Book Reviews

Crowns in Egyptian Funerary Literature: Royalty, Rebirth, and Destruction

Katja Goebs. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute, 2008.
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Reviewed by Jennifer Davis, University of Sudbury.

'The red primeval ocean lapping around the feet of the arched sky-goddess Nut at sunrise, just after she has given birth to the sungod' is one interpretation of *CT 407*, suggests Katja Goebs, associate professor of Egyptology in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. Basing her theory on the pictures of Nut in the cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos (pl. 8–p. 466) and the caption *dšrt m-ḫt ms ⸢wt⸣* "redness"or "the Red One" (using the hieroglyph for the Red Crown) "is after the birth", and thus describes "the effect of the sun's birth (from between the thighs of the sky-goddess) and subsequent plunge into the primeval ocean at her feet—a red flood. From there the god flies up along Nut's thighs as the solar beetle Khepri, to travel along her belly as Re" (3:194).

The imagery Goebs presents is vivid, evocative and insightful. She arranges her material to distinguish between the White, luminous, bright crowns *Wrrt* and *Ḥḏt*, and the Red, fiery, bloody crown *dšrt*, *wꜣḏt* and *nt*, as symbols of divinely sanctioned royalty and order commenting, where necessary, on other identifiers for these crowns as they appear in the spells. The second (2:33–174) and third chapters (3:175–358) are dedicated to the exegesis of a corpus of funerary spells chosen by Goebs which best illustrate the place and purpose of the crowns in both royal and cosmic domains. Goebs' enquiry leads her to identify the 'aspect of transfiguration' sought; 'retrace the succession of events leading up to, and constituting, the transfiguration; determine the function of the crown within this process; and to ascertain the role of the deities involved—either as independent actors or as divine archetypes into which the deceased wishes to be transformed—'to give a picture of their particular functions as funerary and cosmic deities' (2:34). As Goebs reminds her readers in her introduction 'Egyptology has traditionally devoted much of its research effort to the study of religion, in particular to that of funerary beliefs' (1:1). Her work on the role of crowns carries on this tradition. The texts analyzed clearly 'describe both the events of the deceased king's ascent to the sky and associated cultic procedures aiming to induce that ascent, so that he could join, sun, moon, or

stellar constellations in this divine sphere and achieve immortality in their eternal cycle of rejuvenation' (1:1). 'The visible sign accompanying this transformation is the acquisition of radiance' (4:366).

The first paragraph above is an example of the cosmic action with which the king wishes to be associated before and after death. The crowns as symbols of divinity, given in coronation rituals, serve to link the cosmic with the earthly. As Goebs explains, the crowns represent a 'variety of aspects inherent in the office of kingship, which are associated with different gods, qualities, and aspects of the cosmic cycle' (4:367). The coronation ritual is a process of affirmation by the gods invoked in the bestowing of the crowns (4:366) and symbolize the relationship between earthly and celestial life of both the gods and the king' (1:25). Goebs suggests the likelihood that before the middle kingdom the crowns may have been part of the daily morning ritual of revivification enacted by the temple priest to ensure the continuance of the cosmic cycle (1:27)—a ritual intended to take place when the horizon is an 'island of flames' from which the sun-god, 'the solar creator god' (3:340), 'prince of the sky' (3:332), is reborn to traverse the heavens in his solar barque as the supreme luminosity. The use of source material to suggest propositions and to underscore her theoretical discussion marks Goebs' critique as both thought-provoking and informative; for example, with reference to the ritual re-birth, Goebs quotes Schunck (1985. 63–86; 95–101) as 'proposing a signification of *ḫ*ʿ*w* as "creative effectiveness" (besides that of epiphany), based on the hieroglyphic image of the first appearance of the sun on the primeval mound. This "creativity"is, however, in effect the creation of light in, and out of, the darkness, as stressed by Englund (1993); see also Hornung 1965)" (4:369).

Equally interesting in this volume is the discussion of the spells accompanying the resurrection. Invoked to assure the devouring or engulfing of those celestial bodies of the night sky these spells have been described as cannibalistic. Goebs explores the theory of ritual consumption of these bodies at dawn and their subsequent rebirth as dusk approaches. She concludes that just as the solar rebirth may not be confirmed as the initial symbolism of the Red Crown, so hypotheses concerning the Cannibal Spells may not be definitive. Goebs does suggest, however, that the consumption of the solar enemies 'represents the devouring of the multitude by, and in order to create, the "One", may constitute a so far unrecognized aspect of the well-known "pantheistic formula" *wʿ jrg sw m ḥḥw* "The One who made himself into (or out of) millions"and related expressions' (4:371).

There is much to commend this work. Not only does Goebs painstakingly explore each spell to discover references to support the crown and related insignia symbolism in both the earthly and cosmic realms she also alerts the discerning enquirer to the possibility that symbolism from a far distant Egyptian culture may have parallels elsewhere. From this standpoint this work is important not only to

Egyptologists. Researchers in other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and religious studies will find much of interest as they reflect on what Goebs offers in her analysis. As a thesis reworked this volume lends itself to further enquiry; to build upon Goeb's arguments and to, perhaps, publish co-operative cross-cultural analyses.

African Pentecostalism: An Introduction
Ogbu Kalu. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
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The dramatic growth of African Pentecostal churches is radically altering most African societies. Not surprisingly, a wide range of African, North American, and European scholars have sought to explore the motivations of individuals who join these churches, their theological and sociological perspectives, and the social ramifications of Pentecostal churches on the public square. While Philip Jenkins has contended that such churches will lead a sharp break between Northern and Southern versions of Christianity, academically-trained specialists on African religion have highlighted the role of poverty, long-standing concerns about spiritual warfare, and other local conditions in their studies. No single scholar has tried to explore African Pentecostalism in a single survey throughout the continent before this study. Ogbu Kalu, a Pentecostal minister and a theology professor, has taken it upon himself to give a thorough summary and revision of the existing literature. Simply put, he succeeds better than any other scholarly work to date. *African Pentecostalism* is a stunning achievement. Anyone seeking to understand the theological, social, cultural, and political aspects of Pentecostalism must read this book. Kalu's insider standpoint and unmatched level of erudition make this study one of the most thought-provoking and passionate books this reader has encountered in recent years in African studies.

The main goal of *African Pentecostalism* is to show how African agency has shaped the rise of the movement from its initial beginnings in the early twentieth century through the present. Kalu takes aim at a common master narrative that centers Pentecostalism in the Azusa Street revival of 1906 in Los Angeles. African-led Protestant churches already had emphasized the role of the Holy Spirit in providing physical and spiritual healing with Ethiopian churches and West African independent churches in the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, the decision of independent churches in Ghana (Gold Coast) and Nigeria to contact North American Pentecostal churches such as the Faith Tabernacle church demonstrated how African believers chose to make contacts with like-minded churches, instead