



HORNED GODS AND THE SHINING TRADITION

>Melpomenos<

Who's This Guy?

- Melpomenos: one of the many titles or epithets of Dionysos
- IT guy with a huge interest in ancient religions, particularly as they relate to the Abrahamic traditions
- Classical languages and critical Biblical studies
- Shamanistic traditions
- Oh hey also I'm transmasculine
- NOT INTERESTED IN PROSELYTIZATION! Just found this interesting
- Please save questions for the end
- Let's go!

DIONYSOS

- God of agriculture, not just wine and partying
 - Male counterpart of Demeter
 - Mystic ceremonies
- Not usually considered one of the 12 Olympians, but rather a “foreign god”
- Analogous to many gods of other traditions:
 - Shiva
 - Tammuz
 - Osiris
 - Mithras
 - Cernunnos and/or Lugh

There's no 1:1 correspondence but...

The Unnamed God

- Dionysos has no actual name, only titles
 - Often just referred to as “the god”
 - Was “the god” of the theatre, and all plays were dedicated to him and started as feasts for him
- The god who died and was resurrected
- A god of androgyny (often shown with both a penis and breasts)
- A “green man”
- Associated with goats and bulls (horned animals)
- Called “The Savior” and “The Deliverer”, showed “The Way”
- Receiver of sacrifices, including human
- Took on many characteristics of other gods (Olympian and otherwise)

The Mysteries

- Ritual drink (hallucinogenic)
- Ritual bath (baptism)
- Fasting
- Ritual death and rebirth
- Emergence in a cave or on a hillside
- Dancing and feasting
- Sacrifice

Similar to the Eleusinian mysteries, not surprising since Persephone/Kore was Dionysos' first mother (in his persona of Zagreus).

Dionysos and the Hebrew God

- Dionysos is the same as Tammuz/Adonis; Adonai comes from the same root, meaning “lord”
- Dionysos and YHWH: both invisible, both unnamed, both associated with the sound of wind
- Wilderness deities, milk and honey
- Wine (more on this in a moment)
- Smiting unbelievers
- Spring feasts
- Thyrsos = Moses' staff (entwined with a snake)
- Worship of both originated in same area most likely (Seir/Sinai/Nysa, Dead Sea)

Mithras/Dionysos and El/Allah

- Bull imagery

"But the person I'm talking about was born to a virgin, under a star, and stood for truth, peace, and brotherhood. He launched a following known as The Way, and his supporters called him the Good Shepherd. When he died, he was placed in a rock tomb. He ultimately ascended to heaven while, back on earth, his disciples waited for a day of judgment when those who believed in him would find paradise. People were baptized in his name and his birth was celebrated every December 25th. Clearly, the man in question was Mithras."

- Golden calf worship at Sinai – ecstatic worship of the Canaanite god El
- So many other parallels (references at end)

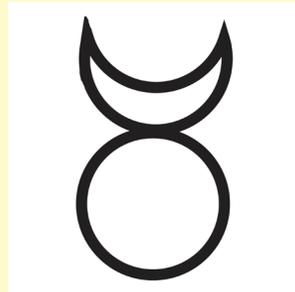
Wine: Forbidden or Sacred?

- Jesus (and in the OT, Melchizedek) serving bread and wine (the foods of Dionysos, god of agriculture and viniculture)
- Jesus turning water into wine (metaphysical?)
- Drink (wine) sacrifices in the OT
- Plutarch mentions parallels between Israelite feasts and Dionysos' feasts
- Ecstatic worship



Cernunnos, the Horned God

- Cernunnos is actually a “modern” god who is a conflation of several gods or concepts
- Possibilities:
 - Dhul Al-Qarnayn (a horned being mentioned in the Qur'an)
 - Alexander the Great, who was thought in his lifetime to be the son of Dionysos
 - Baphomet (Mohammed?), later conflated with “the Devil” but not originally evil
 - Any number of bull or goat associated gods...probably all Dionysos!
 - The Sacred Wicca site says "He is Lord of Life and He gives life, He is also Lord of Death and Resurrection“ referring to Dionysos.



