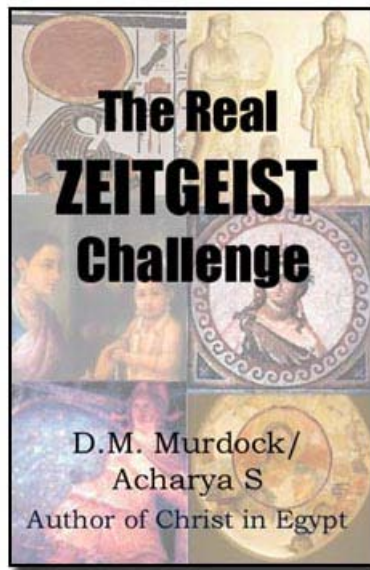


# The Real ZEITGEIST Challenge



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# The Real ZEITGEIST Challenge

by D.M. Murdock/Acharya S

"And when we say also that the Word, who is the first-birth of God, was produced without sexual union, and that He, Jesus Christ, our Teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, we propound nothing different from what you believe regarding those whom you esteem sons of Jupiter."

Early Church Father and Saint Justin Martyr (c. 150 AD/CE)

The hit internet movie "ZEITGEIST," purportedly viewed over 100 million times worldwide in a variety of languages, has stirred up much controversy over the past three years since its release by filmmaker Peter Joseph. As a source for the religious segment—"Part 1"—of the original, official version of ZEITGEIST, I have been aware of the dramatic reactions from those who are religiously inclined, particularly towards Christianity, which ZG contends is a manmade contrivance based on Pagan and Jewish precedents. This part of ZG in particular draws the most fire, apparently because it is the most challenging to the faith.

Instead of welcoming this short digest of religious history that has the potential of providing much needed release from erroneous and deleterious belief systems, a number of individuals have become so flummoxed, distraught and challenged by ZG's revelations that they have gone on the warpath and created a series of dubious "debunking" articles and videos, including a "Zeitgeist Challenge" of their own, full of flawed logic and false contentions that have been addressed long ago but that I have also rebutted continually over the past few years whenever claims of ZG "debunking" or "refutation" have cropped up. My measures to demonstrate the overall factual nature of Part 1 of the original ZEITGEIST (ZG1.1) include an ebook, "The Companion Guide to ZEITGEIST, Part 1," a video and an exhaustive study of the ancient Egyptian influence on Christianity called *Christ in Egypt: The Horus-Jesus Connection*.

I have also written several articles and appeared on a number of radio programs, although ZG1.1 appears to be so controversial that the mainstream media seem terrified to give air time to any serious expert in comparative religion and mythology who actually knows about the profound but often difficult-to-find research and factual evidence behind the film's major contentions regarding religious origins and precedents.

In any event, once more I step into the fray to demonstrate—as I have already done many times over the past decades—that a number of salient "modern" religious notions are in fact very ancient, that Christianity is largely a rehash of earlier religions and mythologies, and that acknowledging this past, without all the brainwashing and conditioning that causes intellectual dishonesty, blindness and hysteria, represents the *real* "ZEITGEIST Challenge."

## Logical Fallacy No. 1: Straw Men

One of the most prominent "debunking" attempts raises the straw man that ZG1.1 is "unscholarly," accusing the "makers of Zeitgeist" of failing to list "original texts," besides the Bible, in defense of the film's claims. Firstly, many of the "original texts" *are* found in a number of the sources Peter Joseph does cite, so this latter contention merely reflects the ignorance of the commenter in not knowing the subject matter in question.

Secondly, this 22-minute segment of ZEITGEIST was never meant to be a scholarly, exhaustive documentary on the subject. Although it does play the voices of certain individuals, there are no "talking head" experts in ZG1.1 with pristine credentials giving scholarly consensus at august universities, as we see in professional documentaries. ZG1.1 was not intended to serve as such; instead, it is a readily accessible and easily understandable *digest* of centuries of deep research and profound scholarship in the subjects of comparative religion and mythology. Such individuals in relevant fields with pertinent opinions do exist, however, and these scholarly assessments showing the true origins of religious thought are what I have spent the better part of the past two decades putting together in my works.

While ZG1.1 itself does not go through a list of its sources, Peter Joseph has created a "Sources" page on his [ZeitgeistMovie.com](http://ZeitgeistMovie.com) website that carefully and thoroughly cites every contention in ZG1.1, a number of which were from my books, which include:

[The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold](#)  
[Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled](#)  
[Who Was Jesus? Fingerprints of The Christ](#)

It is to these sources, then, that any serious student (and would-be "debunker") of ZG1.1 would need to turn.

As noted, I have also created several pertinent articles, ebooks and videos, along with an enormous, in-depth study specifically addressing the Egyptian/Horus claims in the film, which largely emanated from a list in my book *The Christ Conspiracy* (p. 115). These ZG1.1-inspired works include:

[The Companion Guide to ZEITGEIST, Part 1](#)  
[Christ in Egypt: The Horus-Jesus Connection](#)  
[Was Horus Crucified? \(Article\)](#)  
[Was Horus Crucified? \(Radio\)](#)  
[The Nativity Scene of Amenhotep III at Luxor](#)  
[The Star in the East and the Three Kings](#)  
[Jesus as the Sun throughout History](#)  
[Skeptic Mangles ZEITGEIST \(and Religious History\)](#)  
["ZEITGEIST, Part 1" Debunked? Acharya Responds \(Video\)](#)  
["ZEITGEIST, Part 1" Debunked? NOT!" \(Blog\)](#)  
[ZEITGEIST Part 1 section at TBK Forum](#)  
[Acharya's Frequently Asked Questions](#)  
[Was Krishna's Mother a Virgin?](#)  
[Metafysiko Interview of Acharya S](#)

Here I will reiterate some of the same material, as well as steer the reader to my previous writings, where the "debunking" of ZG1.1 has already been addressed, thoroughly and repeatedly. I will also provide more fascinating information that has not been included in my other writings.

## **Logical Fallacy No. 2: Appeal to Authority**

Some of the most notorious "debunking" of "ZEITGEIST," Part 1, has been largely by *Christian apologists*, although they infrequently identify themselves as such, as they apparently understand this admission will leave them open to charges of bias. In not a few

instances, these would-be debunkers have also pretended not to be Christians, presenting themselves as "atheists," while appealing to other purported atheists, whose alleged expertise is flung around in order to drub ZG1.1 and its proponents. When apologists remark that "even so-and-so says so, and he's an atheist," they seem to be raising up the atheist as some sort of omniscient *god* whose word should be taken on face value because his unbelief must somehow make him an expert on the history of religion and mythology. If so, then we must also take as true and factual the atheist's declarations that there is no proof of a god. Apparently Christians and other theists, however, draw the line at the atheist's "expertise" on this point. The reality is that simply because someone lacks a belief in a god—the definition of "atheism"—he or she is not an expert on religion by any stretch of the imagination.

While these ZG1.1 "debunkers," whether theists or atheists, themselves frequently have no relevant credentials, they often harp on the supposed lack thereof by ZG1.1's sources. This "appeal to authority" fallacy could therefore be applied to them as well, as they are usually far less qualified to be writing about religious origins than a number of the film's sources, including lay Egyptologist Gerald Massey, an important analyst of the Egyptian claims as found in ZG1.1 and elsewhere about whom I write in my book *Christ in Egypt*, an excerpt of which can be found at the following link:

#### [Who Was Gerald Massey?](#)

In sum, the highly peer-reviewed Massey was far more erudite, educated and qualified on this subject than the bulk of his detractors.

