile). According to myth, on the "Night of the Teardrop" Isis would shed a single tear, which was caught by Satet and poured into the Nile, causing the inundation. As a result, she (like Isis) was linked to Sothis, the personification of the star Sept (Sirius A, the "Dog Star") which rose in the sky just before the arrival of the inundation every year. As a warrior goddess, she protected the pharaoh and the southern borders of ancient Egypt and in her role as a goddess of fertility she caused the innundation and purified the deceased with water from the underworld (the mythical source of the Nile). Satet is described in the Pyramid Texts performing this service for the king.Her most important role was as the goddess of the inundation (yearly flooding of the Nile). According to myth, on the "Night of the Teardrop" Isis would shed a single tear, which was caught by Satet and poured into the Nile, causing the inundation. As a result, she (like Isis) was linked to Sothis, the personification of the star Sept (Sirius A, the "Dog Star") which rose in the sky just before the arrival of the inundation every year. Like Anuket (and many other goddesses) she was originally thought to have been Ra´s daughter and was sometimes considered to be the spouse of Montu (the Theban war god). By the New Kingdom she was believed to be the wife of Khnum and the mother or sister of Anuket . These three gods formed the Abu (Elephantine) triad. As Khnum became linked to Osiris, and Anuket linked to Nephthys, Satet became firmly connected to Isis. She was also linked with Hathor, as goddess of human fertility and love.She was worshiped through the Aswan area (particularly on Setet Island) and throught Upper Egypt. However, items found in Saqqara suggest she was popular in Lower Egypt even in ancient times. She remained popular throught Egyptian history and her temple in Abu (Elephantine) was one of the principal shrines in Egypt.She is depicted as a woman wearing the Hedjet (White Crown) of Upper Egypt decorated with either ostrich plumes (the Atef crown), or gazelle or antelope horns. Due to her link with Sothis and the inundation, she was sometimes depicted wearing a star on her head and carrying water jars. Occasionally, she carries a bow and arrows, but usually this is replaced by a sceptre and an ankh (symbolising life).

