

Some remarks about the Egyptian Creator

Mariano Bonanno¹
Submetido em Agosto/2015
Aceito em Agosto/2015

ABSTRACT:

The sexual co-participation is of significant importance in the generative universal process of masculine Egyptian society. Nevertheless, it is true that the creator appears explicitly with extern masculine attributes and that its feminine part is his complement and that, in anyway, the sexual interrelation is the trigger of conception. The androgyny of the deity condenses the best of the sexual potency of both and the outcome is the conjoint work of the complete essences, and this concentration in only one entity constitutes the apotheosis of the original perfection. Thus, the androgyny constitutes the transcendence of the primordial non differentiation in which the generative energies of the pre-creationist chaos were concentrated, and also the previous stage to the definitive sexual differentiation. The aim of this paper is analyze and sketch out about the androgyny presence in the ones which constitute the principal theological systems of the ancient Egypt; in effect, the Memphis, Hermopolis and Heliopolis cosmogony will be our center of attention.

Keywords: cosmogony - creation myths - pre-creation state - androgyny - sexual co-participation

RESUMEN:

La coparticipación sexual es de significativa importancia en el proceso generativo universal en una sociedad masculina como la egipcia. Es cierto igualmente, que el creador aparece explícitamente con atributos externos masculinos y que su parte femenina es su complemento y que, no obstante, la interrelación sexual es el desencadenante de la concepción.

La androginia del demiurgo condensa aquí lo mejor de la potencia sexual de ambos y su resultado es la obra conjunta de esencias completas. El que se concentren en una sola entidad constituye la apoteosis de la perfección original.

Así, la androginia constituye la trascendencia de la indiferenciación primordial en la que se condensaban las energías generativas en el caos pre-creacionista, y también el estado previo a la definitiva diferenciación sexual.

El objetivo del presente trabajo es analizar y bosquejar la presencia androginia en los que constituyen los principales sistemas teológicos del antiguo Egipto; en efecto, las cosmogonías de Menfis, Hermópolis y Heliópolis serán el centro de nuestra atención.

Palabras Clave: cosmogonía - mitos de creación - estado pre-creación - androginia - coparticipación sexual

¹ Doctor Mariano Bonanno (Universidad nacional de La Plata). Dictado de Morfo-sintaxis del Egipcio Clásico en el Instituto de Historia Antigua Oriental "Abraham Rosenvasser" (Universidad de Buenos Aires). mbonanno1971@gmail.com

Introduction:

It is significance the sexual co-participation in the generative universal process in the masculine Egyptian society. Nevertheless, it is true that the creator appears explicitly with extern masculine attributes and that its feminine part is his complement and that, in anyway, the sexual interrelation is the trigger of the conception.

The androgyny of the deity condenses the best of the sexual potency of both and the outcome is the conjoint work of the complete essences, and this concentration in only one entity constitutes the apotheosis of the original perfection.

Far from being exclusively Egyptian, the concept of androgyny was present in numerous mythic-religious conceptions. Ying and yang in the Far East, Sin moon god at the Mesopotamia, the dual interpretation of the Genesis, the androgynian shape of Zeus in the Mediterranean mythology (Troy, 1986, 3), among others, are some of the examples that follow this direction. But beyond particular cases, we can deduct its importance in the general context of the pre-philosophical thought. And this is closely involved with its *Weltanschauung* and the natural forces that are its support.

The idea of a continuous interaction between opposites impregnates a great part of the mythic production of the ancient societies. The concept of androgyny is an inclusive concept in which the participation of the sexes is a complementary relation.

It was difficult, mostly for the Egyptian people, to achieve high levels of abstraction without going over concrete concepts, in a way that all thoughts were based on them.

This is probably the explanation for the bisexual conception of the creator deity. If life was the result of the conjunction of the sexes, the creator had to, although it was in a subtle way, get both of them together in integration for the generative process. Thus, the hand or the mouth, as we will see, was associated to the feminine element, trigger of the creative potency of the god; is for that reason that the doctrine of creation was based on the procreative and regenerative powers symbolized by the sexual division of the divine power (Tobin, 1988, 176).

In fact, the androgynian conception of the deity condenses, we believe, a big part of the general idea that Egyptians had of their gods. First, because it synthesises in one being the dual cosmovision of the universe that has always impregnated the Egyptian thought, second, because of the evident female function in the creative process which made woman

an omnipresent object of cult; and third, and speaking in a more general level, because of the attribution of supernatural potentials, one of the funding conditions of myth.

With sexual capacities defined, though integrated into one entity which unified them, creator was able to emerge as a leader of the human action not only over the earthly environment, but also over the celestial one and introduce itself to the mankind as the plenty of life and its eternal continuation.

This synthesis involved the characteristics of Creator of the male condition, and the female function of the triggering of the creative forces and the receiving of the seed.