I too possess [academic credentials from excellent institutions](#) that are certainly relevant to the subject and sufficient enough to allow me to become an expert in the field of comparative religion and mythology. While this subject is extremely interesting and important, it isn't "rocket science" or brain surgery that requires a slew of advanced degrees to study, master and present the facts in a professional, scholarly manner without the bias and kneejerk reactions that lead the debunkers to make so many erroneous contentions. Expertise in this field nevertheless does require some skills that are not abundantly found in the general populace and are usually procured through education, such as I possess, including the ability to research in a variety of languages.

I have been studying a number of languages in addition to English for nearly 40 years, starting in the early 1970s. Not only did I study French, Spanish, Italian, German, ancient Greek and Latin formally in school/college, but I also taught myself modern Greek, as well as other languages, including Sanskrit, Hebrew and Egyptian, to varying degrees. I used Greek abundantly during my trips to Greece, where I did both undergraduate and postgraduate studies, including traveling extensively to archaeological sites throughout the country, serving as a teacher's assistant on Crete, and excavating at Corinth with the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Such language skills very much come with the territory of archaeology, history and religious origins, and without them no investigation of the subject of ancient religion and mythology can be thorough, including any attempts at "debunking" ZG1.1. These skills are, of course, necessary for the study of ancient texts or *primary sources*.

### **Primary Source Destruction**

In this regard, the loud shrieking of the debunkers for "primary sources" in fact serves to remind us of the historical treachery of religious fanatics in the willful and deliberate destruction of human culture—mankind's very past. The scale of this censorial sin is so vast

and appalling that it takes the breath away. Who will answer for this heinous crime against humanity, about which we are reminded every time someone raises the issue of primary sources?

The reality is that there would be much more evidence of ancient religion and mythology had not so much been destroyed, largely by fanatics spawned by the monotheistic Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. For example, in antiquity there existed multiple volumes about ancient religions specifically mentioned by the early Church fathers; yet, these important treatises do not survive, while the Christian apologies and polemics against them do. These works on religion obviously were around when the fathers wrote their commentaries, criticisms and diatribes against them—the latter were preserved but the original bases of these apologies and polemics have been "lost" or deliberately destroyed. Why? These lost/destroyed works include the voluminous writings of the Roman statesman and soldier Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BCE)—called "the most learned of the Romans"—especially his work on religion (*Antiquitates rerum humanarum et divinarum*), which no doubt would have been eye-opening, had it survived. Although Varro's works were burned in his day after he was outlawed by Marc Anthony, based on commentaries upon him by St. Augustine (354-430), enough must have survived until that time at least.

In a number of instances, where so much primary-source material has been destroyed wantonly and willfully, we simply must rely on secondary sources such as the historians of the past, who took the time to chronicle painstakingly whatever they could find within their limited resources of the era. In many cases, these sources are more accurate than scholars of the modern era because they were closer to the events or material in question.

Even if a story, myth, tradition or motif is not recorded in a pristine primary source of the impossible kind required by the "debunkers," if it does appear in the works of a historian, regardless of whether he represents a source secondary, tertiary or otherwise, prior to the Christian era—such as is the case with Diodorus Siculus (c. 90-27 BCE), for example—the information presented therein could likewise have served as an inspiration for the creation of the Christ myth. No one is contending that only primary sources were used in the creation of Christianity, as such a proposition is ludicrous.

And where are the inerrant primary sources written by the very hands of the apostles themselves that prove Christianity's extraordinary claims? Millions give a pass to these supernatural claims, because they have been conditioned by them since an early age, while making unreasonable and impossible demands of proof for rational and logical contentions that Christianity is in significant part a rehash of earlier religions and myths.

If the works of *ancient historians* such as Diodorus, Plutarch and Macrobius do not represent reliable sources, then neither does the New Testament. In addition, if we cannot rely on the works of historians for corroboration of comparative religion, then we may also throw out the purported testimony of Josephus, Pliny, Suetonius, Tacitus, Thallus, Phlegon and all the rest as having no value in "proving" the historicity of Jesus. In this regard, a "[Jesus Challenge](#)" is issued and unlikely to be met any time soon.

If the Christian faith can rely largely upon the secondary-source testimony of non-eyewitnesses as "proof" of extraordinary, supernatural events—there being no textual autographs or concrete and relevant archaeological evidence for gospel claims concerning Jesus—then so too may we turn on occasion to secondary sources when it comes to chronicling one of the most important and fascinating subjects of human culture, i.e., religion and mythology. To ignore this wealth of information because it is considered secondary not only constitutes an egregious waste of a massive human effort but also is utterly unscientific and derived from a need to shore up the faith no matter what the cost.

Indeed, the dishonesty in ignoring this body of work can only be deemed appalling and negligent.

The mockery concerning primary sources—many of which were obliterated long ago by Christian fanatics attempting to stamp out all signs of Paganism—reminds one of the taunting by a criminal who believes the law will never catch up with him because he is too clever and has destroyed all the evidence. It is obvious from the caution with which they proceed and the commentaries and polemics they eventually produce that this evidence was extant during the bulk of the period when the early Church fathers were creating Christianity, but began to disappear sometime after they finally procured the power to destroy it.

Happily, despite the desperate and endless widespread criminal acts of destruction, the evidence of our collective human past is so vast and obvious that enough of it remains regarding many aspects of human culture—including various artifacts we take for granted today, such as the names of the days of the week and the months—that we can piece together a reasonably accurate picture of our ancient religious and mythological heritage, using both whatever primary sources remain, as well as secondary sources deemed to be accurate and factually sound. We are fortunate, for example, that so much of the massive and long-lived Egyptian culture also survived the numerous assaults by religious fanatics. Despite all of the frantic evidence-burying criminal activity, we possess an enormous amount of primary-source material from ancient Egypt, clearly pre-Christian, which is why my response to the various would-be ZG1.1 debunkers, include a nearly 600-page scholarly book, *Christ in Egypt*, with almost 2,400 citations from over 900 sources, providing abundant primary-source material in a variety of languages, both ancient and modern, as well as the works of highly credentialed individuals in relevant fields.

### What is "pre-Christian?"

In this debate, it is necessary to define what is meant by "pre-Christian." Requiring only "primary source" evidence "before the time of Christ," as debunkers are wont to do, is utterly *unreasonable* and shows a real lack of scholarship in the subject. When Christ was supposedly born—around 1 AD/CE, 4 BCE, 6 BCE or some other undocumented date that cannot be found in any pristine primary source—the whole world did not suddenly take notice and start following him and his new cult. Indeed, Christianity itself remained largely unheard of until the *second* century, with the bulk of the earliest Christian efforts taking place at the *end* of that century. In this same regard, the AD/BC dating, representing "Anno Domini" or the "Year of Our Lord" and "Before Christ" (or some other notation in another language meaning the same), was not even established until the 6<sup>th</sup> century, with the efforts of the Scythian monk Dionysius Exiguus, (c. 470–c. 540).

In Europe, the country of Lithuania did not become Christianized until the 14<sup>th</sup> century, meaning that until that time it too was *pre-Christian*. In some parts of the world to this day Jesus Christ and Christianity remain completely unknown, making those places *pre-Christian*. Just because something entered the historical record after the year 1 AD/CE does not mean that it is not *pre-Christian* and was therefore influenced by Christianity. In fact, it could be very well pre-Christian and completely uninfluenced by Christianity.

