

**PATTERNS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN  
CHILD DEITIES**

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Sung Hwan Yoo was born on February 28th, 1970 in Busan, Republic of Korea (South Korea). He received his undergraduate degree in 1995 at Busan National University, majoring in English Literature and Language. He received Master of Translation and Consecutive Interpretation from Hankook University of Foreign Studies in 1999. After graduation, he worked as a professional translator for six years until he was admitted to Brown University in 2005. As a graduate student at Brown University, he taught the undergraduate Middle Egyptian course for the academic year of 2008-2009.

He has received awards, including the Army Commendation Medal in 1993 after serving in the Eighth United States Army for his meritorious service as a KATUSA (Korean Augmentation Troops to the United States Army); and the Certificate of Merit (First Prize) awarded by the Minister of Education at the National English Competence Contest for College Students hosted by Hankook University of Foreign Studies in 1994.

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# **PART I**

## **INTRODUCTION**



# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

## THE BEGINNING

Once I stepped into the field of Egyptology, I instantly became interested in minor deities in the Egyptian pantheon. By definition, they include (1) lesser deities not as important as the creator-gods and state gods, (2) those who are almost forgotten or less known to us than others, and (3) those who were never worshipped in state-run temples but enjoyed a wide popularity among their followers. In my research on those gods, demigods and even deified mortals, I have discovered that some deities are visualized in the form of a child as the child-member of a divine family. Before long I realized that there had been no attempt to examine them in detail, so I decided to write a dissertation on these “child deities.” For this project, I raised three basic questions:

- (1) Who are the child deities in ancient Egyptian religious thought?
- (2) What are their roles in the Egyptian pantheon and theology?
- (3) Are there prototypes that can serve as a model for the child deities?

Therefore, this dissertation constitutes an effort to answer these questions and analyze developmental patterns, if any, of the deities who belong to the specific category of “child deities.”

### 1.1 Identity and roles

As Hornung points out, Egyptian gods are not unbegotten and have a beginning and an end in time (1982: 143). Though one of the most salient features of Egyptian creator gods is that they are

all “self-developing” deities, not created or born by others, most of the divine beings in the Egyptian pantheon are in origin a child of other gods. However, it is necessary to narrow down the definition of the “child deities” to be studied in this dissertation, because most of them are only mentioned as a child of a certain creator-god or parent deities without exhibiting certain attributes of a child god or playing any important role as such. For instance, Shu is mentioned in many funerary texts as the son of Atum; but he is never described or visualized as a child god and does not play any role as one in the Egyptian pantheon. Therefore, the first step in the study of the “child deities” should be to lay down definitions of the “child deities” who form a unique class in the Egyptian pantheon.

The definitive features of the “child deities” to be studied in this dissertation are listed below:

- They are always male and usually represented in juvenile or youthful human form, and therefore appear as an infant, a toddler, a child or an adolescent. In most cases, when they are described in a text or visualized in an artistic representation as a child, their iconography conforms to the fixed Egyptian convention of representing them – a nude child, sitting or standing with his index finger held to his mouth and wearing the side-lock of youth on the right side of his head.<sup>1</sup>
- They are child-members of the familial triads consisting of a father, mother and son. The divine familial triads began to be formed around major cultic centers dating to the New Kingdom period. In those familial triads, deities such as Ihy, Khonsu and Nefertem became the child-members because they shared some traits that could qualify them as child-member in the divine family (see 7.7 below).

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<sup>1</sup> It is also important to note that the child deities, like the child king, are shown with the essential symbols signifying their royalty and divinity, such as the uraeus, the crowns, or other royal attributes.

- As a child-member of the divine triad, they symbolize the cyclical rejuvenation of the universe and the legitimate succession of the king. In the Late Period, many of them were worshipped in cultic sites of important mother goddesses, such as Isis and Hathor, as their sons. While they remained in the form of a child, they were regarded to retain the full power of a deity. Therefore, they received prayers and were called upon for help by their worshippers.

## **1.2 What are their role models?**

In the study of the roles played by the “child deities,” it is important to check if there is a role model for them. Throughout ancient Egyptian history, Horus in the child form, or the Horus child, remained the most prominent role model for other child deities. In addition, we have the young sun-god, who was usually visualized as a child standing on the lotus blossom above the primeval water. As we will observe in CHAPTER TWO, the youthful sun-god, or the sun-child, provides the basis for the concept of the “child deities,” namely the ancient Egyptian notion of the sun’s life-cycle.

Therefore, there emerge two prototypes that will serve as a basis for unique features of the “child deities”:

- (1) the young sun-god, shown as a shining solar child who is considered to be the culmination of the ancient Egyptian cosmogonies; and
- (2) the Horus child as a faithful son of Isis and the legitimate heir of his father Osiris.

The regular rebirth of the sun-child in the eternal cycle symbolizes the renewal of the cosmos and may have led to the concepts of the yearly renewal of Egypt’s fertility and the resurrection of the

dead. Meanwhile, the Horus child is destined to succeed Osiris who became the king of the dead after he was murdered by his brother Seth, and to restore the divine order on earth as the legitimate heir and avenger of his father. Later he was solarized, and this solarized form of the Horus child became closely associated with the idea of (re)birth of the sun (and the moon). The Horus child, who is first attested in the Twenty-first Dynasty and is now commonly referred to by the Greek version of his name, Harpocrates (*Ἡρως Παιδίος* "Horus the Child"), came to embody these two prototypes and eventually became the child deity *par excellence* or the most important of all child deities (Meeks 1977b: 1004).

As the ultimate role model for other child deities, the Horus child was syncretized and identified with many of them – especially Ihy, Khonsu, and Nefertem. As the personification of the young sun, these child deities also served as a deity of fertility, as a healer of the living, and as a protector of the dead. In addition, as the (re)productive outcome of a union of divine parents, the child deities became closely linked to the concept of the divine conception and birth of the king throughout ancient Egyptian history. During the Late Period and the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, the periodical renewal of divine and political life was believed to be realized and perpetuated by the birth of the king as a child deity of the mother goddess in every *mammisi* of major temples built at the time (Assmann 2001: 116-119).

### **1.3 Patterns of the child deities**

With the identity, prototypes and roles of the child deities having been established, further questions can be raised as follows:

- (1) Are the two prototypes of the child deities applicable to all major child deities?
- (2) Is it possible to derive the patterns of the child deities not conforming to those models?

It is obvious that major “child deities” show the attributes of the solar child and the Horus child as they are associated, identified and syncretized with those two prototypical child deities over the course of time. When we take a closer look at divine triads, however, we can observe that the triads of the other child deities are different particularly from that of the Horus child. The triad of Osiris, Isis and Horus represents a divine family with a strong bond between husband and wife and shows traditional relationships found in a human family such as the birth and rearing of a child and the succession from father to son. However, the triads of other child deities appear to be more artificially constructed to weld together the creator/sun-god, the intermediary mother goddess and the archetypical child deities who can be considered as a counterpart or an opposite image of their fathers.

Therefore, the focus of CHAPTERS FOUR, FIVE and SIX of this dissertation will be on the difference (as well as similarity) between the Horus child and the other “child deities” in terms of their roles and characteristics within the framework of their respective divine triads.

## **CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH**

Almost every prominent deity in the ancient Egyptian pantheon has been the subject of a modern scholarly monograph. However, many child deities, like many other minor gods, do not seem to have received that honor. Showing their dependence as a child, even major child deities are, in most cases, mentioned rather briefly in the chapters about their parent gods. Regarding the major child deities such as the Horus child, Ihy, Khonsu and Nefertem, we can find a handful of articles, mostly about the Horus child and Khonsu during the New Kingdom and thereafter. As such,

there has been no comprehensive work dedicated to them in Egyptology and no monograph has been written about the child deities and their patterns in the Egyptian pantheon.<sup>2</sup>

#### **1.4 Research on child deities in general**

First, let us take a look at short articles and encyclopedia entries about ancient Egyptian child deities in general. A general overview of child deities is found in Brunner's article in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (1977c: 648-651). R. Wilkinson's *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt* devotes a brief section to the child deities, under the subtitle of "Male Child Deities," which includes entries on Horus the Child, Ihy, Neferhotep, Nefertem and Shed (2003: 132-135). As regards the three-dimensional representations of the child deities, Hall published an article entitled, "Harpocrates and Other Child Deities in Ancient Egyptian Sculpture" in the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* (1977: 55-58), which offers only passing comments about the major child deities and focuses mostly on statuettes of Harpocrates in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period.

Prominent works about ancient Egyptian religion also contain chapters or sections on the concept of child deities. In most cases, however, they deal with the birth of gods as a part of the Egyptian cosmogony and the Horus child as a part of the Osirian cycle (Morenz 1973: 24-26, 159-182; Hornung 1982: 143-165; L. Lesko 1991: 90-115; Assmann 2001: 116-147). Among the general reviews of child deities, two stand out: (1) *Kingship and the Gods* (1978) by Frankfort and (2) *Daily Life of the Egyptian Gods* (1996) co-authored by Meeks and Favard-Meeks. In his insightful

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<sup>2</sup> There is one compilation of studies on ancient Egyptian child deities during the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. Published in 2003, *Kindgötter im Ägypten der griechisch-römischen Zeit: Zeugnisse aus Stadt und Tempel als Spiegel des interkulturellen Kontakts* (by Budde, Sandri and Verhoeven) contains chapters on various aspects and roles of major child deities such as Harpocrates and Khonsu during that period. In this regard, it should be noted that my dissertation investigates the development of the concept and roles of child deities before the Third Intermediate Period with a focus on incipient stages in the development of early child deities.

chapters, Frankfort suggested two aspects of the kingship – one is the king as the son of Re, or the successor of the sun-god, and the other is the king as the son of Osiris, or the Horus incarnate (1978: 143-212). He points out that the ancient Egyptians conceived of kingship as an institution involving two generations and this observation gives us a basis for the notion of Egyptian child deities used to legitimize the king's divine descent.<sup>3</sup> *Daily Life of the Egyptian Gods* has been criticized for “choosing to treat the Egyptian pantheon as if they were a ‘community that has caught the interest of anthropologists’” (Pinch 2002: 219), but it nevertheless provides many interesting insights into the sexuality of the gods, bodily secretion and the birth of gods (1996: 66-80).

There are two comprehensive works regarding children in Egyptian society. One is Janssen & Janssen's *Growing up in Ancient Egypt* (1990), which covers various stages of the lives of Egyptian children from birth to education, transition to adulthood, and society's perceptions of the younger generation. The other is Feucht's *Das Kind im Alten Ägypten* (1995), which also examine various aspects of childhood on the basis of texts and artistic representations.<sup>4</sup> Regarding Assmann's statement (2001: 112, 2008: 20) that the mythology or “narrative theology” of the Egyptians was anthropomorphic (not anthropocentric), it can be said that the two works shed light on aspects of ancient Egyptian child deities. However, it is important to keep in mind that they do not deal directly with the divine counterparts of ancient Egyptian children.

### **1.5 Research on the prototypical child deities**

As mentioned above, there has been no comprehensive overview of the common and distinct nature of the major child deities, and critical information about them is scattered all over the

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<sup>3</sup> For a general idea of mythology being used to legitimize the living king, see Assmann 2001: 111-147.

<sup>4</sup> For a critical review of her book, see Roth 1998: 118-121.

scholarly treatments of their parent deities – in most cases, their mother goddesses. It is especially so in the case of the sun-god in the child form. The aspect of the sun-god as a child can be gleaned from a number of scholarly sources – sometimes from monographs on mother-goddesses such as Billing's *Nut: The Goddess of Life in Text and Iconography* (2002).

When it comes to the Horus child, most of the articles and entries on Horus cover his role as a child god. As a versatile deity, Horus has a number of aspects, and each aspect is dealt with in separate entries with titles such as "Horus," "Harpocrates," and "Harsiese," to name only a few.<sup>5</sup> The birth and childhood of Horus is explained briefly in Münster's *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis* (1968: 5-12), and a detailed analysis of Isis's pregnancy and childbirth is presented by O'Connell in an article titled, "The Emergence of Horus: An Analysis of Coffin Text Spell 148" (1983: 66-87) in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. There are a number of articles regarding Horus of Edfu and a religious narrative of Horus preserved in the form of a sacred drama in the Temple of Edfu, which deals with the victory of Horus over Seth and his followers (Fairman 1935: 26-36; Blackman and Fairman 1942: 32-38, 1943: 2-36, 1944: 5-22; Gardiner 1944: 23-60; Griffiths 1958: 75-85).<sup>6</sup> The function of Horus as the king's person is elaborated by Frankfort in his *Kingship and the Gods* (1978: 36-47). Finally, the visual representation of Horus as a child is discussed in Seele's "Horus on the Crocodiles" (1947: 43-52) in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* and Cooney's "Harpocrates, the Dutiful Son" (1972: 284-290) in the *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*.

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<sup>5</sup> For general studies on Horus, see Bonnet 1952: 307-314; Barta 1973b: 154-185; Schenkel 1980: 14-25; Hart 1986: 87-96; Meltzer 2001: 119-122; Pinch 2002: 143-146. For Harendotes, see Meeks 1997a: 964-966. For Haroeris, see Bonnet 1952: 270-272; Kurth 1977: 999-1003. For Harpocrates, see Bonnet 1952: 273-275; Cooney 1972: 284-290; Meeks 1997b: 1003-1011; Pinch 2002: 146-147. For Harsiese, see Bonnet 1952: 275-276; Björkman 1977: 1018-1020.

<sup>6</sup> Watterson's *The House of Horus at Edfu* (1998) provides a short but comprehensive overview of Horus of Edfu.



The most comprehensive studies regarding Harpocrates, the ultimate form of the Horus child, have been undertaken by Sadri and Meeks. Sandri's *Har-pa-chered (Harpocrates): Die Genese eines ägyptischen Götterkindes* (2006) covers every aspect of this child deity *par excellence* from name and iconography to cultic centers and functions. Meeks also posted an exhaustive iconographic analysis of Harpocrates on the website of the Iconography of Deities and Demons (2009: <http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd>). There is another study focusing on Horus as the son of Isis or Harsiese. Forgeau's *Horus-fils-d'Isis: La jeunesse d'un dieu* (2010) examines the origin and development of Harsiese as well as the nature of the relationship between Isis and Horus.

### **1.6 Research on divine triads**

In researching child deities, it is important to look into past work on the concept and development of the numerical groupings of deities and especially those of the triads, because the major child deities are the child-member of the divine triad. Such studies have been done as part of efforts to classify the Egyptian pantheon or address the question of divine unity and plurality.

Adopting the numeral-genealogical classification proposed by Otto (1963: 264-272, esp. 267-269 for the concept of the triad), Hornung puts more emphasis on the significance of the number three, which was the preferred ancient Egyptian way of expressing plurality (1982: 217-223).<sup>7</sup> For this dissertation, however, te Velde's approach based on genealogical classification proves to be more useful (1971: 80-86). Though remaining cautious, he distinguishes "pluralistic triads (triad)" from "monistic triads (trinity)" and maintains that mixed male-female triads form pluralistic triads, which leads to the birth of the divine child and thus constitutes the divine family. His article also offers an interesting interpretation of the relationship between the divine triad/family

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<sup>7</sup> For a detailed explanation of the numerical groupings, see Kees 1956: 161-171; R. Wilkinson 2003: 74-79.

and the ancient Egyptian familial structure and introduces various types of pluralistic triads (1971: 83, 84-86). The concept of the trinity and influences on the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is examined in Griffiths' article "Triune Conceptions of Deity in Ancient Egypt" (1973: 28-32) in *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, and in his book, *Triads and Trinity* (1996), which is based on a thorough analysis of original sources from Egypt (1996: 11-113), Mesopotamia and Indo-European traditions.