Thus, the androgyny constitutes, accepting the validity of an evolutionist analysis, the transcendence of the primordial non differentiation in which the generative energies of the pre-creationist chaos were concentrated, and also the previous stage to the definitive sexual differentiation.

The act of creation was considered as a perfect conjunction of multihierarquical microcosms. That summed up in itself the whole totality of the natural forces latterly differenced, although already perfectible, given its correspondence to the empire of the humane. The Egyptian binary conception was solved and reflected itself in the deity, the uncreated One, the all mighty carrier of life and hope.

The primordial creation had to be reproduced indefinitely in the microcosmic level of mankind and thus emulate the original perfection and be the guarantee of the continuity of the work dictated supernaturally. In other words, the degraded movement, -in the sense of a limited cession of the divine potency to the human-, of the creator capacities, were the support of such state of original perfection.

Finally, for our analysis, it is important to state that the cosmogonic myths to which we will limit ourselves are the ones from Memphis² and Heliopolis, the ones which constitute the principal theological systems of the ancient Egypt.

Androgyny in the cosmogonic sources:

Every creative process supposes the simultaneous participation of both sexes, and this complementation implicates the success in the continuity of specie. But, if we get into the domain of the cosmogonic conceptions, such status of things varies considerably³.

² The chronology of such Theology is discussed. Some scholars consider it from XXV Dynasty, a period in which a solarisation of the religion and, moreover, the moment in which inscription of Sabacon preserved it was recorded. See Junker (1939), Junge (1973), Fazzini (1988), Kemp (1992, 42-43), Kraus (1999,239-246), Van Lieven (2007,255-258), Altenmüller, (1975, cols.1065-1069).

The human universe is very much limited than the divine one, because it handles the forces that condition the first one. Thus, the nature of gods becomes into intelligible, and gives them capacities and potencies substantially diverse and different from the human ones.

A brief extract of a main cosmogonic text is illustrative:

“The Lord of All, after having come into being, says: I am he who came into being as Khepri (i.e., the Becoming One). When I came into being, the beings came into being, all the beings came into being after I became. Numerous are those who became, who came out of my mouth, before heaven ever existed, nor earth came into being, nor the worms, nor snakes were created in this place. 1, being in weariness, was bound to them in the Watery Abyss...⁴ (Piankoff, 1954, 24).

The text identifies clearly the becoming of the existence of the creator with the beginning of universal existence. This creator is called Khepri “the one who become to be” and it should be related since remote times to creator Atum. The “First Occasion” makes reference to the first elevation of god Atum over the primordial hill after having backed off the Nile’s flood. Little hills left uncovered were the promise of the annual life of Egypt and it was in one of them from where it was considered that the deity had started its work. As regards the primordial beings mentioned, Shu y Tefnut are the pristine couple sexually separated, later also creators themselves.

The text states the creation from only one entity which is introduced to us sexually non differentiated although they carry within themselves, immanently, both sexes.

The cosmogonic myths, in their condition of phenomena that present themselves as facts with no explanation for men, are founded precisely because of this “defenseless” reasoning impregnated mostly with imagination. That is why the power, the capacity, the strength and any divine attribute are unlimited, being their origin the reflect of the human conscience of their lack in relation with the superhumane. But besides, and emphatically, the creator shows itself as the beginning of all existence.

“...Then I planned in my own heart, and many forms of beings came into being as forms of children, as forms of their children.” (Piankoff, 1954, 24).

³ “The combining of masculine and feminine traits was not unique in Egyptian art and mythology *per se*: the fecundity of the Nile god, Hapi is portrayed in a similar fashion and the sole creator god, Atum is, by reason of his actions, essentially ‘hermaphroditic’ in nature”, Johnston (2010, 11).

⁴ Also en Pyr. 1466c-d, n hprt pt n hprt b n hprt rmt mst ntrw n hprt mt; “the sky had not yet come into being, the earth had not yet come into being, mankind had not yet come into being, the gods had not yet been born, death had not yet come into being”.

Thus is showed the solitude of the deity when conceiving the different ways of existence, like the preconceiving of creation. It is probable that the “other” existence that the text makes reference should be that which comes from human liquids, which became into the son and the daughter Shu and Tefnut.

And the demonstration of the existence of these two, can come in our help, because conception and birth are the result of the active participation of both of the sexes, and in this way, and analogically, Shu and Tefnut come from the sexual exchange united in the androgynian creative divinity.

As regards “the ways of existence of Khepri (the creator)”, we can speak in two senses: on one side, understanding that its son and daughter are the conjunction of the bisexual generative potency of the god, because of being the fruit of the masturbation or of the solitary expectoration of this latter, and on the other side, we can speak about the identification of Khepri with Atum and Re, denominations of the Sun creator.

Going back to our first statement and analysing this last fragment of the Heliopolitan Theology, we found out that the deity came absolutely alone to the existence and setting himself the moment of his appearance as a creation, setting thus the time of his “becoming”. The idea is preserved in Chapter XVII from The Book of the Dead.