### Raising the Bar

The ZG "debunking" over the years has changed, with the bar being raised every time it is answered. First it was claimed that ZG1.1 and its sources simply fabricated the facts. When this assertion was shown to be false—and a reflection of the lack of expertise in the subject

by the would-be debunkers—it was admitted that there were plenty of people making these contentions long prior to ZG but that they were evidently seized by some peculiar madness with no basis in fact. For example, in setting up his "requirements" one ZG "challenger" remarks:

Let me be very clear, Im [sic] not looking for what people SAY it says in the ancient literature. There is an abundance of that available. I want to know where these people are getting their information because I can find no historical record of these claims myself.

First of all, this person should be thanked for acknowledging that there is an "abundance" of people making these comparisons, because too many individuals on the internet repeat the falsehoods that I and others are "just making it all up." Secondly, when he admits he cannot find something, he is reflecting not that it isn't there but that he is not a qualified and capable researcher.

Thus, the first admission of ignorance of the subject matter—which did not stop "debunkers" initially from making one wrong claim after another, as if they were experts—was that the information was simply fabricated a few years ago by modern writers. The next claim was that it was fabricated by ne'er-do-wells years earlier, up to perhaps a couple of centuries.

When that widespread contention of reliance upon "19<sup>th</sup> century writers" was shown to be false, by bringing up far more ancient sources used by these earlier scholars, such as Philo, Plutarch, Justin, Macrobius and so on, the debunkers raised the bar again by claiming that these ancient sources are "worthless" and apparently likewise fabricated data. No matter how far back we go in time, therefore, the bar will be raised and the cry will be "fabrication."

Of course, no admission of the previous errors and oversights indicating the lack of real knowledge and expertise in the subject—or any apology for essentially calling the modern proponents of Jesus mythicism "liars" and "frauds"—has ever been forthcoming from this "debunking" crowd, as such honest admissions are not their strong points. And, naturally, in order to keep up the faith, regardless of how dishonest and lacking in integrity have been the previous efforts, the bar was raised again, this time by requiring pristine "primary sources" only approvable by the debunkers themselves. But what else can we expect from those who believe that a book—and that book alone—was written by the very hand of God? Any source we can dig up will not suffice, therefore, because all will be dismissed as "hearsay" written by men, not by God. To ignore ancient sources simply because their information was not recorded by the very finger of God constitutes poor scholarship, to say the least. Meanwhile, without any proof at all—not even any earthly corroboration—these same individuals willingly believe that the Bible *was* written by the very finger of God.

The bottom line is not whether or not Zeus himself left behind documentation of having impregnated the virgin Danae with a golden shower to produce Perseus, or a certificate proving Dionysus's mother Semele's virginity, but whether or not these precedents existed in the pre-Christian world and could have been drawn upon by the creators of Christianity. Most assuredly, the major motifs in question that supposedly distinguish Jesus Christ and prove his divinity were in fact religious and mythological concepts long before his purported advent, regardless of whether or not they can be found in an authorized ancient encyclopedia guarded by Cerberus the three-headed dog for the past 2,500 years.

## Encyclopedia Surfing

While clamoring for primary-source proof of the logical claim that supernatural events in the New Testament and other parts of the Bible represent not "history" but myth, detractors rely on very little evidence for their own beliefs and convictions to the contrary.

For example, as part of the supposed "debunking" come remarks such as the following: "It only took me 15 minutes on the internet to debunk Zeitgeist." Well, if it only took you 15 minutes, and you used websites such as Wikipedia or those of Christian apologists, you have not studied the subject sufficiently by any stretch of the imagination. It takes years—*decades*—of serious study and research both in and out of a formal academic setting to master this subject, provided you even possess the appropriate skills to do such study and research in the first place. Just knowing *how* to study and research requires scholastic training.

Thus, scanning internet or other encyclopedias—"encyclopedia surfing"—or net forums and chat rooms will not suffice to make an expert of anyone, particularly when the petty efforts at "debunking" are plastered all over the net and are easily accessible to even the most illiterate and uneducated among us. The deeper research, however, is often buried under layers of fear and loathing, revealing a shameful record of censorship based, once again, on religious fanaticism—the same fanaticism that today wants to censor this information *again* with shrill cries, personal attacks and fallacious claims of "debunking." Such shallow dismissals do not constitute "credible research," and the truth about this matter is much more profound and interesting than a 15-minute perusal of the net will ever reveal.

## Spiritual Terrorism & the Lunatic Fringe

In my books I expose a pattern of censorship within the fields of religion and mythology created through intimidation and terrorism that culminated in the Inquisition but by no means ended there, as it is continued by fanatics of a variety of religions, including and especially Christianity and Islam. Where facts and logic fail, out come the personal attacks, ad homs, calumny, vitriol, libel, slander and threats. And we wonder why this material is not more widely known? As my research shows, time and again scholars have stepped forth with this information, only to be slapped down by religious authorities and the general public. Where the persuasion of "authorities" fails, these scholars have been thrown to the mobs—and that is precisely what we see flourishing all over the internet. The mainstream ignores this fracas, while the frenzied mob gleefully drags the bodies around.

For those with an open mind and a more serious interest in the reality behind the scenes, however, such mob rule will not suffice. These truth-seekers will look to the real research behind the so patently logical and rational claims that our "revealed" religions represent little more than the dressed-up rehashes of ancient ideologies dating back millennia. Scholars and other writers have not only lost their occupations for revealing such truths but they have also been killed. Again, is it any wonder why this info is not more widely known? Those of us who have brought to light this information have been subjected to the most uncivil and depraved treatment at the hands of rabid and utterly unqualified individuals who have slandered and libeled us with all manner of calumny and false witness deriving from religious delusion, delirium and dementia. This calumny includes allegations of the most bizarre and fanciful nature imaginable, devoid of facts but reflecting an unglued worldview that is best described as "lunatic fringe." This lunacy would include ridiculous and malicious rumors, lies and vitriol invoking the "Illuminati," "Theosophy," "Masons" and assorted other nonsensical notions.



In this regard, one ZG "challenger" remarks: "I hope you will find that this 'Christ-myther' scenario is the exact dogma of the ancient mystery schools and many secret societies." Now we get to the heart of this matter, which is to convince you of the validity of Christianity and that the powers that be are trying to destroy it. Despite the proselytizing effort, the facts, however, reveal otherwise: To wit, such powerful secret societies who could pull off all the other shenanigans attributed to them, including creating a massive amount of human culture such as various religions and cults, would certainly be able to destroy Christianity in an instant, if they wanted to do so.

The actuality is that these selfsame agencies—remember, these are *the* powers that be, according to this mentality, the "Illuminati" and so on, who control the media—do whatever they can to *shore* up the flagging faith, by producing endless "documentaries" concerning the "real" Jesus that *never* discuss possible *mythical* origins of Christianity based on Pagan precedents. In fact, the mainstream media—which undoubtedly would be under the control of these all-powerful secret societies and brotherhoods—bend over backwards to *ignore* this Christ-myth research, burying it wherever it can be found, censoring those who bring it up, and, in earlier times, driving them into poverty or worse.

Who was behind the Inquisition, if not the powers that be? Where was the all-powerful god Jesus when millions were being abused, raped, tortured and murdered in his name? Where is he now, if the Illuminati are really in charge? Why is Jesus relying on the likes of those we see all over the internet spreading disinformation regarding human history? Why do the mainstream media favor received Christian tradition and history, if there is some grandiose conspiracy to bring to light the information found in ZG1.1 and elsewhere?

In the end, "ZEITGEIST" is a grassroots movement created by "some guy with a computer," not the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent Illuminati and New World Order. In this same sense, I myself am "just some gal with a computer," and I know many of the other people in the field of Jesus mythicism, most of whom are just barely making ends meet. The idea of an overarching conspiracy of omnipotent scalawags behind Jesus mythicism is completely absurd.