**Sekhmet**

Sekhmet (Sakhmet) is one of the oldest known Egyptian deities. Her name is derived from the Egyptian word "Sekhem" (which means "power" or "might") and is often translated as the "Powerful One". She is depicted as a lion-headed woman, sometimes with the addition of a sun disc on her head. Her seated statues show her holding the ankh of life, but when she is shown striding or standing she usually holds a sceptre formed from papyrus (the symbol of northern or Lower Egypt) suggesting that she was associated primarily with the north. However, some scholars argue that the deity was introduced from Sudan (south of Egypt) where lions are more plentiful. She was often closely associated with Hathor (the goddess of joy, music, dance, sexual love, pregnancy and birth). In this partnership, she was seen as the harsh aspect of the friendly Hathor. A temple was constructed by Amenemhet II to Sekhmet-Hathor at Kom el Hisn (Imau in the western Delta) in which she and Hathor are referred to as the "Mistress of Imau". Imau was situated near a branch of the Nile that has since shifted eastwards, but in ancient times the town was right on the edge of the desert on the route to the Libyan frontier. Clearly it was hoped that Sekhmet would protect the border.Sekhmet's main cult centre was in Memphis (Men Nefer) where she was worshipped as "the destroyer" alongside her consort Ptah (the creator) and Nefertum (the healer). Sekhmet was represented by the searing heat of the mid-day sun (in this aspect she was sometimes called "Nesert", the flame) and was a terrifying goddess. However, for her friends she could avert plague and cure disease. She was the patron of Physicians, and Healers and her priests became known as skilled doctors. As a result, the fearsome deity sometimes called the "lady of terror" was also known as "lady of life". Sekhmet was mentioned a number of times in the spells of The Book of the Dead as both a creative and destructive force, but above all, she is the protector of Ma'at (balance or justice) named "The One Who Loves Ma'at and Who Detests Evil".She was also known as the "Lady of Pestilence" and the "Red Lady" (indicating her alignment with the desert) and it was thought that she could send plagues against those who angered her. When the centre of power shifted from Memphis to Thebes during the New Kingdom the Theban Triad (Amun, Mut, and Khonsu), Sekhmet's attributes were absorbed into that of Mut (who sometimes took the form of a lion). She was associated with the goddesses given the title "Eye of Ra". According to myth, Ra became angry because mankind was not following his laws and preserving Ma'at (justice or balance). He decided to punish mankind by sending an aspect of his daughter, the "Eye of Ra". He plucked Hathor from Ureas on his brow, and sent her to earth in the form of a lion. She became Sekhmet, the "Eye of Ra" and began her rampage. The fields ran with human blood. However, Ra was not a cruel deity, and the sight of the carnage caused him to repent. He ordered her to stop, but she was in a blood lust and would not listen. So Ra poured 7,000 jugs of beer and pomegranate juice (which stained the beer blood red) in her path. She gorged on the "blood" and became so drunk she slept for three days. When she awoke, her blood lust had dissipated, and humanity was saved. In one version of the myth, Ptah is the first thing she sees on awaking and she instantly fell in love with him. Their union (creation and destruction) created Nefertum (healing) and so re-established Ma'at.The saving of mankind was commemorated every year on the feast day of Hathor/Sekhmet. Everyone drank beer stained with pomegranate juice and worshipped "the Mistress and lady of the tomb, gracious one, destroyer of rebellion, mighty one of enchantments". A statue of Sekhmet was dressed in red facing west, while Bast was dressed in green and faced east. Bast was sometimes considered to be Sekhmet´s counterpart (or twin depending on the legend), and in the festival of Hathor they embodied the duality central to Egyptian mythology. Sekhmet represented Upper Egypt while Bast represented Lower Egypt.Sekhmet was closely associated with Kingship. She was often described as the mother of Maahes, the lion god who was a patron of the pharaoh and the pyramid texts (from dynasty five) suggest that the Pharaoh was conceived by Sekhmet. For example, one relief depicts the Pharaoh Niuserre being suckled by Sekhmet. This ancient myth is echoed in the New Kingdom reliefs in the temple of Seti I which depict the Pharaoh being suckled by Hathor whose title is "mistress of the mansion of Sekhmet". Ramesses II (Seti's son) adopted her as a symbol of his power in battle. In friezes depicting the Battle of Kadesh, Sekhmet appears on his horse, her flames scorching the bodies of enemy soldiers. But, one Pharaoh in particular seems to have had an obsession with Sekhmet. Amenhotep III (father of Akhenaten, Dynasty Eighteen) built hundreds of statues of Sekhmet in the precinct of Mut's temple (known as "Isheru") south of the Great Temple of Amun in Karnak. It is thought that there was one for every day of the year and that offerings were made every day.

**Seshat**

Seshat was a goddess of reading, writing, arithmetic and architecture who was seen as the female aspect of Thoth, his daughter or his wife. They had a child called Hornub. This actually means "gold Horus", so Seshat was sometimes associated with Isis. She was the scribe of the pharaoh, recording all of his achievements and triumphs including recording both the booty and the captives taken in battle. She was also thought to record the actions of all people on the leaves of the sacred persea tree. She was known by the epithet "Mistress of the House of Books" because she looked after the library of the gods and was the patron of all earthly libraries. She was also patron of all forms of writing, including accounting, auditing and the taking of census. According to one myth, it was actually Seshat who invented writing, but it was her husband Thoth who taught the people to write. It is interesting to note that she is the only female character who was actually depicted in the act of writing. A number of other women were depicted holding the scribes’ palette and brush, indicating that they could write, but not actually engaged in writing. She was also given the epithet "Mistress of the House of Architects" and from at least the Second Dynasty she was associated with a ritual known as "pedj shes" ("stretching the cord") which was conducted during the laying of the foundations of stone buildings. The "cord" refers to the mason´s line which was used to measure out the dimensions of the building. She was occasionally associated with Nephthys. For example, in the Pyramid Texts she is given the epithet "The Lady of the House" (nbt-hwt, ie Nephthys) while Nephthys is described as "Seshat, Foremost of Builders". So far, no temple specifically dedicated to her has been located and there is no documentary evidence that one ever existed. However, she was depicted on a number of other temples and we know that she did have her own priests because Prince Wep-em-nefret (Dynasty Four) was described as "Overseer of the Royal Scribes" and "Priest of Seshat". However, it seems that as Thoth grew in importance he absorbed her roles and her priesthood. She was depicted as a woman wearing a leopard skin dress (as worn by Sem preiests) wearing a headdress composed of a flower or seven pointed star on top of a pair of inverted horns. She was occasional called "Safekh-Aubi" (or "Safekh-Abwy" meaning "She of two horns") because of this headdress, although it is also suggested that "Safekh-Aubi" was in fact a separate (if rather obscure) goddess. However, others have suggested that the horns were originally a crescent moon, representing her husband (or alter ego) Thoth. Finally, it is sometimes suggested that the "horns" actually represent a bow. Unfortunately there is no clear evidence to confirm which view is correct. Her headdress also represents her name which was not spelled phonetically (the semi-circular bread loaf and the seated woman are both female determinatives). She is often shown offering palm branches (representing "many years") to the pharaoh to give him a long reign.