The Shining Tradition

- Ancient Shamanism: from the far East to the West, North, South
- Kundalini energy: the snake arises (through spine/chakras to over the head)
- Imagery found to some extent in EVERY religious tradition
- Shining Ones: powerful, gender-traversing shamans
 - Ecstatic worship = “shining”
 - Sacrifice > rebirth
 - Ladders or climbing up (Jacob’s Ladder?)
 - The numbers seven and three
 - Pyramids as (huge) altars
 - Anointing with oil

Fae Religion?

- Do the Fae have or need religion?
 - Some Fae (and/or Otherkin in general) identify with a “Shining One” type of tradition
 - Some Fae identify with Celtic traditions (see above), either Druidism or Courts
 - Some Fae identify with Wicca
- So if you are looking for earthly (and, according to some, extraterrestrial) origins that might “sync” with your self-definition, the Wind Lord (Bromius/Dionysos) is a great place to start!



Any Questions?

THANK YOU!

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(References next four slides)

References p1

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dionysus_in_comparative_mythology mentions Jesus, Tammuz, Shiva, Osiris plus Adonis and Hades being similar to Dionysos.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_in_comparative_mythology says:
 - "The [Gospel of John](#) bears indirect influences from [Platonism](#), via earlier Jewish deuterocanonical texts, and may also have been influenced in less obvious ways by the cult of [Dionysus](#), the Greek god of wine, though this possibility is still disputed."
 - This is in reference to the importance of wine, for instance, in the wedding feast at Cana, where Jesus turns water into wine.
 - "More general comparisons have also been made between the stories about Jesus's birth and resurrection and stories of other divine or heroic figures from across the Mediterranean world, including supposed "[dying-and-rising gods](#)" such as [Tammuz](#), [Adonis](#), [Attis](#), and [Osiris](#), although the concept of "dying-and-rising gods" itself has received criticism."
- <https://www.usu.edu/markdamen/1320Hist&Civ/chapters/12CULTS.htm> Mark Damen's History and Civilization course at USU mentions the following (from the syllabus): "It does not, in fact, require much of a search to find a god in the Roman world who shares many more features with Christ than Cybele, Isis or Mithras. Dionysus, who we are often taught is Greek but whose cult actually arose in Asia Minor, is attested more than a millennium before Jesus' lifetime, by 1200 BCE at least. Subsequently imported to Greece, his worship entails a myth which bears striking resemblance to the life of Christ as recounted in the Bible. In particular, Dionysus' "biography" involves an unusual intermixing of the mortal and divine spheres, a peculiar blending of history and myth. While the ancient Greeks called him "the son of Zeus," at the same time his myths are set against a backdrop that is very close to their conception of what-really-happened in remote antiquity. In other words, unlike many of his Olympian peers, Dionysus was believed to have lived in a realistic past of sorts, or at least not one seen as imaginary the way many other Greek myths were, such as the tale of Cronus eating his children or the war between the gods and the giants. Like Christ, Dionysus is a god whose story is set inside a more historical framework. Dionysus and Jesus share other characteristics as well. Both have mothers who play a crucial role in their religion, and their worship centers on the expression of strong emotions, bordering on hysteria at times. Also like Christ, Dionysus is most often portrayed as a bearded young man, who promotes "love" in others yet did not often participate in amorous or sexual business himself. Moreover, the myths surrounding the Greek god center on his humiliation at the hands of cruel, benighted mortals, another close parallel with Christ's life. In some variations of Dionysus' "biography," he's even brutally killed by his enemies, only to be reborn and triumph over them."

