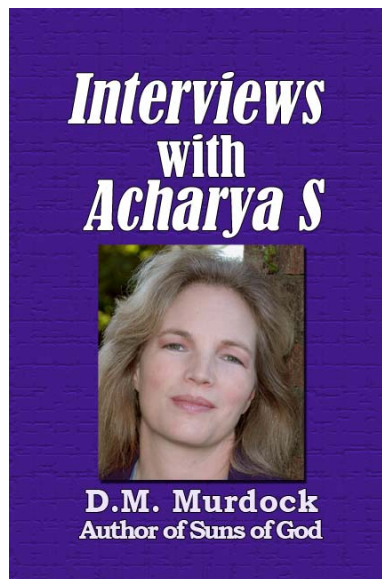


Interviews with Acharya S

D.M. Murdock



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INTERVIEWS WITH ACHARYA S

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Table of Contents

Preface	4
The Good Shepherd	6
Man's Inhumanity to Man	12
God, Myths and Politics	19
The Pedigreed Puritan and Royal Rebel	23
Greece, Zeitgeist and Comparative Religion	29
The Sons of the Sun God	38
Jesus Christ as Myth?	45
Christ Conspiracy Author D.M. Murdock Answers Five Questions	49
Bibliography	51
About the Author	53

Preface

For the first time, I have collected together various written interviews in English given over the past several years. I have placed these articles in chronological order from the earliest to the latest. There is more biographical material in this ebook than in most of my writings, and some of it is repeated at certain points. Yet, there is also quite a bit of factual material about my favorite subjects, including religion, mythology, astrotheology, history, archaeoastronomy and languages, etc. It is interesting also to note the changes in the world since the earliest of these interviews took place.

The commentaries at the beginning of each interview are not mine but those of the interviewers. Neither these comments nor the interviewers' questions necessarily reflect my views. Some of the text of both the questions and answers has been changed, as part of this update, to render it more comprehensible and accurate. Spelling and grammar have been cleaned up, and the articles are also edited for style. All highlighted quotes centered and bolded are mine; these are repeated within the text itself at the appropriate place.

The Progressive Observer interview of 2004 leads the way and reflects a time when I only had two books published, *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*. The interviewer's cautionary comments provide a good place to start. The *TPO* article was edited for publication on the interviewer's website, but I include here my complete responses.

I remember Storm Fox as a young college student whose enthusiastic interview earned him an A grade. His interview was published on ParanoiaMagazine.com, and the intro was written by Joan D'Arc, whose own interview is included here as well.

"Infidelis Maximus" is the pen name of a mysterious person who came and went, after publishing my interview on his popular blog, having subsequently found himself besieged by the sort of ranting ne'er-do-wells who regularly harangue me.

Burton Wolfe wanted to interview me at great length—and then he got busy elsewhere for a couple of years. That's okay, as I've got more unfinished and unpublished work than I can shake a stick at! Much to my amusement, I discovered that his long list of some 30 questions was only a preliminary to the "real" interview, which we never did.

Greek polytheism enthusiast Minas Papageorgiou ended up having an article about mythicism featuring me in a major Greek newspaper's weekly magazine, *Phainomena*, published during Christmas week, 2010.

Joan D'Arc is a dear friend from years back who has published several articles of mine in her fascinating periodicals and books under the *Paranoia* title.

Andrés Lomeña caught me at a very busy moment, right as I was completing my book *Christ in Egypt*. His interview was originally published in Spanish but is included here in English.

David Miller aka "Shankbone" has photographed hordes of celebrities, providing some 4,000 images for Wikipedia over the years. He has also interviewed some very famous people, including Israeli president Shimon Perez, Wiki founder Jimmy Wales and controversial writer Salman Rushdie.

Like this ebook, most of my books and many of my longer articles are now available on Kindle as well, which can be downloaded on many electronic devices, including iPhone, iPod, iPad,

Blackberry, Android, PC, Mac and more. They will also be made available electronically in the future in other languages.

I hope you enjoy this more intimate look into my world.

D.M. Murdock aka Acharya S

U.S.A.

February 2011

The Good Shepherd

Interview by *The Progressive Observer*

(November 2004)

To some in the United States, the lessons of Jesus are as simple and straightforward as they are few: Keep your acts of righteousness humbly to yourself. Do not presume to judge and kill anyone; Jesus came in the first place because God Himself would not kill men for their sins after the Great Flood. Do not run after or hoard money, pay your taxes, care for the less fortunate, etc. Though their bedrock of faith in a loving power greater than themselves will probably not be shaken by the revelations to come, those who are sincerely trying to “walk like Jesus” may find the apparent facts about the creation of Christianity as an institutionalized religion profoundly disturbing. These good people should seriously consider reading no further.

At the other end of the spectrum—the “Far Right,” so to speak—the Christian Bible has become a blunt instrument for political opportunists to beat their sense into everyone else. Wrathful verses of the Old Testament and careful parsing of the words attributed to Jesus are culled to suit the agenda and accommodate the failings of the chosen few. But the moral high ground is a slippery place with a steep drop. The priest revealed as a pedophile, the evangelist exposed as a thief or a whoremonger, the moral authorities that turn out to be gamblers and junkies and the political operatives exposed as gay, are so common on the ideological Right that the incidences have become cliché. Women’s birth control is controlled, while men’s prophylactics and performance enhancers are indulgently tolerated. If that fact does not seem at least ironic to you, you need to read this series more than others, but you may find the apparent facts exposed extremely upsetting.

When a political “party of God” in a nation with the military power to end life on Earth supports preemptive war, uranium bombs, mines, torture (in moderation), limitless “defense” spending and new generation of nuclear weapons, one has to ask—the party of *which* god? As it turns out, that is not a rhetorical question.

Acharya S has been described as a classically trained academic, a multi-linguist and a spiritual leader among other things. The appellations have been less flattering since she wrote two books: *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*. Though many seek to discredit her through personal attacks, the information she presents regarding the origins of Christianity seems unassailable. Perhaps surprisingly, Acharya does not expose new facts but rather dares to gather together and repeat some of the oldest “secrets” that have lain in plain view all along. *The Progressive Observer* caught up with the intrepid author in November 2004.

THE PROGRESSIVE OBSERVER: In [*The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold*](#), you say that none of the gospels were written by their purported authors, the apostles; and that there is no evidence outside of the Bible, such as contemporaneous corroboration, that Jesus as a person ever existed. You also debunk historicizers and “pious frauds,” and point out that the New Testament is full of ridiculous historical errors. People need to read the book, but please touch on these stunning charges.

ACHARYA S: You have provided an accurate summary of the major themes of *The Christ Conspiracy*. The thesis has been well known in certain circles for centuries that the four canonical gospels were not written by any of their purported authors. (Mark and Luke were not

apostles, by the way.) It has been scientifically demonstrated—by Walter Cassels, for one—that the gospels as we have them were not in existence until the end of the *second* century, long after those writers were purported to have lived. From the numerous mistakes and anachronisms, these writers were obviously not natives of Palestine or Judea.

My contention is that the bulk of the material was either composed or worked over at Alexandria, Egypt, by members of the Therapeutan brotherhood, which was connected to branches, both Jewish and Gentile/Pagan, in other parts of the "known world" and particularly in the places addressed in the New Testament epistles. From Philo Judaeus we know that the Therapeuts possessed non-biblical texts that are apparently long gone but that served as the basis for some gospels and epistles, as contended by Church historian Eusebius.¹

"There is no contemporary evidence—biblical or otherwise—that verifies the existence of a person called 'Jesus the Christ' or 'Jesus of Nazareth' at the time he supposedly lived."

There is no contemporary evidence—biblical or otherwise—that verifies the existence of a person called "Jesus the Christ" or "Jesus of Nazareth" at the time he supposedly lived. What documentation we possess from the era in question is stunningly silent on the subject of Jesus Christ, Christians and Christianity. Outside of the passage in the works of the Jewish historian Josephus—a forgery in its entirety, it is maintained by many—there is nothing concrete from the first century at all.

The other purported documentation of Jesus's existence is easily dismantled through scientific examination and exegesis. It simply does not hold up. In fact, it's some of the worst "evidence" possible: Testimony based on tradition long after the alleged facts, such as the miniscule remarks purportedly original to the works of Tacitus, Suetonius and Pliny, or the even more ridiculous reports of eclipses (Thallus, Phlegon) during Jesus's alleged advent.² Even if these reports were accurate, how do they prove Jesus Christ existed? These writers did not say anything about him or his movement. No one of the era has a word to say. It becomes apparent that nothing remotely resembling the gospel story ever took place on planet Earth.

"The priesthoods worldwide have a long, sordid history of defrauding the public with absurd tales and myths that if understood properly have value but that the priests have corrupted endlessly in order to befuddle the masses."

The priesthoods worldwide have a long, sordid history of defrauding the public with absurd tales and myths that if understood properly have value but that the priests have corrupted endlessly in order to befuddle the masses. "Pious fraud" is an actual term widely employed by the priesthood to justify lying. If it furthers the work of "the Lord"—whoever happens to be the most powerful priesthood of the day—then it is just fine to lie through one's teeth. After all, the Almighty, Omnipotent God needs our help to spread the Ultimate Truth—by *lying*.

It is obvious the writers of the New Testament were distanced in time from the actual events—and that they were using the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, as well as Josephus, as the "history" books by which to create the gospel topography. They used names of places that no longer existed or were completely different at the time the story supposedly took place. It is

¹ For more on these subjects, see the "brotherhood" chapters in my books *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God* and *Christ in Egypt*.

² See my books *Who Was Jesus?* and *Suns of God* for further discussion of the purported references to Jesus Christ in secular works.

evident that these texts were in the main composed after Judea was laid waste in 135 AD/CE. The idea for establishing this new religion, which would effectively usurp all the reigning deities with that of a specific group of people, really started percolating after the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 CE.

One example of blatant anachronism in the gospel story is the depiction of Palestine as a wilderness in which sheep were roaming about and primitive agriculture was practiced. In that era, Palestine was densely populated and more advanced than the bumpkin depiction of the gospels, which is clearly based on the Old Testament, not on eyewitness accounts.³

TPO: Many people may know that the zodiac is a big part of deciphering the Christ myth, from the 12 houses or "ages" of the zodiac relating to 12 disciples (helpers), to the separation of the zodiac into four seasons making a cross on which the sun of god "dies," stops moving for three days, and is "reborn" on December 25. Please talk about the startling correlation between the zodiac and Jesus's adventures.

AS: This astrotheological thesis of Christian origins contends that Jesus's major attributes and adventures (and many of his minor ones as well) are those of a sun god. The story of the sun, as widely known in bits and pieces worldwide, follows a basic, logical path. In the northern hemisphere, the sun is "born," "born again" or "resurrected" on December 25th, which is celebrated as Jesus's birthday. In certain eras and locales, because the sun god is thus born in the sign of Capricorn, the goat, it was said that farm animals attended his birth. When the sun rose on December 25th, at times he was back-dropped by the constellation of Virgo, so it was said that he was born of the Virgin, referring to the constellation and the Goddess.

Also present at the sun's birth are the "Three Kings," stars in Orion's Belt.⁴ The gifts brought by the "wise men" in the gospel story are all typical symbols of the sun or gifts offered to it. As in the Jesus tale, the sun's myth forwards to the "age" of 12, representing high noon, when it was said that the sun was in the Temple of the Most High.

Fast forwarding again to age 28 or so, in the solar mythos the god also symbolizes the light in the moon, and the 28 days represent a lunar month. Or 30, which represents the degrees of the circle of the zodiac divided into 12. At that point, the sun has entered into a new sign, i.e., Aquarius. As the sun moves into Aquarius, in January-February, which was the rainy season in some places when the zodiac was developed,⁵ the solar orb was said to be "baptized" by the Waterman. Here's the solution to the enigmatic scripture at Luke. 22:10 about following the man with the water jar into a house. It also explains why John the Baptist was placed in art in the position of Aquarius.

The fish motif in the gospel tale represents the Age of Pisces. March or Aries is the Lamb of God. The vernal equinox—spring—occurs during Aries, which is why "Easter," or Christ's Passion, is set at that time: At the equinox, when the night and day are the same length, the sun

³ For more, see Harold Leidner's *The Fabrication of Christ*.

⁴ See my book *Christ in Egypt*.

⁵ The origin of the zodiac signs as we have them in the West has been dated variously, with a sound conclusion by Royal Astronomer Dr. E. Walter Maunder to some 4,000 or more years ago, also saying: "From [the latitude and longitude of the zodiac] we learn that the constellations were designed by people living not far from the 40th parallel of north latitude, not further south than the 37th or 36th." (Maunder, 157.)

was said to be on a cross. There is much more to the sun story, a significant amount of which can be found in [The Christ Conspiracy](#) and [Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled](#).⁶

TPO: The godman Horus of ancient Egypt seems a clear early prototype of the Jesus myth, from Horus's birth of a virgin to raising El-Azarus to being called KRST or "anointed one." But Horus isn't the only Christ character in world history, is he?

AS: Horus's tale incorporates many elements from the myth of his father, Osiris, a biggie in the world of mythology. An attempt at fusing cultures by fabricating gods occurred with the creation of the Egypt god Serapis, from Osiris and Apis, designed to unify the Alexandrian populace but especially the Egyptians, Greeks and Jews. In form and function, Serapis is a prototype of Jesus Christ. The Greek god Dionysus is another prototype, as are evidently Apollo, Hercules, Hermes, Jason, Mithra, Adonis, Tammuz, Krishna and so on.

"When one studies in depth comparative religion, it becomes obvious that the gospel tale comprises bits and pieces of Pagan and Jewish mythology melded together."

It is clear that elements of the Jesus myth were direct lifts from the stories revolving around a number of these gods. The Jesus character also integrated qualities of the Goddess. When one studies in depth comparative religion, it becomes obvious that the gospel tale—including its numerous contradictions—comprises bits and pieces of Pagan and Jewish mythology melded together. This conglomeration, which incorporated a significant amount of themes and motifs from a wide variety of cultures, has made for an extremely powerful religion and priesthood. It is unique in its magnitude but was simply an end product of centuries and millennia of doing the same priestcraft.

TPO: Tell us about 666, the "Mark of the Beast" as in the biblical Book of Revelation.

AS: The mark of the beast is no big thing. Numbers have been considered magical, so they've been used in a variety of ways. Three, seven, 12—these are well-known mystical numbers. Six was the sign of the Goddess, who was widely worshipped and was frequently the major competition for the creators of Judaism and Christianity. As part of the vilification of Goddess—in order to usurp her power—her potent number 666 was labeled the "mark of the beast."⁷ The mystery school initiates who heard that degradation probably shuddered, and it had the desired effect of demoralizing them. "The beast" is the "whore of Babylon," the Goddess, locally called Ishtar. Now, the Goddess was revered for millennia—can you imagine the outcry?

TPO: In the United States some politicians describe themselves as belonging to a "party of God." Children reportedly receive messages telling them that God has chosen the President. Does this pattern ring any alarm bells for you?