**Serqet**

Serqet was a benevolent scorpion goddess. She was generally viewed as a protective goddess, but also had her darker side. Serqet was thought to have power over venomous snakes and scorpions, like Meretseger and Isis. It was thought that she could protect a person from venomous bites, and also that she could send snakes and scorpions to meet out punishment to those of whom she disapproved. According to some versions of the story, it is she who helps protect Isis and her infant son Horus when they are hiding from Set in the marshes of the delta. She is associated with the seven scorpions who act as a body guard for the mother and child and is sometimes named as the goddess who convinces Ra to stop the sun barque and help when Horus is poisoned by a magical snake sent by Set. Because of this story, she was thought to offer special protection to children and pregnant women from venomous animals. She also protected Ra as he travelled though the underworld each night. She was said to watch over any dangerous twist in the path and was responsible for restraining the serpent Apep when he was imprisoned in the netherworld and protecting the sun god´s barqe from his attack. This protection was extended to everyone who made the difficult journey through the netherworld. In the tomb of Nefertari (wife of Ramsess II) the goddess welcomes the queen into the afterlife saying "(I am) Serqet, mistress of heaven and lady of all the gods. I have come before you, the King´s Great Wife, Mistress of the Two Lands, Lady of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nefertari, Beloved of Mut, Justified Before Osiris Who Resides in Abydos, and I have accorded you a place in the sacred land, so that you may appear gloriously in heaven like Ra." However, like the other goddesses known as the "Eye of Ra", she was thought to be either the mother or daughter of Ra, who was embodied in the scorching heat of the sun. She was given the epithet, "Lady of the Beautiful Tent" and "Mistress of the Beautiful House", (referring to the embalmer's tent). She also protected Qebehsenuef (one of the four sons of Horus) who guarded the intestines of the deceased. She was associated with the western cardinal point (the west was associated with death and rebirth). Yet, she was closely associated with the breath of life. Her enemies would have their breath literally taken away by the effect of a poisonous bite, but she also gave the justified dead the breath of life in the afterworld. In the Book of the Dead, she is associated with the teeth of the deceased. A longer version of her name (srq.t-Ht.w) is often translated as "She Who Lets Throats Breathe", or conversely "she who stiffens (paralyses) the throat". According to the Pyramid Texts she was the mother of Nehebkau, the snake god who protected the pharaoh from snakebites. She was closely associated with Isis and her sister Nephthys because of her connection with magic and the underworld. In Edfu she was said to be the wife of Horus and the mother of Horakhty (Horus of the Horizon). She often appeared with the ancient warrior goddess Neith. In the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut Neith and Serqet are present when Amen impregnates Hatshepsut's mother, Mutemwia. In another tale the two goddesses ensure that Amen and his wife get to enjoy some quality time in peace, and so she was also considered to be a goddess of marriage.Serqet was often shown as a woman with a scorpion on her head, and occasionally as a scorpion with the head of a woman, though this was rare. She was sometimes shown wearing the headdress of Hathor ( a solar disk and cow horns) but it is thought that this was more to do with her association with Isis. From the Twenty First Dynasty, she was occasionally depicted with the head of a lioness and a protective crocodile at the back of her neck. However, the most famous image of Serqet is the golden figure that forms one of the four goddesses protecting Tutankhamun which was found in his tomb.