References p2

- <https://live.jewishexpert.com/dionysus-events> Draws parallels between OT YHWH and Dionysos.
- <https://nautis.com/2013/08/the-messiahs-hercules-mithras-osiris-horus-dionysus-attis-and-apollo/> "But the person I'm talking about was born to a virgin, under a star, and stood for truth, peace, and brotherhood. He launched a following known as The Way, and his supporters called him the Good Shepherd. When he died, he was placed in a rock tomb. He ultimately ascended to heaven while, back on earth, his disciples waited for a day of judgment when those who believed in him would find paradise. People were baptized in his name and his birth was celebrated every December 25th. Clearly, the man in question was Mithras."
- <https://www.ancient-origins.net/human-origins-religions/yahweh-and-dionysus-0014291>
 - The Israelites were worshipping a "golden calf" while Moses was communing with God - this is usually interpreted as apostasy but was it? El, the deity of the Canaanites (precursors of the Hebrews), and called "El" or "Elohim" in the OT, IS THE HEBREW GOD. (cf Allah)
 - Both El/Elohim and Dionysos are associated with bulls. Interestingly enough, the similar god Mithras, who may actually be the source of Dionysos, is also associated with bulls. So this "apostasy" (which was ecstatic in nature) might not have actually been apostasy but just their way of celebrating their god while Moses was off communing.
 - Both gods are also associated with being worshipped "in the wilderness".
 - "Ironically, while the Judeo-Christian tradition (having its origins in the ancient worship of Yahweh) tends to frown upon the consumption and use of alcohol, the biblical witness attests to the use of wine in Israelite religion as a sacred beverage similar to what one finds in the cult of Dionysus. The association of Yahweh with the vine is found in the earliest sources of the Old Testament. For example, in the story of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek, king of Salem, it is said that the king hosi lehem wayayin "brought out bread and wine" (Genesis 14:18). Elsewhere, drink (i.e. wine) offerings are presented to the deity on numerous occasions (Lev. 23:18; Num. 15:5; Deut. 12:17). In Christianity, this link between the deity and wine is continued in the Eucharistic rite in which the wine literally represents the presence of the deity."

References p3

- <https://www.asor.org/onetoday/2017/08/yhwh> "Troublesome evidence, however, reveals a much closer relation of YHWH to Dionysus than to Zeus. The first point is the broad diffusion and popularity of the cult of Dionysus in ancient Israel, the deity being worshipped even in priestly cities in the cult of YHWH, such as Sepphoris. The second is the identification of the Nabatean god Dushara (Dusares) with Dionysus. The appellation DuSara (ze seir = the one from Seir) coincides with the origin of YHWH from Seir in biblical poetry (Judges 5:4; Deut 33:2) and DuShara was probably a late Edomite version of the worship of YHWH."
 - "The homology between YHWH and Dionysus is not as surprising as it may seem at first. Both deities exert the same subversive influence against the established pantheons and temples. Exactly as in the Exodus for the Israelites, Dionysus calls for deliverance from the tyranny of kings and gods who support their abusive authority. In Euripides' Bacchae, Dionysus even calls on every one, slaves—freedmen and princes, young and old, and men and women—to partake of the ceremonies and musical processions of Dionysus-worship."
 - "Plutarch (Quaestiones Convivales iv, 6.2) observed many parallels between the Dionysian banquet and the Israelites' cultic festivities. Again, this is not surprising, because YHWH, like Dionysus, displays an essential relation to wine, Israel being even likened to His vineyard (Isaiah 5:7; Jeremiah 6:9). Abundant wine production reflects YHWH's blessing (Jeremiah 31:5; Amos 9:13-14; Micah 4:4) and wine libations and drinking were associated to his worship (Exodus 29:40; Leviticus 10:1-10; Numbers 15:5-10). The exudation of milk and honey from the Maenad's staff (thyrsos) was regarded in Greece as a theophany of Dionysus, exactly as YHWH's land of residence is termed a land flowing with milk and honey."
 - "Beyond these observations, a similar subtle ethereal/windy nature is attached to both YHWH (see 1 Kings 19:11-12; Psalms 104:4) and Dionysus, the latter also called Bromius (= the rustling). They also act in similar ways. Dionysus has the capacity to modify human behavior in an ecstatic fashion defined as enthusiasm; this phenomenon finds a close correspondence with Saul's experiencing the spirit of YHWH possessing him (1 Samuel 19:5-6). The epidemic character of such ecstatic possession constitutes another parallel between YHWH and Dionysus."
 - "The first Homeric hymn traces Dionysus' origin to "Nysa, a mountain most high and richly grown with woods, far off in Phoenicia, near the streams of Aegyptus..." In the seventh hymn, he first appears "on a jutting headland by the shore of the fruitless sea." The only "fruitless" that is to say, fishless, sea between Phoenicia and the Nile is the Dead Sea, and the tall forested mountain to its south is Mount Seir, the mountain of origin of YHWH. This transforms Dionysus into an Aegean version of YHWH, whose cult was probably propagated and adapted during the 'Orientalizing revolution' that followed the settlement in Greece of a population originating of east Mediterranean during the first half of the first millennium BCE."
- Further evidence of Dionysos and YHWH being the same: Dionysos is often conflated with Adonis, who is the same as Mesopotamian Tammuz. The name Adonis is the same root as Hebrew Adonai; both mean Lord. Both Dionysos and Tammuz are gods of vegetation/agriculture.
- It is important to know that Dionysos actually has no name. ALL of his "names" are epithets, including Dionysos itself. cf Acts 17:23 "22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. 23 "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you." Dionysos is actually the UNNAMED GOD.
- Dionysos is not dissimilar to Cernunnos, the Horned God of Celtic mythology (and Wicca). Both of them are depicted as horned, both are associated with agriculture and sexuality, both are consorts or associates of triplicate goddesses, both are associated with death and resurrection. And if you consider that the Celts probably originated in Central Europe, and spread as far Southeast as Anatolia, it's not hard to think of the two gods as either having the same origin...or, possibly, as a parallel evolution.