"The question needs to be asked, by what appalling arrogance do you think that *you* above all others understand the nature of God, 'his' desires and wants (as if an omnipotent god has desires and needs!) and that *you* above all have the right to impose *your personal perspective* of this god on the rest of us?"

⁶ Note that the phenomenon of the precession of the equinoxes changed these signs, but these are accurately represented here as to where they were when the gospel story was created.

⁷ If the scholarship of Walter O. Moeller is sound, the number 666 was also representative of the Perso-Roman god Mithra/Mithras, which would likewise explain its vilification in the New Testament.

AS: The question needs to be asked, by what appalling arrogance do you think that *you* above all others understand the nature of God, "his" desires and wants (as if an omnipotent god *has* desires and needs!) and that *you* above all have the right to impose *your personal perspective* of this god on the rest of us? It needs to be stopped. The entire world is at peril from this dementia.

TPO: We know that there are good people who characterize themselves as Christians, but we are often amazed by the selfish and especially violent people who claim to follow Christ. You point out this has been the case from the very beginning

AS: The American fundamentalism has been on an upswing for the past 25 years or so, ever since the Reagan Era. Although it is not very new, especially when you factor in how this country was founded, it is always alarming because some of its fervent adherents are indeed nasty, violence-prone people. We live in a sick world where we need to pray to God to protect us from his followers!

TPO: Speaking of Horus, though we are stunned and appalled to find the great Eye of Horus associated with George Washington, the Freemasons and embedded in the very symbols of the United States, is this connection between "secret" societies and powerful people really so mysterious? Washington, at least as he is remembered, may not be the best example, but weren't the Freemasons, the Templars, the various Churches, all just a core group of almost unimaginably rich or powerful people lying, inciting and committing violence and sowing confusion among the people, particularly their followers, just to continue lying and stealing? Beyond all the supposed mystery, isn't this just Man as a savage and uniquely sophisticated beast?

"In the ancient Greek of the New Testament, the word for carpenter used in describing Jesus and Joseph's occupation is 'tekton.' In modern Greek, the word tekton means 'freemason.'"

AS: Knowing the history of the world somewhat, I didn't find it surprising that secret brotherhoods are responsible for the creation of religions, including and especially Christianity. Let's give one concrete example: In the ancient Greek of the New Testament, the word for carpenter used in describing Jesus and Joseph's occupation is "tekton." In modern Greek, the word tekton means "freemason." Not just "mason," as in a stonecutter, but *freemason*, as in the brotherhood. Now, how did that happen? Could it be that, in antiquity, to be a "tekton" meant you were an initiate in the brotherhood? We know for a fact that, long before the Christian era, there were carpenter gods and goddesses, as well as guilds, priesthoods and tribes that revered them; ditto with masons.

As concerns the mean, rich people, yes, they are perpetrators, and they enlist the rank and file to do their dirty work—I'm talking not just about Masons but also about the public at large, through politics and religion. And, these people *are* vicious. It seems to be especially intimidating when viciousness is associated with religion, as kinder, gentler souls will back off and say, "It's okay, man, I respect your beliefs." Well, I don't! Your nasty beliefs are always trying to tell everyone else how evil they are, no matter how exemplary a life they may have led, because they don't believe exactly as you do. The operations that support, create, foster and nurture this deranged mentality need to be shut up or shut down. No audience, no money, no energy—bye-bye!

TPO: As the song goes, "This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius." Do you have any hope that human beings have grown up enough to face issues of morality without blaming some

unearthly force, or can at least reject the greed, divisiveness and violence that are often cloaked in religious terms, and embrace the miracle of their own lives?

AS: I wish I could say I had a great deal of hope that humanity's sickness will be healed. I may have a little hope. I don't dislike myths—in fact, I love them, once they're explained and understood *as myths*. But to spew abuse, to torment, torture and/or kill a living, breathing, feeling human being over a myth is beyond immoral. I don't think that the average religious fanatic is capable of that understanding, as he's too sick. The average person? Maybe, and that's what I'm counting on, an appeal to common decency. It's the commonly decent folks who keep these nutters—dangerous loonies—in check. If humankind does somehow "break on through to the other side," finding its utopian equilibrium, that will be a miracle indeed. You'd think an all-powerful god could pull that off at any time, wouldn't you?

Man's Inhumanity to Man

Interview by Storm Fox

(2005)

In an unusual interview, scholar of comparative religion, mythology, astrotheology, archaeology and history D.M. Murdock, also known as Acharya S, author of the controversial books *The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold* and *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled*, offers a rare glimpse into her childhood and Christian background, sharing what led her to her life's work and providing a provocative commentary on the past and present, as well as a hope for the future. Storm Fox of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania asks pertinent and refreshing questions of this irreverent and forward-thinking woman of the 21st century.

STORM FOX: Were you brought up in a religious/spiritual family, or was your early life more skeptical?

ACHARYA S: I was raised in a religiously liberal family. My mother was an active member of her Congregational church. However, Northeastern Congregationalists are very classy and don't go around preaching outside of church. In my family, there was no talk about God, the Bible, Jesus; no biblical quotes, no threats or chastisement based on "God's Word," etc. Nothing. We celebrated Christmas and Easter, but these holidays were about community, family, love. I don't know if anyone in the family really believed the biblical malarkey. My only interest in Sunday school was the story in Luke of the short man who climbs a tree to see Jesus over the crowd. As a little kid, I could relate, as I was always standing on tip-toe to see.

Otherwise, Sunday school was torture, but church was even worse. What a bore! But, I went, every week, until I was 12, when I declared myself autonomous in the matter of religion. My siblings did basically the same thing. Now, imagine such a rebellion from something so mild! If we'd been fundamentalists, I would have run away from home! I did go back to church a few more times, sang a duet with my choir-director mother, which was her dream. Over the years, as an archaeology student and simply out of curiosity, I went into many churches, as well as a few synagogues and, of course, the ruins of countless pagan temples.

SF: There is some information on your website that hints to you being "born again" at some point in your life. What were the circumstances surrounding that conversion?

AS: In retrospect, the story is pretty funny. I actually went through a brief period where I tried on that born-again Christian hair shirt. It was horrible! I was living in Manhattan, somewhat rudderless, after spending a year of post-graduate studies in Greece. Trying to make it in NYC is very difficult for most people, and I wasn't having the easiest time of it. Through a modeling agency there I met a woman—Jimmy Swaggart's cousin—who was leading a "Bible-study" group. I joined mostly because I wanted to know more biblical passages for crossword puzzles. As it turned out, I seemed to know more about the Bible than she did, but she was great at weeping over Jesus. So great, in fact, that she would put on shows, just like Swaggart.

Anyway, we went to a tent revival with a Greek minister in the Bronx, and at the high point, with her prodding me, I stood up and declared myself born again. I liked the minister but I wasn't about to get dunked in their little pool. A couple of weeks later, it was clear that the born-again business was something no sane person could possibly uphold for any length of time without becoming cuckoo. As the great freethinker Robert Ingersoll said, "If a man would follow, today,

the teachings of the Old Testament, he would be a criminal. If he would strictly follow the teachings of the New, he would be insane."⁸

SF: What symbolic significance did Jesus and Christianity have to you then?

AS: Oh, there were a few goofy moments where I became emotional—such as accepting Jesus "into my heart"—but nothing much to write home about. I had been raised a Christian but had rejected Christianity as being no more true or important than the rest of the world's religions and mythologies, so I can't say that the faith ever had any profound meaning to me. I remember being utterly repulsed by Christianity in college and post-graduate school, when I spent a great deal of time in Greek Orthodox Churches, where just about every neurosis and psychosis is manifested. By "psychosis" I refer to the monasteries, where everyone is seriously repressed, and there are images of horrible tortures painted on the walls. What kind of "spiritual" environment is that?

SF: What did being a Christian mean to you?

AS: As a youth it simply meant that we went to church. In college, I wondered aloud to a roommate if I were a Christian, at which point he asked, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" I responded that I guessed I did, so he stated, "Then you're a Christian." Seemed pretty simple, but I never really bought it. I had studied so many religions and mythologies even by then, because of my interest in history and antiquity, that I considered Christianity just one of the many. In truth, even as a child I didn't believe most of the Jesus stories, as they were no more convincing than the tales of the Greek or Roman gods, which were universally pronounced as *myths*.

"In truth, even as a child I didn't believe most of the Jesus stories, as they were no more convincing than the tales of the Greek or Roman gods, which were universally pronounced as *myths*."

SF: What led you to conclude that Jesus Christ was a purely mythical figure?

AS: For some time I was an "evemerist," which means that I believed there was a historical Jesus but that the supernatural stories associated with him were just fairytales added to his biography by enthusiastic followers. Or, perhaps, he was a yogi in the Eastern tradition who could do some sort of "magic" or *siddhis*, as these "tricks" are called in India. Because I had been studying Eastern religions intensely at the time, in my late 20's, the yogi perspective was the last I held before I came to the conclusion that "Jesus Christ," as depicted in the biblical, gospel tale, was a myth through and through. I began to get an inkling of the "Mythicist School," as it is called, about that time.

My recollection is that a book practically jumped off the shelf and set me on the path: It was *Forgery in Christianity* by Joseph Wheless. From there, as they say, the rest is history—or mythology, as the case may be. I followed Wheless's clues and sources, and discovered a whole school of thought—a very intelligent and profound school of thought that essentially verified nagging doubts I'd had since I first heard about Jesus Christ as a child. With my background in mythology, it was not very difficult to see through the historical pretense associated with Christianity. If one set of beliefs with incredible supernatural events is easily regarded as mythology, why not another?

SF: The arguments you give for mythicism in your books and articles are very powerful, and I find the astrotheological aspects of your books and articles to be especially fascinating. I'm

⁸ Ingersoll, 134.

curious as to when and under what circumstances you became aware of these patterns in myths and how ubiquitous they are.

AS: Naturally, the more time one spends on a subject the more one learns. I suppose that as I came to understand the awe with which the ancients viewed the cosmos, the natural world, the earth in general, I had "aha!" moments or epiphanies in connecting the gods with the planetary bodies and constellations, etc. In reality, it didn't take much, because I have always been awed by nature and spent most of my childhood romping and splashing through the woods, fields, streams and lakes.

"In reality, it didn't take much, because I have always been awed by nature and spent most of my childhood romping and splashing through the woods, fields, streams and lakes."

I imagine that, as it does with me, the night sky appears a most amazing sight to anyone sitting under it away from an urban environment. The sun, of course, is a major reason we exist. Knowing these facts, it becomes quite comprehensible why the ancients—as well as a significant portion of the world to this day—would revere these natural objects and forces, attributing divine qualities to them. These aspects of the natural world are found globally, which is why they are ubiquitous in human mythologies. In the end, it all makes sense.

SF: There has been little written from the mythicist perspective in the past few decades, but at various periods in the past, there was a wealth of mythicist writing and research. To what social forces do you attribute this development?

AS: During the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century in Europe and America, there was a profound shift in consciousness, away from the repressive mind control of the Church, whether Protestant or Catholic. Some of this change appears to have come from the expansion of the British into India and French into Egypt. I suppose people were utterly sick of the atrocities committed by Christian authorities, and no doubt the insidious mind control and censorship had taken their toll on the erudite and intelligentsia.

The 19th century experienced an explosion in brilliant thinking in countless subjects, not just religion and philosophy. The writing of the era—again, in numerous subjects—was superb, especially compared to that of today. In fact, one thing that has not necessarily improved with time and technology is the quality of writing. In the English language, little compares to what was produced during the 19th century.

The 20th century, on the other hand, experienced a profound dumbing-down, especially in the areas of freethought, philosophy and religion. There are many social forces I would attribute to this frightening and depressing dumbing-down of the masses. For sure, much of it has been deliberate, in order that the political and religious status quo could be maintained. After all, we can't have people thinking for themselves, can we?

Religion and politics have been the main tools used to control the masses for the benefit of the elite. What we saw during the 18th and 19th centuries were members of the elite themselves coming forward and forcefully speaking the truth. I will say that, because of the Internet, many people are becoming more politically savvy—possibly more than before. And, perhaps, we will see an increase in people thinking for themselves about the important matters of religion and philosophy. They simply must, or the mass, herd mentality will destroy this planet.

SF: How do you think history will remember Christianity?

"I do believe that Christianity will be viewed in the future—if a future there be—as a destructive interloper that disconnected humanity from its natural world and caused tremendous turmoil."

AS: I can only say that I think I see what will happen—and hope that it is true. For many years now, since I was a teenager, I figured that Christianity and the other monolithic religions would fizzle into nothingness, would lose their hold over the human mind, and be replaced by true enlightenment that needs no organization of the sort that has been so destructive in the past. I do believe that Christianity will be viewed in the future—if a future there be—as a destructive interloper that disconnected humanity from its natural world and caused tremendous turmoil. As prejudiced as the Christian ideology has been against the so-called Pagan world, that's at least as badly as the future populace will view Christianity. In other words, Christianity is the Paganism of the future, or vice versa.

In any event, it will be realized that the "faith" is a terrible hoax played upon the masses in order to make them believe that the Almighty power behind the cosmos was a particular person of a particular ethnicity during a particular period, to the exclusion of all other cultures, eras and individuals.

SF: You seem to rail against evemerism about as strongly as you do against literalist interpretations of the Bible. What trouble do you think evemerism causes?

AS: Again, evemerism is the perspective that, behind all the fabulous fairytales, there was a "real person" named Jesus who lived about the same time as depicted in the gospel tale. But, according to evemerism, he didn't do much, because if you take away all the fairytales there isn't much left—at least nothing impressive. Some shaggy guy wearing a robe wandering around spouting platitudes and, maybe, doing a few parlor tricks. Gee, like that's never happened before—or since!

"Does anyone honestly believe that the Romans would overthrow their entire culture, with all its gods, including the Caesar himself, in order to worship a ragamuffin magician from the reviled backwaters of the Roman Empire?"

Does anyone honestly believe that the Romans would overthrow their entire culture, with all its gods, including the Caesar himself, in order to worship a ragamuffin magician from the reviled backwaters of the Roman Empire? It's just incredible! No self-respecting, elitist Roman would consider the thought for a second. He would have laughed his head off at the very notion. There had to be some highly powerful motivation for the Romans to acquiesce to this fable that *the* God of the cosmos had appeared—completely unbeknownst to them—decades before in the outback, as a member of one of the most despised ethnicities of the empire.

The addition of fairytales would hardly have been enough to impress the Romans, even if there really had been "some guy there," as is believed within evemerism. Evemerism simply doesn't go far enough in an honest investigation. It's an opinion by people who want to appear somewhat intelligent—in other words, not entirely gullible—but who haven't really studied the issue to know that there is no evidence of this wandering Jewish guru who stood out not because of any magic tricks but because of profound or revolutionary ideas and statements. None of these "profound statements" is original—much more wisdom can be found in the more ancient Egyptian and Indian texts. I find this concept irritating as well because, while this purported "groovy guru" gets all the attention—and much sympathy because of his supposed suffering—

countless *real* people the world over have demonstrated breathtaking brilliance and suffered much more, yet have received no attention whatsoever.