**Sopdet**

Sopdet ("skilled woman", also known as Sothis) represented Sirius, the Dog-Star. Sirius was the most important star to ancient Egyptian astronomers because it signalled the approach of the inundation and the beginning of a new year. New year was celebrated with a festival known as "The Coming of Sopdet".In fact, the "Sothic Rising" only coincided with the solar year once every 1460 years. The Roman emperor Antoninus Pius had a commemorative coin made to mark their coincidence in AD 139. The Sothic Cycle (the periods between the rising of the star) have been used by archaeologists trying to construct a chronology of Ancient Egypt. Sopdet was the wife of Sahu ("the hidden one"), the constellation Orion, and the mother of Sopdu ("skilled man"), a falcon god who represented the planet Venus. This triad echoed the trio of Osiris, Isis and Horus, but the connections were not always simple. Sopdet became increasingly associated with Isis, who asserts that she is Sopdet (in "the lamentations of Isis and Nephthys" c 400 B.C) and will follow Osiris, the manifestation of Sahu. However, as well as being considered to be the spouse of Orion (Osiris), she is described by the pyramid texts as the daughter of Osiris. Although Sopdet started out as an agricultural deity, closely associated with the Nile, by the Middle Kingdom she was also considered to be a mother goddess. This probably related to her growing connection with the goddess Isis. This connection was further strengthened by Sopdet´s role in assisting the Pharaoh find his way to the imperishable stars. It may be no coincidence that Sirius disappeared for seventy days every year, and mummification took seventy days. In the first Dynasty ivory tablets Sopdet was depicted as a reclining cow with a unidentified plant-like emblem (possibly signifying representing the new year) between her horns. However, she was most often depicted as a woman wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt topped by a star or a headdress with two plumes. Less often, she is portrayed as a large dog, and by the Roman period the hybrid goddess Isis-Sopdet was depicted as a woman riding side-saddle on a large dog. Sopdet was occasionally shown as a male deity. During the Middle Kingdom the male Sopdet was in associated with Horus as one of the gods who held up the four corners of the earth and held Nut (the sky) in place. During the Greek period she was linked to Anubis as Sopdet-Anubis, possibly because of her canine associations.