Confronted with these facts, debunkers retreat into supernatural claims that the purported puppetmasters are working through diabolic agencies including channeling the sentiments of long dead people with whom this material does not originate in the first place. In other words, when faced with science, we hear the same old "Devil got there first" platitudes. That's right—when all else fails, it's obviously the all-powerful Satan getting the better of God once again and yanking our chains.

The same "challenger" contends that these "ancient mystery schools" and "many secret societies" are "the groups more or less behind the problems in parts 2 and 3 of Zeitgeist" and then remarks:

They seem to encourage the belief system Zeitgeist is pushing, even though it is primarily based on initiated writers like Plutarch Gerald Massey, and Manley P. Hall. NOT on the actual writings or records of historical Egypt or any other.

This entire paragraph reveals a number of problems with this detractor's viewpoint, including the utter fallaciousness of ZG.1. being "primarily based on initiated writers..." Firstly, merely a small portion of the [mythicist position](#) has anything to do with Plutarch or Gerald Massey, and that much concerns Egypt only. Secondly, the Egyptian evidence of Jesus mythicism relies not on either of these sources but on the numerous artifacts from Egypt itself and the voluminous commentaries thereupon by highly qualified authorities. Moreover, I personally have never read any book by Manley Hall and therefore make no reference to him in any of my works.

In addition, if Plutarch was "initiated," then he was in a better position to know what exactly was this "Christ-myther scenario" that is supposedly the "exact dogma of the ancient mystery schools and many secret societies." Is the debunker claiming here that the belief that Christ is a myth is really an *ancient* doctrine, since he asserts it was "the exact dogma of the *ancient* mystery schools?" According to the same debunkers, the idea of Christ as a myth is simply a "new fad" fabricated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century!

Moreover, this individual is not qualified to state what is or is not in the "actual writings or records of historical Egypt or any other." Does he read hieroglyphs, and has he personally done a survey of thousands of papyri and inscriptions? In *Christ in Egypt*, I have quoted numerous well-respected authorities on Egypt and sifted through several translations of thousands of pages of Egyptian writings, as well as translated some myself, to demonstrate that these parallels are real and are indeed in the "writings and records of the historical Egypt." This individual's remarks simply show that he is neither qualified nor capable of doing such intense research, not that the material isn't there.

In reality, this statement would more accurately read that the Christ *myth* scenario is the exact dogma of the ancient mystery schools and many secret societies. In other words, the various motifs of the gospel story are essentially what was being taught in the mystery schools for hundreds to thousands of years before Christ purportedly lived.

As concerns the besmirchment of Plutarch, why should we not trust his assessment, particularly when the ancient Egyptian writings and other artifacts do in reality back up his contentions? Do we have any refutation of his commentary from antiquity, anyone calling him a liar and denying his accounts? No, but we do have Egyptologists remarking upon his accuracy, such as: "When we examine this story by the light of the results of hieroglyphic decipherment, we find that a large portion of it is substantiated by Egyptian texts..."<sup>1</sup>

Plutarch's writings appeared in a pre-Christian context, despite him having written during the first and early second centuries. There is absolutely no evidence that Plutarch was aware of Christ, Christians or Christianity and was influenced by them, nor has anyone reputable made such a contention. He was obviously free to make these statements without the censorial Inquisition and its harpies on his back calling him a liar, as there was no reason to do so. Not only is it likely he was telling the truth but also that no one had an interest in refuting him because there was at that time no Christian tradition to defend.

What does Plutarch say? He relates that Osiris is the sun and Isis the moon, and that Isis was impregnated by the *sun* and gave birth to Horus on the winter solstice (which has come down to us as December 25<sup>th</sup>). Plutarch also relates the myth about Osiris's annually celebrated death and resurrection. We have no reason to doubt any of these claims—in fact, in *Christ in Egypt*, I have demonstrated through numerous pre-Christian primary sources that Plutarch is correct. Thus, Plutarch remains a very valuable resource who shows that no one in the modern era is making up any of these contentions. When faced with Plutarch, in fact, rather than honestly admitting they knew nothing of the existence of these remarks in his writings—if they had even heard of him in the first place—debunkers smugly raised the bar and pretend that he has no relevance.

Not content with revealing such flawed thinking, this same "challenger" also libels me personally by saying that my books are "notoriously absent of many references to her claims," an utter falsehood that is again reflective of this individual's total ignorance of the subject matter in general and my work in particular. Every major and many minor contentions in my work are carefully cited, with abundant ancient and modern sources, including biblical verses in their original languages, as well as citations from other

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<sup>1</sup> See *Christ in Egypt*, 91.

languages. The lack of honest admissions on the part of apologists is what is notorious, not the absence of references by so-called "Christ-mythers."

In the same paragraph, after falsely characterizing my work, the "challenger" includes my email address and incites his readers to harass me with requests for information that is already demonstrated repeatedly and copiously in my writings over the past two decades.

### **Where does it all come from?**

When one reads various remarks from would-be debunkers, whether theists or atheists, one can see that they have not studied this subject in depth by their repeated admissions that they do not know where the information has come from. When one hears someone say, "I have no idea where they got that from" or "I can find no historical record of these claims myself," they are in effect revealing their own ignorance of the subject and their own personal inability to do adequate research, and should therefore not be presenting themselves as experts.

This fact is handily demonstrated by the massive amount of research concerning the Horus-Jesus parallels that I have put together in my book *Christ in Egypt*. Again, in that book, I have shown through numerous ancient, pre-Christian primary sources that the contentions in ZG1.1 concerning Horus and/or his father Osiris or other Egyptian divine figure are true and factual. There is, of course, no acknowledgement of these facts from the ZG debunking crowd, just more of the same dismissive calumny, libel and vitriol designed to cover up the criminal destruction that has allowed for these facts to be buried. As I describe in my book, however, in Egypt there was simply too much evidence of the ancient astrotheological religion at the basis of the Christ myth to destroy or cover up. Christians did in fact rampage all over that country, defacing and destroying monuments, texts and other artifacts wherever they could. Nevertheless, again, the evidence was too overwhelming—literally, in this case, as there were so many massive buildings, some of which were buried and forgotten. Where the Christians could not destroy the monuments, they stuccoed over the hieroglyphs, having the effect of preserving them for future generations, and it is to these and much else that we may turn for our evidence.

This information thus comes from many different sources, including primary sources, as well as the works of ancient historians and moderns scholars.

It needs to be kept in mind throughout this study of comparative religion and mythology dating back into ancient times that much of it takes place in languages other than English. In addition to the writings in their original languages, including Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, appears much commentary in more modern times also in languages such as Latin, as well as French and German. This material is not particularly easy to dig up and/or understand, and requires expertise to make it more readily available.

### **Testimony of Early Church Fathers**

It is obvious from the frantic, hysterical and dishonest efforts to refute and debunk the first part of ZG, with a rabid focus on the Pagan parallels laid out there, that this aspect of Jesus mythicism constitutes the Achilles' heel of Christianity. From an abundance of facts, however, we can assert that early Christians copied much Pagan (and Jewish) religion, mythology and philosophy, and subsequently attempted to cover up their actions by a massive and sustained censorship campaign that continues to this day, in such disingenuous efforts made by anti-ZGers. These facts can be demonstrated in a variety of ways using many sources, including the works of the early Church fathers. For example, in his *First Apology*, Church father and saint Justin Martyr remarked:

Chapter 21. Analogies to the history of Christ.