SF: I devoured *The Christ Conspiracy*, loved it, and found it to be very liberating. Unfortunately, it was attacked a great deal online, and for some rather strange reasons. *Suns of God* seems in part to be an answer to those criticisms. Was this your intent with *Suns of God*?

AS: Thanks! *Christ Con* was also *hailed* online, as well as elsewhere. There are more than a few professors, theologians, priests and ministers who are closet fans. I don't really care about what the harpies have cackled online. As Abraham Lincoln said about his opponents, "But I also remember that though they blazed like tallow candles for a century, at last they flickered in the socket, died out, stank in the dark for a brief season, and were remembered no more, even by the smell..."⁹ Perhaps that's harsh, but, truly, these critics have accomplished little. I am certain that, in the same manner that Osiris, Thor and Hercules have been relegated to the heap of mythology, so too will Christ.

Yes, *Suns of God* is an answer to the criticisms of *Christ Conspiracy*. These criticisms were so shallow and petulant that it was easy to produce hundreds upon hundreds of pages showing where they were wrong—the evidence disproving them was abundant.¹⁰ I had to shorten my book, of course, but there is much more material to demonstrate that in general the major concepts I have presented are accurate and correct. I also worked extremely hard in getting *Suns of God* done—through unbelievable adversity that is material for another book—so that those who were impressed and convinced by *The Christ Conspiracy* would not be left hanging with these shallow and ignorant criticisms.

SF: Some have criticized your use of sources such as Blavatsky. What do you think such controversial sources add to your work?

AS: A completely asinine criticism that shows the level of the rest of their harping. I quoted Blavatsky a total, I believe, of three times out of over 1,000 citations.¹¹ And what miniscule amount I utilized of hers was *factual* and *accurate*, having nothing to do with her mysticism. I used a wide variety of sources in *The Christ Conspiracy* in order to show that I have covered the topic, because, before the book was completed, I was always getting questions regarding this author and that—"What about Sitchin?," for example. So, I included one or two quotes from controversial writer Zechariah Sitchin in order to show that I had indeed read his works and had factored them into my research, although not in the manner that Sitchinites might wish. Believe it or not, I've had fanatic "spiritualists" chastise me for dismissing Blavatsky's perspective of Christ! Obviously, then, I didn't get my ideas from her—not in the least.

SF: Speaking of controversy, Kersey Graves seems to have been a big influence on your work. Unfortunately, Graves seems to be maligned above other past mythicists. Why is this?

AS: If you look at the citations in *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*, you'll see I used relatively little of Kersey Graves's writing, and he did not have all that much of an influence on

⁹ Striner, 71.

¹⁰ Note that I have since procured hundreds to thousands of pages of more evidence, incorporating thousands more sources from antiquity to the modern era.

¹¹ This figure represented the citations in my first two books, *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*. As of 2011, my books and articles raise the figure to many thousands more, the bulk of which are highly credentialed authorities in relevant fields.

my work.¹² In reality, I didn't need his work, because what he was conveying could be found all over the place. That being said, I will comment that the brouhaha over Graves's work has led to some very interesting parts of *Suns of God*, in my opinion. Also, I was inspired enough by Graves's courage and insight that I wrote the foreword to AUP's edition of his book *The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors*.

I don't know if anyone else has taken the time to really explore why Graves wrote what he did. Without having done such in-depth investigation—as I have done, engaging in what I believe to be fascinating detective work that absolves Graves of hasty and ignorant criticism—his critics are not particularly impressive. I would pronounce the fracas so much blowing of smoke. Graves is a favorite target because his book appeals to the mainstream and has endured for well over a century.

Yet, I certainly don't concur with Graves's conclusions that all these "16 crucified saviors" were "real people" who bizarrely kept saying and doing the same things and getting themselves crucified in different places and eras, over and over again! Ridiculous. These are myths.

As concerns influences on my writing, Barbara Walker and Gerald Massey are two scholars whose work I sincerely esteem. Because I used their work so abundantly in *The Christ Conspiracy*, I turned to numerous other sources for *Suns of God*, nevertheless showing the same salient motifs in mythologies from around the world. So, you see, it matters not what the source is: The truth is out there.

SF: I work with Evangelicals, and they can be very difficult, not to mention irrational. Is there any argument that will work with them, or should I just smile, point to the Sun, and walk away?

AS: By Jove, I think you've got it! There is little point in having any discussion with them on this subject. You can give them all the evidence in the world, and they will simply allow it to go over their heads. Their behavior becomes robotic—and sometimes quite hostile and unpleasant. In fact, when they can't "sweet talk" you into their brainwashing, they start in with the insults and threats. Very nice faith, that!

When I have such discussions, I'm often asked how I know Jesus Christ is a myth. How do I know? I'm a mythologist, an expert on myths. If I'm an expert on grass and point out a patch of grass, do you question how I know it's grass? I wonder why such expertise is valued so little—is it because everyone is taught that he or she knows "the truth," simply by believing what someone else has told him or her? How is *that* possible? Regurgitated fables are "the truth?"

"Just because you have a head with brain matter in it does not make you an expert on religion, spirituality and mythology."

Have you spent hours upon hours contemplating the nature of the cosmos? Have you studied the world's religions and mythologies in depth? Have you wrapped your mind around many of the profound philosophical concepts? Just because you have a head with brain matter in it does not make you an expert on religion, spirituality and mythology.

As in everything else, expertise in religion and philosophy must be earned. Then again, someone can be *spiritual* without having studied a thing—a simple old woman living in a cabin in the woods, for example. Or a small child. Spirituality is a whole different issue. But I find little to be spiritual about organized religion.

¹² Ditto with the above regarding my sources since these two books were published in 1999 and 2004.

"Believing what others have told you about Jesus Christ or some other 'savior' is *not* a spiritual experience."

And, certainly, believing what others have told you about Jesus Christ or some other "savior" is *not* a spiritual experience. Nor is having a "vision" of what you believe to be Christ. Millions of people in the past have had visions of countless other gods—none of these experiences has made those gods "real people." If they did, then the Egyptian Osiris and Isis would have to be considered *the* God/Goddess of the cosmos, because it is of them, arguably, that the most visions throughout history have been experienced. Moreover, "feeling" a god or goddess "in your heart" may constitute a "spiritual" experience, but it provides absolutely no evidence that the god or goddess ever walked upon the face of this earth.

SF: What do you think will be the future of the mythicist argument?¹³

AS: I certainly hope it will go beyond the idiotic nitpicking and ad hominem foolishness occurring now. Professional jealousy and egotism are unfortunately blinding and stupefying what could be decent minds working on this subject, which is surely one of the most important that face humanity. So much of the rest of life hinges upon the reality that religion does *not* necessarily produce truthfulness in human beings. *Au contraire!*

"The fact that a large percentage of human beings have been made powerless and have been enslaved to false religious dogmas is a major reason why, in this day and age, with so much wealth and technology, and so many generations working on the problems, we still have such appalling poverty and violence on this planet."

In the end, I hope, mankind will realize that superhuman saviors and godmen such as Jesus Christ are fictional characters, period. The picayune points of how such a fact came to be believed otherwise will ultimately be irrelevant; hence, to argue endlessly about whether or not this detail or date is correct is just plain silly and an utter waste of time.

SF: Finally, if I forgot anything, please feel free to add final comments of any nature, and thanks again for the interview.

AS: You're welcome! Thanks for the intelligent and relevant questions. It may be obvious to some that I am on a "mission" of a sort, and I would like to explain that there certainly was something percolating in me since childhood that has led me to study these subjects and write these works. One of my prime reasons for doing what I do is that when I was a child I was absolutely sickened by man's inhumanity to man and other creatures, and I continue to be sickened by it today. Although it is not the only reason for such inhumanity, religion has been the single largest factor in causing entire cultures to commit atrocious crimes, such as wholesale theft, torture, genocide, etc., ad nauseam. So long as humankind divides itself into "isms" there will never be peace on Earth and people will never progress to becoming true human beings.

¹³ For more on the history of mythicism or the mythicist position, see my articles "What is a Mythicist?" and "A Brief History of Mythicism."

God, Myths and Politics

Interview by Infidelis Maximus

(June 4, 2006)

Acharya S recently entered my thoughtscape while I was doing some research on the Christ myth and happened to stumble onto her work. I was immediately fascinated by it. For one thing, I was pleased to see someone giving Kersey Graves his due. Some modern scholars like to pick on him, but I have always liked him and appreciated his work in helping debunk Christianity. For another, she is an expert in [astrotheology](#), which I think is the missing piece in understanding much of the remaining mysteries of the Bible. For example, as she alludes below, the Book of Revelation contains numerous astrotheological references that are lost on the modern reader. Much of the symbolism people have imputed to the Bible is actually basic astrotheology. Acharya believes that today's religions descend largely from sun worship, and her work is a fascinating exploration of that concept.

Below is an interview I conducted with her over email. We touched on everything from the Bible to religious extremism to politics, as you'll see. Stop by Acharya's site, www.TruthBeKnown.com, for more info. For more info on her most recent books, visit www.StellarHousePublishing.com.

INFIDELIS MAXIMUS: You frequently debunk evangelical Christian positions but do not consider yourself a hard-core atheist. What do you consider yourself?

ACHARYA S: I am neither a theist nor an atheist, as I believe the human mind can conceptualize both ideas at once—and that *many* people do alternately believe and doubt the existence of a "higher power" of some sort. For example, at times there appears to be something magical about the cosmos, when bizarre or delightful "coincidences" occur. At too many other times, however, such as when horrible things happen to entirely innocent creatures like babies, there seems to be absolutely nothing in charge of life on Earth. In other words, sometimes it seems as if there is "divine intervention," while at others, nothing.

My perspective of "God" is pretty much along the lines of what Carl Sagan described when he said the following:

The idea that God is an oversized white male with a flowing beard who sits in the sky and tallies the fall of every sparrow is ludicrous. But if by "God" one means the set of physical laws that govern the universe, then clearly there is such a God.¹⁴

I am also reminded of a story about "the Buddha" in which he tells a fervent theist that there is no God and a rabid atheist that "God is."

The following equation may sum up the question:

God is now here.

God is nowhere.

To me, this simple concept represents true freethought.

¹⁴ Sagan, Carl, *U.S. News and World Report*, December 23, 1991.

IM: You've mentioned being involved with archaeological digs around the world. Give us some examples of your favorite digs and why they were your favorites.

AS: I have only physically been involved in a couple of excavations, although I've probably been to a couple of hundred archaeological sites, the vast majority of which were in Greece. I also dug at a "paleo-Indian" tool-making camp in Connecticut. That was a great deal of fun, because there was no serious pressure, while in Greece, where I excavated at Corinth—the place where St. Paul is alleged to have spoken—everything was quite serious. Nevertheless, these experiences were very exciting.

IM: Do you believe there was ever any sort of historical person behind the Jesus figure or is he merely a myth?

"I am quite convinced through intense study, analysis and exegesis of the pertinent texts and other data that there is no historical core to the onion of the New Testament character called Jesus Christ."

AS: I am quite convinced through intense study, analysis and exegesis of the pertinent texts and other data that there is no historical core to the onion of the New Testament character called Jesus Christ. Between the patently obvious characteristics of preceding pagan gods that were applied to the Christ character, and the incorporation of Old Testament scriptures, as well as various sayings found in pre-Christian texts, the entire construct appears to have been contrived. As Gerald Massey stated in regard to this question, "A composite of 20 people is no one."¹⁵

When we consider ancient religion, inspecting for example the story of Hercules, we have no problem accepting that he is a mythical character. Such was not the case in ancient times, when the followers of Hercules were as certain that Hercules had been a real person who walked the Earth as are the Christians today regarding Jesus.

IM: What do you think of the historicity of other NT characters besides Jesus such as Peter, Paul, James, John, Mary, Mary Magdalene, etc? Do you believe they existed? Why or why not?

AS: None of these characters finds any place in the historical or archaeological record of the time, and their lives have a decidedly unreal air about them. I believe there is a strong basis for the claim that they are in large part mythical entities, although James and Paul seem to have been founded upon one or more historical personages, with Paul also incorporating aspects of mythical characters such as Orpheus.¹⁶

IM: You wrote the foreword to the AUP reprint of Kersey Graves's *The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors*. What do you say to critics who claim Graves was a dishonest hack?

AS: I can assure you that I have not discovered one individual in modern times who has looked into the issues surrounding Kersey Graves as much as I have. When the subject is studied *in depth*, it becomes apparent that Kersey Graves made nothing up, as he has been charged, but was

¹⁵ This is a paraphrase of Massey's original: "The typical Christ, so far from being derived from the model man, has been made up from the features of many gods, after a fashion somewhat similar to those 'pictorial averages' portrayed by Mr. Galton, in which the characteristics of various persons are photographed and fused in a portrait, a composite likeness of twenty different persons merged in one that is not *anybody*." (Massey, 169-170.)

¹⁶ See *The Christ Conspiracy* and *Suns of God*, as well as my article "Apollonius, Jesus and Paul: Men or Myths?" and forum thread, "Did St. Paul Exist?"

working with preceding scholarship. Whether or not that scholarship is accurate becomes the issue then, not whether or not Kersey Graves "fabricated" anything. I have examined many aspects of his work and have not found one instance of "fabrication." More careful citation on Graves's part would have prevented many of these aspersions from being cast upon him.

IM: Having written quite a bit about both camps, who do you think poses more of a threat to world peace: Islamic extremists or Christian extremists?

AS: At the moment, the Christian extremists—such as Inquisitors or theocratic fundamentalists—have been reduced in their power to control everyone else's lives and behavior. Christianity in general has been tamed of its vicious and violent past. Islam has yet to experience that sort of push to become civilized, such that my conclusion is that Islam in its most fervent form—held by millions of people worldwide—is much more of a threat to humanity as a whole.

This extremist perspective—Islamic fundamentalism—is upheld by *hundreds* of millions of "moderates" who are either too afraid to mitigate it or are willfully going along with it. This mentality is not a small thing, and it is spreading quickly for a variety of reasons, including and especially through a high birth rate.

IM: Do you believe the New Testament's Book of Revelation provides any guidance about future events or the end of the world?

AS: No, not at all. The Book of Revelation is basically an astrotheological text reflecting what is called the "Great Year" or the 26,000-year cycle of the precession of the equinoxes.¹⁷ The only manner in which it is a "guide" for the future—and this *is* a big deal, in actuality—is that Revelation is being used as a *blueprint* to deliberately bring about Armageddon. This fact does not bode well for the future of humankind.

IM: What do you say to Christians who claim the United States is "a Christian nation" and that Christianity should have more of a role in American government given that the country was founded by Christians?