**Taweret**

Taweret (Tawret, Taueret, Tawaret, Taurt, Thoeris and Toeris, Ipy, Ipet, Apet, Opet, Reret) was an ancient Egyptian patron of childbirth and a protector of women and children. Like Bes, she was considered to be a ferocious demon as well as a protective and nurturing deity. She was associated with the lion, the crocodile, and the hippo; all animals which were feared by the Egyptians but also highly respected. Initially she was viewed as a dangerous and potentially malignant force. Taweret was associated with the northern sky as Nebetakhet, the "Mistress of the Horizon". She represented the circumpolar stars of Ursa Minor and Draco (the little dipper formed her back) who guarded the northern sky. The northern sky was thought to be cold, dark and potentially dangerous and was associated with both Apep and Set. According to one ancient myth, her husband Apep could only come out during the night and so she represented all that was evil during the day. However, by the Old Kingdom she was seen as a protective, rather than an aggressive force (just as female hippos came to be seen as aggressive largely in defence of their young). As a result, Taweret became a mother goddess and a patron of childbirth who was often described as the mother or wet nurse of the pharaoh. As time passed she soon became a household deity, helping rich and poor alike. When acting as a protective force Taweret is described as a goddess. She was thought to help women in labor and to ward off evil spirits and demons who intended harm to mother or baby. She was also thought to help with matters of female sexuality and pregnancy, and so she was often associated with the goddess Hathor. As a fertility goddess she was also associated with the innundation, particularly at Gebel el-Silsila. According to "The Book of the Dead", Taweret guarded the paths to the mountains of the west which led to the underworld and could also use magic to help the deceased pass safely through that dangerous and frightening land. Expectant mothers often carried amulets depicting Taweret to invoke her protection. These amulets remained popular even when Akhenaten moved his capital to Akhetaten and rejected the old gods in favour of The Aten. Her image also makes an appearance on cosmetic applicators, jewelry, headrests and vessels. The vessels often had an opening in one of her nipples to allow the contents to be poured out and to add the protection of the goddess to the contents. She was associated with the so called "magic wand" or "magic knives" used during labour to ward off evil. These magical tools were usually made of hippopotamus ivory, and included depictions of the goddess. Her family relationships were typically confusing. She was ocassionally (usually in older texts) described as the demon-wife of Apep who lived in the northern sky. This area was also associated with Set. One myth (reported by Plutarch) claimed that Taweret was the concubine of Set but that she was loyal to Horus. Apparently, she helped Isis after the death of her husband Osiris by detaining Set in the northern sky and preventing him from attacking Isis and her new baby. The link to Set probably came about because he sometimes took the form of a Hippo and because the animal was recognised to be potentially dangerous and destructive. As the wife of Set she was linked to Isis whose magic kept the god in fetters. However, she was also described as the wife of Sobek, probably because he took the form of a crocodile. Sobek was associated with Set, but also with Horus (the enemy of Set) and Isis. She was frequently described as the wife of Bes, a demonic deity who was also closely linked to childbirth. Finally, in Thebes, Amun and Taweret were thought to be the parents of Osiris (and therefore by implications his siblings, including Set). One of the most popular festivals (called Ipet or Opet) celebrated her marriage to Amun thereby associating her with Amanuet and Mut. In fact in later times, Mut absorbed many of Taweret's attributes. She was also associated with Nut the sky goddess of the Ennead because her constellation was always above the horizon. She was depicted as the combination of a crocodile, a hippo and a lion. However, unlike the composite demoness Ammit, she had the paws of a lion, the back of a crocodile and the head and body of a pregnant hippo but with the addition of a woman's hair. She often wears a short cylindrical headdress topped by two plumes or the horns and solar disk of Hathor, bearing the "Sa" (representing protection) or the ankh (representing life). Sometimes Taweret was depicted with a crocodile on her back, thought to represent Sobek. Taweret literally means "The Great Female", but she was also known as "Ipet" ("harem") and "Reret" ("the sow"). At one point in history there may have been three variants of the goddess, but soon all were merged as Taweret.

**Tayet**

Tayet (Tait) was an ancient Egyptian goddess of weaving and the patron of weavers and those involved in the ritual of mummification. It is thought that her name derives from the word "shroud". She was thought to craft the woven bandages used during the mummification process which were sometimes referred to as "the land of Tayet" . In the The story of Sinuhe the pharaoh Senusret invites the elderly Sinhue to return to Egypt and promises him that he will be buried at home with all of the usual accoutrements including "the wrappings from the hand of Tayet". Linen bandages were also used to bandage wounds and it was thought that Tayet could protect the injured person from a blood hemorrhage and ansure the cleanliness of the wound. Thus she represented purity and perfection. It seems that she was originally viewed as the spiritual mother of the pharaoh and the protector of his physical body. During the Old Kingdom she was referenced in spell and prayers in the Pyramid Texts which were intended to protect the corpse of the king. However, as time progressed she was increasingly associated with linen bandages and with the "Wab" priests (sometimes known as the purification priests) who wore fine linen when discharging their duties. She was associated with Nephthys and Neith and to a lesser extent Isis and Osiris because of her connection with mummification. She also created the woven curtain which hung in the chamber where the ritual of embalming was conducted. This linked her with Ptah who was sometimes thought to have embroidered the design on the curtain.