Finally, in the chapters devoted to child deities below, brief histories of scholarly work on each child deity will be presented.

## **SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY**

### **1.7 Sources and methodology**

Given the practical constraints on a dissertation, the primary focus will be on child deities from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom. The sources will be in most cases important religious texts. The Pyramid Texts contain only a few comments about child deities (or the child attributes of deities). However, the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead provide more and more specific information about child deities – i.e. their roles, familial relationships and mutual identifications. In addition to religious texts, major literary works, hymns to gods, historical records and medical treatises will be examined and cited in order to cover various topics related to child deities, such as childbirth, education and family structure.

Besides the textual materials of the dynastic period, I will consult important sources of the late periods – mostly temple inscriptions and some magical texts of the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. The

texts from this period constitute major sources of epithets, descriptions, cultic practices and narratives involving child deities (Finnestad 1997: 185-237). Classical works, such as Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*, will also provide precious information missing in earlier sources. Of course, factors such as foreign influence and cultural changes should be taken into account when differences are encountered between the earlier and later sources. Sources of the later periods will be used only to supplement observations that I make based on the sources of the dynastic periods. Like textual sources of the later periods, visual representations such as reliefs and sculptures that depict the principal child deities will be examined in order to support observations based on textual evidence.

Finally, in addition to a diachronic approach and examining important traits of child deities in each historical stage, this dissertation will also focus on identifying and tackling topics relevant to the child deities. One may wonder if a purely topical approach can take into account diachronic nuances in the data. In this regard, I believe that it is imperative to take note of chronological developments of important theological concepts when they are introduced. Important topics that will be dealt with in each chapter of the dissertation are presented in detail in the following section.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

### **1.8 Part I: Introduction**

The first part of this dissertation (see above) has been about the background of the research on child deities. It deals with basic elements such as the definition of child deities to be studied in

the dissertation, their role models or prototypes, the current state of research, and the structure of the dissertation.

### **1.9 Part II: Basic Patterns of Ancient Egyptian Child Deities**

Before embarking on a full-scale investigation of child deities in the ancient Egyptian pantheon, it is important to take a close look at the basic patterns of child deities who serve as the “prototype” of ancient Egyptian child deities. The two prototypical child deities are the sun-child and the Horus child.

The sun-child is considered to be the culmination of the ancient Egyptian cosmogony because the sun symbolizes the concept of *nḥḥ* or “Eternal Recurrence” and completes its perpetual cycle by uniting with the mother goddess who represents the concept of *dt* or “Eternal Sameness.” Based on the daily cycle of the sun, the sun-child naturally represents a cyclical and reversible rejuvenation and regeneration.

On the contrary, the Horus child embodies a generational transmission and succession. As the legitimate heir of his father and the deceased divine king Osiris, he is the quintessential successor of a future generation and the fruition of perpetual creation. Moreover, his dramatic childhood marked by events such as nursing, protection and conflict emphasizes generational transmission. The important characteristics and basic patterns of the two prototypical child deities will be examined in detail in CHAPTER TWO and CHAPTER THREE, respectively.

### 1.10 PART III: Case Studies of Three Child Deities

In PART III, a case study on each of three child deities – namely, Ihy, Khonsu and Nefertem, will be presented in CHAPTERS FOUR, FIVE and SIX. Besides these child deities, there are many deities who also appear as a child, such as Heka, Neper, Shed and Somtus. However, I selected the aforementioned three child deities in this dissertation for the following reasons:

First, according to the definition of the child deities to be studied in this dissertation, (1) ancient Egyptian child deities are the child members of familial triads consisting of a father, mother and son; (2) they are usually represented in juvenile or youthful human form; and (3) they symbolize the cyclical rejuvenation of the universe and the legitimate succession of the king (see 1.1 above).

Second, it seems that the three child deities in question share a few common traits already in the Middle Kingdom, as indicated by the fact that they appear side by side in Coffin Texts Spell 563 (see T1-1 below). The exact function of the child deities mentioned in the spell remains obscure but it is apparent that they are considered to be very closely related to one another. In this regard, Allam writes that these three deities can replace each other as the son-god of their parent deities (1963: 135): *“Diesen drei Göttern ist gemeinsam, daß jeder von ihnen andern Gottheiten als deren Sohn beigesellt.”*

#### T1-1. Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162n-v)<sup>8</sup>

<sup>162-n</sup> *jnk wr nj rḥ rn.f*

<sup>162-o</sup> *b3.j pw b3w* <sup>162-p</sup> *šwwt.j pw ḥnmw*

<sup>162-q</sup> *jnk nb m3ʿt mr.f nfrt*

<sup>162-r</sup> *nj šḥdd.j m-m šḥdw*

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<sup>8</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1977: 169.

<sup>162-s</sup> *jrr.j šmwt hr rdwj.j mj nfr-tm*

<sup>162-t</sup> *snn.j t3w m fnd.j mj hns[w] hq3 df3w*

<sup>162-u</sup> *m33.j w3t m jrt.j*<sup>9</sup> <sup>162-v</sup> *mj jhy z3 hwt-hrw mry.s*

<sup>162-n</sup> I am a great one whose name is unknown.

<sup>162-o</sup> The rams are my *ba*; Khnum is my shades

<sup>162-q</sup> I am a lord of *ma'at* who loves what is good.

<sup>162-r</sup> I will not be turned upside down among those who are turned upside down.

<sup>162-s</sup> I make marches on my feet like Nefertem.

<sup>162-t</sup> I sniff air with my nose like Khonsu, the lord of sustenance.

<sup>162-u</sup> I see the path with my (two) eyes <sup>162-v</sup> like Ihy, son of Hathor, whom she loves.

Finally, their common traits, as well as different phases of their development into a child deity, will be discussed in detail in CHAPTER SEVEN. In addition, attempts will be made to answer the important questions raised at the beginning of this CHAPTER (see 1.3 above).

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. the reading *m m3w jrt.j*, see Faulkner 1977: 169, note 2.

## **PART II**

# **BASIC PATTERNS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CHILD DEITIES**

## CHAPTER 2. THE SUN-CHILD

### 2.1 Introduction

For ancient Egyptians, the rising sun was the symbol of the creation of the world and the course of the sun the symbol of the cyclical renewal of the cosmos. Therefore, the sun-god always held paramount importance as the creator god and the lord of the created world throughout ancient Egyptian history. In the study of the patterns of child deities, particularly noteworthy is the fact that the life cycle of the sun provides the basis for the concept of child deities. Among a number of manifestations that he can assume, the sun god sometimes appears as a youthful child who symbolizes eternal rejuvenation and resurrection. In this aspect, the sun-god is visualized as a child god who emerges from the universal mother goddess who embodies the primeval waters at the time of creation or from the sky-mother who forms part of the eternal cycle of renewal after the creation.

Given that the sun-child pattern is based on the eternal cycle of the sun's course, the first step to understand the essence of the sun-child and his prototypical pattern should be a close examination of the two ancient Egyptian concepts of eternity – that is *dt* “Eternal Sameness” and *nḥḥ* “Eternal Recurrence.” As we will see later, the two concepts are very useful in understanding the two prototypical child deities: (1) the new-born solar child (the embodiment of the *nḥḥ*-element) born out of the primeval ocean or the sky-goddess Nut (the *dt*-element); and (2) the Horus child (as well as other major child deities) who also embodies the *nḥḥ*-element in the rejuvenated form of his father.



## 2.2 Two ancient Egyptian concepts of eternity

In his explanation of the development of ancient Egyptian trinity (*"Dreieinigkeit"*), Westendorf mentions two polar elements that periodically become one in the "eternal, cyclical life-force sphere" (1974: 137). The two elements are *dt* "Eternal Sameness" and *nḥḥ* "Eternal Recurrence."<sup>10</sup>

The two elements are mentioned in Coffin Texts Spells 78-80 (CT II 19a-43h), which explain how the natural order of existence derived from the first act of creation – that is, *zp tpy* the "First Occasion."<sup>11</sup> As a real beginning, the First Occasion should be reenacted by repetitions of rituals to maintain the functioning of the created world. In this regard, time is a paradigm to denote periodicity for the Egyptians (Morenz 1973: 166).<sup>12</sup> The repetition of the First Occasion is most manifest with the rise of the sun (as the most powerful force in nature) every morning from the primeval waters of Nun. The reenactment of the creation takes place on the historical level as well as on the cosmic level. Each new pharaoh (as the most powerful force in human society) replaces the dead king as the possessor of the royal *ka* and the maintainer of kingship (J. Allen 2000: 144).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> For the concept of *dt* "Eternal Sameness" and *nḥḥ* "Eternal Recurrence," see Assmann 1975: 41-48, 2001: 73-80, 2002: 18-19; Wente 1982: 17-26; J. Allen 1988: 21-27, 2000: 104-106; Hornung 1990: 93-96. The use of the pair to express the concept of "time" in its totality stems from the "typically Egyptian manner" that reflects a penchant of the ancient Egyptians to express the totality with a union of pairs that sometimes contrast or conflict with each other and by so doing encompass all elements in between the two opposites (Assmann 2001: 74). Also note Wilkinson (1999: 129): "*The phenomenon of duality pervades Egyptian culture and is at the heart of the Egyptian concept of the universe itself.*"

<sup>11</sup> For a translation and comments on the texts, see J. Allen 1988: 21-27 and NOTE 14 below.

<sup>12</sup> Also note Bochi (1994: 55): "*It is probable that the nature of time may have been perceived at first by ancient Egyptians through the observation of the cyclical rhythm of nature such as alternation of day and night, the clockwork succession of seasons and the Nile's annual inundation. These early observations contributed to formulating the concept of time.*"

<sup>13</sup> Regarding the royal *ka*, note Bell (1995: 5): "*With the Creator essentially being the ka of the king, the royal ka was the immortal male creative spirit of divine kingship, symbolizing the legitimacy of the king's inheritance from his Heavenly Father.*" Also note that at any time of crisis, the king, as an incarnation of the Creator God, was required to reestablish *ma'at* as it had been on the First Occasion. Indeed, the dating starts all over again at the beginning of each reign (Dunand & Zivie-Coche 2004: 66).

In his reference to the pair *dt* “Eternal Sameness” and *nḥḥ* “Eternal Recurrence,” Assmann mentions more fundamental principles of the ancient Egyptian world view. One is “stasis” or the notion of creation as perfect and complete, which can be expressed with the Egyptian verb *wnn* “exist,” whereas the other is “change” or the notion of life as dynamic and recurrent, which can be expressed with the Egyptian verb *ḥpr* “develop.” The whole idea is summarized in the table below (Assmann 1975: 44-45, n. 156).

<b>Stasis (<i>wnn</i>):</b>	<b>Change (<i>ḥpr</i>):</b>
Tefnut ( <i>tfnt</i> ) <sup>14</sup>	Shu ( <i>šw</i> )
Order ( <i>m3ʿt</i> )	Life ( <i>ʿnh</i> )
Eternal Sameness ( <i>dt</i> )	Eternal Recurrence ( <i>nḥḥ</i> )

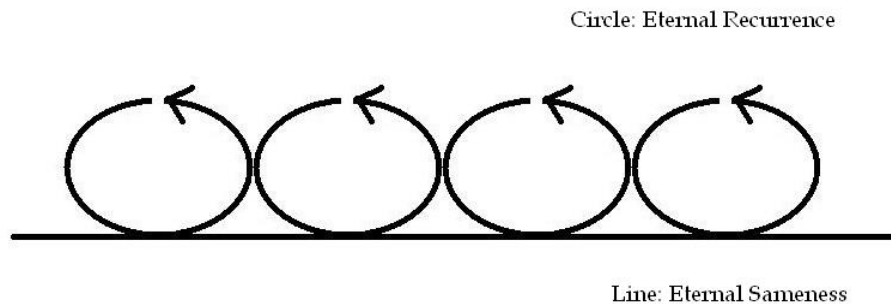
As such, *dt* “Eternal Sameness” does not correspond exactly to the linear or diachronic concept of time composed of time-points such as present, past and future on an infinite line. Rather, it refers to the concept of stability or time at a standstill. To quote Assmann, *dt* “Eternal Sameness” is “a sacred dimension of everness, where that which has become – which has ripened to its final form and is to that extent perfect – is preserved in immutable permanence.”<sup>15</sup> In sum, *dt* “Eternal

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<sup>14</sup> The birth of Shu and Tefnut is the first act of creation and set the cycle of existence in motion. Therefore, Tefnut and Shu are identified with *dt* “Eternal Sameness” and *nḥḥ* “Eternal Recurrence,” respectively. See Coffin Texts Spell 80 (CT II 32b-e): *z3t.j pw ʿnhḥ tfnt, wnn.s ḥnʿ sn.s šw, ʿnh rn.f, m3ʿt rn.s* “My living daughter is Tefnut. She will exist with her brother Shu. Life is his identity, Order is her identity.” Also note a similar phrase in Coffin Texts Spell 78 (CT II 22a-23c): *jnk nḥḥ jt(j) n ḥḥ, snt.j pw tfnwt z3t tm mst psdt ... jnk ms ḥḥw whmw n tm, dt pw, snt.j pw tfnwt* “I [Shu] am Eternal Recurrence, father of an infinite number. My sister is Tefnut, daughter of Atum, who bore the Ennead. ... I am the one who bore repeated millions for Atum: that is Eternal Sameness; that is my sister Tefnut.”

<sup>15</sup> This concept is directly connected with the Egyptian concept of eternity (“a stretch of time that does not have beginning or end”) as a way of surviving death, almost completely free from the passage of time and everything to which the Egyptians attached negative values such as illness, injury and aging. While hoping for survival after death, the Egyptians had no notion of going through the cycle of life all over again. Instead, they wished to continue their lives after death “in the full vigor and enjoyment of earthly life” (Kadish 2001: 408).

Sameness" is time at a standstill and only in *nḥḥ* "Eternal Recurrence" does time move (Assmann 2002: 18-19). Therefore, it can be said that the Egyptian world is an "unchanging pattern of elements, forces, and relationships (Eternal Sameness) that is continually changing in its realization (Eternal Recurrence)" (J. Allen 1988: 57). The concept underlying *nḥḥ* "Eternal Sameness" refers to the pattern of existence that was set at the time of creation and will remain the same until the end of the world.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, the concept of cyclical time is embodied in *nḥḥ* "Eternal Recurrence," which refers to repeating and ever-changing forces in the framework of the fixed principle of existence (Fig. 2-1).