AS: That America was founded by "Christians" is a bunch of hooey. Even if the Founding Fathers considered themselves "Christian"—and a number of them, I believe, are more aptly described as "Deists"—they were not of the ilk we find today calling themselves "Christians" or the kind from yesteryear either. The American Founding Fathers were in general a group of extraordinarily enlightened individuals who knew very well what harm religion could do to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and they worked very hard to make sure religion would not destroy their dream of creating an egalitarian and free society.¹⁸

"There is no doubt that Judeo-Christian—and, coming soon, Islamic—perspectives are the most influential forces in the American government today."

¹⁷ For more information, see "The Meaning of Revelation" in my book *The Christ Conspiracy*.

¹⁸ Note that I am well aware of the existence of slavery at that time and neither condone nor justify such a "tradition"—it is a stain on this otherwise enlightened group. Additional note in 2011: Since I did this interview, I have researched and written about how some of the American Founding Fathers questioned whether or not Jesus was a myth. See "Did George Washington and Thomas Jefferson Believe Jesus was a Myth?"

As concerns Christianity having more of a role in the American government, give me a break! There is no doubt that Judeo-Christian—and, coming soon, Islamic¹⁹—perspectives are the most influential forces in the American government today. The current candidates for president prove that point repeatedly in their "expressions of faith."

IM: What do you think of George W. Bush's faith-based initiatives?

AS: It's a scary thing, to be sure. As if faith-based organizations don't have enough power as it is! When I think of George Bush or his somewhat ideological predecessor, Ronald Reagan, I think of "The Handmaid's Tale"—very frightening!

IM: Do you think the war in Iraq has ultimately made the world a better place or a worse place?

AS: The mess in Iraq has been incredibly badly handled and has created a huge amount of animosity towards the U.S. and Americans in general. The fact is that Saddam Hussein was in large part empowered by the same warmongers who subsequently took him out. Such treachery and deception do not do anyone any good at all. George Bush joking about not being able to find the weapons of mass destruction in his closet and elsewhere is frankly a disgrace. Behind the scenes of this nightmare, of course, are what we could call "international industrialists" and "third-party weapons manufacturers." Moreover, when people attack "Americans" as being responsible for this horror, who in specific are they referring to? I didn't vote for George Bush, I can guarantee you that!

IM: What are your hopes for the world your son will inherit?

AS: I am *deeply* concerned that my son will grow up in a world that has lost most of its freedoms and is profoundly entrenched in a theocracy more bizarre and heinous than the world has ever seen before, because this theocracy will be so far-reaching as to leave practically no place on Earth free of its fascistic and sadistic tentacles. I am disturbed to consider that my little guy might be compelled to wear a particular form of dress, to pray in a particular manner, to think in a certain way and to be aggressive towards and oppressive of women. I myself may not be around for such a development, but I am horrified to contemplate such a future for him and his offspring, as I am for just about anyone on the planet.

"What we are seeing is a bunch of sadistic, cruel and psychotic barbarians who are using religion and God to force their savagery and brutality upon the rest of mankind."

What we are seeing is a bunch of sadistic, cruel and psychotic barbarians who are using religion and God to force their savagery and brutality upon the rest of mankind. This deranged menace has always been with us, but now it is fast becoming overwhelming, and I believe we are already in deep trouble. Like the proverbial frogs in the pot of boiling water, however, many people simply cannot feel the heat. Nevertheless, the peril is there.

Like most thinking individuals concerned for the future, I sincerely hope that we will be able to overcome this dire threat and will instead enter into an age when human beings have achieved psychological and spiritual health, appreciating and cherishing the extraordinary wonder and beauty of life in the cosmos as whole.

¹⁹ Since this remark was written, Muslim presence in the United States and other non-Muslim countries has increase dramatically.

The Pedigreed Puritan and Royal Rebel

Interview by Burton H. Wolfe

(2007)

BURTON WOLFE: Do you inherit your intellect from your parents or grandparents, or did you achieve it in spite of genetics and the family environment in which you were raised?

ACHARYA S: I imagine that my grandparents were very bright, and my parents both had high IQs, so I have little doubt that my intellect is in large part genetic. There are other factors at play, of course, that shape each individual.

My familial environment was fairly extraordinary, running across a broad spectrum of living life passionately. Most of all, we were encouraged to use our "God-given" talents to their fullest, and that would include our intelligence. So, here I am.

BW: How about describing some salient facts about your grandparents and parents, such as their ancestry, the kind of work they did, whether they were literary people, anything pertinent.

AS: I love these questions. My grandparents are a bit of a mystery—aren't most of ours? And so on back through time. Speaking of going back in time, I can brag that one set of my 24th great-grandparents was King Henry II and Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine. Now, I know that sounds very special, until you hear that some 100 million Americans are related to European royalty—and that, according to at least one genealogist, the entire human populace is related to royalty at some point in time!

Still, I suppose that I have a bona fide pedigree with known and very powerful royalty—sort of like Jesus! <grin>

"My mother's American family starts with the Puritans who left England via the Winthrop Fleet, which landed in Massachusetts in 1630."

Moving a bit closer to home, my blue-blooded mother was also a solid citizen, serving as the first selectman of our town and as a state legislator for many years. My father was an educator who taught psychology, among other things. His father was an MD who died before I was born. My dad's mother was great fun, but she died when I was 9.

My mother's Depression-era parents—her father a blue-collar worker and her second-generation Swedish mother a housewife who never got a driver's license—were pretty stark. My mother's American family starts with the Puritans who left England via the Winthrop Fleet, which landed in Massachusetts in 1630.

BW: In what part of the world or the U.S. did you spend your childhood, and are you an only child?

AS: I'm reluctant to locate myself at any age, but I will say that I'm a Northeasterner, a Yankee. I have a couple of siblings, so I was not overly indulged as a child.

BW: Is Murdock your family name or your married name?

AS: "Murdock," which is Scottish and means "daughter of the sea," is my father's family name. Naturally, since everyone is related to royalty, my father was rumored to have been a descendant of Mary, Queen of Scots. We were also told there was some Moorish blood there.

BW: Did your parents encourage you to undertake any particular profession or work, or were they content that you marry well and be a good housewife?

AS: LOL! No, my parents did not make many suggestions as to any profession for me, and marriage wasn't even discussed! Frankly, when I was about seven I honestly believed that by the time I was 18 marriage would be obsolete! I also had an epiphany at that age that religion would go the way of the Dodo! My naivete placed it just a tad early...

My mother once suggested I become a translator, with good reason, as I turned out to be fairly proficient with languages. Later, after I got a liberal arts education and became a writer, Mom suggested I take a job in a fastfood restaurant to make ends meet. ☺

BW: Were your grandparents and/or parents religious, and if so what religion did they follow?

AS: Neither of my parents could be considered "religious," although my mother was a regular churchgoer, the choir director for many years, as well as the church secretary. Shortly before my mother's death, she was reading my book *The Christ Conspiracy*. I winced when I saw it next to her bed, and said, "Mom, I didn't really want you to know about my book, because it destroys your faith."

My blessed mother—facing her imminent mortality—sighed and replied, "Oh, I don't really know what I believe." In her life, she had gone from Baptist to Congregationalist to Unitarian, the last one with a Buddhist minister!

"We were from longtime Christian backgrounds, but by the time my generation came along, any Puritanical streak had been smoothed out by wisdom."

I don't recall any religious proselytizing from anyone in my family, whether parents, grandparents or aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. We were from longtime Christian backgrounds, but by the time my generation came along, any Puritanical streak had been smoothed out by wisdom.

I saw flaws in organized religion at a very young age—7, as I say. These profoundly damaging flaws were so obvious to me. I am still flummoxed at the state of denial by humanity as to these gaping, nightmarish holes in what is called "faith." It is as if all honesty is tossed out the window when it comes to religion! Quite the opposite of its publicity.

BW: If your parents were religious, did they send you to a parochial school, and if so which one?

AS: I was educated in the public school system—and a very fine one, it was, where I come from. I wish the entire world could have access to the fine, secular education I received. Religion was never discussed in school, either inside or outside of the classroom.

However, I will tell you about one traumatic moment at grade school that is seared for life in my memory. This hideous incident had to do with a boy who brought a photo to school that his penpal had sent him. Everyone was peeking over his shoulder to see it—and they were laughing. I finally got a look and thought I was going to throw up. I turned away and started to gag and sob, at which point the other children started following me and tormenting me. I searched for the teacher, but she was scolding me as well! I could not believe it—this was a day when I realized I was different from much of humanity and when I began to feel very isolated.

The photo's description may be too heavy for some readers, so be warned: This incident occurred during the Vietnam War, and the image was of an American GI holding the severed heads of two

Vietnamese soldiers—and smiling! I was completely grossed out by this despicable picture, but the other kids and the teacher bitterly castigated me that these decapitated humans were "the enemy." I didn't understand the concept of an "enemy" at all. To my innocent mind, these were other *human beings*. I'm still nauseated as I write this—I cannot believe man's inhumanity to man. In fact, I spent the first decade or so of my life so empathetic that I did become physically ill—vomiting—at this inhumanity on several occasions.

"I spent the first decade or so of my life so empathetic that I did become physically ill—vomiting—at this inhumanity on several occasions."

But this abuse goes on *endlessly*—and so much of it is because of unfounded and idiotic religious beliefs. I have no doubt that religious fanaticism simply must disappear in order for humanity even to consider itself remotely civilized.

BW: In high school and college, were you the studious type or a playgirl?

AS: Funny! As I am now, in high school I wasn't a "playgirl" but a mischiefmaker. I got good grades, *and* I had fun. Obviously, in order to accomplish anything or do something well, at some point you have to develop a passion for whatever it may be, which requires settling down and being at least a bit serious. I am fortunate to have managed to live a full life—and I'll leave it at that!

BW: At what point in your life did you become immersed in religion, what and/or who influenced you to become so immersed, and at first were you trying to pursue education into the fundamental beliefs and origins of a religion you wanted to follow, or had you already developed skepticism and were researching to determine if your skepticism was justified?

AS: These are very profound questions that would require a book unto themselves! As I say, I had certain epiphanies about religion as a child—I knew at seven years old that organized religion was big trouble. I recall telling my mother at that age that when I was 12 I would stop going to church. I knew by that time I would be old enough to make my own decisions in that area. Even though the church was pleasant and the setting exquisite, I didn't like Sunday school much—and the church sermons were even *more* boring! No offense to the lovely minister and his wonderful family, but the subject matter itself seems meant to bore you half to death. There just isn't any way around it. In our church, we didn't jump around, just sitting dully singing love songs to a dead Jewish man who didn't exist 2,000 years ago. It seemed rather absurd to me, as it did to others I pointed it out to. It was like the BORG—some robotic mentality falls over people when it comes to religion. Reason and intelligence are suspended, where faith reigns.

"It seems that in our lifetime we will see some truly awful things happening to humanity and this planet—and much of it is a product of religious fanaticism and idiocy."

Now, don't get me wrong—there are some aspects of religion, mythology and spirituality that I very much enjoy. But the mind control of organized religion is terrible, and those who are most deluded can see it least. It could be easy to dismiss these zombies—but the problem is they can be *very* nasty! They completely forget their humanity and are willing to slice and dice in the name of their god. We are surrounded by this pack of howling zombies. It really isn't funny—it's quite scary, and I fear horribly for the future. It seems that in our lifetime we will see some truly awful things happening to humanity and this planet—and much of it is a product of religious fanaticism and idiocy.

BW: If you were influenced by any particular thinker or book or series of books on the subject of religion, please identify the thinker and books.

AS: From when I was a fairly small child, *National Geographic* magazine impressed me very much. My parents had a decent collection, and I used to pore over them—they were the most fantastic windows to the world! There was also a series of booklets—I believe it was called *American Geographic*—into which we placed stamps that we wet with sponges. These stamps had images of all these people and places from around the world. I was fascinated by these images and spent many hours getting glue on my fingers as I pasted them into the booklets. So, having been exposed to cultures worldwide, I was very aware at an early age that there were other religions—and that their followers were every bit as ardent about possessing the truth as any Christian proselytizer I'd ever heard.

"It is amazing that, according to the received 'history,' Jews are the *only* people on the planet, it seems, who have *no* myths?! Ridiculous. We know where the Jewish myths are—in the Bible!"

Another big influence that prepared me for my role as religious debunker, as it were, was the Greek myths—I recall seeing images of Greek gods in a book when I was three. They held sway over my imagination from that point on. This knowledge of Greek myths made me quite skeptical of Judeo-Christian claims. Come on! The stories of Hercules are "myths," but those of Jesus are not? You couldn't fool me even as a kid. It is amazing that, according to the received "history," Jews are the *only* people on the planet, it seems, who have *no* myths?! Ridiculous. We know where the Jewish myths are—in the Bible!

I was also highly influenced by the American Founding Fathers—and that's a whole other subject, but I knew they were sophisticated philosophically and religiously, not a bunch of demented hillbillies.²⁰

BW: What university or universities did you attend, what was your major course of study, and what was the highest degree you attained?

AS: The schools I attended were noteworthy, including Franklin & Marshall College, from which I received an undergraduate degree in Classics, focusing on Greek Civilization. Studying an entire civilization, especially such an advanced one, requires knowledge from a wide spectrum of disciplines, from art and architecture to languages and economics. I had been fascinated with the ancient Greek civilization since I was a child. The Greek myths had a huge impact on my psyche, beginning around the age of three. The fact that the Founding Fathers studied Classics was a significant reason I majored in that subject.

During college, I spent a semester in Greece, having studied by that point ancient Greek and teaching myself modern Greek. I loved living in Greece, although there are some serious difficulties rooted in the Christian orthodoxy that reigns there, where Socrates was said to have been poisoned.

After college, I returned to Greece for a year with the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, a highly esteemed institution that, among many other important functions, runs the excavation at the famed Agora there. ASCSA also oversees the dig at Corinth, where St. Paul is alleged to have addressed the Corinthians and where I excavated one season.

²⁰ See my article "Did George Washington and Thomas Jefferson Believe Jesus was a Myth?"

BW: When did you start writing for publication, when did you first break into print, in which periodicals and with which books—or, because of the controversial stuff you decided to write, was it necessary for you to self-publish right from the start?

AS: My writing career really began when I composed a series of letters to major media outlets about 20 years ago. I sent out about a dozen letters, almost all of which were published, including one in *Time* magazine about the environment and overpopulation. I knew then that writing was my medium. That was a few years before I got onto the net, which is where I could speak more freely than I would if I had been a writer for a mainstream publication. Fortunately, I was compelled not to go that route, mainly because I knew I could not conform but must sing my own song. There have been a number of small magazines over the years that have published my articles, but, up to this point, I've only submitted my work upon invitation by people who know it.

The publisher of my first book, *The Christ Conspiracy*, had to have his arm twisted mightily to take on the project, even though I did almost all of the work. It became one of their bestsellers, so you can bet he's glad he did!