References p4

- The term Cernunnos means Horned One but it could also refer to a character in the Muslim Quran known as Dhul Al-Qarnayn (the Horned One) who is a mysterious being who may or may not have been a reference to Alexander the Great (who worshiped Dionysos and was often portrayed with the Horns of the god Ammon, whose oracle had pronounced him divine).
 - Alexander was supposed, in his lifetime, to have actually been the son of a god (most likely Dionysos) rather than of his legal father, Philippos.
 - "Sherry Salman considers the image of the Horned God in [Jungian](#) terms, as an archetypal protector and mediator of the outside world to the objective psyche. In her theory the male psyche's 'Horned God' frequently compensates for inadequate fathering. When first encountered, the figure is a dangerous, 'hairy chthonic wildman' possessed of kindness and intelligence. If [repressed](#), later in life The Horned God appears as the lord of the Otherworld, or [Hades](#). If split off entirely, he leads to violence, substance abuse and sexual perversion. When integrated he gives the male an ego 'in possession of its own destructiveness' and for the female psyche gives an effective [animus](#) relating to both the physical body and the psyche.[\[20\]](#)"
 - "Eliphas Levi's image of "[Baphomet](#)" serves as an example of the transformation of the Devil into a benevolent fertility deity and provided the prototype for (Margaret Murray's horned god.[\[36\]](#)"
 - "Since 1856, the name Baphomet has been associated with the "Sabbatic Goat" image drawn by [Éliphas Lévi](#),[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[7\]](#) which contains binary elements representing the "[symbolization](#) of the equilibrium of opposites"[\[1\]](#) (e.g. [half-human and half-animal](#), [male and female](#), [good and evil](#), etc.)" Dionysos is also often represented as being dually sexualized, i.e. both male and female.
 - "Modern scholars agree that the name of Baphomet was an Old French corruption of the name "mahmoed"" (Muhammad)
- According to the Sacred Wicca site, the Horned God is the same as Dionysos. <https://sacredwicca.com/horned-god> "He is Lord of Life and He gives life, He is also Lord of Death and Resurrection."
 - "Dionysus another Horned God of Greece, is a creature of mystery, his very essence an enigma. His realm is shadowy, and his followers flirt with madness, drunkenness, and death. He is the patron deity of the Bacchantes, those wild women who were said to tear living animals apart in their trance of divine possession. He is the god of wine and intoxication that merges the drinker with the deity. He is also a "Slain God", that is a God who dies and is reborn. For a Greek God to die was unthinkable, how can an immortal die? Through the death and rebirth of the God, the Cult of Dionysus, like that of the Goddess Demeter brought forth the mystery of rebirth to their followers."
- <https://www.theoi.com/Cult/DionysosTitles.html> The Titles/Names of Dionysos
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zagreus> Zagreus, the "first" Dionysos
- [The Shining Ones: The World's Most Powerful Secret Society Revealed](#) by [Philip Gardiner](#) and Gary Osborn