**Fig. 2-1: Eternal Recurrence and Eternal Sameness**

In the ancient Egyptian view of the created world, the two elements do not stand apart; rather, the element of *nḥḥ* "Eternal Recurrence" develops out of *dt* "Eternal Sameness," as if being born from the mother's womb, and goes back to it for rejuvenation and rebirth. In other words, the cyclical movement of the *nḥḥ* "Eternal Recurrence" is realized on the background of *dt* "Eternal

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<sup>16</sup> This concept of time is expressed in attempts by the ancient Egyptians to eternalize a final results or attainments; and their striving for "imperishability and immutable continuance" is manifested in the core elements of Egyptian culture such as writing (hieroglyphs), funerary architecture (pyramids) and mummification (Assmann 2001: 77). This attitude also explains Egyptian artists' consistent efforts to eliminate the effects of time in their works throughout the pharaonic era except for the Amarna period.

Sameness.”<sup>17</sup> The relationship between the two elements can be summarized in the table below (Westendorf 1974: 137):<sup>18</sup>

<i>dt</i> -Eternity	<i>nḥḥ</i> -Eternity
Female (mother/consort)	Male (father/spouse/son)
Space (static)	Course of time (dynamic)
Night/darkness	Day/sunlight
Next world/out-worldly	This world/mundane
Duration	Recurrence
Osiris/royal mummy	Re/Horus/living king
<i>ḥꜣt</i> -corpse	<i>bꜣ</i> -spirit

At this point, it can be said that the pattern of the *nḥḥ*-element completes its cycle of rebirth/rejuvenation through the *dt*-element. The most prominent example showing the cyclical development of the *nḥḥ*-element (regenerative power) against the background of the *dt*-element (the matrix) would be the daily cycle of the sun-god who goes into the womb of the mother/sky goddess Nut (or the primeval ocean Mehet-Weret) or the unchanging matrix of the *dt*-element in the evening and reemerges as a rejuvenated child in the morning.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Also note Westendorf (1974: 137): “*Etymologisch ist nḥḥ als ‘der Kreislauf (bzw. der Kreisläufer)’ aufzufassen, dt als ‘der (Mutter-)Leib’.*”

<sup>18</sup> Also note Assman’s interesting comment regarding Westendorf’s “*Zuordnungen*” (1975: 44-45, notes 156 and 156a): “*Er [Westendorf] hat sie zu einer stattlichen Reihe paarweiser Oppositionen ergänzt, wobei allerdings nḥḥ und dt als zwei allumfassende komplementäre Prinzipien in der Art von Yin und Yang erscheinen, die letztendlich auf den Gegensatz von männlich und weiblich zurückgeführt werden.*”

<sup>19</sup> For Nut as the descendent of the Great Mother Goddess in ancient Egyptian mythology, see B. Lesko 1999: 23-24, 36-38.

As shown in the daily solar cycle, the conception in the evening and the (re)birth in the morning not only explains the disappearance and reappearance of celestial bodies including the sun, but also indicates that the creation of life takes place, oscillating between the two poles of *jwr* “conception” and *mswt* “birth,” as aptly summarized in Papyrus Berlin 3048 (Assmann 1969: 118-122; Troy 1986: 26-27; Billing 2002: 33-37, note 54):

**T2-1. Hymn to the Rising Sun (p.Berlin 3048, IX 4a-15a)<sup>20</sup>**

<sup>4a</sup> *hy mss r<sup>c</sup> nb* <sup>5a</sup> *mj jr.f tn, jr.n n.f hnw* <sup>6a</sup> *dj.n j3w n tjt.f šps* <sup>7a</sup> *m rnw.f nbw nfrw*  
<sup>8a</sup> *nḥḥ jmj drw nḥḥ* <sup>9a</sup> *mj jr.f tn, jr.n n.f hnw* <sup>10a</sup> *dj.n j3w n tjt.f šps* <sup>11a</sup> *m rnw.f nbw nfrw*  
<sup>12a</sup> *j3wj zbb dt* <sup>13a</sup> *mj jr.f tn, jr.n n.f hnw* <sup>14a</sup> *dj.n j3w n tjt.f šps* <sup>15a</sup> *m rnw.f nbw nfr*

<sup>4a</sup> Child who is born every day! <sup>5a</sup> Come so that we make jubilation for him  
<sup>6a</sup> and give praise to his august image <sup>7a</sup> in all his perfect names.  
<sup>8a</sup> Adult who is in the limit of the Eternal Recurrence!  
<sup>9a</sup> Come so that we make jubilation for him  
<sup>10a</sup> and give praise to his august image <sup>11a</sup> in all his perfect names.  
<sup>12a</sup> Elder who travels the Eternal Sameness! <sup>13a</sup> Come so that we make jubilation for him  
<sup>14a</sup> and give praise to his august image <sup>15a</sup> in all his perfect names.

In other words, the motif of the rebirth/rejuvenation of the sun-god as a child through the two poles of creation symbolizes the eternal (self-)generation of the cosmos, the gods and the royal dynasties. The cycle of the sun’s eternal generation can be represented as a diagram shown in Fig. 2-2 below.<sup>21</sup>

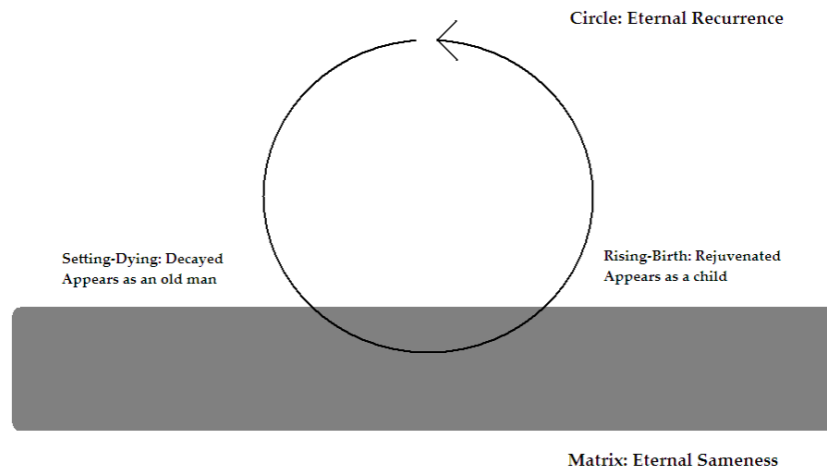
It is also noticeable that the sun-god, the most prominent player in the *nḥḥ*-element, shows two aspects in this cycle.<sup>22</sup> He first appears as a child/son in the morning but becomes a father/spouse

<sup>20</sup> For the text, see Wolf 1929: 34-35. For a translation, see Wolf 1929: 36-37.

<sup>21</sup> For the various modes of the sun-god’s regeneration in the later sources, see Zandee 1992b: 181-185.

<sup>22</sup> For the sun-god especially as lord of the *nḥḥ*-element, see the solar hymn of Montuemhat (Daressy 1922: 167-168): [*nb*] *nḥḥ ntt nḥḥ m drt.f dt m ḥf<sup>c</sup>.f, smn ḥnb*, [...] *3w m r(m)ḥ hr ntrw, wd{.tw}.f ḥnb jr.f sdd smsw ntrw* (the

in the evening, when he goes back to the body/womb of his mother-consort goddess to rejuvenate himself. As he becomes the cause of his own development, the sun-god becomes *kamutef*, literally “bull of his mother” (see EXCURSUS 2-1).



**Fig. 2-2: Pattern of the maternal birth/rejuvenation of the sun-child**

However, the double aspect of the *nhh*-element – that is, the son becoming the father in the course of time – can be represented not only in the form of *causa sui/kamutef* but also in the form of a son who embodies the rejuvenated form (“*Wiedererscheinungsform*”) of his father, which is rendered possible only through the unchanging power of the *dt*-element (Westendorf 1974: 138).

Procreation thus requires three elements, resulting in a triad comprised of father, mother and son. Regarding the son as a rejuvenated form of his father, the Horus child, Ihy and Nefertem can be regarded as the sun/morning-child and Khonsu as the moon-child.

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sun-god), “the [Lord] of Eternal Recurrence, in whose hand Eternal Recurrence is and in whose fist Eternal Sameness is. [...] length among people and with gods. The one who commands life, the one who rejuvenates the elders among the gods.” In a text found in the tomb of Tjanefer, the *nhh*-element itself is depicted as a personified actor who rejuvenates itself (Assmann 1975: 37-39): *jw nhh rnpjw jnn h'pj m tphf.r s'nh rmtw ntrw, dw3 [...] r ms rnpwt, nhh nhh* “Eternal Recurrence rejuvenated, who brings the Inundation from his cave in order to nourish (cause to live) people and gods; morning [...] in order to give birth to years eternally (Eternal Recurrence), eternally (Eternal Recurrence).”

### 2.3 The Sun-child pattern

In ancient Egyptian mythology, the creation of the void that led to a distinction between top (sky) and bottom (earth) is not an end of the creative process but a backdrop for the prime act of creation – the first sunrise (J. Allen 1988: 25, 2000: 144). As a creator god, the sun-god may appear as a self-creating god at the time of creation.<sup>23</sup> Many images were adopted to describe the first sunrise, including (1) a fiery bird or the one emerging from a cosmic egg laid by a primeval bird, a snake or a crocodile, (2) a blue lotus rising above the surface of the dark primeval ocean Nun, and (3) a naked child or a ram-headed figure sitting on the lotus especially from the New Kingdom on (Pinch 2002: 59-61). From the perspective of the *nḥ*-element completing its cyclical movement on the background of the *dt*-element, however, the first sunrise can be expressed in the image of childbirth. As mentioned above, the youthful sun-god appears from the primeval water at the time of creation (e.g., CT IV 184/5b-191c), but he is also regarded as a son of the sky-goddess Nut in the eternal cycle after the creation as mentioned in Pyramid Text Spell 650:<sup>24</sup>

#### T2-2. Pyramid Texts Spell 650 (Pyr. § 1835a-c)<sup>25</sup>

<sup>1835-a</sup> *ms sw mjwt.f pt ḥnh.(w) rḥ nb mr rḥ*

<sup>1835-b</sup> *ḥḥ.f ḥnhḥ.f m j3bt, ḥtp.f ḥnhḥ.f m jmnt*

<sup>1835-c</sup> *nj šw mjwt.f nwt jm.f rḥ nb*

<sup>1835-a</sup> His mother, the sky, shall bear him alive every day like Re,

<sup>1835-b</sup> and he shall appear with him (the king) in the east,  
and go to rest with him (the king) in the west.

<sup>1835-c</sup> and his mother Nut shall not be void of him every day.

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<sup>23</sup> According to his different aspects, the sun-god appears in the form of different deities, such as Atum (as the source/finish of all life), Khepri (as the beginning of the process of daily life), Re (as the sun in the broadest terms) and Horus (as the predominant force in the world). See J. Allen 1988: 10-12.

<sup>24</sup> For a comprehensive study of the sky-goddess Nut, see Billing 2002.

<sup>25</sup> For translations, see Faulkner 1969: 268; J. Allen 2005a: 265.

### 2.3.1 Nut as mother-goddess

As shown above, Nut is mother of the sun-god, bearing him daily, as mentioned in funerary spells and other texts (Hollis 1987: 498):

- Pyramid Texts Spell 606 (Pyr. § 1688a-c): *ḥmsw.k ḥr ḥndw pw n rꜥ, wd.k mdw n ntrw, n twt js rꜥ pr m nwt msst rꜥ rꜥ nb, ms (nmtj-m-z3.f nrj.n rꜥ)| pn rꜥ nb mr rꜥ* “you will sit on this chair of Re so that you (the king) will govern the gods, because you are Re who comes forth from Nut, who gives birth to Re daily, and this Nemtiemzaf Merenre will be born every day like Re.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 267 (CT III 398a-b): *ms.n tw nwt ḥft mswt rꜥ* “Nut has borne you (the deceased) according to the birth of Re.”
- Papyrus Carlsberg I, IV 37: *mj ms.s rꜥ rꜥ nb* “... like she (Nut) gives birth to Re daily.”

Therefore, Nut can be considered as a personification of the sky who gives birth to the sun-god (J. Allen 1989: 16) and various place names of the sky in Pyramid Texts Spells 264 and 510 may have originated from her female anatomy (L. Lesko 1991: 118-119).<sup>26</sup>

In this regard, it is also noticeable that Nut is depicted as having her hair braided in Coffin Texts Spell 77 (CT II 18g): *wd.kw jm.s m z3 z3t nwt, ḥnzkt mst ntrw* “I (the deceased identified with the *ba* of Shu) was set in it (the Great Ennead) as son and daughter of Nut, she with the braided hair who bore the gods.” This description conjures up an image of an ancient Egyptian woman in labor who kept her hair from being a nuisance during labor (B. Lesko 1999: 28). In the New Kingdom period, Nut’s conception and birth is expressed in iconographical images, including the one in

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<sup>26</sup> Also note Hollis 1987: 497: “Nut appears in an organic activity, namely bearing the gods, not as the static lifeless, heavenly roof of the world structure, which is the usual portrayal of the sky.” In Egyptian mythology, Nut is not just mother of the sun but also of stars. Cf. Goebis 2008: 7-8.



the cenotaph of Sety I at Abydos and the ceiling in the tomb of Ramesses IV, where the sun is shown being swallowed by Nut, a giant nude woman arched above the earth, in the evening, passing through her body at night and being born again in the morning.<sup>27</sup>

### 2.3.2 Nut, Mehet-Weret and Akhet

In ancient Egypt the sky was often thought of as a watery region, and Nut was closely associated with Mehet-Weret (*mḥjtt wrt*) “Great Flood,” a female counterpart of Nun. Sometimes envisioned as a cow astride the earth, Nut was paired or even identified with Mehet-Weret who was shown as a cow-headed woman or a cow carrying a child (J. Allen 1989: 16; B. Lesko 1999: 23-24; Pinch 2002: 163).<sup>28</sup> In this connection, Mehet-Weret stands as a primeval cow goddess who gave birth to the sun-god. It is interesting to note that Mehet-Weret gave birth to the sun in the form of a calf, as mentioned in the Pyramid Texts Spell 485A (Pyr. § 1029a-b): *jw.n (pjpj)| pn hr.k rꜥ, bḥz n nbw ms nwt, ḥ3d n nbw qm3w ḥz3t* “This Pepi has come to you, Re, a calf of gold to whom Nut gave birth, a fatted calf of gold whom Hezat created” (Barta 1984: 167).<sup>29</sup> The statement calls to mind the fact that Ihy, regarded as one of the sun-children, is born as a calf (Hoenes 1980: 125).

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<sup>27</sup> For the cycle of the sun through Nut’s body, see J. Allen 1988: 1-7. For various depictions of the sky, see Westendorf 1966: 10-13, 63-66; Hornung 1977: 1216. For a description of Nut as the night sky, see Roulin 1996: 33-37. For Nut as personification of the Milky Way, see Wells 1992: 305-321; Kozloff 1994: 169-176 (especially in connection with a type of spoons in the form of a “swimming girl”). According to Wells, the Egyptian month “Mesore” came from *mswt rꜥ* “birth of Re,” because in origin the winter solstice fell in it at a time when that part of the Milky Way representing Nut was visible from the waist to the feet as a woman ready to give birth. On the other hand, the sunset at the spring equinox was regarded as the time when the sun enters Nut through her mouth. He points out that the number of days between the spring equinox and the winter solstice is 272 days, identical to the nine-month period of human gestation.

<sup>28</sup> Also note the description of Nut as *3wt-ꜥb* “long of horn” in Pyr. § 1344a. For more examples, see Roulin 1996/1: 34, note 150.