“...I am the Great God, the self-created. Who is it? The Great God, the self-created, is water, he is Nun, father of the gods. Otherwise said: He is Re. He who created his names, Lord of the Ennead. Who is he? It is Re who created his names and his members, it means the coming into existence of those gods who are in his suite.” (Faulkner, 1985, 44)

Nun is the first chaotic stage, waterish and dark, previous to the activity of the creator. From one point, the residence of the non being because there is no activity, movement or any kind of alteration, is also the residence of the being, the potentiality of the being is inferred from its latter creative activity.

Such chaos carried substantially all the generative forces, male as well as female, being the god a non differenced part of that primordial chaos. That this part hadn't been explicitly manifested doesn't mean that it wasn't present in this first status of not being. In Aristotelian terms, the ambivalent sexual potentiality of the deity becomes into act at the moment of creation of genders

This explains that Atum, Ptah and latterly Re, which is identified with the first one, being gods of male nature, wouldn't be exclusively male. As universal creators, they carry in themselves the two sexes, so creating of sexed essences was possible as a deed of a being substantially masculine-feminine.

To the original primeval non differentiation of this chaotic stage, follows the appearance of the deity self created, which contains in its essence both sexes although externally is being shown with masculine attributes.

Atum's solitary creation was cause of many speculations from the scholars in what is related to the feminine element during the act of creation. According to this cosmogony, Atum created from himself the first couple of gods sexually differenced and did it starting from his one physical activity. The original passivity of the creator was interrupted by his activity, the masturbation itself, the point at which started the first generation of gods.

The real and material agent that activated the generative potency of the deity was the hand, grammatically and conceptually feminine, according to the Pyramids:

“... This is Atum who is getting to be as the masturbator (*iws3w*) of Heliopolis. It was in his fist that he put his phallus (*hnn*). He got to the orgasm (*ndmmt*) with himself and his son and his daughter (*s3ty*) brother and sister (*snty*) Shu y Tefnut were born.”⁵

It is important to retain this last paragraph, because in later times the Divine Worshippers -*dwt-ntr*- was also holder of the title “Wife of the God”-*hmt-ntr*- they were called “Hand of the God”-*drt-ntr* (Leclant, 1957,168) in intimate relation to the Heliopolitan myth⁶.

Nevertheless, the last one has to go back at least to the Middle Kingdom, as an independent being, when a goddess, as companion to Atum, and called *drt.f*, “His Hand”, personifying Djeritef (Chassinat, 1912,159-160).⁷

It was the Atum's hand his companion in the loneliness of the Nun, and it was, as latter is mentioned the God's Wife, who satisfied (*htp*) Atum. She copes with their duties to the god, performing the rituals of the cult that give him strength and potency. In the case of the princesses send to the intimacy of the gods, a sexualised reinterpretation can be verified from the traditional acts of the pharaonic ritual (Leclant, 1957, 169). But it is not only sexual satisfaction what the feminine hand provides the god with, the ritual use of the *sistro* and of the *menat* necklace, contribute to the revivification of the heart of the god.

⁵ Pyr. 1248 a-d.

⁶ “Das les Textes des Pyramides, Atum, le démiurge solitaire d'Héliopolis (*Urgott), de sa propre main donne naissance à Schu et Tefnout”, (Leclant, 1975, col. 813).

⁷ “Toum devient ainsi un dieu analogues aux autres membres de l'enneade héliopolitaine conçus sur le type humain et groupés par couples. Au geste créateur du dieu solitaire qui donne naissance à Shou et à Tafnout, on substitue une personnalité féminine qui par son nom rappelle cet acte, mais dont l'existence même est une contradiction de fait avec le vieux mythe dont elle contribue à corriger la forme brutale”, (Chassinat, 1912,160).

This was the transcendental function of the God's Wife for the conservation of the pre-stated divine order.

Westendorf (1967, 141), consider that these objects represent male/female opposition. The feminine connotation of the necklace would be given by the term *mnyt* and its relation with *mnt* “tight”, while the male reference, is given by the phallic shape of the *sistro*. Both of themes were Hathor's instrument and were linked to the renascent. They symbolized permanent and continuity of life forces, and so to reenactment of primeval creation.

Such contribution to the maintenance of the universal order -*m3t*- is the most important cosmic function of feminine element in the cosmogonic myths⁸. During the pregnancy the body of woman takes the place of the recipient where the best of the generative forces of both sexes is condensed and its development is made possible, with her contribution the success of the generative process is guaranteed. But it is also true that once triggered the process, its alteration or any possibility of loosing its equilibrate position, the feminine element is the one capable of re-stabilisation and thus acts as the point of inflection.