**Tefnut**

Tefnut (Tefenet, Tefnet) was an ancient Egyptian goddess of moisture, but was strongly associated with both the moon and the sun. She was known as both the left (moon) and the right (sun) "Eyes of Ra" and represented moisture (as a lunar goddess) and dryness (or the absence of moisture, as a solar goddess). Her name means "She of moisture" and its root can be found in the Egyptian words for "moist" and "spit". Tefnut was generally depicted as a lioness or a woman with a lion's head. Less often, she was depicted as a woman. She always wears a solar disk and Uraeus, and carries a sceptre (representing power) and the ankh (representing the breath of life). She also occasionally took the form of a cobra. She was originally considered to be the lunar "Eye of Ra" linking her to the night sky as well as to dew, rain and mist. However, she also took on the aspect of the sun as the solar "Eye of Ra", the protector of the sun god (also known as the "Lady of the Flame" and the "Uraeus on the Head of all the Gods"). She shared this role with a number of other goddesses including Sekhmet, Hathor, Mut, Bast, Isis, Wadjet and Nekhbet. Her family background is fairly complex. She was originally associated with a god called Tefen. The Pyramid Texts inscribed in the tomb of Unas suggest that Tefnut and Tefen were closely involved in the weighing of the heart of the deceased by Ma´at. The text states; "Tefen and Tefnut have weighed Unas and Ma´at has listened, and Shu has born witness." However, Tefen seems to have disappeared into obscurity (one of the scorpions who accompanied Isis was called Tefen, but this may be a coincindence) and Tefnut´s role changed somewhat as time progressed, although she retained her connection with Ma´at. In Heliopolis (Iunu, On) and Thebes (Waset) she was generally described as the daughter of the creator god (Amun, Atum or Ra), the sister-wife of Shu, and the mother of Geb and Nut. She was sometimes shown helping Shu to hold Nut (the sky) above Geb (the earth).While, in Memphis she was also known as the "Tongue of Ptah" who had apparently helped him create life. Part of the city of Denderah (Iunet) was known as "The House of Tefnut" and she was worshipped in her lion form at Leontopolis (Nay-ta-hut). According to legend, Shu and Tefnut went out into the waters of Nun (chaos). Their father, Ra, thought that he had lost them and sent his eye to find them. When they returned Ra was so happy that he wept, and his tears formed the first human beings. Another legend states that Tefnut fell out with her father, Ra, while he lived on earth as the Pharaoh of Egypt. She left Egypt for Nubia taking all of the water and moisture with her. The fertile land soon dried up and the people suffered. Meanwhile, Tefnut was rampaging through Nubia in her leonine form. Ra eventually sent Thoth and Shu to get her back. When she returned (bringing the inundation with her) she visited each town in Egypt and there was much celebration and rejoicing throughout the land. This story may have originally referred to Anhur (also known as Onuris, who is associated with Shu ) and his wife Menhet (who also took leonine form). In another version of the tale it is Hathor or (Sekhmet) in her form of the "Eye of Re" who has left for Nubia and she has gone because she was tricked with blood coloured beer to prevent her from destroying mankind. During the reign of Akenaten when many of the old gods were rejected, Tefnut and Shu remained in favour and Akhenaten and Nefertiti were often depicted as the twin lion gods. This suggests that Atenism was not in fact a monotheistic religion, but a henotheistic solar religion.

**Tjenenet**

Tjenenet (Tenenit) was the wife of Montu during the Middle Kingdom. However, her position was somewhat usurped by Iunyt and Rettawy (both aspects of Ra). When Amun became the state god and was linked to Montu she was absorbed by Mut although she was still referred to in connection with Montu-Ra. Tjenenet was a goddess of brewing and beer and her name may have derived from the word "tenemu" meaning beer. She was depicted as a woman wearing the symbol of a cow´s uterus as a headdress, linking her with the goddess Meskhenet and associating her with royal births.