<sup>29</sup> Hezat (*ḥz3t*), meaning “Wild One,” is a cow-goddess and appears as the mother of Anubis and the sun already in the Pyramid Texts (R. Wilkinson 2003: 173-174).

At the time of birth, the sun-god is born into a place called *3ht* “*akhet*” that can be translated as the “place of becoming effective.”<sup>30</sup> Pyramid Text Spells speak of Nut’s role of guiding the king (identified with the sun-god) into the *akhet*:

- Pyramid Texts Spell 422 (Pyr. § 756a-b): *pr.k r.k hr mjwt.k nwt, ndr.s ʕ.k, dj.s n.k w3t r 3ht r bw hr(j) rʕ* “So, you should go forth to where your mother Nut is, and she will take hold of your arm and give you the way to the *akhet*, to the place where Re is.”
- Pyramid Texts Spell 677 (Pyr. § 2028a-c): *h3 (ppj nfr-k3-rʕ) | wʕb, gm tw rʕ ʕhʕ.tj hnʕ mjwt.k nwt, ssm.s t(w) m w3wt 3ht, jr.k jmn.k jm, nfrw hnʕ k3.k n d[t dt]* “Ho, Pepi Neferkare! Become clean and Re will find you standing with your mother Nut. She will lead you in the *akhet*’s paths and you shall make your abode there, perfect with your *ka* for (the course [of] eternity).”

According to J. Allen (1989: 17-21), the *akhet* is the place where “the sun undergoes the final transformation from the inertness of death and night to the form ‘*akh*’ that allows him to live effectively.” The association of the *akhet* with the sun-god’s (re)birth is mentioned in the final hour of the New Kingdom Book of Night.

### T2-3. Book of Night: Eleventh Gate, Twelfth Hour (Third Register)<sup>31</sup>

*<sup>1</sup>prt m dw3t, htp m {m} mʕndt, sqdt nw r wnwt<sup>2</sup> n rʕ ptr nfrw nb.s  
hpr m hprj, hfdt r 3ht, <sup>3</sup>ʕq m r, pr m k3t  
wbn m r n ʕ3wj<sup>4</sup> 3ht r wnwt shʕt nfrw rʕ r jrt ʕnh r(m)t*

<sup>30</sup> For the meaning of *akhet* as the “place of becoming effective,” see Friedman 1986: 101-102. It is also mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 217 (Pyr. § 152d): *wbn.tn m 3ht m bw 3h.n.tn jm* “You [the sun-god Re and Atum] shall rise from the *akhet*, from the place in which you have both become *akh*.” For the image of the king given birth like the sun and Horus and crossing to the *akhet*, where “the gods were born,” see Pyr. § 1074c-d. Meanwhile, for the original meaning of *3h* as “effective” and the notion of *3h*-“effectiveness” in cosmic, kingship (filial), and funerary spheres, see Friedman 1985: 39-46.

<sup>31</sup> For the text, see Piankoff 1942: 80. For translations, see Piankoff 1942: 81, 1954a: 428; J. Allen 1989: 20.

<sup>1</sup> Coming forth from the *duat*,<sup>32</sup> coming to rest in the day-barque,  
 and sailing Nu at the hour <sup>2</sup> of the sun (called) “Seeing the Perfection of Her Lord.”  
 Becoming Khepri, climbing to the *akhet*,  
<sup>3</sup> having entered the mouth and come forth from the vagina.  
 Rising from the doorway <sup>4</sup> of the *akhet* at the hour (called)  
 “Causing Re’s Perfection to Appear” in order to make people live.

Before the sun’s birth (or rising) in the eastern sky, the sky becomes red and bright. This is envisioned by the ancient Egyptian as Nut’s blood turning the sky red when she gives birth to the sun-god. It is depicted in a text found in the cenotaph of Sety I.<sup>33</sup>

#### T2-4. From the Cenotaph of Sety I: Sun-disk before Nut’s Foot<sup>34</sup>

<sup>G</sup> *dšrt m-ḥt mswt* <sup>F</sup> *w<sup>c</sup>b.f m-ḥnw* <sup>E</sup> *wj jt(j).f wsjr*  
*sw* <sup>E</sup> *nḥ jt.f ʒḥ.f dj.(w) n.f ḥr.f*  
<sup>E</sup> *wbʒ.f m nhpt.f, nb.f ḥr tms.f*

<sup>G</sup> The redness after birth,  
<sup>F</sup> as he becomes pure in the embrace of his father Osiris.  
 Then his father lives and becomes effective,

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<sup>32</sup> Along with the sky-mother Nun and the *akhet*, the *duat* is the place where the deceased king, like the sun and stars, is born; at the same time, it is the domain of Osiris where the king spends the night before his rebirth at dawn (J. Allen 1989: 14, 22-25). Note that the *duat* is regarded as the daughter of Nut, as mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 504 (Pyr. § 1082a-b): *jwr pt m jrp, js ms.n nwt m zʒt.s dwʒt* “The sky has become pregnant with wine: behold, Nut has given birth through her daughter, the *duat*.” Troy sees this as the sky goddess giving birth to a daughter as well as a son. She explains that the daughter shares with her mother the role that is differentiated into the phases of conception and birth. So she notes (1986: 27): “The feminine element is thus, parallel with the masculine, a composite of two generations. The sky goddess is the wife-mother who conceives the child while the dawn goddess [the *duat*], her daughter, is responsible for the birth of her son-brother.” However, I do not follow Troy’s idea of (1) the solar disc as a “disembodied womb” and (2) the double role of mother-daughter in a generational structure associated with the birth of the sun-child.

<sup>33</sup> At the time of the sun’s (re)birth, Nut was supposed to eat the moon and stars. This violent image led to the description of Nut as a sow devouring her own piglets (stars); see Neugebauer & Parker 1960: 67-69; Kurth 1982: 538-539; Pinch 2002: 174. Regarding the connection between devouring and giving birth (also impregnation), note Kurth’s interesting comment (*ibid.* 539, note 16): “Dieses sicher der Realität entnommene Bild lieferte dem Ägypter eine Erklärung für die Verbindung von Verschlängen und Gebären, die das Bild der menschengestaltigen Himmelsgöttin nicht im gleichen Maße liefern kann.” For the interpretation of the redness in the morning as the bloody battle that the sun-god wages against his enemies, see Goebis 2008: 297-299.

<sup>34</sup> For the text, see Frankfort 1933/II: Plate LXXXI; Neugebauer & Parker 1960: Plate 44 (Texts G, F and E). For translations, see J. Allen 1988: 3 and 76 (for textual notes), 1989: 20; Dorman 1999: 93-94.

having been given to him (to be) with him  
E as he sets in motion his potter's wheel<sup>35</sup>  
and swims in his redness.

After the birth, the sun-god needs to be purified, fed, protected and raised. He is purified in the Field of Reeds (*šht-jḳrw*) as well as on the Primeval Hill, in the Lake of *Ma'at* or in the Lake of Natron; he is fed in the Field of Offerings (*šht-ḥtp*). It should be noted that all the places meaningful to the sun-god were collectively called the Field of Re (*šht-rꜥ*) (Barta 1984: 167). Here, Nut appears as a protector of the sun-child after birth, as in Coffin Texts Spell 765:

#### T2-5. Coffin Texts Spell 765 (CT VI 395f-j)<sup>36</sup>

<sup>395-f</sup> *j(w).k ḥnꜥ rꜥ r šht-jḳrw*

<sup>395-g</sup> *gm.k ntrw ḥꜥy m-ḥsf.k mj rꜥ nb tpw*

<sup>395-h</sup> *jw tz tw nwt ꜥꜣt m nfr.k* <sup>395-i</sup> *šn.n.s tw m ꜥwj.s*

<sup>395-j</sup> *ḳtw <tw> nbtj dpw mj ḥrw zḳ wsjr*

<sup>395-f</sup> You are off to the Field of Rushes with Re,

<sup>395-g</sup> and you will find the gods joyful at meeting you like Re, Lord of People (Heads)

<sup>395-h</sup> for Nut the Great will raise you in your (youthful) perfection,

<sup>395-i</sup> having enclosed you in her arms

<sup>395-j</sup> the two ladies of Dep will nurse <you> like Horus, son of Osiris.

The image of the new-born sun-god under the protection of the mother goddess (and other protective goddesses such as Isis and Nephthys belonging to the Osirian cycle) emerged only during the New Kingdom period as mentioned in many solar hymns composed mostly from the Nineteenth Dynasty to the Twenty-first Dynasty (Assmann 1995: 45):

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<sup>35</sup> For the central role played by the potter's wheel in the daily rejuvenation of the sun-god, see Dorman 1999: 83-99. In particular, he notes that the central figure in frontal perspective depicted in the first hour of the Book of the Day is not the pregnant sky-goddess but the creator-god himself who is at work at his potter's wheel, modeling a lump of clay into a child (*ibid.* 88).

<sup>36</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1977: 295.

- (1) the sun-god protected by his mother (LL, II 1): *hnm tw mjwt.k r<sup>c</sup> nb* “your mother nurses (gladdens) you every day”<sup>37</sup>
- (2) the sun-god in the arms of Isis and Nephthys (LL, II 2): *stz tw 3st hn<sup>c</sup> nbt-hwt* “Isis and Nephthys raise you”<sup>38</sup>
- (3) the sun-god nourished by the crown goddesses (LL, III 4): *rnn sw nbty mrtj* “the Two Ladies, the two Merty-goddesses suckle him.”<sup>39</sup>

In this regard, it should be also noted that the newborn sun-god is mentioned as “child,” such as *hjj n dw3t* “child of the morning” only in the New Kingdom period (Assmann 1995: 45, note 40). In fact, the sun-god was frequently depicted as born each morning from the sky-mother Nut before the New Kingdom period, but he was rarely described in the child form. Billing points out Nut’s lack of association with the act of conception and quotes J. Allen’s recognition of Nut as an “amniotic sac, from which the deceased king, like the sun, was born each day” (J. Allen 1989: 17; Billing 2002: 36-37). This indicates that the image of mother-child began to take shape in the New Kingdom period.

The same can be said about the image of the sun-child sitting on the lotus flower, which is regarded as a particular image of the morning sun.<sup>40</sup> The blue lotus flower submerges during the night and reappears at the time of sunrise. In addition, this lotus flower is pollinated by beetles that are closely associated with Khepri, the morning manifestation of the sun-god (Pinch 2002:

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<sup>37</sup> For a translation, see Assmann 1969: 169-170 and 175.

<sup>38</sup> For a translation, see Assmann 1969: 187-190 and 197.

<sup>39</sup> For a translation, see Assmann 1969: 315-316 and 319.

<sup>40</sup> The plant associated with the morning sun is, in fact, not the lotus but the blue water-lily or *Nymphaea cerulea*. However, the terms, such as “blue lotus,” “white lotus” and “lotus-blossom,” will be used here because, as Harer points out, the misnomer “lotus” is so entrenched in Egyptology (Harer 1985: 49-51; 2001/II: 304-305). For the details about the blue lotus see CHAPTER SIX.

158). The ancient Egyptians thought that the plant mimics the cosmic and daily course of the sun. As a result, it became the symbol representing the daily rebirth of the sun and the rebirth of the deceased (Morenz & Schubert 1954: 43; Brunner-Traut 1980: 1092).<sup>41</sup> Morenz assumes that (1) the image of the sun-god squatting or standing on the lotus flower was not attested in the Pyramid Texts; and (2) therefore, it might have belonged to the Heracleopolitan theology (1954: 44).

However, many scholars agree that the image of the solar infant on the lotus flower is attested only after the Amarna period. Notably during the Twenty-first Dynasty, the image and role of the youthful sun-god became associated predominantly with the independent Horus child form, or Harpocrates (Tait 1963: 134; Schlögl 1977: 33; Ryhiner 1986: 19-20, 22; Meeks 1997b: 1004). The first textual evidence for the sun-child on the lotus blossom is found in the Nineteenth Dynasty hymn of the Nakhtamun (Schlögl 1977: 20-22; Ryhiner 1986: 19; Assmann 1995: 5-6, 45):

## T2-6. Hymn to the Rising Sun (p.Berlin 3002 = BD Chapter 15A)<sup>42</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *j.nd hr.<k> nḥn* <sup>3</sup> *jmy mn[yt].f wbn m sšn*

<sup>4</sup> *ḥwnw nfr pr m 3ḥt*

<sup>5</sup> *shd [t3wj m] šzp.f*

<sup>2</sup> Hail to you, youth <sup>3</sup> who is in his ro[ot], who rises in the lotus flower.

<sup>4</sup> Beautiful youth, who comes from the *akhet*

<sup>5</sup> and illuminates the [Two Lands] with his light.

The notion of the solar child led to an image that shows the sun in the typical Egyptian child form inside the *ouroboros* supported by the sky-cow and the two lions of yesterday and tomorrow (Fig.

<sup>41</sup> However, Harer makes it clear that the daily blooming of the lotus flower is not precise because the lotus flower does bloom at the time of sunrise but it tightly closes after noon (1985: 52).

<sup>42</sup> For the text, see Naville 1886a: Plate XVII. For translations, see Schlögl 1977: 21; Assmann 1995: 45, 1999: 131; Carrier 2009: 53. The sculptural image corresponding to the text mentioned above is the wooden statue the head of Tutankhamun as the sun-child bursting out of the lotus flower (Munro 1981: 40-41). The motif of a deity/king on the plant will be discussed in CHAPTER SIX.

2-3). As mentioned earlier, the concept of the sun-child who undergoes regular rebirth in the eternal cycle led to the appearance of the divine child Harpocrates – the image of a powerful child deity who represents the “*höchste Hoffnung für den Menschen*” (Brunner 1977c: 649); his cult became extraordinarily popular and widespread in the Late Period, as observed by Ryhiner (1986: 23): “*L’enfant divin, image chargée d’espoir, prend une importance dont témoignent la naissance et la multiplication des Harpocrates ainsi que des données qui font entrevoir la création, à Thèbes et ailleurs, d’édifices telles que les mammisis et institutions religieuses: le clergé, les mères divines, les nourriciers, spécialement consacrés à la naissance perpétuelle d’un enfant roi.*”



**Fig. 2-3: Image of the solar child**

#### **2.4 Functions of the sun-child pattern**

As mentioned earlier, the cycle of the sun-child forms the basis for the concept of other child deities. In addition, the sun-child pattern based on the two temporal aspects (*nhh* and *dt*) plays a significant role in the ideology of kingship and the after-life existence of the deceased. Assmann writes that there are three different semantic levels associated with the “transfiguration” of the

solar journey; they consist of (1) a cosmic level of the solar journey itself; (2) the kingship level; and (3) the funerary belief level (1995: 42). In fact, the sun-child pattern can be applied to all three of these levels.

On the cosmic level, the sun-god completes the process of creation by appearing as a youthful child-deity who emerges from the womb of the primeval water. After the creation, as the primary source of creative energy, the sun was worshipped as the champion of the cosmic order. In his form as a child deity, the sun-god also represents the rejuvenation of the cosmos in the eternal cycle, as we have seen in Pyramid Texts Spell 650 above.