“Die Majestät des Re sprach darauf: „Wisset, sie sind in die Wüste geflohen, den ihre Herzen sind in Furcht über das, was ich ihnen gesagt habe. Sie aber sprachen im Angesicht Seiner Majestät: „Laß dein Auge dahinziehen, daß es sie der bloßtelle die sich verschworen haben als Bösewichter. Es gibt keine Auge, das ihm überlegen ist, um sie für dich zu schlagen (so) möge es herabfahren als Hathor“. (Hornung, 1982, 38).

Those feminine entities are the ones in charge of restoring the altered order. In numerous cosmogonic texts, goddesses take that transcendental role of a forever returning to the primordial stage. Nevertheless, not making reference to the first chaos but to the “*thus heart and tongue rule over the limbs in accordance with the teaching that it (the heart, or: he, Ptah) is in every body and it (the tongue, or: he, Ptah) is in every mouth of all gods, all men, all cattle...*” (Lichteim, 1976, 54) that is to say, the original creation.

The universe was created once and for all according to a plan of immutability, any real or potential disorder, wasn't consider a cosmic aberration; on the contrary, it had been conceived in the deity's mind and it was a constitutive part of the original pre-conception.

⁸ “The existence of evil is attributed to humanity and not to the creator god. The latter crushes mankind's rebellion brutally through the intervention of Hathor; to destroy evil he is compelled to annihilate humanity, an action that conflicts with the idea of creation itself. The ultimate solution—a separation of the cosmic levels of existence—limits the problem to the earthly realm. In this sense, the composition is complementary to the other netherworld books, such as the Amduat, the Book of Gates, and the Book of Caverns, which show how manifestations of disorder are punished and overcome in the Beyond”, (Guilhou,2010,4-5).

“Und die Majestät diesses Gottes (Re) sprach: “Willkommen in Frieden Hathor, die dem Schöpfer gefolgen hat, als ich zu ihr gekommen bin!”. Darauf sagte diese Göttin: “So wahr du für mich lebst, als ich mich der Menschen bemächtig habe, war es angenehmen für mein Herz”. Und die Majestät des Re sprach: “Ich werde Macht über sie haben als König, als der, der Sie verhindert hat”. So war es, daß Sachmet entstand, das Gebräu der nacht, im in ihrem Blute zu waten von Herakleopolis an”. (Hornung, 1982, 38-39).

This text talks about a conspiracy of men against their supreme governor Re, who send s the goddess Hathor in the shape of Sekhmet, (the powerful one) to frighten the human gender. Once again is a goddess the commissioned for the restoration and her violent action is justified as a purifying ritual. The conclusion that can be taken from this brief analysis puts the feminine element in the role of the guarantor of the continuity of the pre-stated cosmic order. Such function could have had its expression in the ancient myth through which the sun god had been born and was being born continuously from a mother god in the shape of a cow.

According to the solar mythology, the sun entered into the celestial cow's mouth during the night, to reappear in the morning through her vulva as “the bull of his mother” (*k3mwt.j*), that is to say, his own father, the self-engendered or created of himself.

The taking part of both sexes is clearly, resumed in the creator Re. As the feminine receiving activity is also clear shown in Hathor who receives the seed in the first instance, keeps it -during the night- until the ideal conditions for the conception are given, so as to finally conceive the creator.

In the earthly domain, this would have an institutional reflect, as when difficulties came upon in the dynastic succession, -guaranteed by the matrilineal filiation- it was usual to appeal or to the lateral branches or to look for any kind of relation with a feminine member of the royal family. Here, as in the mythological domain, the female element was the guaranty of the restoration of the order after a transitory crisis situation, as it was supposed during a dynastic changing period.

As frequently happens when trying to trace directive exes in the religious, thought we see that diverse traditions, contradictory in appearance, converge because of numerous ways. It would be naif to try to unify in only one doctrinaire corpus such a varied and rich production like in this case.

In this way, every production would have been the original result of the convergence of the various intellectual currents conformed around one or various canons of acceptation related directly to an ancestral unchangeable order. So, each change,

adaptation or reformulations were made accessible for the thought structure rooted in the omniscient tradition, supreme censor and sacredly above all speculation.

To illustrate the myth of Atum's creation, another cosmogonic text makes to arrive to existence of the first couple of gods by the expectoration of the deity: "*I spit (iss) what became Shu (Su) and expectorated (tf) what became Tefnut*". (Wilson, 1946, 6-7).

To be noted the shear difference between the creative actions described in the Texts of the Pyramids -through masturbation- and the one described in the Bremner Rhind papyri in which the mouth is the artifice of the existence of the sexed couple Shu and Tefnut.

"I planned in myself, I made all forms being alone, before I ejected Shu, before I spat out Tefnut before any other who was in me had become. Then I planned in my own heart, and many forms of beings came into being as forms of children, as forms of their children. I conceived by my hand, I united myself with my hand, I poured out of my own mouth". (Faulkner, 1937, 166-185 and 1933, cols.29,1-29,2,72)

Such generation represent the female element of the god, first by mention of the hand, and the word one by the mouth that we can identify with the vagina and thus reinforce the androgynian character of the creator.