BW: Is there any particular significance or meaning attached to the name Acharya S? Where did you get the idea for the name Acharya, why did you follow it with only an initial, and what does the S stand for?

AS: I decided to take that on as a pen name over 15 years ago. "Acharya" is an honorific title of Indian spiritual leaders, reflecting a "teacher" of religion. Some might say I've got quite a sense of humor—I adopted this name principally in order to create a more level playing field with the males who occupy this field, since it is ordinarily a title and occupation for males. "Acharya" is a common last name in India, so it's really no big deal, although it does irk some people. The "S," I like to say, stands for "something special," but I have also defined it as "Sanning," which in Swedish means "truth." I put the name in this form with just a last initial because it has a certain cachet or mystique.

BW: At what point did you decide to use a pen name, and was that because you feared some sort of retaliation or even violence from Christian fanatics?

AS: I decided to use it before I began focusing on Christianity, when writing my first book, a novel called *Paradise Found*. Without a doubt, the violence caused by religious fanatics was a factor in my continuing to use that name when I went online. The use of a nom de plume for a variety of reasons has a long and honorable tradition.

BW: Have you received any threats, and if so in what form and what did they threaten?

"Over the years, I have endured hundreds of personal attacks from so-called religious people."

AS: Fortunately, in that regard they've been few and far between. I've only had a couple of people make remarks like, "I must inform you of your pending death," accompanied by some Christian harangue. Over the years, I have endured hundreds of personal attacks from so-called religious people. One Christian fanatic hounded me via Wikipedia for almost a year, driving me to tears on several occasions, because his attacks were so grotesquely personal—he even threatened to commit crimes against me. It was only with tremendous effort this person was stopped. Being insensate, this cyberstalking character-assassin likely had no idea what grief he caused me and my family and friends.

BW: Has there been any attempt to boycott your books?

AS: I wish! That would mean it's having a noticeable effect. I *have* heard reports of Christ Con being burned!

BW: If you have made any radio or TV appearances, or given any speeches or lectures, please brief me with a few details about them.

AS: I've done dozens of [radio appearances](#) over the past decade, mostly with others who can handle the information. I've also done a few public-speaking engagements and video documentaries, and I've been asked to do others. Over the past several years, I've had other pressing issues that haven't allowed me to pursue such engagements.

BW: Have you tried to induce any theologians or scholars, Christian or otherwise, to debate you, and if so with what results?

"If someone gets into my face, I am known to defend myself."

AS: No, I do not enjoy debates at all. I prefer to simply write out my perspective and leave it at that. Take it or leave it. No compulsion here, no shoving anything down anyone's throat, no getting into anyone's face. If, however, someone gets into my face, I am known to defend myself.

Greece, Zeitgeist and Comparative Religion

Interview by Minas Papageorgiou

(Metafysiko.org; July 2009)

MINAS PAPAGEORGIOU: Dear Acharya, you are an author who has devoted much of her work to the figure of Jesus. Why have you decided to deal with the founder of Christianity, and what is the objective goal which you are trying to achieve with the publication of your books?

ACHARYA S: I was born into a Christian—Protestant—family, and I have been interested in religion and mythology since I was a small child. I studied the *religion* of ancient Greece—which we now call “mythology”—beginning in childhood, as well as in college, where I majored in Classics, Greek Civilization. I also did postgraduate work at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. After my formal schooling, I continued studying various of the world’s major religions, including, of course, Christianity. During these studies, I came upon the information found in my books concerning Christ being a mythical figure and his alleged life representing a series of parallels from the myths of pre-Christian gods, goddesses, godmen and heroes. I discovered this school of thought a couple of decades ago, at which time I decided to start writing about it.

"I felt qualified to bring this information to light because of my background in Greek mythology and language, which allowed me to examine ancient texts in Greek, including the Bible."

I felt qualified to bring this information to light because of my background in Greek mythology and language, which allowed me to examine ancient texts in Greek, including the Bible. My classical education also allowed me to produce scholarly works, but the fact that I did not become locked into an academic curriculum gave me the freedom to pursue non-mainstream concepts.

After I discovered this information—which made so much sense—I felt it was vitally important for mankind’s spiritual, psychological and emotional health to understand these facts. I hope that my work will assist the world in transitioning to a wiser and more evolved manner of being.

MP: We have read that much of the information presented in the first "Zeitgeist" documentary, and particularly in the part about religions, has been taken from your books. I would like your comment about the well-known "Zeitgeist Movement."

AS: Certain information only in the religion part of the original “Zeitgeist” movie came from my books *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God* and *Who Was Jesus?* I have followed up some of these claims with my ebook “[The Companion Guide to ZEITGEIST, Part 1](#)” and my large book [Christ in Egypt: The Horus-Jesus Connection](#).²¹ I would like to see more education concerning religion within the Zeitgeist Movement as a whole, as I believe it is a crucial issue that remains largely overlooked.

MP: I would like to focus mostly on two of your books: *Suns of God* and *Christ in Egypt*. Could you briefly describe their content?

²¹ See also my [ZEITGEIST Sourcebook](#), published in 2010, a year after this interview was given.

AS: My book *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ* makes the case that all three of these divine figures are largely sun gods or solar heroes/deities. I trace the comparisons between all three, as well as demonstrating that their alleged lives contain such fabulous events that it is next to impossible to consider them historical figures. I also follow a fascinating tale of the scholarship surrounding this subject of comparative religion and mythology, including some intriguing shenanigans that reveal the oppressive environment in which scholars must work.

In *Christ in Egypt*, I dig deeply into the voluminous ancient primary-source material from Egypt that reveals clear and precise parallels between the Egyptian and Christian religions. I have drawn from over 900 sources, including the works of respected Egyptologists and other noteworthy scholars in relevant fields to show that the comparisons between Egyptian religion and Christianity—many of which can be seen in the movie “Zeitgeist”—are sound and important.

MP: We will start our “journey” from the East and the religion of Buddhism, whose creator is Siddharta Gautama, commonly known as “The Buddha.” What are the basic philosophical doctrines of this religion? Also, when does Buddhism come in contact with Western civilization?

"Buddhism did not start with 'the Buddha' who allegedly lived during the sixth century BCE but began much earlier, according to Buddhist traditions."

AS: In the Buddhist traditions, there have been *many* Buddhas and Bodhisattvas—thousands upon thousands of them. Buddhism did not start with “the Buddha” who allegedly lived during the sixth century BCE but began much earlier, according to these traditions. Buddha himself had already taken on many incarnations, including one as a carpenter,²² an occupation said to be shared by Jesus as well. (Mk 6:3)

The most basic Buddhist doctrine is that anyone can become an enlightened being or “buddha” through various techniques designed to purify one’s “karma” and expand one’s consciousness to attain to “nirvana.” While this simple notion sounds good in theory, the various sects of Buddhism present different manners in which this attainment may be achieved. Some Buddhist sects, in fact, maintain that women are inferior and must incarnate as men before they can become enlightened.²³ While some sects believe nirvana can be achieved through celibacy, others utilize sex (“tantra”), and so on.

According to legend, Buddhism was promulgated during the great expansion under the Indian King Asoka (304-232 BCE), who sent out missionaries to “all corners of the earth,” so to speak. This contention is disputed by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, for one, because it would mean that there could be possible Buddhist influence on Judaism and its offshoot, Christianity. In reality, even before then it is likely that Buddhist monks made their way west along the Silk Road, while others, such as the Greek philosopher Pythagoras, were rumored to have gone *to* India to study with the gurus there. Alexander the Great also further opened up communication between these two worlds, and it is said that there were Buddhist monks in Egypt as well before the common era. There is also some fascinating research showing Buddhistic influence or cultural commonality as far west as Ireland centuries prior to the common era.²⁴

²² Hardy, 100. See also *Suns of God*, 298-299, 366ff.

²³ See Murdock, *The Gospel According to Acharya S*, 140.

²⁴ See *Suns of God* for more information.

In the first century AD/CE, the Jewish historian Josephus discussed the Jews as “descendants of Indian philosophers” (*Contra Apionem* 1.178ff), passing along the alleged claims of the Greek philosopher Aristotle made during the fourth century BCE. There is much more to the India-Levant-Egypt connection, with the very “patriarch” of the Hebrew ethnicity, Abraham, said to be a remake of the Indian god Brahma.²⁵

MP: In your book *Suns of God*, you find many similarities between Buddha and Jesus. Could you mention the most important?

AS: In the ancient texts, Buddha is deemed a divine being with supernatural powers, much like those of Jesus, including the ability to heal the sick and cure the blind. Both Buddha and Jesus are said to have a “royal origin,” with Buddha being of a noble family and called “prince,” while Christ is purported to be a descendant of King David. Both have lengthy genealogies recited in their sacred texts. In addition, both are conceived in a dream or visionary state, with the father informed during an annunciation by angelic beings. Both births are attended by assorted miracles and supernatural events, such as the appearance of angels. As Buddha’s birth is accompanied by a bright light, so too is Christ’s by a bright star. The narratives of both births focus on the wrapping of the babes in swaddling clothes, while much is also made of both saviors’ names.

"In the fourth century of the common era, Church father St. Jerome discussed Buddha specifically as having been born through the side of a *virgin*."

In the fourth century of the common era, Church father St. Jerome discussed Buddha specifically as having been born through the side of a *virgin*, while Jesus was likewise said to have been born of a virgin. Jerome’s raising of the issue is against his interest and that of the Catholic Church, reflecting that he would not have made up such a tradition and lending credence to the scholarship showing that this Buddhist virgin-birth motif predated Christ’s alleged advent. The idea of Buddha being born from the side of his mother existed long before Jerome—and this notion was undoubtedly an attempt to demonstrate that his mother was *virginal*. Indeed, we know for a fact from other myths, such as the birth of the Egyptian god Horus to the goddess Isis, the “Great Virgin,” that the idea of a virgin mother predates the Christian era and is therefore derivative with Christ’s birth.²⁶ Adding to this contention, both Buddha and Jesus’s mothers were supposedly taken into heaven with their virginity intact.²⁷

Furthermore, just as Jesus is tempted by Satan, so too is Buddha tempted by the demon Mara. As I relate in my book *Who Was Jesus? Fingerprints of The Christ*:

The tale of Christ’s temptation becomes doubly peculiar when it is understood that, in a famous myth, Lord Buddha too was subjected to, and overcame, the temptation by the evil being Mara. This tradition dates to at least the 2nd century AD/CE, as evidenced by Indian sculptures depicting the scene, and as found in the Padhana Sutta, parts of which may date to the time of Ashoka (3rd cent. BCE). According to this scripture, Buddha is tempted nearby the “river Neranjara,” which bears a resemblance to the “River Jordan.”²⁸

²⁵ See *The Gospel According to Acharya S*, 69-70.

²⁶ See *Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity* by Marguerite Rigoglioso.

²⁷ For citations and discussions of these various motifs, please see my books, ebooks and articles, especially *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God*, *The Origins of Christianity* and various forum threads at FreethoughtNation.com.

²⁸ Murdock, WWJ, 150.

In both Buddhist and Christian tradition, there is a “harrowing of hell” whereby the savior enters into the abyss to free souls. Both saviors claimed to be bringing “universal salvation” to mankind. As there is a Second Coming in Christianity, so too does Buddhism teach about the coming Maitreya or “Friend” of humanity, who is essentially yet another Buddha.

If you factor in the apocryphal or “hidden” narratives of Christ’s infancy there are even more parallels, some of them very specific. For further reading, see my books as well as Dr. Zacharias P. Thundy’s *Buddha and Christ* and Dr. J. Duncan M. Derrett’s *The Bible and the Buddhists*.

MP: The characteristics that Jesus seems to have in common with the “chosen ones” of other religions are countless. In your book, you claim that even Krishna’s tradition in ancient Hinduism has similarities to Jesus’s life! Please name them for us.

"It is debated whether or not Krishna’s mother, Devaki, who was said to be a 'chaste maiden,' could also be called a 'virgin.'"

AS: The parallels between the Indian god Krishna and Jesus are well known and include the miraculous births of both gods. It is debated whether or not Krishna’s mother, Devaki, who was said to be a “chaste maiden,” could also be called a “virgin,” mainly because she traditionally had given birth to seven children prior to Krishna. However, the evidence points to her—and Krishna—as mythical characters, and myths do not have human body parts and so on, so many goddesses are said to be both mother and virgin.

According to the myth, Devaki is an incarnation of the dawn goddess Aditi, who was the “eternal virgin” or “celestial virgin,”²⁹ despite the fact that she too gave birth to *eight* children. In Christian scripture (Mk 6:3), the Virgin Mary is likewise said to be the mother of at least seven children, but this claim does not negate her supposed perpetual virginity—that’s how it is with *myths*. If Mary can give birth even one time yet remain a virgin, then she can also give birth seven or more times and remain a virgin. The same can be said of Devaki, as it was of Aditi and many other goddesses.

Moreover, there are other precedents within Hinduism for the virgin birth, including that of the traditional composer of the Indian epic the Mahabharata—a man also by the name of Krishna! Yet another character in that epic—the earliest layers of which are conservatively dated to the 8th century prior to the Christian era—by the name of “Kunti,” is likewise claimed to have been a virgin mother.

In addition, Krishna’s mother earlier had given birth as an unmarried and presumably *virginal* teenager after becoming pregnant *from eating half a mango*. Obviously, the virgin birth vis-à-vis Krishna’s mother represents a real, ancient Indian tradition, even if it is not strictly applicable to his specific nativity. In other words, at one point before Krishna was born, Devaki *was* a virgin mother, and the assumption that she remains so throughout the myth is thus understandable, particularly if we view the story as a typical anthropomorphization of natural forces, in this case specifically as concerns the sun (Krishna) and the dawn (Devaki). There could also be a parallel here with the story of Eve eating the fruit in the Garden of Eden, after which she suffers the fall from grace.

"Krishna was claimed to be the incarnation of the sun god Vishnu, who 'rises' at the winter solstice, the same time when Jesus was traditionally said to have been born."

²⁹ Turner, 15.

In any case, Krishna was claimed to be the incarnation of the sun god Vishnu, who “rises” at the winter solstice, the same time when Jesus was traditionally said to have been born. When both Christ and Krishna were born, terrible tyrants threatened their lives but ended up massacring other infants instead. We have another parallel in the Krishna tale when, like the baby Jesus being placed in a manger with farm animals, the Indian divine babe is secreted to the home of a cowherd. Also, when Krishna was born, his foster father was off in the city paying taxes, while when Christ was born, *his* foster father was likewise in the city paying taxes.

Krishna’s brother Balarama acts as a sort of John the Baptist figure, as forerunner to the more powerful son of God. Krishna was evidently identified with the Greek son of God Hercules/Herakles at least three centuries before the common era—and Jesus has much in common with Herakles as well.