On the kingship level, the pharaoh, as the most powerful force in human society, reaffirms his power through a reenactment of the First Occasion manifested by the first sunrise. In the eternal cycle after the creation, the king plays his role, as a true image of the sun-god, of maintaining the order of the created world based on the rule of “consubstantiality,” or the studied similarities between the solar event and royal acts (Frankfort 1978: 149). Moreover, the coronation of a new king, ideally taking place on New Year’s Day, reenacts the creation of the world and the subsequent reign of the sun-god, as well as the establishment of the living Horus on the throne of his deceased father (Zandee 1992b: 179, note 338, 184-185). Here a new king replaces the dead king as an incarnation of the creator sun-god who reestablishes *ma’at* and as the possessor of the royal *ka*. After the coronation, each year of the king’s reign was considered to mirror the great cycle of the creation. Therefore, royal ceremonies were held each year to renew kingship (Bell 1985: 251-294).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> A much more elaborate renewal process – the so-called *sed*-festival – was celebrated after thirty years of his reign, which represents the length of a generation. In the *sed*-festival, the king had to identify himself



However, the significance of the sun-child as a symbol of resurrection comes to the fore especially in the funerary sphere. In order to understand the role of the sun-child in the (royal) funerary sphere it is necessary to see the king's destiny after death dictated in the Pyramid Texts.

In this regard, J. Allen observes (1989: 1):

The destiny of the deceased king in the Pyramid Texts is to "go forth to the sky among the imperishable stars" (Pyr. 1123a) and "go around the sky like the Sun" (Pyr. 130d). For the Pyramid Texts, this celestial vision of the afterlife is a single-minded goal. Even what used to be viewed as a separate "Osirian" destiny of the king in these texts has more recently been recognized as one aspect of his celestial cycle – the regenerative phase through which he passes before "rising in the eastern side of the sky like the Sun" (Pyr. 1465d-e).

Like the sun and other celestial bodies, the king was also conceived and given birth by the sky/sky-goddess Nut.<sup>44</sup> Regarded as a receiving mother, Nut (= the amniotic sac) was also identified with the coffin, sarcophagus and tomb in which the king's (and the deceased's) imperishable body was laid awaiting rebirth (J. Allen 1989: 17, 25-26; B. Lesko 1999: 38-44). The identification of Nut with the coffin/tomb corresponds to the identification of the dead king/the deceased not only with the sun-god who is borne by Nut every day but also with Osiris, king of the netherworld, who is the son of Nut in the Heliopolitan Theology (B. Lesko 1999: 28).<sup>45</sup> Therefore, laying the corpse in the coffin was like the sun-god returning to his mother's womb for rebirth as well as Osiris lying within the *duat* (given that the burial chamber of the pyramid/tomb served as the king's/the deceased's personal *duat*).

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again with the life-giving youthful forms of the creator and the sun-god throughout the ancient Egyptian history (Hornung 1992: 53-54).

<sup>44</sup> According to Egyptian religious thought, the king could be born in/from various deities or places such as Nun, the sky/sky-goddess Nut, the *akhet* and the *duat* (Allen 1989: 14).

<sup>45</sup> In his explanation of the generational transition, Billing uses the concept of the "elder mother," which designates Nut as mother of Osiris, in contrast to that of the "younger mother" for Isis, mother of Horus. For the double identity of the king as Osiris and Horus, coupled with the two respective mothers, he quotes Pyr. § 741a-e (2002: 38).

Like the sun-god who is born into the *akhet*, the king/the deceased emerges into the *akhet* (identified with the antechamber) and transforms himself into a living form of *akh*. Then he moves from the *akhet*/antechamber through the corridor (identified as the birth canal) into the outside world, completing “his daily rebirth into the sky to begin his eternal cycle of celestial life anew” (J. Allen 1989: 25-26).<sup>46</sup> As such, the pattern of the sun’s (re)birth provided the king/the deceased with the hope of overcoming death throughout Egyptian history (Assmann 1995: 65; Brunner 1977c: 649)<sup>47</sup> and this is why the worship of the newborn sun-infant in the form of Harpocrates became so popular in the later periods, as mentioned by Ryhiner cited above.

#### **Excursus 2-1. *Kamutef*: Sun-child pattern for royal divine birth**

*Kamutef* (*k3 mjwt.f* “bull of his mother”) is not the name of a deity but a functional epithet associated with the name of a deity – usually Min or Amun-Re.<sup>48</sup> Generally, it is represented in the form of Min with an erect phallus (Traunecker 2001: 221). As this meaning indicates, the essence of the epithet is the union of two generations in the same deity who unites with his own mother and begets himself (Jacobsohn 1939: 15). As such, it does not represent the mode of self-begetting of the creator gods but rather embodies the repeating self-renewal through the “changing mode of theophany” (Jacobsohn 1980: 308).

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<sup>46</sup> In this context, J. Allen observes that (1) the layout of texts in the Old Kingdom pyramids paralleled the passage of the sun through the night, from west to east; and (2) the concept is also reflected in the architecture of the pyramid’s subterranean chambers (1994: 5-28, 2005a: 10-12).

<sup>47</sup> It is noteworthy, in this regard, that the daily miracle of the sun’s transformation and rejuvenation was the central theme of the texts and images on the walls of the tombs in the New Kingdom Valley of the Kings as well (Hornung 1990: 90).

<sup>48</sup> Bell gives us a simple but clear explanation about the relationship between *kamutef* and other deities (1985: 259): “*Kamutef/Amenemopet is the manifestation of Amun as the Theban Min, the physical creator of the gods (at Medinet Habu) and of the king and his ka (at Luxor); in him are united both Amun-Re of Karnak and the Amun of Luxor.*” The relationship between Min and Amun can be traced back to the Middle Kingdom when scenes show Amun in the form of the ithyphallic Min. Much of the evidence for the connection between these two deities, however, is known from the New Kingdom on.

Regarding the patterns of the child deity, the *kamutef* concept fits readily with the pattern of the sun-child, who is swallowed by his mother goddess Nut each evening and born again as a newborn baby each morning.<sup>49</sup> As Nut can appear as a cow goddess, the sun can present himself as a calf that grows to become a bull and impregnates his mother to be reborn, embodying the concept of *kamutef* as hinted in Pyramid Texts Spell 271 (Pyr. §§ 388c-389a): (*wnjs*)| *pw dmdy mjwt.f sm3t wrt, mjwt nt (wnjs)| sm3t hmt tpt dw shsh* “It is Unas: join together, (you) his mother, the great wild cow, the mother of Unas, the female wild cow on the hill of stork” (Hollis 2008: 175).<sup>50</sup>

Apart from the cyclical pattern of the sun-child, the *kamutef* concept can also be encountered in the generational transition as the creative “binding member” (Bindeglied) of the father-son succession (Jacobsohn 1968: 425). In this generational transition, the *kamutef* concept represents a “way of denying linear time and inverting the succession of generations by uniting the past and the present in one personage (*sic*)” (Traunecker 2001: 221). The “personage” possesses an unquestionable legitimacy because he is both father and son at the same time, and this idea of legitimate descent with ancestry encompasses the continuity of the generation of royal dynasties, as well as the lineage of the gods in the form of Amun-Re-Kamutef. Since the *kamutef* concept can be found in the generational transition, it is comparable with the pattern of the Horus child, who will be dealt with in detail in CHAPTER THREE. In fact, both the Horus child pattern and the *kamutef* concept emphasize the divine generation and the continuity of kingship. However, the latter does not correspond directly to the former, because, as has been stressed previously, father

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<sup>49</sup> The action of swallowing is usually considered to be destructive, but it can appear to be creative in the myth of the sun-child because it brings about change and creates something new. For instance, note the creation of the lunar disc on the forehead of Thoth in the Late Egyptian narrative of the Contendings of Horus and Seth. The lunar disc comes from the semen of Seth who was deceived by Isis to swallow it (Goebis 2008: 296, note 650). The notion of getting pregnant by the action of swallowing is also found in the Late Egyptian story of the Two Brothers, in which the wife of Bata swallows a chip of wood and becomes pregnant. This episode is mentioned later in this EXCURSUS.

<sup>50</sup> The idea of *kamutef* can be traced back to the Pyramid Texts. For the sun as a calf, see Pyr. § 1029a-c.

and son in the Osirian cycle are not one and the same but the son always replaces the father. On the contrary, the *kamutef* concept has father and son as a union – that is, the inseparable integration of the old and the new.<sup>51</sup> The fact that father and son are identical and that father becomes son through his mother/consort reminds us of the *nhh*-element coming out of the *dt*-element in the sun-child pattern.

Besides its association with the pattern of the sun-child, the *kamutef* figures prominently on the kingship level. In fact, the kingship theory can be regarded as the primary source of the *kamutef* concept (Assmann 1982: 264). On this level, *kamutef* no longer appears as a bull to the queen (chosen as the matrix who plays the role of the mother goddess) but as the reigning pharaoh who has been united with the creator god, as in the case of Hatshepsut:<sup>52</sup>

**T2-7. Urk. IV 219-220, 1-4 (= 1714, 1-4)<sup>53</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> [dd mdw jn ntr pn šps jmn nb t3wj]  
 [jr].n.f hprw.f [m] hm [n] hy.s pn nswt bjt (ꜥ3 hpr k3 rꜥ)|  
 [gm].n.sn {n} s(j) ndm.s <sup>2</sup> m nfrw nw ꜥh.s  
 rs.n.s hr st(j) ntr, sbt.[s] hft hm.f  
 sw šm.f hr.s hr ꜥ, sw h3d.f r.s, <sup>3</sup> sw rdj jb.f r.s,  
 sw rdj m3.s sw [m] jr.w.f n ntr m ht jw.f tp jm.s hꜥ.tj <sup>4</sup> m m3 nfrw.f  
 mrwt.f hꜥp.s m hꜥw.s  
 [ꜥh bꜥhj.(w) m st(j) ntr], [hnmw].f nbw m pwnt

<sup>1</sup> [Recitation by this august god, Amun, lord of the Two Lands,]

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<sup>51</sup> In this regard, Assmann notes that the Horus/Hamlet constellation (or the generational transition) thematizes the conflict of generation since the conflict of genders plays no role here, whereas the *kamutef* constellation thematizes the conflict of genders since the conflict of generations is annulled. In addition, the Osiris-Horus succession encompasses the rational, cultural and community phenomenon, while the *kamutef* concept represents the irrational character of “*Vaterschaft*,” or the natural mystery (1991: 117-118).

<sup>52</sup> During the Old Kingdom period when the *kamutef* motif evolved into the myth of the divine conception, the creator god was the sun-god, as in the narrative in the Papyrus Westcar about the first five kings of the Fifth Dynasty. Later he appears as Amun-Re, as in the accounts of the royal divine birth of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III (Jacobsohn 1968: 419-420).

<sup>53</sup> For a translation, see Breasted 1906a: 80.

after he [made] his form [in] the Incarnation of her (Hatshepsut's mother) husband,  
the dual king Aakheperkara  
after they [found] her as she was resting <sup>2</sup> in the innermost chamber of her palace.  
She woke at the fragrance of the god, smiling before his Incarnation.  
He went to her immediately; he lusted for her; <sup>3</sup> his heart was given to her;  
she was made to see him [in] his form of the god after he came before her,  
while she was excited <sup>4</sup> at the sight of his beauty.  
And his desire passed through her limbs,  
[while the palace was flooded with the fragrance of the god], all of his [odors] from  
Punt.

In other words, *kamutef* here is a divine person in which father and son are united in the royal *ka* (Jacobsohn 1968: 420),<sup>54</sup> or the collective identity embodied in both father and son, through which all kings become a member of the single imaginary dynasty (Frankfort 1978: 61-78).<sup>55</sup>

As mentioned above, the mother of *kamutef* is the queen but at the same time, she is Hathor the divine mother of the king (Urk. IV, 244): *z3t pw nt k3 mjwt.f [hwt-hrw] mrrt* "She is the daughter of *kamutef*, [Hathor] the beloved" (Jacobsohn 1939: 19).<sup>56</sup> According to the *kamutef* concept that revolves around the fertilization of his own mother, the mother-goddess seems to play the role of the matrix by receiving and containing the seed of the bull god who possesses the active power of engendering life. Therefore, she can be seen merely as a vessel of renewal that preserves the divine seed and thus safeguards the continuation of the royal dynasty (Roberts 1995: 82). What is important here, however, is that the mother of *kamutef* – first Hathor, then the Ennead and finally

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<sup>54</sup> In this regard, Assmann notes (1982: 264): *Die beiden Götter [Min and Horus] sind in diesem Bezug [the raping of their mother Isis in the kamutef constellation] identisch; ihre Gemeinsamkeit beruht aber nicht auf dem Element der männlichen Fruchtbarkeit, sondern auf ihrer Eigenschaft als Königsgötter (im Sinn von Göttern, die sich im König verkörpern)*. For the transmission of the royal *ka* through the agency of *kamutef*, see Bell 1985: 258-259.

<sup>55</sup> This explains why *kamutef* is practically absent from the funerary texts and comogonies (Traunecker 2001: 222). For Horus and Re as the *ka* of the king, see Frankfort 1978: 77-78. The reigning king is regarded as the incarnation of Horus, who was the *ka* of the king. Likewise, the king is also considered to be the earthly manifestation of *kamutef* (Jacobsohn 1939: 19).

<sup>56</sup> For the restoration of *hwt-hrw* "Hathor," see Hollis 2008: 178, note 111.

Isis<sup>57</sup> – is the divine mother of the dynasty, or more precisely, the divine mother of kingship as an institution (Assmann 1982: 264).<sup>58</sup>

Since the kingship is an institution that involves two generations, at the time of his ascension to the throne the new king appears not only as the son of the creator god but also as his expressed generational power – i.e., *kamutef*. To reiterate, the son is essentially identical as his father even after the generational transition. This important idea is well preserved in the Late Egyptian narrative of the Tale of Two Brothers, which was written during the New Kingdom period when the *kamutef* concept evolved into its fully developed form. It is noteworthy that Bata's birth in the story shows a combination of the cosmic and kingship levels of the *kamutef* concept: the conception of Bata follows the pattern of the sun-child (Papyrus d'Orbiney 28, 5-8): *wn.jn w<sup>c</sup> n3d3 hr pwy, jw.f (hr) <sup>c</sup>q m r n t3 špsj, wn.jn.st hr <sup>c</sup>m3m, jw.st hr šzp jwr m km n j3dt šrj* "Then a chip flew up and entered the mouth of the noblewoman; then she swallowed and received pregnancy in the completion of an instant" – whereas his birth reveals the legitimizing account of the royal divine birth (*ibid.* 28, 8-29, 1): *hr jr m-ht hrww qnw hr-s3 nn wn.jn.st hr msyt w<sup>c</sup> z3 t3y, jw.tw hr šmt r dd n hm.f<sup>c</sup>-w-s, msy.tw n.k w<sup>c</sup> n z3 t3y ... hr jr m-ht hrww qnw hr s3 nn wn.jn hm.f<sup>c</sup>-w-s hr djtw.f r-p<sup>c</sup>t n p3 t3 dr.f* "Now, after many days after this, then she gave birth to a male son, and one went to tell His Incarnation

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<sup>57</sup> For the Ennead as the mother of *kamutef*, see Barta 1973b: 35-38. For Isis as the mother of *kamutef*, see Bergman 1968: 127-130. Much of the evidence for the connection between the goddess and *kamutef* dates from the New Kingdom and later, but her mother-son relationship with Min or Min-Horus dates back to the Middle Kingdom (Münster 1968: 129-137).