Analysing the Book of defeating Apofis and the Bremner Rhind papyrus, we can recognize in the first place and in reference to expectoration, the mouth with the vagina where the semen, outcome of the masturbation, and then and having in mind the female role of recipient of the generative potencies, we can identify the expulsion – as a corollary of the interrelation of the sexes- of Shu and Tefnut.

It is also possible to identify Tefnut, the Humidity, with the mouth and also with the vagina because it's essential component is the liquid substance that through them enters. On the contrary, the identification of Shu, the Air, with the sexed element is more complex, although may be we the going through the physical space of the semen of the god can help us in this sense.

"... for the Ennead of Atum came into existence through his semen and his fingers. But the Ennead is the teeth and lips in this mouth which pronounced the name of every thing, from which Shu and Tefnut came forth and which gave birth to the Ennead." (Lichtheim, 1976, 54)

The verbal creation of Ptah transcend the Atum previous one; it reaches because it reaches a high degree of abstraction -the creator verb- and makes it depending on a pre- conception of the mind. Besides, the fact of bisexualising the Nun constitutes a subtle use of the male/female concepts. Here the androgyny not only characterises the creator, but also the first state of the non created.

Here, in the Theology of Heliopolis it seems to coincide on the androgyny of the deity.

Also, about Ptah , its principal deity, the Memphite Theology says:

“Ptah –Nun the father , the one who begat Atum,

Ptah- Naunet the mother, who gave birth to Atum”.(Iversen, 1990, 485)

Thus Path is identified with the absolute of the pre-created, with the Primordial Ocean in its male essence -Nun-, and in its female one -Naunet-. That is to say that the Memphite Theology sexualises Nun in an ambivalent way, giving to creator an androgyny nature. Furthermore, is Atum who appears effectively identified with the androgynian chaos.

“And thus the kas were made and the hemsut installed those who make all nourishment by this word.” (Iversen, 1990, 486)

Ptah is the supreme intelligence who conceives in his mind –heart- and gives shape with his tongue -verb- to the creation of Atum and of all gods , thus constituting this principle the closer approach of the Egyptian to the Logos ‘s doctrine, (Wilson, 1995, 96).

We have then two cosmogonics systems well distinguished. In Heliopolis we have a self-created god emerged from the chaos, from the non differentiation, who initiates the divine individualisation through defined sexes. This lonely activity implies a physical conception of creation.

In the creation by Re in the Bremner-Rhind papyrus, we find a more abstract idea of the chaos and creation.

“Because I created (some of) them in the Nun (or nnw= primordial water) like somnolents (inert ones , nnw= the dead ones), before I found a place where to stand (literally, to be stand up)”. (Faulkner, 1933,26,24 to 27,1,60)

It is interesting the use of the male and female ways respectively of the same word -nnw- to name the sexually differentiated nature which makes the divine essence of Ptah. The reference made to the primeval state, which is exempt of any sexualisation, seems to be contradictory to the Memphite Theology conception , where the creator appears being male and female.

Nevertheless, beyond the differences between both systems, the Egyptian thought included in some way both sexes. At the moment of explaining the creation it was reticent to get rid of components of the empire of the concrete.

The same happens in the creation hermopolitan tale which, together with the former, constitutes the most important Egyptians cosmogonics myths. According to this cosmogony, the primeval Nun is materialized in eight creatures, four frogs and four snakes of both sexes which are constitutive part of the same and not of the created universe (Frankfort, 1976, 176). For this reason, once created the universe, they must die because they were elements of this not-being or primeval chaos overcame by creation.

This assertion seems to arise from the names of such entities: Nun and Naunet (the primeval water), Huh and Hauhet (the Infinity), Kuk and Kauket (the Darkness), and Amun and Amaunet (the Hidden) (Tobin, 1988, 173).

Here, such as occurred in Memphite Theology, the androgynous sexualization goes back to the non-created chaos. The difference is based on the fact that in the Hermopolis cosmogony an identification of the demiurge with Chaos does not exist, such as Ptah-Nun-Naunet. The creator, on the contrary, appears the work concretion of Nun's constitutive human beings and from here creates all the known. His androgyny lies in that, following Troy analysis, if in each sexual union is combined both hearts and the child heart he was born with was provided by the mother (Bryan, 1997, 45) the creator, while masculine divine entity issued from the sexual exchange of the eight chaotic creatures, in this case, takes renowned forefathers hearts.

We must take into account that for the Egyptians the heart was the seat of the intelligence, the wish and the will; that means that in the creation of the intellectual conception there is also a direct participation of both sexes.

