



## WHAT IS SPECTRA?

### CONTINUITIES OF BELIEF

I became so fascinated about tracking back society's current behaviour, customs, rituals and beliefs to their ancient roots that I changed the function of this box to bring in the multitudinous and significant ways in which our lives are based on ancient practice, mostly without our realizing it. For instance, few of us realise we inherited the 360° horizon from the fourth millennium BC Sumerian sexagesimal system of counting in 60s – and that our clock and watch-faces are based on that sky horizon in circuits of 60 seconds to a minute, 60 minutes to the hour. I don't know about you, but it certainly gives me a different perspective on my place in *this* life to realise I am telling the time on the shoulders of the ingenuity of other people who lived and worked thousands of years and miles away from where I stand now! We underestimate just how much we owe them for the ordered timings of our lives.

**Spectra** provides an umbrella to shelter descriptions of this kind that together form a cultural String Theory, where the threads of ancient life still weave in and out of our seemingly newly invented modern one. I hope the idea behind the choice of logo is evident, given we are considering continuities of tradition in different chords of human life. The nature of the Cosmos and of human society in it is that there are certain enduring notes and scales that are fundamental (they are explored in huge detail on the Cosmokrator site [www.cosmokrator.com](http://www.cosmokrator.com) and in its books). In making use of them, different societies have chosen a variety of combinations that constitute perennial themes reverberating from generation to generation, and it is these deep-seated patterns that **Spectra** looks into on a fairly academic level, as a collection of case studies explaining current human practices. On the other hand, sometimes we have to branch out and forge our own customs in the light of new situations –such matters are covered under the **OCTANE** box on the Layish website, right next to the **SPECTRA** slot.

I invite anyone to offer their own item to add to the list (e-mail it to me on [asia@cosmokrator.com](mailto:asia@cosmokrator.com) for consideration) – but it must be a substantial piece – at least a page, and not just a sentence or two. As my first contribution (Link 1) I have posted a paper I gave at the Oxford Oriental Institute in April 2013 which while delivering it led our group to realise it contained material that explains many aspects of a long-standing background to Christian ritual, literally *millennia* later, as indeed do the next two pieces to do with the Resurrection of Baal and the Feast of Ishtar (Links 2 and 3). I have to admit the first piece is longer than ideal because it was originally written for a different event, but it was the desire to share the stunning matches in it that made me think of starting **Spectra**. Despite its overall academic and art historical mode of presentation I was nonetheless so struck by the contract-making procedures in relation to the story of Holy Week that I decided, apart from initially placing it under the relevant box in the main body of my **Canon of Ancient Near Eastern Art** framework (**Catalogue C**), to try and share it here also with the general reader (the entire research document is posted at Level 3 on this website as **Chapter 7**). Short essays will be added annually under separate links in numerical order.