<sup>58</sup> The idea of impregnating one's own mother can be regarded as an act of incest, like Geb violating his mother. In the *kamutef* constellation, Min or Min-Horus is said to rape his mother Isis. For the texts depicting the rape of Isis by Horus, see Münster 1968: 129. Jacobsohn writes that Horus (the Elder) and Min (as the bull-god) are the creator/fertility gods *par excellence*, and the motif of raping Isis was the early Egyptian way of materializing the *kamutef* concept (1968: 414). Min-Kamutef was considered as the son of Isis and many scholars think that this is caused by the introduction of the Osirian mythology to the theology of Coptos, the cult center of Min, with Min-the-son assuming the functional name of Horus (Assmann 1982: 264; Traunecker 2001: 221). For the different interpretation of the integration of Min into the Osirian myth, see Jacobsohn 1968: 414-415.

l.p.h.: 'A male son has been born to you.' ... Now, after many days after this (the appointment of Bata as King's Son of Kush), then His Incarnation l.p.h. made him heir of the whole land."

Assmann sees the cycle of the divine birth of the king as a legitimizing myth, whose "purpose is not only to explain a present situation by means of a story that occurred in the past, to make the present situation 'readable' by filling it with meaning, but first and foremost, and unmistakably so, to provide a mythic basis for a given pretender's claim to the right to rule" (2001: 118). Later this function gave way to the "explanatory" and "meaning-imparting" function along with the rise of the child deities who embodied the *kamutef* concept in later periods, characterized by ceaseless foreign invasions and the misrules of foreign kings. At the time, the kingship theology experienced dramatic changes, with the son-god of the divine triad regarded no longer as the reigning king but as a savior who assured the well-being of Egypt and its people. With the growing importance of the child deity, the kingship was now legitimized through the worship of the child deity. In addition, the father-god and the son-god tended to be understood as the father-form and the son-form of the same deity, as in the case of Harpocrates in Edfu and Harsomtut in Dendera, and the mother-goddess played the role of the mother-consort goddess ("*Muttergattin*"). The idea of the deity who could bring himself into the world through the mother-consort goddess allowed Egyptians in the grip of foreign rule to see the present as divine providence ("*gottgewirkt*"), independently of the actual conditions (Assmann 1992: 264).

The mother-consort goddess who brings the child deity into the world takes up her role of continuously connecting the female creative power (namely, the *dt*-principle) with the male creative power (namely, the *nḥh*-principle) or the *kamutef* concept that unfolds in the perpetual cycle of father and son (Westendorf 1974: 138; Assmann 1975: 28-30).

## Excursus 2-2. Union of the sun-god and Osiris

Besides the sun-child pattern, in which the *nhh*-element completes its rejuvenating cycle through the *dt*-matrix, ancient Egyptians also believed that the two principles of the creative order – i.e., *nhh* “Eternal Recurrence” and *dt* “Eternal Sameness” – corresponded in Egyptian funerary beliefs to (1) two major aspects of a person: *ba* and corpse; and (2) the two principal deities: the sun-god (Re) and Osiris.<sup>59</sup> This relationship, or “constellation,” is aptly explained by Assmann (2001: 79):<sup>60</sup>

The Egyptian imagined the constellation in which Re and Osiris work together as embodiments of the two antinomic or complementary aspects of time, as a *ba* and a corpse, by analogy with the two aspects of the person in which the deceased led an eternal life, “going in” and “going out” as a *ba* in the *neheh*-time of the sun and “enduring” as a corpse in the *djet*-time of Osiris. *Ba* and corpse would unite at night, the *ba* alighting on the mummy in bird form, thus ensuring the continuity of the person. In the constellation of Re and Osiris, this model was applied to cosmic totality as a sort of formula. Night after night as a *ba*, Re would “go in” and “go out,” that is, descend into and emerge from the netherworld; and around midnight, he would unite with Osiris, the corpse that lay continuously in the deepest depths of the netherworld, thus ensuring the continuity of the cosmos.

Therefore, the sun-god’s daily course through the sky was viewed as a journey from birth to death, and his rebirth at dawn was made possible through the union with Osiris who embodies “the force through which one generation of living beings produces the next” (J. Allen 2005: 8). By means of the temporary but nonetheless very critical union of the two deities, the sun-god receives the power of new life through Osiris, and Osiris is enabled to live again through the sun-god. After being rejuvenated through the union, the sun-god can continue his journey throughout the netherworld and rise to new life again in the morning (J. Allen 2000: 95).

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<sup>59</sup> For the association of *dt* “Eternal Sameness” and *dw3t* “the Netherworld” through the identification of Osiris with the *dt*-element and assonance (resemblance of sound), see Stricker 1953: 26, note 196 (especially hieroglyphic writings in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period); Kákosy 1963: 29.

<sup>60</sup> See also Wentz 1982: 22-25.



The solar and chthonic themes corresponding to *nḥḥ* “Eternal Recurrence” and *dt* “Eternal Sameness” are expressed in Coffin Texts Spell 335:

**T2-8. Coffin Texts Spell 335 (CT IV 184/5a-202/3b = BD Chapter 17)<sup>61</sup>**

184/5-a *r n prt m hrw m hrj(t)-ntr jn jm3hy N pn dd.f*  
 184/5-b *hpr mdt, nnk tm, (185-c jnk rꜥ) 186/7-a wnn.j wꜥ.kw*  
 186/7-b *jnk rꜥ m hꜥw.f tꜣpw (186-c wbn.f m 3ht)*  
 187-d *wbn.f pw m j3bt pt, ky dd 187-f 33ꜥ rꜥ pw m hꜥt hr t3*  
 188/9-a *jnk 3 hpr ds.f, 188-b ptr sw, 3 hpr ds.f 188/9-c mw pw nw pw jt(j) ntrw*  
 190/1-a *qm3 rnw.f, nb psdwt, 190/1-b jwtj hsf.f m ntrw*  
 191-c *zy tj pw 191-d tm pw jmj jtn.f*  
 192/3-a *n(j) jnk sf, jw.j rh.kw dw3w 192/3-b jr sf wsjr pw 193-c jr dw3w rꜥ pw*  
 193-d *zy tj pw, hrw pf3 n jw.n mn.n 193-e qrst wsjr pw hnꜥ shq3 z3.f hr(w)*  
 ...  
 196/7-a *jw.j rh.kw rn n ntr pw 3 ntj jm.s*  
 197-b *zy tj pw 197-c hknw, rꜥ rn.f*  
 198/9-a *jnk bnw pw 3 ntj m jwnw*  
 199-b *zy tj pw 199-c wsjr pw*  
 200/1-a *jr sjp n ntt wn 200/1-b ptr sw 200/1-c wsjr pw*  
 200/1-d *jr ntt wn 200/1-e nḥḥ pw hnꜥ dt*  
 202/3-a *jr nḥḥ, hrw pw 202/3-b jr dt grh pw*

184/5-a Spell for emerging by day in the necropolis by this revered one N, saying.  
 184/5-b The word developed, all was mine (185-c I am Re)  
     186/7-a when I existed alone.  
 186/7-b I am Re in his first appearance (186/7-c when he rose in the horizon).  
 187-d *It means that he rises in the east of sky.*  
     Variant: 187-f *It is the beginning of Re appearing over the land.*  
 188/9-a I am the great self-developing (god),  
 188-b *Who is he, the great self-developing god?*  
     188-c *It is water: 189-c it is Nu, father of the gods.*  
     190/1-a who created his identities, lord of the Enneads  
     190/1-b the unstoppable one of the gods.  
 191-c *Who is he? 191-d It is Atum in his disk.*  
 192/3-a Yesterday is mine, I know tomorrow.  
 192/3-b *As for yesterday, it is Osiris;*

<sup>61</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1973: 260-269 (esp. 266, note 7). For penetrating comments on the spell, see J. Allen 1988: 30-35.

- 193-c *as for tomorrow, it is Re.*  
 193-d *Who then is it?*  
     *That day of "We Are Enduring."*  
 193-e *It is the burial of Osiris and causing his son Horus to rule.*  
 ...  
 196/7-a *I know the name of this great god who is in it.*  
 197-b *Who then is he?* 197-c *The Acclaimed, Re, is his name.*  
 198/9-a *I am the great heron that is in Heliopolis.*  
 199-b *Who then is it?* 199-c *He is Osiris.*  
 200/1-a *the accountant of that which exists.*  
 200/1-b *Who then is it?* 200/1-c *He is Osiris.*  
 200/1-d *As for that which exists,* 200/1-e *it is Eternal Recurrence and Eternal Sameness.*  
 202/3-a *As for Eternal Recurrence, it is day;*  
 202/3-b *as for Eternal Sameness, it is night.*

The spell clearly indicates that the two elements – i.e., *nḥḥ* “Eternal Recurrence” and *dt* “Eternal Sameness” – are the two principles of the created order (CT IV 200/1d-e): *jr ntt wn, nḥḥ pw ḥnꜥ dt* “As for that which exists, it is Eternal Recurrence and Eternal Sameness.” With the symbolic contrast of day and night, it then defines the *dt*-element as the static pattern of existence (matrix or night) and the *nḥḥ*-element as the dynamic pattern of regenerative power (day) (CT IV 200/1d-202/3b): *jr nḥḥ hrw pw, jr dt grḥ pw* “As for Eternal Recurrence, it is day; as for Eternal Sameness, it is night.” Moreover, the glosses of the spell equate the static pattern of existence (the *dt*-element) and the dynamic development of the pattern (the *nḥḥ*-element) with Osiris and the sun-god by saying (CT IV 192/3a-c): *n(j) jnk sf, jw.j rḥ.kw dwꜣw, jr sf wsjr pw, jr dwꜣw rꜥ pw* “Yesterday is mine, I know tomorrow. As for yesterday, it is Osiris; as for tomorrow, it is Re.”<sup>62</sup>

As mentioned, Re and Osiris represent the *nḥḥ*-element and the *dt*-element, respectively. Therefore, the two deities embody the whole cycle that began at the time of creation and had been continuously realized in daily life (J. Allen 1988: 33-34). The spell (with its glosses) is also

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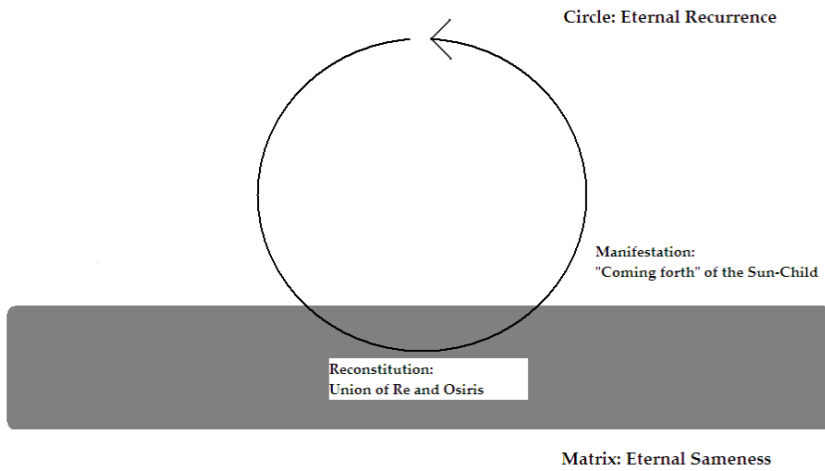
<sup>62</sup> For the two elements as a cosmic energy to maintain the created order, see Assmann 1975: 36-41.

significant, in that it reveals the two mythic paradigms (the sun-god/the solar mode of regeneration and Osiris/the Osirian mode of resurrection): (1) the appearance of the sun-god from the primeval waters as the culminating event of the creation (and from the sky goddess Nut in daily life following the creation) (CT IV 184/5b-191c); and (2) the Horus child as the heir and the rejuvenated form of his father Osiris (CT IV 193e): *qrst wsjr pw hn<sup>c</sup> shq3 z3.f hr(w)* “It is the burial of Osiris and causing his son Horus to rule.”

In addition to the maternal rebirth/rejuvenation of the sun-god as a child, the above-mentioned pattern can also symbolize a generational transition expressed in the form of the old meeting the new – that is, the union of Re and Osiris. In order to explain this, I would like to adapt the concepts of “reconstitution” and “manifestation” put forth by Billing to explain the duality in the ontological process, through which “death is transformed into life, chaos becomes order and night turns into day” (2002: 26-28). The concept of reconstitution revolves around the verb *s3h* “make *akh*” and refers to a process of restoration, effectuated by the *akhifying* (*s3hw*) rituals, whereby something in disorder is returned to its original state.<sup>63</sup> The causative verb form emphasizes a passive and receptive position of the deceased at this stage where Osiris (the old = yesterday/father/corpse in the *dt*-time) and the sun-god (Re: the new = tomorrow/son/ *ba* in the *nht*-time) become one (Billing 2002: 31). Meanwhile, the concept of the manifestation is expressed with the verb *prj* “come forth” and means a transformation that entails “leaving one spatially bound/limited condition for another after the reconstitution” (Billing 2002: 28). The active verb indicates that the deceased plays an active role in the later stage of coming out into the world restored and rejuvenated (Fig. 2-4).

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<sup>63</sup> For the significance of *s3hw* “*akh*-makers” or “*akhifiers*,” see J. Allen 2005a: 7-8.



**Fig. 2-4: Pattern of manifestation and reconstitution**

## CHAPTER 3. THE HORUS CHILD

### 3.1 Introduction

In the Egyptian pantheon, Horus plays many complicated roles that are complementary rather than antithetical. Attested as early as the Predynastic Period, Horus is one of the earliest deities in Egyptian history and he remained one of the most prominent well into the Ptolemaic-Roman Period.

Based on his forms, titles, epithets and roles, Horus can be categorized into two distinct entities:

- (1) Horus the Elder as the sky-god or the sun-god; and
- (2) Horus the Younger as the child of the divine familial triad.

While the contrast of Horus the Elder against Horus the Younger was clear-cut throughout all periods and cultic centers (Kurth 1977: 999),<sup>64</sup> Horus the Elder (*hrw-wr*, also called Harwer or Haroeris) is generally regarded as a primeval being who initiated the creative process. He is also the lord of the sky whose wings span the skies and whose eyes are the sun and moon. In this form, he is regarded as the son of a sky-goddess, either Nut or Hathor (Pinch 2002: 143).

Horus the Younger belongs to the Osirian cycle, in which he is usually mentioned as the son of Isis. In this role, Horus is known as Harsiese (*hrw-z3-jst*), which literally means “Horus Son of

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<sup>64</sup> Referring to Pyramid Texts Spell 303 (Pyr. § 466a-b): *tw t hrw z3 wsjr, tw t (wnjs) | ntr smsw z3 hwt-hrw, tw t mtwt gbb* “You are Horus, the son of Osiris; you, Unis, are the senior god, the son of Hathor; you are the seed of Geb,” Frankfort claims that the two Horuses are one and the same (1978: 41). Meltzer also writes that numerous roles of Horus should be understood as different aspects of the same divine persona (2001: 119). However, Bleeker observes that while they are linked in an almost inextricable way, the two Horuses are easily distinguishable (1973: 25). Consistent distinction between the two through the usage of different epithets was not made until the New Kingdom (Barta 1973: 164).