“Thoth is conceived as the first product of Re's thought, but he is also, the thinking faculty itself of Re. Further, the thought act of Re's heart by which Thoth is produced, is, at the same time, an act of the god who is the “Heart of Re”; thus Thoth is, in every sense, self-begotten”⁹ (Boylan, 1922, 122)

This cosmogony is known in part, from the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead, but mostly from his Theban version of the Temple of Khonsu¹⁰. There is this conception a chaos inhabited by bisexual creatures that engender creative entity which can be or the primordial egg from which the sun rises, or a child demiurge or a Lotus.

But beyond the difficulties of reconstruction, it is clear that the chaos is bisexual and the creator becomes androgynous. However, it is important to point out that Toth is also the God of the Moon, feminine counterpart of the Sun; so we can affirm his androgynous character. If the Sun's rays can assimilate to the outflow of semen, the

⁹ For a more recent study about Toth, see (Zivie-Coché, 2009, 167-225) and (Staedler, 2012)

¹⁰ In this cosmogony, “Toth himself is described as “the one who created every- thing”, (Cruz-Uribe, 1994, 169-189).

significance of the moon has close ties with the placenta. An equivalent association occurs between the celestial bodies (sun and moon) and gold and silver as metals identified with the feminine and the masculine (Aufrere, 1992, 389-392).

Conclusions:

To sum up, the Egyptian cosmogonic forces were as the complementarity and on the simultaneity of the action of the sexes in the integral generative process of the universe. This could be deducted from the same sources but also from the later situation of the female element in Egyptian society and religion.

Is also important to point out the functional differentiation of both sexes at the moment of creation. That is to say, that the masculine part of the god plans the creation in his heart and expels the seed stimulated by his female counterpart and triggers the conception. For the tradition which makes of the mouth the object through which the god creates, we can identify this last one, as we already mentioned, with the vagina recipient of the semen, product of the female manual excitation.

To sum up, the delimitation of the divine function of the sexes synthetised in only one being, supposes, in a first place, the dual conception of the Egyptian universe, and also the high valued role in which the woman was placed. This would then be seen in the high juridical status that she was given and, at a religious level, in her role of regulator and guarantee of the divine order, and finally the perfection of the pre-created stage, non -differenced but inclusive, potentially generative and synthesis of the Egyptian divine conception. And this original perfection, unconditioned (Eliade,1992,175), turns out into perfectibility when triggering the creative progress, as the creator concedes his capacities, limited of course, gets differenced sexually and his work becomes into an imports. It is Atum who appears in both cosmogonies as the god from whose physical activity generation gets to start, although is true that he is the one who cause the creation, the preconception of Ptah takes bethink even more the original idea. Connected to this, let me introduce a brief disaccording argument, of course relevant to the subject.

It is clear that all intellectual creation obeys to an intentionality; in this sense if we accept the hypothesis which situates the Memphite Theology in the 25th Dynasty, we will see how a previous period of crisis requires a justification that legitimates the latter state of harmony, as a result of the former one. Ptah seems to synthetize such order, to

the extent of being the predecessor of the creator *par excellence*, Atum, and by doing it through a mere predication or expressing of the mental preconception.

And it is precisely the problem of the chronology the one that conditions in a certain way the analysis of both creationist myths. We say so because when reviewing the different religious local Egyptian systems, we face a truly process of superation, if not of equalization or inclusion.

In fact, Re absorbs Atum, Khnum emerges as the universal deity the same as Toth and the different local gods , Amun gets to be “a new Re”;that is to say, the new system has its basements in the previous one, the one which takes as a model although in a superative instance.

That is why, and following the same path of reasoning, that may be Ptah Theology is later than that of Atum- Heliopolis- given that, if that were not the case, we wouldn't be able to understand why Atum, emerging as the creator god, had set a dependence of his action to the verb of Ptah, and thus became his physical vehicle of creation.

We wouldn't then be in front of a inclusive superative process of junction, so common when a god is to be arised to the supreme rank and this is to be justified ideologically.

On the contrary and focusing in the Memphite Theology we can make deductions in an ambivalent way, from the fact of the acceptation of the two probable moments of elaboration. Thus, accepting its chronologization based in the Dynasty II, we would be in the presence of a syncretic process that involves local or regional deities -systematized or not-, which follow the supreme deity Ptah as his hypostasis or predication. The way, the verb, through which Ptah emerges as the creator and ordenator, turns out to be strange for the pragmatism and the appealing for the sensitive shown in the Egyptian mentality. Let's also take into account the already mentioned idea about the inclusive theological systems.

Then , let's grant to the Dynasty XXV the intellectual characteristic, now we have at this level a fully conformed line of gods soundly established , with their different systems and relationships, with family ties between them or theologically bonded and all of them with a very prestigious reputation. Ptah, may be local god of Memphis, and put aside in the main theologies, retries the moment of the conception, operates over the abstracts concepts then turn into objects themselves and absorbs the rest of the gods under his existence.