Krishna is, of course, a religious teacher, the same as Jesus, and both gods transfigure in front of their stunned disciples. Both characters are the “living master” who is the “sole revealer of the hidden truth.” Like Jesus, who is depicted in the gospels as the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (Rev 22:13), in the Bhagavat Gita Krishna says, “I am the beginning, the middle and the every end of beings.”³⁰

The deaths of the two godmen are also similar: Krishna is pinned to a tree by an arrow, while Jesus is affixed to a cross or stake by nails, or hung on a *tree* (Acts 5:30). Both ascend alive into heaven, although Christ resurrects first on Earth for a time.³¹

MP: Both Hinduism and Buddhism are religions that are still alive. Are you aware of any earlier or contemporary sources (books, articles, important quotes) coming from the East that support the above similarities?

"The Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh tells of a wise godman, a flight into the wilderness, a godly voice from heaven speaking of bread, and a disappearance into the underworld."

AS: The very ancient Sumerian and Assyro-Babylonian religions also contain parallels found in the later Christian myths, doctrines, rituals and traditions. For example, the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh tells of a wise godman, a flight into the wilderness, a godly voice from heaven speaking of bread, and a disappearance into the underworld. There is also the tale of the Sumero-Akkadian goddess Inanna/Ishtar, who descends into the underworld for three days, during which time she is placed on a stake, after which she is resurrected. Inanna’s consort, Dumuzi/Tammuz, is likewise a “dying and rising god” who is mourned by the Jews in the Bible at Ezekiel 8:14.

The Persian religion of Mithraism possessed many similarities to Christianity, including the following:

- Mithra’s miraculous birth by a virgin³² occurred on December 25th³³ and was attended by shepherds.
- Mithra was surrounded by 12 companions.

³⁰ Thundy, 204.

³¹ For citations and discussions of these various motifs, please see my books, ebooks and articles, especially *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God*, *The Origins of Christianity* and various forum threads at FreethoughtNation.com.

³² See my ebook *Was Mithra Born of a Virgin Mother?*

³³ See my article "Mithra the Pagan Christ."

- His religion included the sacredness of the cross and a mark on the forehead.
- He performed miracles and promised his followers immortality.
- Mithra was resurrected from death or “born again” each winter, and his principal festival occurred on what has come to be called “Easter.”³⁴
- The Mithraic sacred day was Sunday.³⁵

With remains found from Persia to Great Britain, Mithraism was very widespread by the time Christianity began to take hold, and there is no solid, scientific evidence that Mithraism copied Christianity. I aver that the fact this massive religious movement was the target of a prolonged and brutally destructive attack by Christians serves as evidence that the latter were attempting to cover up the alien roots of their faith.

MP: Let’s travel westwards and specifically to the eastern Mediterranean basin, the place where the Egyptian civilization and its ancient pantheon thrived, amongst various others civilizations. However, it is believed that monotheism appeared for the first time in Egypt. Is there any evidence which can support this claim?

"It seems that the concept of monotheism is much older than this theory suggests and that Akhenaton was simply externalizing one of the mysteries, a sort of 'monotheistic polytheism' or 'monistic polytheism.'"

AS: One currently accepted theory concerning the origin of monotheistic thought is that it began with the rogue pharaoh Amenhotep IV (died circa 1336 BCE), later called Akhenaton, who attempted to roll all the gods into one, Aton, and to oust the old religious order. Supposedly this monotheism was then passed along to the Hebrew prophet Moses, and the rest, as they say, is “history.” In reality, it seems that the concept of monotheism is much older than this theory suggests and that Akhenaton was simply externalizing one of the mysteries, a sort of “monotheistic polytheism” or “monistic polytheism.”

There are many indications of this early monotheism and monism, and this issue has been debated since at least the time of the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone by the French linguist Champollion (1790-1832), who posited that the Egyptians were monotheists in a certain sense. Since then several Egyptologists have examined this debate in microscopic detail, most notably Dr. Erik Hornung and Dr. Jan Assman. As I relate in my book *Christ in Egypt*, which contains a significant discussion of whether or not the Egyptians were polytheistic or monotheistic, Egyptologist Dr. James P. Allen remarked:

Although the Egyptians recognized most natural and social phenomena as separate divine forces, they also realized that many of these were interrelated and could also be understood as *different aspects of a single divine force*. That realization is expressed in the practice known as “syncretism,” the combining of several gods into one.³⁶

³⁴ If Mithra is born again every year at the winter solstice, we may understand implicitly that he also must die, as is so common with other sun gods or aspects of the God Sun.

³⁵ For citations and discussions of these various motifs, please see my books, ebooks and articles, especially *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God*, *The Origins of Christianity* and various forum threads at FreethoughtNation.com.

³⁶ Allen, 44.

The evidence is clear that the Egyptians happily confounded numerous of their gods, often blending them into one.

MP: In your book *Christ in Egypt* you make a very interesting analysis of the “battle” between the gods Horus and Seth, comparing it with one of the first battles of good and evil. Tell us a few words about this.

AS: As concerns the battle between good and evil that many people know because of Christian teachings, we also find this struggle in pre-Christian mythologies such as the Zoroastrian and Egyptian. In the Egyptian mythology, there is a good god of light, Horus, and an evil god of darkness, Set or Seth. These two are locked in a perpetual battle, with Horus ruling as the sun during the day, while Set is the “serpent of the underworld.” It is interesting that the word “Set” is also transliterated at times as “Sut,” “Sat” or “Sata,” the latter particularly resembling *Satan*. In *Christ in Egypt*, I show many reasons why it is likely that this Egyptian archetype contributed significantly to the Christian mythos.

MP: Even the accounts of Horus’s life have many things in common with Jesus’s life. The miracles which he supposedly made and also the figure of his mother, Isis, bring Christianity strongly to our mind. Please, elaborate a bit more on this.

AS: As you may have seen in “Zeitgeist,” there are many similarities between Horus and Jesus, not the least of which that they both represent the “light of God,” being solar in nature. In *CIE*, I demonstrate that the parallels between Horus and Jesus are soundly based on pre-Christian texts, monuments and other artifacts. These parallels include:

- Horus was born on December 25th (the winter solstice)³⁷ in a manger.
- He was of royal descent, and his mother was a virgin called “Mery.”
- Horus’s birth was announced by a star in the East and attended by “wise men.”
- At age 12, he was a child teacher in the Temple, and at 30, he was baptized.
- Horus was baptized by “Anpu the Purifier,” who was beheaded.
- The Egyptian god had 12 companions, helpers or “disciples.”
- Horus performed miracles, exorcised demons and raised the dead.
- The god walked on water.
- Horus was “crucified” or placed on a cross between two “thieves.”
- He (or Osiris) was buried for three days in a tomb and resurrected.
- Horus/Osiris was called the “Way, Truth and Life,” “Messiah,” the “Good Shepherd,” etc.³⁸

As we can see, there are many correspondences here with the gospel story, although these aspects of Egyptian religion could not be found as one consolidated myth that someone could

³⁷ See my forum post, “What about December 25th and the winter solstice?”

³⁸ For citations and discussions of these various motifs, please see my books, ebooks and articles, especially *Christ in Egypt*, *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God*, *The Origins of Christianity* and various forum threads at FreethoughtNation.com.

have just copied. As I show in *CIE*, they were, however, prominent features that would be important to incorporate into the creation of a new religion, if the creators wished to succeed in usurping the followers of the Egyptian faith.

MP: Another interesting point that also has many things in common with Christian beliefs is the Egyptian concept of death, resurrection, and after-life. According to you, when did all these elements from other traditions become integrated into Christianity?

"The Christian depiction of heaven and hell closely follows that of the Egyptian, so much so that even early Egyptian Christians assumed these elements were simply a continuation of the same theology."

AS: The Egyptian notions regarding death, resurrection and afterlife represented the very foundation of their religion, and it is my opinion and that of many other scholars, including various professional Egyptologists over the past couple of centuries, that Christianity heavily borrowed from the Egyptian interpretation of these concepts. This borrowing would have occurred from the very beginning of the Christian era, although Christ's resurrection appears to have been an afterthought added later than other aspects of the gospel tale. This contention of the later addition of the resurrection motif to the Christ myth can be demonstrated through an analysis of the New Testament and other Christian texts, such as may be found in my book *Who Was Jesus?* Moreover, the Christian depiction of heaven and hell closely follows that of the Egyptian, so much so that even early Egyptian Christians assumed these elements were simply a continuation of the same theology.

MP: The last question is closely connected with your answer to the first one. Since you have done some thorough research on the historical Jesus and on the similarities he has to other important religious figures, could you tell us how the image that we have of him nowadays has been constructed? What could it possibly mean for humanity to eventually accept that Jesus indeed has many things in common with the figures of the global pre-Christian tradition?

"The image we possess of Jesus in any given era is largely dependent on what attributes in ourselves or in society we value most. Over the centuries, Christ has taken on so many forms it would be difficult to recount them here."

AS: The image we possess of Jesus in any given era is largely dependent on what attributes in ourselves or in society we value most. Over the centuries, Christ has taken on so many forms it would be difficult to recount them here. During the Crusades, Christ was viewed as a militant, and the macho, warrior aspects of his life were emphasized, such as battling Satan and taking up a whip and overturning the tables in the temple. In other eras, Christ's softness and forgiving nature were highlighted, such as with his comments regarding being like children (Mt 18:3), or him serving as a great humanitarian who cared for the adulterous woman about to be stoned (Jn 8:7). When a biography of Jesus is composed, the writer often imbues the character with qualities he or she esteems most, and so on.

"I have heard Muslims state that the idea of Christ as the Son of God is 'blasphemous' and that they will not allow it to stand unchallenged."

Also, with the increasing presence of Islam on the scene, we are watching an old process right before our very eyes, as Jesus Christ is being demoted from the Son of God to a mere prophet, albeit an important one. I have heard Muslims state that the idea of Christ as the Son of God is "blasphemous" and that they will not allow it to stand unchallenged. As the population of

Muslims rises, and they continue to rub elbows with Christians, there will be very troubling times ahead as these two factions battle over this notion in particular, among many others. The incursion of Islam into Western civilization and the demotion of Jesus make one wonder where *is* the omnipotent Christ, who is supposedly in charge of everything in the cosmos. He appears to be losing ground quite quickly, casting doubt on his very existence.

This development of questioning whether or not Christ was a historical figure and realizing that he is quite likely as mythical as the Greek son of God Hercules can only bring a healthier and more honest mentality to this planet. It may also represent the key to preventing a terrible global conflict on a scale of the biblical Armageddon, based on the warring factions within Judaism, Christianity and Islam. My work clearly demonstrates that none of these faiths can honestly lay claim to possessing the absolute truth above and beyond all the rest—and we must simply awaken to that fact before we destroy the whole world.

The Sons of the Sun God

Interview by Joan d'Arc

(*PARANOIA: The Conspiracy Reader*, vol. 1; 2010)

JOAN D'ARC: A "mythicist" is someone who perceives biblical characters as being mythical and the origin of myths as being based in nature worship and "astrotheology." How did you come to be a mythicist and astrotheologist? Does this necessarily mean you're an atheist?

ACHARYA S: I began reading about myths—especially the Greek myths—when I was a small child. After that time, I had a growing curiosity about mythology and religion, which has evolved into a longstanding passion. By young adulthood, I knew a significant amount about the religions and myths of many cultures around the world. But I myself did not really have a religion.

I was born into a mild Protestant sect and attended a Congregational Church, but I rejected it all as boring from about the age of seven onward, and I emancipated myself at 12. I went to Greece when I was 14, and the rest, as they say, is history...and archaeology...and mythology...

With all that strong background in mythology for so many years, I was prepared for when I had the epiphany of the mythical nature of Jesus. I don't mean the vague sense of rejection of the miracles that many people likely experience, leading them to become "evemerists," or those who believe Christ was a real man to whose mundane biography his ardent followers attached many fables and fairytales. A mythicist is someone who perceives the gospel tale as a whole to be mythical, with no historical core to the onion when the mythological layers have been peeled. This contention is not to say, however, that there are no historical characters in the New Testament. Herod and Pilate appear firmly rooted in the historical record, for example. But the gospel story itself is like *Gulliver's Travels*, a historical novel that is placed in England but that nonetheless remains fictional.

When it comes to the Greek and Roman gods, practically everyone is a mythicist, believing these characters, such as Zeus and Hercules, not ever to have been "real people" but to represent in large part natural phenomena, such as storms, thunderbolts, wind, the sea, the sun and so on. All told, the religion and mythology of old were very concerned with not only the afterlife and underworld but also the here and now of *this* world, which they likewise perceived as sacred.

The cosmic part of this nature worship is called "astrotheology," specifically the reverence for and worship of the sun, moon, planets, stars, constellations and so on.

"I have no interest in being categorized in either the theist or atheist camp, and I have no desire to create either theists or atheists with my writing. What you do with your own mind is up to you, so long as it doesn't spill out onto others in a negative fashion."

Being convinced of the mythical nature of many gods, godmen and heroes of old, and being fascinated by the astrotheological origin of many myths and traditions, does not necessarily make or require one to become an atheist. I have no interest in being categorized in either the theist or atheist camp, and I have no desire to create either theists or atheists with my writing. What you do with your own mind is up to you, so long as it doesn't spill out onto others in a negative fashion.

If you wish to sit and daydream about a beautiful, heavenly place where there is a radiant being of bliss you call "God," not only is it none of my business, but I would actually encourage you to do so, if it brings some joy to your life.

If, however, something tragic happens—and it always does—and you wish to think there could not possibly be any good god in charge of everything, your thoughts too would be none of my business, except that I would say they are entirely appropriate for the situation.

Frankly, the archaeoastronomical, astrotheological and cosmological knowledge expressed by the ancients—one of the planks of mythicism—is so exciting to me that it fills me with the wonder and awe often deemed a religious experience. Yet, I neither believe nor dismiss it. I simply enjoy it.

JD: According to your website (StellarHousePublishing.com), mythicism began in France and Germany at the end of the 18th century. Can you tell me a little bit about this tradition and whether your work is based, in part, on this European tradition?

AS: To my knowledge, the most extensive effort in Europe in this subject of Jesus being a myth began at the end of the 18th century with the publication of the French scholar Charles Dupuis's multi-volume masterpiece, *Origines de tous les cultes*. I have been scrutinizing the English abridgement of his work, *The Origin of All Religious Worship*, as well as some of the original French edition, for over 15 years, and I have found it to be scholarly and solid. Not only did Dupuis highlight numerous mythical motifs from pre-Christian deities, godmen and heroes, but he also evinced that Jesus was as mythical as Hercules. Dupuis further showed numerous of these mythical motifs to be solar in nature, theorizing that Jesus was originally a sun god. Dupuis's writings were so powerful they caused much excitement among the European elite, including the French scholar's most famous pupil, Napoleon Bonaparte.

"Dupuis further showed numerous of these mythical motifs to be solar in nature, theorizing that Jesus was originally a sun god."