**Wadjet**

Wadjet was one of the oldest Egyptian goddesses. She began as the local goddess of Per-Wadjet (Buto) but soon became a patron goddess of Lower Egypt. By the end of the Predynastic Period she was considered to be the personification of Lower Egypt rather than a distinct goddess and almost always appeared with her sister Nekhbet (who represented Upper Egypt). The two combined represented the country as a whole and were represented in the pharaoh´s "nebty" name (also known as "the two ladies") which indicated that the king ruled over both parts of Egypt. The earliest recovered example of the nebty name is from the reign of Anedjib of the First Dynasty. In the Pyramid Texts it is suggested that she created the first papyrus plant and papyrus swamp. Her link to the papyrus is strengthened by the fact that her name was written using the glyph of a papyrus plant and the same plant was the heraldic plant of Lower Egypt. According to another myth Wadjet was the daughter of Atum (or later Ra) who was sent her as his "eye" to find Tefnut and Shu when they were lost in the waters of Nun. He was so happy when they returned that he cried and created the first human beings from his tears. To reward his daughter, he placed her upon his head in the form of a cobra so that she would always be close to him and could act as his protector. She was one of the goddesses given the title "Eye of Ra" (connecting her to Bast, Hathor, Sekhment and Tefnut amongst others). In fact the symbol of the "Eye of Ra" was often called "the Wedjat". In this form she was sent out to avenge her father and almost caused the destruction of mankind. Humanity was saved when she was tricked with some beer which had been dyed red with pomegranate juice to resemble blood. There is also a suggestion that she was very closely linked to the principle of Ma´at (justice or balance). Before being crowned as king, Geb attacked and raped his mother Tefnut. When he went to take his place as pharaoh and put the Royal Ureas on his own forehead, the snake reared up and attacked the god and his followers. All of Geb´s retinue died and the god himself was badly injured. Clearly, his actions were against Ma´at and Wadjet was not prepared to allow him to go unpunished. Wadjet is often described as an agressive deity while while her sister Nekhbet was thought of as a more matronly protector. However, she also had her gentler side. Wadjet was believed to have helped Isis nurse the young Horus and to help mother and baby hide from Set in the marshes of the delta. She was also considered to offer protection to all women during childbirth. She (and her sister) also protected the adult Horus from the followers of Set. Horus pursued them in the form of a winged sun disc and Nekhbet and Wadjet flanked him in the form of crowned snakes. This protection was also extended towards the pharaoh who wore the "Royal Ureas" (serpent) on his (or her) forehead. From the Eighteenth Dynasty the queens also added one or two snakes to their headdresses representing Wadjet and her sister. Wadjet was associated with the fifth hour of the fifth day of the month and with "iput-hmt" (Epipi), the harvest month of the Egyptian calendar. Festivals were held in her honour on the 10th day of "rh-wr" (Mekhir) which was also called "the day of going forth of the Goddess", the 7th day of "khnty-khty" (Payni) and the 8th day of "Wpt-rnpt" (Mesori). These latter two dates coincide roughly with the winter and spring solstices. She was worshiped at the Temple of Wadjet, known as "Pe-Dep". This temple was already long established by the Old Kingdom and is referred to in the Pyramid Texts. In this temple, Wadjet was linked with Horus. Wadjet was thought to be the wife of Hapi in Lower Egypt and was linked to Set in his role as a representative of Lower Egypt. She was sometimes described as the wife of Ptah and the mother of Nefertem, probably because she occasionally took the form of a lion like Sekhmet. Her sacred animal was the cobra, and she was often depicted as either a rearing cobra, a winged cobra, or a woman with the head of a cobra.She was also depicted as a woman wearing the red crown of Lower Egypt. She often appears with her sister Nekhbet who was in as a snake or woman. By the Late Period she was also associated with the ichneumon (a mongoose-like creature). This animal was known for its skill in killing snakes and was also sacred to Horus.The Egyptians placed mummified ichneumon and shrew (small mice) inside statuettes of Wadjet which were interred with the dead. The two animals represented day (ichneumon) and night (shrew). She was also worshipped as a vulture Goddess. In her form of the "eye of Ra" she was depicted as a lion-headed woman wearing a solar disc and the Uraeus (cobra).

 **Weret-hekau**

Weret-hekau (Urthekau) was a lion headed goddess who was also depicted as a snake with the head of a woman. She was the wife of Re-Horakhty and wore his symbol (the sun disc) on her head along with a cobra on her brow. She protected the sun god and acted as a wet nurse for the pharaohs. The pharaoh in part derived his right to rule from his mother, who would normally be the previous king´s Great Wife. As a result it was sometimes suggested that the queen became the goddess when she bore the next pharaoh. This myth was referred to by Hatshepsut, a female Pharaoh, to help support the legitimacy of her rule. Her name means "great magician" and she was known as "She Who is Rich in Magic Spells" prompting some to suggest that she was not actually a distinct goddess, but a form of Isis. As she took either the form of a lion or a snake and protected the sun god, she is also associated with Wadjet and Sekhmet and the story of the "eye of Ra". Because she was a powerful symbol of protection, her name along with the symbol of a snake often appears on magical weapons buried with the dead to help them protect themselves in the underworld. Her name also appears on ivory knives which were supposed to protect pregnant and nursing women