'The presence of a god which its hypostasis is its physical generative agent, and who has gnoseologically preconceived the creation, gets an intellectual and also a temporal compatibility with the idea of the pre-socratic Logos and with verbal conception of the Genesis.

In fact , the Dynasty XXV, but mostly the Dynasty XXVI, who takes the Asirians out of Egypt, unifies the country after a long process of disgregation of the central authority, shows a strong archaising tendency in general¹¹, in the whole intellectual production; according Leclant, "la qualité des œuvres est remarquable avec de nombreux traits d'une reprise archaïsante, consciente et affirmée" (Leclant, 1984, col. 503)¹² . In the religious field, a return to the cult of the ancient gods is shown, such as Ptah and Neith (Drioton and Vandier, 1986, 30).

¹¹ For this issue, see (Der Manuelian, 1993); (Neureiter, 1994); (Kahl, 2010).

¹² J. Leclant, "Shabaka", *LÄ* V :499-513.

RELATION BETWEEN THE PRINCIPAL COSMOGONIES

Cosmogony	Precreation	God Creator		Creation
Heliopolis ¹³	Nun non differenced	Atum	Ambivalent Sexuality	<i>Shu and Tefnut</i>
Memphis ¹⁴	Ptah-Nun masculine Ptah-Naunet feminine	<i>Atum</i>	Derivation of Ptah	First sexual differentiation Solar Egg
Hermopolis ¹⁵	Chaos Nun-Naunet Kuk-Kauket Huh-Hauhet Amun-Amaunet (chaotic creatures)	<i>Amun</i>	Personifications of the world primitive state before creation Channelling and convergence	

¹³ Troy (1989,59-69); Tobin (1989,:46-53, 57-64, 89-92, 113-122, 195-215; Lesko (1991,91-95; Quirke (1992,22-30; Bickel (1994,33-53).

¹⁴ See Breasted (1901,39-54); Wilson (1958); Frankfort (1976,50); Altenmüller, (1975,1065-1069); Lichtheim (1976,41-57); Fazzini (1988,10).

¹⁵ See Sethe (1929); Yoyotte (1959,51-62); Zivie-Coche (2009,95-107).

Bibliography:

- ALLEN, J.: *Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts.* Yale Egyptological Studies, 2. New Haven. Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1988.
- ALTENMÜLLER, H.: *Denkmal Memphitischer Theologie*, LÄ I, 1065-1069, 1975..
- AUFRÉRE, S.: *L'univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne* 2, Bde 105. Cairo, 1992.
- BICKEL, S.: *La cosmogonie égyptienne avant le Nouvel Empire.* OBO134. Universitätsverlag. Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht. Freiburg/ Göttingen, 1994.
- BOYLAN, P.: *Thoth the Hermes of Egypt. A study of some aspects of theological thought in Ancient Egypt.* Oxford University Press, Viena, 1922.
- BREASTED, J.H.: “The Philosophy of a Memphite Priests”, ZÄS 39, Leipzig, Berlin, 39-54, 1901.
- BRYAN, B.: *In Women Good and Bad Fortune are on Earth: Status and Roles of Women in Egyptian Culture*, in A.K. Capel y G. Markoe (eds.), Mistress of the house, Mistress of heaven. Women in ancient Egypt. Cincinnati, Cincinnati Art Museum, 25-46, 1997.
- CHASSINAT, M.: *La déesse Djeritef*, BIFAO 10, Cairo, 159-160, 1912.
- CRUZ-URIBE, E.: “The Khonsu Cosmogony”, JARCE 31, Boston, 169-189, 1994.
- DER MANUELIAN, P.: *Living in the Past: Studies in archaism of the Egyptian Twenty-six Dynasty.* Studies in Egyptology. London and Ney York: Kegan Paul International, 1993.
- DRIOTTON, J.; Vandier, J.: *Historia de Egipto*, EUDEBA, Buenos Aires, 1986.
- ELIADE, M.: *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries.* Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1992.
- FAZZINI, R.: *Egypt Dinasty XXII-XXV, Iconography of Religion* 16. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1988.
- FAULKNER, R.: *The papyrus Bremner-Rhind* (British Museum no. 10188). (Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 3- Édition de la Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth in Bruxelles, 1933.
- FAULKNER, R.: *The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-III*, JEA 23, London, 166-185, 1937.
- FAULKNER, R.: *The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-IV*, JEA 24, London, 41-54, 1938.
- FAULKNER, R.: *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead.* London. British Museum Press, 1985.
- FRANKFORT, H.: *Reyes y Dioses.* Revista de Occidente. Madrid, 1976.
- Guilhou, N.: *Myth of the Heavenly Cow.* In Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (eds.), UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology, Los Angeles. <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2vh551hn>, 2010.
- Hornung, E.: *Der ägyptische Mythos von der Himmelskuh. Eine Ätiologie des Unvollkommenen.* OBO 46, Fribourg/Göttingen-Universitätverlag, 1982.