Another of Dupuis's students was Count Volney, author of *Ruins of Empires*, which followed the same theme. Volney likewise became one of Napoleon's teachers.³⁹ Indeed, it is claimed Napoleon once remarked that the question of Christ's existence was a "good one." It is also asserted that Dupuis and Volney's work was so convincing as concerns the Egyptian origins of much Christian myth and ritual, one of Napoleon's main motives in exploring Egypt was to find evidence in this regard. The one discovery of the Rosetta Stone alone by his troops was enough to make Napoleon's expedition successful, as this granite monument allowed for the accurate translation of Egyptian hieroglyphs, which eventually did reveal significant potential influence of Egypt on the Christian effort, as I demonstrate quite thoroughly in my book *Christ in Egypt*.

Obviously, I am influenced by some of these individuals, as well as others. However, their inspiration has come in the form of digging down into the evidence for their contentions and theses, which means I've spent the last many years unearthing the primary sources and testimonies of ancient writers. These individuals of the past eras were intelligent and highly educated. They were multilingual, including being able to do research in Greek and Latin—I studied these languages too, as well as others, and I do research in them.

³⁹ For more on the fascinating influence of mythicist Count Volney on major American Founding Fathers, again, see my article, "Did George Washington and Thomas Jefferson Believe Jesus was a Myth?"

In other words, I read the ancient testimonies in their "original" form. One problem is that these ancient writings have come down to us through the copying efforts of many people, who both made mistakes and put their own spin on things at times. Therefore, ancient writings need to be disentangled from these alterations and interpolations in order to be called "original."

JD: Do you also argue from the Greek "evemerist" position, that the "gods of old" were kings and heroes who were later deified? According to your research, does this argument have some basis in reality?

"The Egyptian god Imhotep appears to be an evemerized physician of ancient times. Other gods, however, were clearly never 'real people.'"

AS: Despite the commonality of euhemerism or evemerism, only a relative handful of gods and goddesses could be said to represent evemerized individuals, i.e., human beings deified at some point during their lives or afterwards. Alexander the Great is one of these figures, as are various other rulers to whose biographies fantastic motifs have been added. The Egyptian god Imhotep appears to be an evemerized physician of ancient times. Other gods, however, were clearly never "real people," and this conclusion needs to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

My work largely serves to demonstrate that those commonly believed to have been evemerized "real people," such as Jesus, Buddha and Krishna, cannot be said to have truly "walked this earth," as they are obviously compilations of characters, and a composite of twenty people is no one.

JD: Right! So this leads nicely to the subject of your latest book, *Christ in Egypt: The Horus-Jesus Connection*. Let's talk about Horus, the Egyptian god who was known as the "Sun of God," or "Son of God" as well as "Lord of lords" and "Lord of the sky." His dad was Osiris, who was also a sun god. What are some of the many epithets and motifs commonly shared between Horus and Jesus?

AS: Phew! There were so many, I had to pluck them out of *Christ in Egypt*. In the Pyramid texts appear the following epithets of Horus, among others:

God, Great God, Great one, Son of a Great One, Heir of the father, Hereditary Prince, First-born god, King of the gods, Lord of the sky, Lord of men, Lord of men and gods, Presider over spirits, Presider of the living, Presider over the imperishable ones, Presider over the mighty, Morning star, God of dawns, the Gleaming One, Lord of the two lands, Lord of the horizon, Master of the sustenance of truth, Master of his people, Mighty over gods.⁴⁰

You can see the similarities there, as well as in the many epithets of other gods in the various texts of ancient Egypt. If you factor in these other gods, which include Osiris, Isis, Horus, Re, Anubis, Thoth and Seb, you will come up with a list like this:

Lord of Lords, King of Kings, Lord of the Universe, Lord of Eternity, Lord of Truth, Savior, the Divine, All-Powerful, the Unknowable, Great God, Lord of All, Inviolable God, God of Justice, Lord of Justice, Lord of Right, Lord of Power, Lord of Might, God of Authority, the Sole and Only One, the Eternal One, Most Glorious One, His Majesty, Mighty One, God of Mighty Names, Mighty Enlightener, Wise One, Potent One, Holy Soul, Good Being, the Great, the Mighty, the Ancient One, Sovereign, Protector,

⁴⁰ Murdock, *CIE*, 320.

Universal Lord, Author of Eternity, Eternal Lord, Ruler of Eternity, Ruler of Everlasting, Lord of Everlasting, King of Eternity, the Eternal King, King of Everlasting, Prince of Eternity, Prince of the divine Powers, Hereditary Prince of the gods, the Peaceful One, Lord of Resurrections, Lord of Righteousness, Lord of Life, Living Lord, Lord of Time, Lord of Life for All Eternity, Giver of Life from the Beginning, Master of masters, Supreme among gods, Father of the gods, Lord of the Gods, Leader of the gods, King of the gods, Everlasting King, King of Heaven, Lord of Persons, Lord of the Law, Leader of the Host, Primeval One, Great One, Son of a Great One, United of Good, Lord of mysteries, Lord of the Age, Lord of the Soul, Lord of Strength, Lord of Offerings, Defender in the Netherworld, Lord of the Unseen World, Lord of Oneness, Lord of the Earth, Lord of millions, Lord of Millions of Years, Lord on High, Lord of Light, Radiant One, the Giver of light, Lord of the Horizon, Lord of Daylight, Lord of the Sunbeams, Soul of his Father, Lord of Years, Lord of the Great Mansion, Lord of Grain, etc.⁴¹

The title "KRST" as concerns Osiris is also an important one, for its obvious resemblance to "Christ," a subject I discuss in detail in CIE. Ditto with the apparent epithet of Horus as "Iusa," the "ever becoming son,"⁴² which resembles "Jesus," or "Iesous," as it is in the original Greek of the New Testament.

JD: What other solar deities also share some of these common names, motifs or attributes? What is it essentially that makes them all sun gods?

AS: The list is long indeed. The most obvious of these are Buddha and Krishna, who share many important similarities with Jesus. Most people would not think of these two as "sun gods," but I've made that case pretty thoroughly in my book *Suns of God*. Other gods and goddesses from the ancient world who possess solar attributes and have been deemed sun gods, among other epithets, and who possess parallels in common with Christ, include the following, from a list in my ebook, [*The Astrotheology Calendar Guide*](#):

Asclepius, Adonis, Amaterasu, Amun, Apollo, Ares/Mars, Arinna, Attis, Baal/Bel, Bacchus/Dionysus, Balder, Brahma, Buddha, Dumuzi, Hades, Hathor, Helios, Hephaistos/Vulcan, Hercules, Hermes, Horus, Hu, Iao/Yahweh, Indra, Inti, Isis, Janus, Jason, Jesus, Krishna, Mithra, Molech, Moses, Neith, Odin, Orion, Orpheus, Osiris, Pan, Perseus, Quetzalcoatl, Ra, Samson, Saturn, Serapis, Shamash, Shiva, Sol, Surya, Tammuz, Thor, Thoth, Viracocha, Vishnu, Zeus/Jupiter, Zoroaster and many more gods, goddesses, godmen, heroes and prophets.

The solar attributes vary from god to god, of course, but some of those in this list are depicted as born miraculously—including of a "virgin"—in a cave or other dark place, a classic solar motif. They may also do miracles and be deemed "savior," again, characteristics of the sun god. Raising the dead, healing, walking on water—these are all solar attributes.

"Being put on a cross represents the sun at the equinoxes, while the birth at the winter solstice is an obvious mythical motif concerning the lengthening of the day."

Being put on a cross represents the sun at the equinoxes, while the birth at the winter solstice is an obvious mythical motif concerning the lengthening of the day. Fire, heat, light—these attributes of various gods are obviously solar in nature. Some, like Helios, Apollo, Krishna—and

⁴¹ Murdock, *CIE*, 329.

⁴² See Murdock, *CIE*, 321.

Jesus in a famous mosaic—are depicted as riding in chariots pulled by white horses, another common solar motif. Then there's the motif of "the Twelve," which you personally enjoy. Hercules, Buddha, Horus and Jesus, among others, are associated with this number because it reflects the months, signs of the zodiac or the hours of day and night.

JC: Another fascinating subject you get into in *Christ in Egypt* is the common motif of the Virgin Mother of these gods, as well as their common birth stories. Which gods were born of a Virgin Mother and what are some of these shared attributes concerning the mother of god?

AS: The debate rages on whether or not the mothers of so many gods, godmen, heroes and other figures were "virgins" or merely mortal women who may or may not have been "chaste." Examples of this debate can be found concerning Buddha and Krishna, and I have written extensively, especially in *Suns of God*, on whether or not their mothers could be deemed "virginal." One thing to keep in mind here is that we are discussing *myths*, and myths do not have human body parts, so they can be attributed with all sorts of characteristics that may contradict each other.

For example, while Isis is depicted as impregnating herself using Osiris's "phallus," that object is not necessarily what people think it is, as it is portrayed in the ancient texts as the "sharp star" of Sothis or Sirius, not a man's penis. In this particular myth, Osiris is the water of the Nile, received by the river banks of Isis, to produce Horus. Regardless of the manner of impregnation, Isis was styled in ancient, pre-Christian texts as the "Great Virgin."⁴³ The virgin- mother motif is common enough that academia uses the term "parthenogenesis" to discuss this subject,⁴⁴ in a manner that may float above the heads of the masses, who are thereby kept in the dark about all these parallels to the Christ *myth*.

"This virgin-birth theme often revolves around the constellation of Virgo, as well as the goddess of the Dawn, who arrives every morning fresh and virginal, to give birth to the golden sun."

One famous virgin in Greek myth is the goddess Athena, whose virginity was so highly prized that her main temple at Athens was named the "Parthenon," which is the Greek word for "virgin." Yet, we discover that even she is portrayed in the myths as having given birth to the gods Hephaistos and Apollo. The randy Zeus himself—whose myth is abundant with romantic dalliances—is deemed "parthenos."⁴⁵ So it goes with myths. This virgin-birth theme often revolves around the constellation of Virgo, as well as the goddess of the Dawn, who arrives every morning fresh and virginal, to give birth to the golden sun. In its proper context, this motif, along with many others, is entirely comprehensible. And quite beautiful and inspiring, I might add.

JD: Which gods were crucified on a cross, and did they rise from the dead in three days? What does this motif astrotheologically represent?

AS: This motif is also complicated, because we first must define what it means to be "crucified." Because of the gospel story, we immediately think of tough, leather-clad Roman soldiers throwing the effeminate, robed Jesus to the ground and pounding nails through his hands and feet into a huge wooden cross. In reality, to be "crucified" could mean simply to be in a cross-shape

⁴³ Murdock, *CIE*, 120-1, 152-4ff.

⁴⁴ See, e.g., *Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity* by Marguerite Rigoglioso.

⁴⁵ Graves, 361.

or in *cruciform*. If we understand that [gods, goddesses and other figures in cruciform](#) were a common theme in pre-Christian times, we will see why this motif was picked up by the creators of Christianity, who subsequently changed it by fleshing it out as we find in the gospel story. I have written extensively on this subject, covering just about every theme and objection imaginable, so I would direct the reader to my books for more information.⁴⁶

"We find an old human-sacrifice ritual line in the New Testament when the Jewish people at Jesus's crucifixion make the strange remark, 'His blood be upon us and our children.'"

The long history of human sacrifice on this planet is also involved in this theme of "the crucified." In ancient times, a "sacred king" or a criminal proxy for him were frequently sacrificed in order to ensure fertility for the people, their animals and their lands. Hence, we find an old human-sacrifice ritual line in the New Testament when the Jewish people at Jesus's crucifixion make the strange remark, "His blood be upon us and our children." (Mt 27:25) They are asking for fecundity and fertility, because being sprinkled in the sacrifice's blood was a ritual specifically for that purpose. We find this theme repeatedly in the Old Testament, where the priests slaughter hundreds of animals and throw the blood all over the congregation.

The three-day period or *triduum* is indeed another common motif in mythology, representing in significant part the time it perceivably took for the sun to change its course at the solstices, as well as the equinoxes. Hence, at the vernal equinox we find the *sun* of God hanging on a cross—the equal night and day—to rise again in three days, meaning that at the end of the equinoctial period our hero is beginning to gain strength towards full adulthood, which he achieves at the summer solstice. After that three-day period, he proceeds to the autumnal equinox, after which he starts to lose strength or "die," to be resurrected or reborn at the winter solstice.

The winter solstice in particular was viewed as a three-day period, because the ancients noticed that on the sun dial the shadow no longer moved southerly but stood in the same place for three days, after which it began to move north again.

JD: You have lately begun using your real name, D.M. Murdock, in your various online writings, blog and books, and your articles posted at Examiner.com. Where does your pseudonym Acharya S or Acharya Sanning, come from?

AS: When I first went online I decided to use the pseudonym for purposes of privacy and safety. I was a *Christian apostate* writing scientifically about Christianity, and the reaction was fierce, to say the least. It continues to be, with all manner of invective and calumny tossed at me. My real name was unceremoniously outed by someone who apparently believed I was a "competitor," a nasty move that scared the bejesus out of me, because I was pregnant at the time, and my home address and phone number began to be circulated on the internet. Needless to say, I wasn't too pleased with this individual.

In any event, the name "Acharya" is actually an Indian title meaning "teacher" and "priest of the sun," the latter of which I did not know about until relatively recently—it's quite an appropriate meaning, in consideration of what I do for a living, which largely revolves around solar mythology. "Acharya" is also a common Indian last name, so it's no big deal, although people like to make it into one. A group of Hindu fanatics, for example, ended up getting my Wikipedia page deleted, evidently because they did not like the fact that when someone searched for "Acharya" they landed on my page. That's religion for you.

⁴⁶ See *Suns of God, Christ in Egypt* and forums threads for gods depicted in cruciform.

The "Sanning" came because someone told me he couldn't publish one of my articles without a last name, and "S" wouldn't suffice. "Sanning" means "truth" in Swedish, which is one of my principal genetic heritages, so my full pen name means "teacher of truth." I like the combination of ethnicities there, the Indian and the Swedish, both of whom represent old and wise cultures.

JD: Let me ask you the million-dollar question, Acharya S—who created Jesus and why did they do it?

AS: The creators of the Christ myth constituted a multinational group working over a period of decades who were more or less connected through various brotherhoods that abundantly ringed the Mediterranean and beyond. This group of religionists was continuing the long tradition of the priesthood in many countries in creating gods and goddesses out of natural phenomena or other, older deities and so on. One prime example of this priestcraft occurred in the creation of the Greco-Egyptian god Serapis, who was specifically devised a few centuries before the common era by a similar group for the purpose of uniting the warring Greek and Egyptian factions of Alexandria. Also tossed into this mix, it was hoped, would be the Jews, who were likewise rabblousing and who, like the Greeks, insisted on performing animal sacrifices. Serapis was a god to whom the Greeks and Jews could sacrifice animals, and since he possessed many attributes in common with Osiris—he was in fact a combination of Osiris and his Apis bull—it was hoped the Egyptians would become devoted to him as well. This Serapis effort lasted until well into the common era, when the Christ figure began to replace him. In reality, the Jesus character adopted many of Serapis's features, including his long-haired, bearded appearance. Serapis, however, apparently wasn't strong enough in his Jewish characteristics, so a new creation, Jesus Christ, was needed.

