

The Egyptian Soul: the *ka*, the *ba*, and the *akh*

The Ancient Egyptian belief referred to a number of souls that together constituted the individual. According to the funerary texts man is composed of a mortal body, (kha) and three souls the Ka, Ba, and the Akh.



The Ka (a pair of upraised arms), the Ka was the Egyptian concept of vital essence, that was which made the difference between a living and a dead person. It was received at the instant of birth by breath, and death occurred when Ka left the body, the Egyptian believed when person was born, The God Khnum created his or her soul Ka modeling both body and soul on his potter's wheel.

The Egyptians also believed that the *ka* was sustained through food and drink. For this reason food and drink offerings were presented to the dead.



The Ba

- (a human-headed bird) , the Ba is the second part of the soul that was free to leave the tomb and travel about the earth during the day, the Ba was obliged to return to the tomb during the perilous hours of darkness. The Ba is an aspect of a person that the Egyptian believed would live after the body died ,and it is depicted as a human-headed bird flying in the afterlife .

The Ba also required food to move and survive in the afterworld.

The Akh

The third elements of the soul , According to the Pyramid texts *belongs to the heaven, the corpse to the earth*. The body is buried while the *akh*, the *Shining One*, ascends to the sky, becoming a star. It comes into being when *ba* and *ka* unite.



Ba takes the form of a bird with a human head.

Ka statue of Harawibra, 13th dynasty