And when we say also that the Word, who is the first-birth of God, was produced without sexual union, and that He, Jesus Christ, our Teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, we propound nothing different from what you believe regarding those whom you esteem sons of Jupiter.

Hence, we discover that, in making claims regarding Christ's virgin birth, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension into heaven, Justin is saying nothing different than what the Romans had maintained of their gods!

Justin next names some of these "esteemed sons of Jupiter"—i.e., Greek and Roman gods—who possessed one or more of these mythical motifs as Mercury (Hermes), Asclepius, Bacchus (Dionysus), Hercules and Perseus. Justin specifically uses the term "crucified," so we might wonder to *whom* he is referring, and turn our examination towards Egypt, for one, where it was rumored that there were gods who were "crucified" or who appeared in the shape of a cross, i.e., *cruciform*. This claim concerning non-Christian gods on crosses or in cruciform was also made by Church father Minucius Felix (c. 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> cents.).

I have conducted a lengthy investigation of these subjects of the cross, crucifixion and cruciform in my book *Christ in Egypt*, as well as elsewhere, such as in my book *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled*, which includes numerous images of pre-Christian gods and goddesses in the shape of a cross.

In his *Dialogue with Trypho* (66), in defense of Christ's virgin birth, Justin also says:

...in the fables of those who are called Greeks, it is written that Perseus was begotten of Danae, who was a virgin; he who was called among them Zeus having descended on her in the form of a golden shower.

In chapter 22 of his *First Apology*, Justin reiterates the comparison between Christ's birth and that of Perseus:

And if we affirm that He was born of a virgin, accept this in common with what you accept of Perseus.

Again, all of these quotes may be found in my books, along with other extensive discussions of their meaning and relevance.

Apologists cynically contend that, since Justin wrote around the middle of the second century, it was only then that in all of human history we hear of these concepts of the virgin birth, crucifixion and resurrection in non-Christian religions and myths. This argument holds no water at all, as, for one, nowhere does Justin say these elements just sprang into being in his time in imitation of Christianity—as he surely would have done here, if he could have.

Justin is not addressing a new phenomenon that had just erupted in his time—to make such a claim not only is unsupported by the facts but also represents yet another attempt to cover up the destruction of the past and its potential in exposing true Christian origins. The Church fathers who acknowledged these Pagan parallels claimed the devil had gotten there first and set them up as *precedents*, rather than asserting that these parallels were borrowed from Christianity—as they could not honestly have claimed, because the erudite among their audience of the time knew the truth.

Hence, Justin could not make such allegations, because he evidently knew that other gods had been said to have been born of virgins, crucified and resurrected long before his day. This contention can be proved by looking at some of the most popular gods and goddesses of the day, including and especially those of Egypt, in texts and on monuments long predating the common era.

For example, in a number of pre-Christian inscriptions Isis is called the "Great Virgin," despite her being the mother of Horus and, in one myth, impregnating herself with Osiris's severed phallus. That discrepancy is how *myths* work.

Justin was obviously aware of the existence of the virgin birth in pre-Christian mythology, even though he names not Horus but the Greek "son of Jupiter" Perseus as being a result of the union of God ("Zeus" means "God") and a mortal *virgin*. Justin never contends that the myth of Perseus, including the virginity of his mother, were newly created in imitation of the Christian faith. Instead, he resorts to the "Devil got there first" excuse, which necessitates that "Ol' Nick" *anticipated* Christ's virgin birth and assorted other "Christian" doctrines and planted them in the heads of the Pagans centuries before Christ's alleged advent.

The author(s) of the Christian text the *Paschal Chronicle* or *Chronicle of Alexandria* (7<sup>th</sup> cent. AD/CE) was so sure of this particular motif of a virgin mother long predating the alleged birth of Jesus that he attributed its centuries-old tradition in Egypt to the respect there for the warnings by the prophet Jeremiah, who purportedly lived in the seventh century BCE!

Says the Chronicle author:

This Jeremiah gave a sign to the Egyptian priests that their idols would be shaken, and it would come to pass by a child-savior born from a virgin, lying in a manger. Therefore, for some time now they deify a virgin child-bearer and worship a newborn child placed in a manger.<sup>2</sup>

If the Chronicle author and others before him could have honestly contended that the virgin birth in other cultures had been taken *from* Christianity—or did not exist as a motif at all, like modern would-be debunkers erroneously claim—he surely would have done so. But the tradition was obviously very ancient by the Chronicle author's time, so much so that he, as a bibliolater, felt the need to attribute its origins to the allegedly heeded warnings of a biblical prophet many centuries before Christ's alleged advent. There is much more to this subject, including suppressed testimony from other Church fathers such as Epiphanius (c. 310/320-403), as well as non-Christian sources, which can be found particularly in my books *Suns of God* and *Christ in Egypt*.

## Horus

All of the contentions in ZG1.1 and more concerning Horus and Egypt are addressed in my nearly 600-page book *Christ in Egypt*. Briefly, Horus's birth at the winter solstice ("December 25<sup>th</sup>") is mentioned by Plutarch, but there is much more evidence of it. His mother, Isis, was called the "Great Virgin" in an inscription in the temple of the Egyptian pharaoh Seti I (13<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE) at Abydos.<sup>3</sup> Horus with the 12 companions or "disciples" is easily demonstrated in images found in tombs and pyramids representing passages from the various "books of the afterlife."<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, not only was the great god Osiris killed and resurrected from death—on a regular basis for thousands of years—but so too was his son Horus, in the pre-Christian writings of Diodorus. Indeed, in describing Horus's resurrection, Diodorus uses the precise term, *anastasis*, utilized later in the New Testament and other Christian writings to describe Jesus's resurrection! For more on this important fact, please see also *CIE*, which includes a lengthy discussion of the nature of Osiris's resurrection, both in this world and the afterworld. This fact of Horus's death and resurrection as found in a *pre-Christian* source is

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<sup>2</sup> Murdock, *CIE*, 139.

<sup>3</sup> Murdock, *CIE*, 152.

<sup>4</sup> Murdock, *CIE*, 269ff.

almost always overlooked by both scholars and apologists, for obvious reasons, as it absolutely demonstrates the unoriginality of this motif within Christianity, as well as its patently *mythical* nature, here revealed in an Egyptian *myth*.

Regarding the claim that Horus was "crucified," see my article:

[Was Horus "Crucified?"](#)

See also the lengthy chapter by the same title in [Christ in Egypt](#).

For a shorter discussion of some of the Horus-Jesus contentions in ZG1.1, see also my [Companion Guide to ZEITGEIST, Part 1](#)

## Attis

The contentions in ZG1.1 concerning the Phrygian god Attis have been laid out since ancient times, including in commentary by Church fathers such as Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Tatian, Tertullian, Augustine, Arnobius and Firmicus Maternus. As concerns the parallels between Jesus and Attis, Dr. Gary Taylor, a professor at the University of Alabama, comments:

Similarities between Attis and Christ had become increasingly prominent in the ritual celebrations of Attis in Rome and elsewhere: The "Hilaria" turned his humiliated suffering into an occasion of joy, celebrants were "redeemed by the blood" of a sacrificial victim, and the promise of resurrection was held out to believers.<sup>5</sup>

As I also relate in my book *Christ in Egypt* (391ff), after discussing Attis along with his consort/mother Cybele (the "Metroac" cult/mysteries, Dr. Andrew T. Fear, a professor of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Manchester, remarks:

The youthful Attis after his murder was miraculously brought to life again three days after his demise. The celebration of this cycle of death and renewal was one of the major festivals of the metroac cult. Attis therefore represented a promise of reborn life and as such it is not surprising that we find representations of the so-called mourning Attis as a common tomb motif in the ancient world.