"The main reason for the creation of the mythical figure of Jesus Christ was in order to unify the Roman Empire under one state religion."

The main reason for the creation of the mythical figure of Jesus Christ was in order to unify the Roman Empire under one state religion. We see the germ of this effort in the creation of Serapis, but we also find in the first century a well-funded movement to merge Paganism and Judaism, at the hands of the very powerful and wealthy elite headed by the emperor Vespasian. More information concerning this fascinating development can be found in my books, especially *The Christ Conspiracy*, *Suns of God* and *Christ in Egypt*.

Jesus Christ as Myth?

Interview by Andrés Lomeña

(2009)

ANDRÉS LOMEÑA: You are a proponent of the “Christ myth theory.” We find a lot of information about it if we just visit Wikipedia. Why do people persist in considering Jesus to be a historical figure? To what extent do you think that your book *The Christ Conspiracy* is going to change this historical blindness?

ACHARYA S: Unfortunately, people are heavily conditioned from when they are small, and they do not easily go beyond that conditioning. I believe it was the Catholic saint Ignatius of Loyola who said, “Give me a child before the age of seven, and he’s mine for life.” If people were to study the religions and myths of other cultures going back thousands of years, they would understand much more easily that, in reading the gospel story of Jesus Christ, we are looking at a *myth*.

My book *The Christ Conspiracy* seems to be having a significant impact in the better educated and more literate parts of the English-speaking world. It is also available in Spanish, as you know—[*La conspiración de Cristo*](#)—but I do not know how many people have actually read it. Through the internet movie “Zeitgeist,” Part 1, tens of millions of people have been exposed to my work, although most of them do not realize that fact, regrettably!

AL: You think Christ is a new version of solar gods (new versions of Horus, Attis, Krishna or Buddha as well). Since I read, “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact” by Hayden White, I see a wave of postmodernity in all kinds of facts. How can we trust in history after this new vision? For instance, how can we separate the historical Socrates from the mythical one? I mention Socrates because he too has some parallelisms with Jesus.

"Even if it could be proved that Socrates was a mythical figure, it would not matter, because no one is willing to kill or die for him, and great armies have not marched off slaughtering tens of thousands in his name. A person's entire soul does not depend on Socrates. Christ, on the other hand, is at the root of much disturbance of the mass human psyche, so we had better be sure the whole thing is not just a fantasy."

AS: After a while of studying the world's religions, myths and history in general, it becomes fairly easy to tell what is fact and what is fiction, especially when it comes to bizarre and supernatural claims. Even if it could be proved that Socrates was a mythical figure, it would not matter, because no one is willing to kill or die for him, and great armies have not marched off slaughtering tens of thousands in his name. A person's entire soul does not depend on Socrates. Christ, on the other hand, is at the root of much disturbance of the mass human psyche, so we had better be sure the whole thing is not just a fantasy.

When you study in depth the era and milieu of when and where Christianity was created and realize how many deities and heroes there were all around the Mediterranean, it becomes very obvious that there was a concerted effort to create one more god in order to unify the Roman Empire under one state religion. All the major “Christian” elements are there, from countless “Pagan” predecessors such as the gods and goddesses of Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Rome.

As concerns Socrates, where there is any resemblance to Jesus, it is, I maintain, a deliberate contrivance in order to usurp the fame and following of the Greek sage. I have no doubt that his

disciple Plato's works were used in the creation of Christianity to a significant extent. The same can be said of Aristotle, as was admitted by Cardinal Pietro Sforza Pallavicino (1607-1667), who remarked, "If it had not been for Aristotle, the Church would have wanted for many articles of faith."

AL: Is George Albert Wells (*Did Jesus Exist?*, *The Jesus Myth*) one of your most important influences? What is his legacy? Also Bart Ehrman and others are doing a great job with the quest of the truth, aren't they?

AS: George A. Wells is important for the reason that he kept Jesus mythicism alive in English during the modern era almost singlehandedly, along with John G. Jackson and a handful of others, such as Herb Cutner a bit earlier. Although I have read most of Wells's books and enjoyed them, using some of his work and citing it in my earlier books, my work does not rely on his very much at all. As I understand it, Wells has backtracked a bit and now believes that somewhere under all the myths there is "some guy" who said a few things. That perspective is called "evemerism," and the fact remains that there really is no core to the onion once the mythological and other layers are peeled. Most of the sayings in the gospels can also be traced to earlier ideologies, texts, myths, traditions and so on. There truly is nothing new under the sun.

Bart Ehrman is good as far as he goes, but he has not studied the [mythicist position](#), so I think his perspective on the subject is lacking a big piece of the puzzle.

AL: "Religion" is a non-obligatory subject in Spanish public schools. However, there is an option to study Catholicism in schools. Why do we teach religion as something aside? I think we can teach religions as a part of history, history of art and so on. What do you think here? How is it in your country (USA)?

AS: Obviously, I am fascinated by religion, and I do study it all the time—from the outside. It just does not suck me into deleterious and absurd beliefs, which is a danger with teaching it in public schools. I am like an anthropologist observing but not getting caught up in it. I could only wish that most of the humans on this planet could do likewise, because they surely would not be so emotionally disturbed, and they would *never* consider enslaving or killing others because of religious dogma.

There exist millions of people who are essentially spiritual predators forcing their oppressive god and ideology upon others. They are like brigands in the hills stalking their prey—a very deranged mentality. We have to be on our toes not to fall into their snare, but they are circling us with ropes, just like they have done literally with millions of slaves in Africa and elsewhere.

While religion is not taught in America's public schools in general, the United States has its own brand of spiritual terrorists who lie, cheat, steal and whatever else it takes to impose their religious cults on the rest of us. I see the lies all the time from people who think they are "defending the Lord" against atheists, freethinkers and other non-believers. Unbelievable lies, calumny, vitriol, viciousness and general nastiness—all in the name of the Lord!

"After the Inquisition and all the rest of the torture and torment, slaughter and genocide by organized religions, most people are understandably afraid of the kind of hatred I see spewed all the time."

After the Inquisition and all the rest of the torture and torment, slaughter and genocide by organized religions, most people are understandably afraid of the kind of hatred I see spewed all the time. It just does not affect me on a soul level, however, because I have integrity, and the lies

about me do not sink in. If you are truly righteous—without all the phony beliefs—you do not need all this nonsense. That has been the “problem” with enlightened people over the centuries: They are not coercible and corruptible through spiritual terrorism.

If we could educate but not indoctrinate children about religion, teaching them appreciation for the hidden meanings behind the world’s religions and mythologies dating back thousands of years, rather than imposing dogma upon them, I have no doubt that the Earth would be a much better place. I would love to see the true astrotheological origins behind religion taught in schools. Such an education would go a long way in preventing religious fanaticism based on the false and perilous presentation of myths as “history.”

AL: Let me ask you about popular culture. What is your role in the documentary “Zeitgeist?” What is your opinion about the documentary “The God Who Wasn’t There?” By the way, have you seen the movie “The Man from Earth?” It’s a science-fiction story about connections between Christianity and Buddhism.

AS: As I mentioned earlier, my work was a significant inspiration for the first part of “Zeitgeist.” The list about Horus, for example, was almost verbatim from my book *The Christ Conspiracy*. Two of my other books were used as well: *Suns of God* and *Who Was Jesus?* In fact, the list of historians and other writers from the first and second centuries who do not mention Jesus, Christianity or Christians is from my book *Who Was Jesus?*

I have also written an ebook called “The Companion Guide to ZEITGEIST, Part 1,” and my nearly 600-page book *Christ in Egypt: The Horus-Jesus Connection* provides the scholarly and archaeological evidence backing up the Horus claims in “Zeitgeist.” All of my books and ebooks are available through www.StellarHousePublishing.com.

“The God Who Wasn’t There” was interesting to a degree. I was a bit put off by the fact that one of its cast members went out of his way to make sure I was excluded from it. In any case, another documentary is needed, and I have been asked to do several. Unfortunately, people run out of steam—possibly because they are so afraid of the subject matter. I have not watched “The Man from Earth,” but it sounds interesting, although if it’s taking an evemerist perspective that Buddha and Christ, et al., were all one person, I’d have to disagree, obviously. The only single “person” these characters may be is the sole sun, the great god Sol, who walks the earth daily in the form of sun rays.

AL: Are you afraid of being considered “pseudoscience” by historians and other thinkers? Critics said you are just a part of the New Age people.

AS: Such critics are a dime a dozen and usually will not be counted among the visionaries of the world. People who make dismissive comments about “New Age” this and that do not know my work very well at all. Or, if they do, they are either being mendacious or are blinded by bias to the point of being dishonest. They have to live with themselves. My body of work speaks for itself. If anyone is being “pseudo” here, it is those who foist patent fairytales upon others, and then when their marks do not buy them, they call them names like “New Ager” or worse—believe me, I have heard worse!

AL: Have you ever received any “menace” for your writings? We guess you use a pseudonym because of that.

AS: Yes, I started out using a pseudonym for a couple of reasons, one of which was for protection. Over the years since I have been online, especially at the beginning, many people

asked me whether or not I was afraid for my life because I dared to criticize religion. I was first online in 1995, and things have changed a great deal since then. At that time, I was focusing on Christianity—and people thought that Christian fanatics were savage enough to murder me! Of course, now the biggest threat is Islam. People are being killed for speaking about it, or arrested, having their websites shut down, being sued—all the techniques used to herd the sheeple (“sheep” + “people”) for the slaughter, I'm afraid.

AL: A simple question (or not so simple): Do you believe in God? Are you an atheist?

AS: As concerns whether or not I call myself an “atheist,” in my book *The Gospel According to Acharya S*, I write:

...I do not describe myself as either an “atheist” or a “theist,” because, while I do not believe in the manmade god of the Bible, Koran/Quran or other “sacred text” written by humans, I do choose to perceive a wondrous mystery pervading the cosmos, an immense power that not only drives the sun and produces life on Earth but also creates six-trillion-mile-high clouds of gas that give birth to stars.⁴⁷

There is much more to the subject, and interested readers may want to obtain my book. I'm working towards having *The Gospel According to Acharya S* translated into Spanish as well.

AL: Any conclusion?

AS: I hope that humanity wakes up in time to throw off its religious delusions before it destroys itself. By understanding the true origins of religious thought, we can enjoy it, without believing blindly in it to the point where we would actually torture, rape and/or murder other human beings over it. In my opinion, nothing could be more despicable. I am not interested in banning all religious thought. On the contrary, I believe that understanding its origins in astrotheology and nature worship holds the key to establishing a more peaceful planet. In that regard, we can actually appreciate the gloriousness of existence, including much human creation, especially profound thought and religious exploration.

"I am not interested in banning all religious thought. On the contrary, I believe that understanding its origins in astrotheology and nature worship holds the key to establishing a more peaceful planet."

⁴⁷ Murdock, *Gospel*, 6.

Christ Conspiracy Author D.M. Murdock Answers Five Questions

Interview by David Miller aka "Shankbone"

(November 12, 2009)

DAVID MILLER: What is one thing you think every American should know?

ACHARYA S: Every American should know that they are protected by the greatest Constitution the world has so far created and that their freedoms must not be taken for granted but must be fought for. As American Founding Father Thomas Jefferson was reputed to say, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance."⁴⁸

DM: If you had the option to have been born another nationality than your current one, which nationality would you choose?

AS: I have a big soft spot for ancient Greece, and I would have loved to have been active in the creation of the classical Greek civilization. It would have been amazing to be in ancient Egypt as well. As concerns modern countries, New Zealand would be lovely, I imagine. Everyone loves New Zealanders. I rather like India as well. There are many fascinating cultures and places on planet Earth.

DM: What is one misconception people have about you?

"Many people think I am an atheist or anti-religious. I do not label myself either an atheist or a theist, and I have a tremendous appreciation for religion, so long as its meaning and origins are understood."

AS: Many people think I am an atheist or anti-religious. I do not label myself either an atheist or a theist, and I have a tremendous appreciation for religion, so long as its meaning and origins are understood. Unfortunately, very few people are truly aware of the roots of religious ideology, so what we see manifested is often the pathology of religion, and that is all I am really criticizing. The rest of my work is designed to show the great beauty of human culture dating back thousands of years.

DM: Is there anyone's death, either in your life or in popular culture, whose passing you were *surprised* by how profoundly it affected you?

AS: The profundity of how my mother's death affected me was not surprising. The most surprising sense of loss, probably, was over the death of Princess Diana. Although I liked what I knew about her before her death, I was under the false impression that she was somewhat shallow and superficial. It occurred to me after she was killed just how deep and caring a human being she was. Diana was extremely innocent and trusting; yet, she was also incredibly powerful and had been born into a world-changing role. Amazing woman, really. Her death was the end of the glamour age for royalty. I hoped that the massive global mourning would have pulled people together, but it seems not at all. I hate to think that her life and death were for nothing. Ditto with my mom and every individual who has contributed light and love to planet Earth.

DM: In life we often have goals that we feel as if would just die if we don't reach them. Sometimes we reach them, sometimes we don't. The question is, have you ever worked to fulfill a goal, only to find that once you achieved it, the experience was a let down? It meant something

⁴⁸ See Murdock, *Gospel*, 167, 169.

to you when you did not have it. Then you obtained it and, after the initial excitement, you thought to yourself, "Is that all there is?" Have you ever had an experience like that?

AS: Of course, I have had many disappointments in life. It's an ongoing thing. We try not to be negative, so instead we set high hopes and positive wishes; yet, the reality frequently shortchanges our desired outcome. That's how life is. Thus, in order to keep that zest for life alive, we must look to small pleasures for a sense of excitement and accomplishment, while relishing that occasional grand achievement we may be fortunate to attain.

"In order to keep that zest for life alive, we must look to small pleasures for a sense of excitement and accomplishment, while relishing that occasional grand achievement we may be fortunate to attain."

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D.M. Murdock, also known as “Acharya S,” is an independent scholar of comparative religion and mythology, specializing in ancient nature worship, solar mythology and the astrotheological origins of religious ideology. An alumna of Franklin & Marshall College and the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Greece, Murdock is the author of several controversial books about the origins and relationship of religious ideas dating back thousands of years to the earliest known evidence, including: [The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold](#); [Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled](#); [Who Was Jesus? Fingerprints of The Christ](#); [Christ in Egypt: The Horus-Jesus Connection](#); [The Gospel According to Acharya S](#); and [The Astrotheology Calendar Guide](#). Her work is also published in numerous articles on her websites [TruthBeKnown.com](#), [StellarHousePublishing.com](#) and [FreethoughtNation.com](#), as well as other websites, such as [Freethought Examiner](#), and in magazines. In addition, there are online several videos both by her and about her work, including interviews.