- IVERSEN, E.: *The Cosmogony of the Shabaka Text*, in Israelit Groll. S. (ed.) Studies in Egyptology Presented to Miriam Lichteim, 2 Vols. Jerusalen, 485-493, 1990.
- JOHNSTON, J.: *Beyond Isis and Osiris. Alternate Sexualities in Ancient Egypt*. Petrie Museum Trail, 2010.
- JUNGE, F.: *Zur Fehldatierung der sog. Denkmals memphitischer Theologie oder der Beitrag der ägyptischen Theologie zur Geistesgeschichte der Spätzeit*, MDAIK 29, Cairo, Wiesbaden, 1973.
- JUNKER, H., *Die Götterlehre von Memphis (Shabaka-Inschrift)*, APAWPK, Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften - Berlin, 1939.
- KAHL, J.: *Archaism*. In Willeke Wendrich (ed.) *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles. <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz0025qh2v>, 2010.
- KEMP, B.: *El Antiguo Egipto. Anatomía de una civilización*. Ed. Crítica, Barcelona, 1992.
- KRAUS, R.: *Wie jung ist die memphitische Philosophie auf dem Shabako-Stein?*, in Gold of Praise : Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente, in : John A Larson, J.A., Teeter, E. & Wente, E.F. : *SAOC* 58, Chicago, Oriental Institute, 239-246, 1999.
- LECLANT, J.: *Tefnout et les divines adoratrices thebaines*, MDAIK 15, Cairo, Wiesbaden, 1957.
- LECLANT, J.: *Gotteshand*, LÄ II, cols. 813-815, 1975.
- LECLANT, J.: *Shabaka*, LÄ V, cols. 499-513, 1984.
- LESKO, L.: *Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology*. In Shafer, B., E. (ed.). Religion in Ancient Egypt: god, myths and personal practice. New York. Cornell University Press. 91-95, 1991.
- LICHTEIM, M.: *Ancient Egyptian Literature. A book of Readings*. Vol. 1, The Old and Middle Kingdoms. University of California Press, London, 1976.
- NEUREITER, S.: *Eine Neue Interpretation des Archaismus*, SAK 21, Hamburg, 219-254, 1994.
- PIANKOFF, A.: *The shrine of Tuthankamon*. Bollingen Series Nº 40 Vol. 1, 1954.
- QUIRKE, S.: *Ancient Egyptian Religion*. The British Museum Press. London, 1992.
- SETHE, K.: *Amun um die acht Urgötter von Hermopolis*. APAW 4. Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Hamburg, New York, 1929.
- STAEDLER, M.: *Toth*. In (Jacco Dieleman, Willeke Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles.
- <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002c4k99>, 2012.
- TOBIN, A.: *Theological Principles of Egyptian Religion*. American University Studies, Serie VII Theology and Religion. Peter Lang Publishing Inc. New York, 1989.
- TOBIN, A.: Mytho-Theology in Ancient Egypt”, JARCE 25, Boston, 169-183, 1988.

- TROY, L.: *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian. Myth and History.* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations 14. Uppsala, Boreas, 1986.
- TROY, L.: *The Ennead: The Collective as Goddess. A Commentary on Textual Personification.* Cognitive Structures and Popular Expressions. Proceedings of Symposia in Uppsala and Bergen 1987 and 1988; ACTA UNIVERSITATIS UPSSALIENSIS- Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations, 20, Uppsala, 59-69, 1989.
- Von Lieven, A.: *Grundriss des Laufes der Sterne. Das Sogenannte Nutbuch.* CNI 31, Museum Tusculanum Press and the Carlsberg Papyri, 2007.
- WESTENDORF, W.: *Bemerkungen “Kammer der Wiedergeburt im Tutanchamungrab,* ZÄS 94, Leipzig, Berlin, 139-150, 1967.
- WILSON, J.: *The Memphite Theology of Creation.* Pritchard, J.B.: *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Text and Pictures,* Princeton University Press. Princeton, 1958.
- WILSON, J.: *La Cultura Egípcia,* Breviarios, México, 1995.
- WILSON, J.: *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man. An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East. Chapter 1 “Egypt”.* Chicago. The University of Chicago Press, 1946.
- YOYOTTE, J.: *La Naissance du Monde. Sources Orientales I.* Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 51-62, 1959. Zivie-Coché, Ch.: *L’Ogdoade, élaboration et évolution d’une cosmogonie (suite): Thèbes, à l’époque ptolémaïque,* (Annuaire EPHE, Section des sciences religieuses, t. 116 Paris. 2007-2008), 5-107, 2009. Zivie-Coche, Ch.: *L’Ogdoade à Thèbes à l’époque ptolémaïque et ses antécédents,* in Documents de théologies thébaine tardives (*D3T 1*), (ed. Christophe Thiers. Université Paul Valéry - Montpellier III), 167-225, 2009.