The parallel, albeit it at a superficial level, between this myth and the account of the resurrection of Christ is clear. Moreover Attis as a shepherd occupies a favourite Christian image of Christ as the good shepherd. Further parallels also seem to have existed: the pine tree of Attis, for example, was seen as a parallel to the cross of Christ.

Beyond Attis himself, Cybele too offered a challenge to Christian divine nomenclature. Cybele was regarded as a virgin goddess and as such could be seen as a rival to the Virgin Mary... Cybele as the mother of the Gods, *mater Deum*, here again presented a starkly pagan parallel to the Christian Mother of God.

There was rivalry too in ritual. The climax of the celebration of Attis' resurrection, the *Hilaria*, fell on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, the date that the early church had settled on as the day of Christ's death.<sup>6</sup>

In *CIE*, I continue this analysis by relating that the festival associated with Cybele and Attis, called the "Megalensia," was celebrated specifically in the spring, with a *passion play* commemorating Attis's death and resurrection. Dr. Fear thus asserts this mourning period of the god Attis to have comprised *three days*. In reality, this pre-Christian cult remained

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<sup>5</sup> Taylor, G., 72.

<sup>6</sup> Lane, 39-40.

popular well into the common era, and its similarities to Christianity were not considered "superficial" by the Church fathers who wrote about them. The parallels between the Attis myth and the gospel story are in fact startling and highly noteworthy, and in reality represent an archetypal myth that was evidently changed to revolve around a Jewish messiah, with numerous details added for a wide variety of purposes. Fear's analysis includes the debate as to *when* this prototypical springtime death-and-resurrection motif was associated with the pre-Christian god Attis, with various scholars averring its components to have been added *in response to Christianity*.

Contrary to the current fad of dismissing all correspondences between Christianity and Paganism, the fact that Attis *was* at some point a "dying and rising god" is concluded by Dr. Tryggve Mettinger, a professor of Old Testament Studies at the University of Lund and author of *The Riddle of the Resurrection*, who relates: "Since the time of Damascius (6<sup>th</sup> cent. AD/CE), Attis seems to have been believed to die and return."<sup>7</sup> By that point, we possess clear discussion in *writing* of Attis having been resurrected, but when exactly were these rites first celebrated and where? Attis worship is centuries older than Jesus worship and was popular in some parts of the Roman Empire before and well into the "Christian era."

In addition, it is useful here to reiterate that simply because something occurred after the year 1 AD/CE—which was not the dating system used at that time—does not mean that it was influenced by Christianity, as it may have happened where Christianity had never been heard of. In actuality, not much about Christianity emerges until the second century, and there remain to this day places where Christianity is unknown; hence, these locations can still be considered *pre-Christian*.

It is probable that the Attis rites were celebrated long before Christianity was recognized to any meaningful extent. Certainly, since they are mysteries, they could have been celebrated but not recorded previously, especially in pre-Christian times, when the capital punishment for revealing the mysteries was actually carried out.

In the case of Attis, we possess a significant account in Diodorus (3.58.7) of his death and mourning, including the evidently annual ritual creation of his image by priests. Hence, these noteworthy aspects of the Attis myth are clearly *pre-Christian*. Although Diodorus does not specifically state that Attis was resurrected, the priests parading about with an image of the god is indicative that they considered him risen, as this type of ritual is present in other celebrations for the same reason, such as in the Egyptian festivities celebrating the return of Osiris or the rebirth of Sokar.

Regarding the Attis rituals, Dr. Marvin Meyer, a professor of Religious Studies at Chapman College, states:

The most well-known Roman festival in honor of the Anatolian deities [Cybele and Attis] was celebrated in the spring, during March. *Presumably this festival began to take shape during the first century C.E.* Much of the evidence for specific components of the festival, however, dates from later centuries, so that the following schedule of events most accurately describes the festival as it was celebrated in the third or fourth century C.E. On March 15 the ceremonies opened, with the reed-bearers (cannonphori) carrying their reeds into the sanctuary. The cut reeds may have been a symbolic representation of a feature of the story of Kybele and Attis: either the abandonment of baby Attis by the side of a river or his self-castration later in his life. The next several days of the spring festival were spent in fasting from bread, wine, and other food, as well as abstaining from sexual intercourse.

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<sup>7</sup> Mettinger, 159.

Then, on March 22 the tree-bearers (*dendrophori*) carried into the sanctuary a pine tree that was freshly cut and decorated with ornaments such as purple flowers or ribbons and an image of Attis. On that day and the day following, the worshipers mourned over the tree, for it commemorated the death of Attis. According to the sacred myth, Attis castrated himself and died under a pine tree and even could be identified with the tree. As the pine tree was cut down in death, so also was youthful Attis cut down.

March 24 was aptly named the Day of Blood (*Dies sanguinis*). On this day some of the fanatical celebrants flogged themselves until they bled and sprinkled their blood upon the image and the altars in the sanctuary, while others are said to have imitated Attis by castrating themselves. Such painful and dramatic acts allowed the worshipers to identify with the passion and death of Attis. The Hilaria on March 25 brought renewed joy and hope. There was feasting in honor of the Great Mother and good cheer. At least in some fourth-century celebrations of the Hilaria, there also may have been affirmations of the resurrection of Attis. (CP. the hints in Arnobius, *The Case Against the Pagans*, 5.7, and the denial of Attis's actual return to life. In Firmicus Maternus, *The Error of the Pagan Religions*, 3.1ff., explicit mention is made of the resurrection of Attis.) The spring festival came to a close with a much-needed day of rest (March 26) and a final day (March 27) on which the holy image of the Great Mother was bathed in the Almo River.<sup>8</sup>

Concerning the death and resurrection of another solar and fertility god, Tammuz, whose mourning by the Israelite women in the springtime is recorded in the biblical book of Ezekiel (8:14), in his exhaustive analysis of this god, also known as Dumuzi, Dr. Mettinger concludes: "From the end of the third millennium B.C.E. there is thus a narrative, mythological evidence for Dumuzi as a god who dies and returns."<sup>9</sup> In discussing this subject of "dying and rising gods," Mettinger at one point also complains about a "Christian bias" within the scholarship.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, although we do not need Attis to show a dying-and-rising parallel to Christ, the material in ZG1.1 concerning him is soundly based in scholarship. Regardless of when these attributes were first associated specifically with Attis, the dying-and-rising motif of springtime myths is verified as pre-Christian by the fact of its appearance in the story of Tammuz as well as that of the Greek goddess Persephone, also known as Proserpina, whose "rise" out of the underworld was celebrated in the Greco-Roman world. That the festivals displayed by the Attis myth represent *spring celebrations* and not an imitation of Christianity is the most logical conclusion. Indeed, the presence of such a ritual in springtime festivals dating back to the third millennium BCE, as Mettinger relates, certainly makes the case for borrowing by Christians, rather than the other way around.

It should be noted that the use of the term "crucified" in ZG1.1 and elsewhere, such as concerns gods like Attis, does not necessarily connote that he or they were thrown to the ground and nailed to a cross, as we commonly think of crucifixion, based on the Christian tale. Nevertheless, Attis *is* said to have been "crucified" to a pine tree,<sup>11</sup> while Christ too was related as having been killed and hung on a *tree* (Acts 5: 30; 10: 39).

Interested parties in the sources for all these contentions regarding Attis may wish to consult the various respected authorities cited here.

<sup>8</sup> Meyer, 114. (Emph. Added.) See also Borgeaud, 90-91.