Isis." In the cycle of the Osirian myth, Harsiese is born, nurtured, protected and raised by his devoted mother-goddess Isis who conceived him after the murder of her husband Osiris by their brother Seth. Later he grows up to avenge his father Osiris and takes his place as the legitimate ruler of Egypt. In the role of the dutiful son, Horus (Harsiese) can be compared with two other forms of Horus – (1) Horus "Iunmutef" (*hrw-jwn-mjw.t.f* "Pillar of His Mother") and (2) Harendotes (*hrw-nd-jtj.f* "Horus the Avenger of His Father"). In particular, Horus "Iunmutef" serves as the prototype for the eldest son of the deceased or a mortuary priest dressed in a leopard skin and performing a series of funerary rituals before the deceased's coffin.

It would be out of the scope of this dissertation to cover every aspect of Horus. Instead, the focus will be on establishing a pattern for Horus as a child deity. For this, the traits of Horus will be reviewed through three important stages of the deity's childhood: (1) the posthumous conception and birth of Horus; (2) Horus as an infant-child who is born and hidden after his birth by his mother-goddess in the papyrus thicket of Akhbit (the so-called "Chemmis Motif"); and (3) Horus as a youth who has grown strong enough to wrest the kingship of Egypt from Seth.

### **3.2 The Horus child pattern**

In contrast to the pattern of the sun-child representing a cyclical and reversible self-regeneration/rebirth, the pattern of the Horus child is generational in many aspects.

First, the genealogy of the Heliopolitan theology that begins with Atum and ends with Horus points to a generational transience from father to son. In the theology, the first three gods form a triad that shows a real distinction between the concept of *wmn* "being" and *hpr* "development," as

Atum remains one at the beginning and becomes three later (Morenz 1973: 145-146). This structure emphasizes Atum's role as a creative monad, as mentioned in Coffin Texts Spell 80:

**T3-1. Coffin Texts Spell 80 (CT II 39b-h)<sup>65</sup>**

<sup>39-b</sup> *jnk ʕnh nb rnpwt, ʕnh n nhh nb dt*  
<sup>39-c</sup> *jr.n tm smsw m ʒhw.f<sup>39-d</sup> m mst.f šw tfnt m jwnw*  
<sup>39-e</sup> *m wn.f wʕy m hpr.f m hmtw<sup>39-f</sup> m wpt.f gbb r nwt*  
<sup>39-g</sup> *nj msyt ht tpt, nj hpr.t psdtj pʒtj<sup>39-h</sup> wnn.sn hnʕ.j*

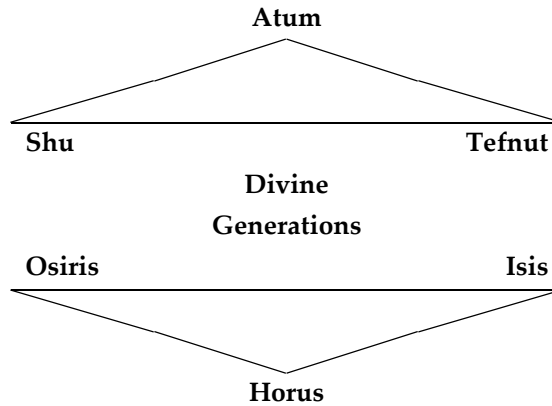
<sup>39-b</sup> I am life, lord of years, life of the Eternal Recurrence, lord of the Eternal Sameness,  
<sup>39-c</sup> Atum made the eldest through his effectiveness,  
<sup>39-d</sup> when he gave birth to Shu and Tefnut in Heliopolis,  
<sup>39-e</sup> when he was alone and developed into three,  
<sup>39-f</sup> when he parted Geb from Nut,  
<sup>39-g</sup> before the first Corps was born, before the two original Enneads developed  
<sup>39-h</sup> and were existing with me.

The Heliopolitan Ennead, which is the result of Atum's development, consists of four pairs of deities, each descending from one generation to the next, ending with a more common triadic family grouping of Osiris-Isis-Horus. This familial triad of Osiris-Isis-Horus (defined as the "cratogony" by Assmann, 2001: 121-122) demonstrates a reversed structure of the first triad of Atum-Shu-Tefnut ("cosmogony"), as shown in Fig. 3-1; it stresses the role of Horus, standing at the terminus antipodal to Atum, as a legitimate successor who symbolizes not only the next, future generation but also the fruition of the perpetual procreation (Griffiths 1973: 28).<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1973: 85; J. Allen 1988: 23.

<sup>66</sup> Concerning the creation of the Heliopolitan Ennead topped by Atum, Anthes writes that the Heliopolitan Ennead arose out of the necessity of answering the question of Horus (a new living king) succeeding Horus (the previous dead king) in the earliest period of Egyptian history (1954: 38-39). He asserts that the Heliopolitan genealogy was developed from Horus upward to Atum and not from Atum down to Horus (1959: 175). In this regard, he accepts Sethe's view that "Atum ein Erzeugnis theologischer Spekulation sei" (1958: 2). Anthes also claims that this late development is why Atum is represented as a human form with the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt (1958: 3). For the anthropomorphism of Egyptian deities, however, see Morenz 1973: 17; Hornung 1982a: 101-109 (esp. 105).



**Fig. 3-1: Antipodal structure of the Heliopolitan Ennead<sup>67</sup>**

Second, the triad of Osiris-Isis-Horus represents an ideal family as conceived by ancient Egyptians. According to te Velde, the triadic structures found in Egyptian religious thought are generated to answer the question of the divine plurality and unity (1971: 80). These structures can be further divided into two types: monistic and pluralistic. He observes that a pluralistic triad, as opposed to a monistic triad (or trinity), usually takes a familial structure of father-mother-child because the sexual differentiation (or “binary opposition”) in the structure makes impossible a return to a unity (e.g. the unity of Amun-Re in which one god remains as an indweller of another).<sup>68</sup> The union of man and woman is not restrictive but productive, and this leads to the birth of a child, who is, as a rule, a son. The son, usually the Horus child, represents the pharaoh who is the ideal man (*ibid.* 80-83).<sup>69</sup> In this pattern, the masculine element is doubled in the father-son relationship and the binary opposition is also repeated in the mother-son relationship.

However, what is important here is that the father-son relationship does not form a cooperative

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<sup>67</sup> Note te Velde’s view that another male-female coupling of Seth and Nephthys brought forth by the union of Geb and Nut disturbs the harmonious development of creation (1967: 27, 49). Moreover, the couple is hardly regarded as an ideal divine pair as in the case of Osiris and Isis, and Nephthys is almost always linked to Isis as an inseparable companion (*ibid.* 29). For details regarding the marriage of Seth and Nephthys, see Klasens 1952: 86.

<sup>68</sup> For this kind of relationship between two deities, see Hornung 1982a: 91-99.

<sup>69</sup> It is confirmed by the fact that the pharaoh could form the third member of this pluralistic triad (te Velde 1971: 83).



pair (as in the case of the mother-daughter relationship) but the son replaces his father in a generational succession (*ibid.* 84, 86).

Third, at the final stage of his childhood, Horus is to grow into manhood and wrest the kingship of Egypt from Seth.<sup>70</sup> With scattered references to the quarrel between the two powers attested already in the Pyramid Texts (e.g. Pyr. § 1463a-e), the conflict of Horus and Seth refers to the burial of the deceased father and the coronation of his son, which validates the succession from father to son.<sup>71</sup> In this cycle of the myth, Horus, who emerges triumphant at the end, is apparently not the same as Osiris who is killed at the beginning of the narrative. Even after Horus ascends to the throne as a legitimate successor, Osiris does not return to the world but achieves a new form of existence in the beyond through the victory and piety of his son (Assmann 2001: 145).<sup>72</sup> The generational relationship between Osiris and Horus is also confirmed at the kingship level, where the deceased king is usually identified with Osiris and the living king with Horus.

The generational nature of the Horus child pattern will be reviewed in detail through the aforementioned stages of his childhood. Aimed at deriving the viable pattern of the Horus child, this chapter will concentrate on the early stages of this child deity.

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<sup>70</sup> For the comprehensive study of the myth about the conflict between Horus and Seth, see Griffiths 1960. While there is no direct evidence regarding adolescent initiation rites in ancient Egypt, the struggle of Horus can be regarded as a royal ordeal designed to test and bring young Horus or the future king through the crisis of puberty to adulthood (Roberts 1995: 100). For the public rituals marking the transition between childhood and adult life, see Janssen 1990: 90-98.

<sup>71</sup> Before the coronation, Horus carries out a series of rituals for his deceased father Osiris, including the Opening of the Mouth and the raising of the *djed* pillar. These acts correspond to the royal funerary rituals performed by the heir of the deceased king to ensure the previous king's survival after death. These rites not only enable Osiris to achieve the transformation and take his new role as king of the dead, but also confirm Horus in his role as king of the living (Pinch 2002: 84-85).

<sup>72</sup> According to Assmann, it corresponds to the so-called "piety constellation (*Konstellation der Pietät*)," in which a son like Horus and Hamlet always remains conscious of the afterlife and takes on the responsibilities of a dutiful son before his deceased father (1991: 116).

### 3.3 Horus child and his parent deities

The representation of Horus as a child first appeared in the Valley of the Queens by the end of the New Kingdom (Sandri 2006: 16). While the Horus child may appear in the form of a falcon according to some textual sources including Coffin Texts Spell 148 (see T3-5 below: Griffiths 1960: 53), the Horus child is also depicted as a human child in others such as Pyramid Texts Spell 378 (Pyr. §§ 663c-664a): *nhj n hrw hrd nhn db<sup>c</sup>.f m r.f, (ttj) pw hm hrw hrd nhn db<sup>c</sup>.f m r.f* “The *nhj*-snake is for Horus, the young boy with his finger in his mouth. Teti is Horus, the young boy with his finger in his mouth.”

A direct allusion to his genealogy as the son of Osiris and Isis is found already in Pyramid Texts Spell 519 (Pyr. §§ 1214b-1215b): ... *n jst wrt t3zt mdh m 3h-bjt, jn.s d3jw.s sjd.s tp-<sup>c</sup>wj z3.s hrw hrd nhn, d3.f t3 m tbtwtj.f hd.tj, j.sm.f jr m33 jt(j).f wsjr* “... for great Isis – she who tied the headband in Akhbit, using her dress and censuring before her son Horus the young boy so that he might cross the land in his white sandals and go to see his father Osiris.”<sup>73</sup>

#### 3.3.1 Mother goddesses of Horus

Besides Isis, Hathor and Nut are also mentioned as the mother of Horus (Kurth 1977: 1001).

Hathor as the mother of Horus is mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 303 (Pyr. §§ 466a-b): *twt hrw z3 wsjr, twt (wnjs) ntr smsw z3 hwt-hrw, twt mtwt gbb* “You are Horus, the son of Osiris; you, Unis, are the senior god, the son of Hathor; you are the seed of Geb.” Some Egyptologists believe that

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<sup>73</sup> As mentioned, the reference to the genealogy of Horus is found already in the Pyramid Texts, and Frankfort claims that the aspect of Horus as “son of Isis” is attested as early as in the First Dynasty (1978: 44). However, the term Harsiese is completely absent in the Pyramid Texts (Garnot 1954: 124), and therefore the recognition of the Horus child may not have been common in the early periods (Hollis 1994: 84). Some scholars believe that the aspect of Horus as the son of Osiris and Isis may have been first established when the Osirian cycle was incorporated into the Heliopolitan theology (Anthes 1959: 199-202; Bergman 1968: 135). Griffiths observes that Horus might not belong to the Osirian cycle originally and that the deity was later made into a child of the divine family in order to fit him in to the framework of the cycle (1960: 15, 20-21).

Hathor was the original mother of Horus and later she was replaced by Isis when a genealogical adjustment was made in order to fit Horus in to the Osirian cycle (Sethe 1930: 54-55; Griffiths 1960: 13; Tassie 2005: 67). Others hold the view that Hathor, who personalizes the concept of heavenly motherhood, was regarded as the mother of Horus the Elder (or the sun-god) and as the wet nurse or foster mother of Horus the Younger (Barta 1973: 163; Bleeker 1973: 25; Pinch 2002: 80).<sup>74</sup>

Given that the king was considered an earthly embodiment of Horus, Frankfort's observation merits our attention in the understanding of the relationship of Horus with Hathor and Isis as his mother goddesses (1978: 173): *"If, on the other hand, the king's origin was considered, not from the point of view of legitimacy (for then he was Horus son of Osiris) or from that of actuality (for then he was Horus son of Isis), but from the point of view of his faculties and potentialities – his divinity, in short – then he appeared in the fullness (sic) of his power, the embodiment of that great cosmological figure who embraced sky, sun and moon, clouds and wind in one exuberant image, Horus the son of Hathor."*

Therefore, it can be said that when Hathor – as her name "Enclosure of Horus" indicates – is understood as the mother of Horus, she is the mother of Horus the Elder, who is the sky-god and the sun-god.<sup>75</sup> In the same context, Nut also appears as the mother of Horus the Elder (Kees 1929:

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<sup>74</sup> Barta claims that Hathor in this role represents a localized part of the sky (Pyr. § 1327b). Hathor as the foster mother has to do with the depiction of kings on temple walls as the Horus child being washed or suckled by a cow in the marshes. Hathor in this role has a great significance in that royal children were usually raised by foster mothers. For the suckling of the royal child by Hathor, see Bleeker 1973: 51-52. For the prominent position of royal wet-nurses, see Janssen 1990: 17-18. Also, a parallel is noted by many scholars between the motif of the Horus child and the biblical tradition of Moses who was hidden in a floating basket among rushes and then given to his own mother to be nursed.

<sup>75</sup> Based on his interpretation of *hwt-hrw* as "house/realm of Horus," Goedicke points out that Hathor is the personification of the ordered universe or the domain where Horus rules (1970: 262, 1975: 208). Meanwhile, Hollis assumes that the role of Hathor as the vault of heaven or the "playground" of Horus the Elder might have led by a new relationship to Re. Her importance as the consort or the heavenly sea across which Re sailed in his daily journey increased along with the increased prominence of Re himself and probably led to

107; Barta 1973: 163). However, Isis is, as mentioned earlier, relatively firmly established as the mother of Horus the Younger even though her relationship with Osiris as his consort remained obscure until the Sixth Dynasty (B. Lesko 1999: 158-159). In this regard, Hollis points out that only two out of 25 references in the Pyramid Texts, in which Isis appears alone without her sister Nephthys, speak of her in connection with Osiris (1994: 82-83). In addition, Pinch writes that the role of Isis remained marginal at the important cultic centers of Osiris until the New Kingdom (2002: 150). However, J. Allen notes that there are many references to Isis in the Pyramid Texts, who appears alone as sister and wife of Osiris.<sup>76</sup> (Details on the roles of Isis as the mother of Horus will be discussed in the following sections.<sup>77</sup>) Later other universal mother-goddesses such as Nut, Amaunet, Neith and Mut were gradually conflated with Isis, and she was regarded as the mother of all gods (Bergman 1968: 133, note 2).<sup>78</sup>

### ***3.3.2 Father gods of Horus***

When it comes to the father-god, Atum, Geb and Re can all be counted as the father of Horus. But it would be reasonable to see their fatherly role as that of an ancestor god of Horus, since their role is mostly granting their creative power and heritage to the legitimate heir (Barta 1973: 162-163).<sup>79</sup> Therefore, the relationship between those fatherly gods and Horus should be distinguished from the exclusive father-son relationship between Osiris and Horus, in which the

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an eclipse of Neith during the Third and Fourth Dynasties (1994: 49, 84-85, note 9). For Mesopotamian and Greek equivalents of Hathor, see Springborg 1990: 135.