<sup>9</sup> Mettinger, 213.

<sup>10</sup> Mettinger, 43fn.

<sup>11</sup> Price, R., 87.



## Krishna

The myth of the Indian god Krishna predates the Christian era by centuries, although not all of it is written in one place prior to that time. While a number of Indian texts were not written down until some centuries ago, others were committed to writing many centuries prior to that, on perishable media such as leaves. Hence, Indian writings often represent *oral* tradition, much of which undoubtedly goes back hundreds of years before the common era. Regardless of when they were finally written down, none of the germane Hindu compositions shows direct influence by Christianity.

While the most common terminology concerning the status of Krishna's mother, Devaki, when she gave birth to the god is that she was "chaste," another myth depicts her becoming a *virgin mother* as a teenager after eating the seed of a mango.<sup>12</sup> This apocryphal tale demonstrates that the notion of the virgin mother existed in Hindu mythology, specifically applicable to Devaki, who later became Krishna's mother. In the Indian epic the *Mahabharata*, parts of which were composed centuries before the Christian era, the character Draupadi is a virgin mother,<sup>13</sup> while the book's supposed author, also named Krishna, is said to have been born of a virgin. Also in the *Mahabharata*, the goddess Kunti remarks: "Without a doubt, through the grace of that god, I once more became a virgin."<sup>14</sup> Kunti is depicted as a "chaste maiden"—here unquestionably a *virgin*—who is impregnated by the sun god Surya. Other "born-again virgins" in this epic include Madhavi and Satyavati.

For more information on this subject, see my related forum thread and article:

[Was Krishna's Mother a Virgin?  
Krishna Born of a Virgin?](#)

Also see the extensive chapter in my book [Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled](#).

The bright star at Krishna's birth is called "Rohini," as related in the *Bhagavad Purana* (10.3:1-8), an ancient Indian text.

Krishna's performance of miracles, in front of his disciples, is legendary, including many in the *Mahabharata*, in which he reveals mysteries to his disciple Arjuna (John?). Krishna does likewise in the *Bhagavad Gita*, in which he describes himself as the "Lord of all beings," among many epithets similar to those found within Christianity. In this same regard, Krishna says: "I am the origin of all that exists, and everything emanates from Me."<sup>15</sup>

Although it is not specifically stated that Krishna "resurrects" upon his death—when he is killed under a tree—he does ascend into heaven,<sup>16</sup> alive again, since he is considered to be the eternal God of the cosmos. Krishna's death is recounted in the *Mahabharata* and *Vishnu Purana*, both claiming he was killed by a hunter while sitting under a tree, the arrow penetrating his foot, much like Christ having a nail driven through his feet. In this regard, there have been found in India strange images of figures in cruciform with nail holes in their hands and feet, one of which was identified by an Indian priest as possibly the god Wittoba, who is an incarnation of Krishna.<sup>17</sup>

Another remarkable motif in the Krishna myth is that of the baby god being sought at birth by a tyrant, King Kamsa, who wanted to kill him, much like the gospel story of King Herod

<sup>12</sup> Hildebeitel, 186.

<sup>13</sup> Hildebeitel, 363.

<sup>14</sup> Rāy, 68.

<sup>15</sup> Bryant, 86.

<sup>16</sup> Bhārati, 29.

<sup>17</sup> Acharya, SOG, 248.

massacring the infants while looking for Jesus. This part of the Krishna myth was purportedly recorded in a cave on the island of Elephanta at least three centuries before the common era. There are many more correspondences to Christianity, as found in the Indian texts, such that a number of scholars over the centuries have contended for one copying the other.

## Dionysus/Bacchus

For the information concerning the birthday of the Greek sun and wine god Dionysus on December 25<sup>th</sup>, we turn to the ancient Roman writer Macrobius (c. 395-423 AD/CE).<sup>18</sup> The birthday of Dionysus was also previously commemorated on both the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of January, while the god Aion who is likewise born on January 6<sup>th</sup> is called by Joseph Campbell a "syncretistic personification of Osiris."<sup>19</sup> Dionysus too was identified with both Aion and Osiris in ancient times. In antiquity as well, Jesus Christ's nativity was also placed on the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> of January, when it remains celebrated in some factions of the Orthodox Church, such as in Armenia, as well as the Coptic Church. Concerning these dates, Christian theologian Rev. Dr. Hugo Rahner remarks:

As to the dates, Norden has shown that the change from January 6 to December 25 can be explained as the result of the reform introduced by the more accurate Julian calendar into the ancient Egyptian calculation which had fixed January 6 as the date of the winter solstice.<sup>20</sup>

It thus appears that in ancient times these dates of January 5, 6 and 7 represented the winter solstice, which is fitting for sun gods. Again, Macrobius later places Dionysus's birth on December 25<sup>th</sup>, also appropriate for a sun god.<sup>21</sup>

As the god of the vine, Dionysus is depicted in ancient texts as traveling around teaching agriculture, as well as doing various miracles, such as in Homer's *The Iliad*, dating to the 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and in *The Bacchae* of Euripides, the famous Greek playwright who lived around 480 to 406 BCE.<sup>22</sup> In addition, Dionysus's miracle of changing water to wine is also recounted in *pre-Christian* times by Diodorus (*Library of History*, 3.66.3).<sup>23</sup>

In an Orphic hymn, Phanes-Dionysus is styled by the Greek title *Protogonos* or "first-born" of Zeus,<sup>24</sup> also translated at times as "only-begotten son," although the term *Monogenes* would be more appropriately rendered as the latter.

As concerns the epithet "King of Kings," Sir James Frazer tells us that the Neoplatonist Proclus (5<sup>th</sup> cent. AD/CE) related:

Dionysus was the last king of the gods appointed by Zeus. For his father set him on the kingly throne, and placed in his hand the scepter, and made him king of all the gods of the world.<sup>25</sup>

In the case of Dionysus/Bacchus being labeled the "Alpha and Omega," here is one instance where not knowing foreign languages would make the sources difficult to access, as we are

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<sup>18</sup> Rahner, 140.

<sup>19</sup> Campbell, 338.

<sup>20</sup> Rahner, 141.

<sup>21</sup> Rahner, 140.

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., Smith, 148.

<sup>23</sup> Cotter, 164.

<sup>24</sup> Campbell, *The Mysteries*, 71.

<sup>25</sup> Frazer, 451.

told in French by Rev. Isaac de Beausobre that there is an ancient inscription in which Dionysus/Bacchus says, "I am the Alpha and Omega."<sup>26</sup>

Dionysus's death and resurrection were famous in ancient times, so much so that Christian father Origen (c. 184-c. 254) felt the need to address them in his *Contra Celsus* (IV, XVI-XVII), comparing them unfavorably, of course, to those of Christ. By Origen's time, these Dionysian mysteries had already been celebrated for centuries. Dionysus/Bacchus's resurrection or revival after having been torn to pieces or otherwise killed earned him the epithet of "twice born."<sup>27</sup>

## Mithra

As I relate in *Suns of God*, it is erroneously asserted that because Mithraism was a "mystery cult" it did not leave any written record. In reality, much evidence of Mithra worship has been deliberately destroyed, including not only monuments, iconography and other artifacts, but also *numerous books by ancient authors*, such as Eubulus, who, according to St. Jerome in *Against Jovianus*, "wrote the history of Mithras in many volumes." Also, Porphyry related that there were "several elaborate treatises setting forth the religion of Mithra," each one of which "has been destroyed by the care of the Church." These many volumes doubtlessly contained much interesting information that was damaging to Christianity, such as the important correspondences between the "lives" and teachings of Mithra and Jesus, as well as identical symbols and rites.<sup>28</sup>

This destruction of ancient culture was committed largely by Christian fanatics on rampages across many countries and centuries. The massive and widespread Mithraic ruins demonstrate quite abundantly that this religion/cult was extremely important long before Christ and Christianity gained prominence. Why were all these artifacts destroyed? Because they would have demonstrated the parallels that had been developed within Mithraism particularly since it reached the shores of the Mediterranean centuries before Jesus allegedly existed?

As concerns the debate regarding the Perso-Roman god Mithra's "virgin birth," not a few scholars and writers of *Persian/Iranian* extract have discussed the Persian goddess of love Anahita as Mithra's *virgin mother*. Presumably, these individuals know more about their ancient traditions than do modern Christian apologists and anti-ZGers.

In the scholarly digest *Mithraic Studies: Proceedings of the First International Congress*, Dr. Martin Schwartz, a professor of Iranian Studies at the University of California, discusses the "Armenian national epic" concerning Mithra, who is called the "Great Mher." In recounting a myth regarding the Great Mher (Mithra), Dr. Schwartz relates the story of his father, Sanasar, who along with his twin brother Baltasar is "born of a virgin who becomes pregnant from the water of the 'Milky Fountain of Immortality'..." He next says:

Combining these data with the tradition found in Elise that Mithra was born of God through a human mother...one may suggest a transference of the miraculous birth of the Sosyants to Mithra.<sup>29</sup>

In other words, in certain traditions Mithra was said to have been born of the union of God with a human mortal, possibly a virgin mother like that of his father.

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<sup>26</sup> Lardner, 379.

<sup>27</sup> For various stages of the Dionysian myth in antiquity, including the god's title "Dionysos the Resurrected," see Guthrie, 182. See also Russell, 137.

<sup>28</sup> Acharya, *SOG*, 125.

<sup>29</sup> Hinnells, 418.

The fact will remain that the motifs of the virgin mother and virgin birth predated Christianity by centuries, as demonstrated here and elsewhere, and to assume that this motif was copied from Christianity by much older Pagan religions such as Mithraism—or to deny that it even exists in these non-Christian religions—constitutes a conclusion unsupported by the evidence.

Mithra surrounded by the 12 "companions" is a motif found on many Mithraic remains and representing the 12 signs of the zodiac. The comparison of this common motif with Jesus and the 12 has been made on many occasions, including in an extensive study entitled, "Mithras and Christ: some iconographical similarities," by Professor A. Deman in the same volume of *Mithraic Studies*.<sup>30</sup>

Mithra's birthday on December 25<sup>th</sup> is commonly known, as admitted even by the Catholic Encyclopedia ("Mithraism"): "The 25 December was observed as his birthday, the *natalis invicti*, the rebirth of the winter-sun, unconquered by the rigours of the season."<sup>31</sup>

Concerning Mithra's miracles, *Mithraic Studies* editor John R. Hinnells remarks:

...the side panels of many Mithraic reliefs and paintings are interpreted as representations of the *primeval* life of the god, in which he performed miracles, experience various adventures, and celebrated an archetypal communion meal before he ascended to heaven.<sup>32</sup>

Early Church fathers Justin and Tertullian were so perturbed by the similarities between the cults of Mithra and Jesus that they fell back on the "Devil did it" excuse to explain them.

Those interested in the subject of Mithraism and its correspondences to Christianity may wish to consult my extensive article:

[Mithra: The Pagan Christ](#)

## Jesus

As concerns the mention of Jesus Christ having been born on December 25<sup>th</sup>, obviously ZG1.1 did not make up this tradition, so the debunkers batting it about as a false parallel are simply being disingenuous about it, in effect raising another straw man to knock down. Perhaps they need to inform the hundreds of millions of people worldwide over the past 1700 or so years that they have been in error, because no "primary source" relates this tradition. They should also be reminded that the New Testament as we have it is not a "primary source," because we possess no autographs of these purported eyewitnesses—and only two of the canonical gospels were allegedly written by individuals claimed to have known Jesus. We have no primary sources proving that Jesus Christ actually existed, no legal documents, no "glyphs," no papyri, no statuary, coins—nothing. All we have to go on is hearsay, the bulk of which is secondary, tertiary and so on. Again, only two gospels are accepted as having come from alleged eyewitnesses, and these constitute but a few dozen pages with little biographical or historical material yet full of miracles, impossibilities and improbabilities. All the rest of Christian literature represents sources that are secondary and tertiary, etc. (For more on the problems of the New Testament, see my book [Who Was Jesus? Fingerprints of The Christ.](#))

The ZG1.1 debunkers also make a big deal of the number "three" in the legend concerning those present at Christ's birth, because these "wise men" are not specifically numbered as

<sup>30</sup> Hinnells, 507ff.

<sup>31</sup> Herbermann, *CE*, X, 404.

<sup>32</sup> Hinnells, 291.

such in the gospel story. Despite this straw man, in the gospel of Matthew (2:11), the gifts brought by these individuals *are* listed as three, and Christian tradition beginning centuries ago puts these "kings," "wise men" and "magi" at three, as in the Christmas song "We Three Kings." Hence, ZG1.1 is justified in citing Christian tradition as reflecting them as three.

These two "debunking" claims, which in fact debunk *Christian tradition*, not ZG1.1, represent the escape clauses allowing the anti-ZGers never to acknowledge that their "challenge" has been met and, thus, they not need to pay out their meager "reward." Ironically, all the harping on these two contentions concerning the purported historical figure of Jesus Christ serves to remind us that *Christian tradition is not trustworthy*, which is the point of ZG1.1 in the first place. In any event, again, with the addition of these two clauses from *Christian tradition*, the debunkers have made their "challenge" impossible to win, so that its creators can claim that the rest has been "debunked" as well. This deceit reminds one of the double bind of answering the question, "Have you stopped beating your wife yet?"

## **Conclusion**

The bottom line is that neither "ZEITGEIST," Part 1, nor its sources "just made anything up." Nor do these claims rely simply on the "opinions" of modern scholars or those of the past couple of centuries. When the subject is actually studied to find out where these contentions come from, ancient authors spring into view, provided the view is clear of the bigoted and biased detritus of people shoring up the faith at any cost, including by censoring very important religious history.

In the final analysis, the clamor for "primary sources" serves to remind us of the appalling destruction of ancient cultures, largely perpetrated by those whose spiritual heirs are now attempting to cover up this crime against humanity with their fallacious "challenges" in books, videos and on websites. When will this crime be acknowledged and dealt with justly? How about the many millions of Pagans—*our ancestors*—who were viciously abused, tortured, raped and murdered by carriers of religious dementia created by the Bible? Where is their justice? Will we allow their legacy to be destroyed and buried again, just as soon as it has finally been unearthed through such liberating media as the internet and films like "ZEITGEIST?"

For the sake of justice and mankind's magnificent legacy—this information actually represents the *best* of humanity—we must not let the cover-up of this crime against humanity stand and the burial of our heritage occur again. We have the tools and freedoms at last to reconstruct the past to a greater extent, to restore the ancient cultures to their proper place, and to delve into religious origins in a way never before enjoyed. Let us not allow this amazing opportunity to slip away based on the same blind belief, calumny and specious contentions that buried this legacy in the first place. This awakening towards our collective past and call to preserve it in the face of continued censorial onslaught represent the *real* challenge of ZEITGEIST.

For updates and changes, please see this page:

[The Real ZEITGEIST Challenge](#)

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