<sup>76</sup> I would like to thank Professor J. Allen for the comment. For examples, see Pyr. § 3b; Pyr. § 32b; Pyr. § 155a; Pyr. § 172a; Pyr. § 632a; Pyr. § 1199c; Pyr. § 1521b; Pyr. § 1630c; Pyr. §§ 1635b-1636a.

<sup>77</sup> For the motherly roles of Isis, see Münster 1968: 5-12.

<sup>78</sup> Renenutet, a cobra-goddess of fertility and harvest, is the mother-goddess of Nepri, the personification of corn, who was equated with Osiris, the corn-god. The apparent parallel between Isis and the Horus child and Renenutet and Nepri led to a merging of the two goddesses during the Late Period when they were worshipped as Isermnithis (Leibovitch 1953: 105-106).

<sup>79</sup> It is noteworthy that Isis gradually pushed Osiris into the background along with the growing importance of Harsiese in the Late Period. Therefore, when the two parents of Horus were mentioned, the epithet "son of Isis" usually took precedence over "son of Osiris" (Bergman 1968: 137, note 2).

two deities become reciprocally effective through their roles as a divine father and a dutiful son (Friedman 1985: 41-45).

### 3.4 Posthumous conception and birth

In the pattern of the generational succession, the most salient aspect should be the apparent sexual union of the male and female principles – in other words, the (implied) sexual intercourse of the two and the reception of the seed from the male, as opposed to the conception through abnormal ways such as swallowing in the case of the sun-child. Therefore, the pattern of the generational succession can develop only through the combination of the two sexual principles, which always results in a triad of two parent gods and a divine child who symbolizes the next, future generation and the terminus of the perpetual procreation (Manniche 1994: 54).<sup>80</sup> This generational pattern made possible by a sexual union of the two principles can be encountered through numerous references to the posthumous conception and birth of Horus. One of the early texts describes the birth of Horus from Isis as Sothis.<sup>81</sup>

### T3-2. Pyramid Texts Spell 366 (Pyr. §§ 632a-d)<sup>82</sup>

<sup>632-a</sup> *j n.k snt.k jst, ḥꜥꜥ.t(j) n mrwt.k*

<sup>632-b</sup> *dj.n.k s(j) tp ḥms.k*

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<sup>80</sup> As mentioned earlier, that is why the pharaoh sometimes replaces Horus as the third member of the divine triad (te Velde 1971: 83).

<sup>81</sup> For the role of Isis as Sothis, see B. Lesko (1999: 156-160). The emergence of the star from behind the sun in the middle of summer marked the start of the Nile's annual inundation. B. Lesko observes that: (1) the death of Osiris, the god of regeneration, was seen in the wilting and drying off of the fields during the hot and dry season before the inundation; (2) the resurrection of Osiris became apparent with the coming of the inundation caused by his wife Isis. According to the second observation, Osiris is identified with the inundation itself and Isis serves as the star that calls forth the inundation, thus remaining as the indispensable female principle of reviving and sustaining life and defying death. In this way, Isis becomes synonymous with fertility and abundance.

<sup>82</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1969: 120-121; J. Allen 2005a: 81. The reference of the concept of Horus in Pyramid Texts Spell 593 (Pyr. §§ 1635b-1636b) is identical with Pyramid Texts Spell 366 (Pyr. § 632a-d) except for the final sentence (Pyr. § 1636b): *m rn.f n ḥrw jm(j) spdt* "in his name of Horus in Sothis."

<sup>632-c</sup> *pr mtwt.k jm.s, spd.t(j) m spdt*

<sup>632-d</sup> *ḥrw spd pr.(w) jm.k m ḥrw jm(j) spdt*

<sup>632-a</sup> Your sister Isis has come to you, excited [for] love of you.

<sup>632-b</sup> You have put her on your phallus

<sup>632-c</sup> so your seed emerged into her, sharp as Sothis

<sup>632-d</sup> and sharp Horus has emerged from you as Horus who is in Sothis.<sup>83</sup>

It should be noted that Horus was conceived posthumously, as Isis used her magic to call forth her husband's latent life force and achieved a mysterious conception. In this regard, some scholars proposed that the posthumous birth of Horus might be the result of parthenogenesis, based on a passage in the second line of the Late-Period Papyrus Louvre 3079.

### T3-3. Papyrus Louvre 3079<sup>84</sup>

<sup>1.</sup> *jnk snt.k jst*

<sup>2.</sup> *nn wn ntr jr jr.n.j ntrt r-pw*

<sup>3.</sup> *jr.n.j t3j jw.j m ḥmt* <sup>4.</sup> *m-mrwt s<sup>c</sup>nh rn.k ḥrj-tp t3*

<sup>5.</sup> *mw.k ntr m-ḥnw ht.j*

<sup>6.</sup> *rd.n.j sw ḥr s3 t3* <sup>7.</sup> *nd.f qdw.k* <sup>8.</sup> *snb.f mn.k* <sup>9.</sup> *wd.f qnw r jr s(j)*<sup>85</sup>

<sup>10.</sup> *stš ḥr.(w) n š<sup>c</sup>d.f* <sup>11.</sup> *sm3jt stš zb.(w) n stš*

<sup>12.</sup> *nst n gbb n.k*

<sup>13.</sup> *ntk z3.f mrw.f*

<sup>1.</sup> I am your sister Isis.

<sup>2.</sup> There is no god who can do what I have done, nor goddess.

<sup>3.</sup> I have made a male although I am (only) a woman

<sup>4.</sup> in order to make your name alive on the earth.

<sup>5.</sup> Your divine water (semen) was within my belly.

<sup>6.</sup> I have put it on the back of the earth <sup>7.</sup> so that it may rescue your form,

<sup>8.</sup> so that it may make healthy your illness,

<sup>9.</sup> so that it may command *qnw* against one who did it.

<sup>10.</sup> Seth having fallen to his cutting, <sup>11.</sup> the confederates of Seth having been sent to Seth,

<sup>12.</sup> The throne of Geb belongs to you;

<sup>83</sup> For Horus as Sothis, see Griffiths 1960: 15, 150, note 1.

<sup>84</sup> For the text, see Spiegelberg 1917: 94-95. For translations, see Spiegelberg 1917: 95; Griffiths 1960: 104.

<sup>85</sup> Emend *ḥd.t(j).f(j)* into *wd.f* and read *jw* as *r*. While Spiegelberg translates *qnw* as an "act of violence" ("Gewalttat"), the exact meanings of the word is not clear.

13. You are his son, his beloved one.

With regard to the sentence in the Line 3: *jr.n.j t3j jw.j m hmt* "I have made a male although I am (only) a woman," Spiegelberg interpreted the word *t3j* "man" as "begetter" based on the phallus determinative (D53).<sup>86</sup> However, he also writes (1917: 96) that "*sie (Isis) den Samen des Osiris lange nach seinem Tode ... in ihrem Leibe zur Entwicklung brachte.*" As Griffiths points out (1960: 105), this confirms that the seed of Osiris is still the origin of Horus. Another Pyramid Texts Spell supports the impregnation of Isis by Osiris:

#### T3-4. Pyramid Texts Spell 518 (Pyr. §§ 1199a-c)<sup>87</sup>

<sup>1199-a</sup> *h<sup>c</sup> jr.k wsjr*

<sup>1199-b</sup> *wd.k (pjpj) pn n hr(j)w shm wd3-jb mhtj sh<sup>t</sup>-htp*

<sup>1199-c</sup> *mr wd.k hrw n jst hrw (pw) swr.n.k s(j) jm*

<sup>1199-a</sup> So stand up, Osiris.

<sup>1199-b</sup> and commend this Pepi to those over the causeway "Sound of Heart, north of the Marsh of Rest"

<sup>1199-c</sup> like you commended Horus to Isis on the day you impregnated her.

In this spell, the phrase *mr wd.k hrw n jst* "like you commended Horus to Isis" means that Osiris commended his son into the womb of his mother (Münster 1968: 6).<sup>88</sup> The spell demonstrates that the conception and parentage of Horus were fully established already in the Old Kingdom.

During the Middle Kingdom and later, those concepts are further elaborated, as shown in Coffin Texts Spell 148:

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<sup>86</sup> Regarding this unusual passage, Manniche regards it something miraculous, if not as astonishing as immaculate conception, and comes up with an interesting interpretation (1994: 54-55): "*By playing 'the part of man,' Isis assumed the conventional male position in intercourse, thereby becoming, in Egyptian mythology, the closest we have to a creator goddess.*" Meanwhile, Griffiths believes that the sentence suggests that Isis was responsible for both aspects of the sexual act by reviving the dead Osiris (1960: 105).

<sup>87</sup> For translations, see Faulkner 1969: 191-192; J. Allen 2005a: 160.

<sup>88</sup> In the legend of the divine conception of the pharaohs, Amun also puts a son in the womb of the queen (Brunner 1964: 43).

**T3-5. Coffin Texts Spell 148 (CT II 209c-226a)<sup>89</sup>**

- 209-c *jrt ḥprw m bjk*  
 209-d *qj sšd, snd ntrw*  
 210-a *rs jst bk3.t(j) ḥr mtwt sn.s wsjr*  
 210-b *tz.n.s s(j) ḥmt wn.t(j)*  
 210-c *jb.s ndm.(w) m mtwt sn.s wsjr*  
 211-a *dd.s wy ntrw*  
 211-b *jnk jst snt wsjr rmt ḥr (j)t(j) ntrw*  
 211-c *wsjr wp šꜣwt t3wj*  
 211-d *jw mtwt.f m-ḥnw 212-a ḥt.j*  
 212-b *t(3)z.n jr w ntr m swḥt 212-c m z3.j ḥntj psdt*  
 212-d *ḥq3.t(j).f t3 pn, jwꜣ.t(j).f gbb*  
 213-a *mdw.t(j).f ḥr (j)t(j).f*  
 213-b *sm3.t(j).f stḥ ḥfi(j) n (j)t(j).f wsjr*  
 213-c *my ntrw jr.tn mkwt.f m-ḥnw jdt*  
 214-a *rḥ m jb.tn 214-b nb.tn js pw ntr pn jmj swḥt.f*  
 214-c *tfr jr w nb ntrw*  
 214-d *ꜣ3.sn nfr.sn*  
 215-a *ḥw šwtj ḥsbd*  
 215-b *jḥ.j.(w) jn rꜥ-tm s3 jb.t ḥmt*  
 215-c *j.rḥ.t n(j) jr.f mj jšst 215-d ntr js 216-a pw nb jwꜣ(w) psdt*  
 216-b *jrj.t n(j) r.f m-ḥnw swḥt*  
 216-c *jnk jst 3ḥt špst r ntrw*  
 216-d *jw ntr m-ḥnw 217-a ḥt.j tn, 217-b mtwt wsjr pw*  
 217-c *dd.jn rꜥ-tm 217-d jwr.t sdḥ.t ḥnwt pw jwr.t mss.t r ntrw*  
 217-e *wnt mtwt wsjr js pw*  
 217-f *jm jw rqw pw sm3 (j)t(j).f*  
 217-g *sd.f swḥt m-ḥnw nḥn.s*  
 218-a *nr r.f wr-ḥk3w*  
 218-b *sḏm nw ntrw j.t(j) jn jst dd.n rꜥ-tm nb ḥwt-ꜣḥmw*  
 218-c *wḏ.n.f n.j 218-d mkt z3.j m-ḥnw ḥt.j*  
 218-e *t(3)z.n.f šnwt ḥ3.f m-ḥnw jdt.j tn*  
 219-a *rḥ.f jwꜣw wsjr js pw*  
 219-b *dy s3 bjk jmj ḥt.j tn jn rꜥ-tm nb ntrw*  
 219-c *mj prj ḥr t3 219-d dj.j n.k j3(w)*  
 219-e *šms tw šmsw (j)t(j).k wsjr*  
 219-f *jr.j rn.k 220-a ph.n.k 3ḥt sw3.t(j) ḥr snbw ḥwt jmn-rn*

<sup>89</sup> For translations and philological analyses, see Griffiths 1960: 52-53 (up to CT II 225b); Faulkner 1968: 40-44, 1973: 125-127; Gilula 1971: 14-19; O'Connell 1983: 66-87. For comments regarding the spell, see Hannig 1990: 91-95.



220-b *pr phtj m-hnw jf:j*  
 220-c *ph.n 3t m-hnw jf:j*  
 220-d *ph.n 3t ks:f*  
 220-e *sqd j3hw* 221-a *jr.n.f st.f ds.f* 221-b *hms.(w) m hnt ntrw m šnwt wh<sup>c</sup>*  
 221-c *bjk s3.j hrw hms r.k m t3 pn* 221-d *n (j)t(j).k wsjr*  
 221-e *m rn.k pw n bjk hr(j) zbnw hwt jmn-rn*  
 221-f *dbh.j wnn.k* 222-a *m šmsw r<sup>c</sup>-3ht m-h3t wj3 p3t nhh dt*  
 222-b *h3 jst r wh<sup>c</sup> jn hrw*  
 222-c *dbh.n jst wnn.f m wh<sup>c</sup> m šsmw nhh*  
 222-d *m3 jr.tn hrw ntr*  
 222-e *jnk hrw bjk <sup>c</sup>3* 223-a *hrj snbw hwt jmn-rn*  
 223-b *ph.n <sup>c</sup>ht.j 3ht* 223-c *sw3.n.j ntrw nwt*  
 223-d *shnt.j st.j r p3wtjw*  
 223-e *nj ph.n j33w <sup>c</sup>ht.j tpt*  
 224-a *w3 st.j r sth hft(j) n (j)t(j).j wsjr*  
 224-b *jn.n.j w3wt nhh n <sup>c</sup>ndw*  
 224-c *tn.j m* 224-d *<sup>c</sup>ht.j*  
 224-e *nn ntr jr jrt.n.j*  
 224-f *3d.j r hft(j) n (j)t(j).j wsjr*  
 224-g *dy hr tbwt.j* 225-a *m rn.j pw n 3dmw*  
 225-b *jnk hrw ms.n jst jry mkt.f m-hnw swht*  
 225-c *nj 3d wj* 225-d *hh n r.tn*  
 225-e *nj ph.n wj ddt.tn r.j*  
 225-f *jnk hrw w3 st r r(m)t(w) r ntrw*  
 226-a *jnk hrw z3 jst*

209-c MAKING TRANSFORMATION AS A FALCON.

209-d The lightning-flash has struck, the gods have become afraid.<sup>90</sup>

210-a Isis has woken pregnant with the seed of her brother Osiris.

210-b The woman has raised herself hastily,

210-c her heart being sweet with the seed of her brother Osiris.

211-a saying: "Oh, gods. 211-b I am Isis, the sister of Osiris, who wept for the father of the gods,

211-c Osiris who parted the slaughtering of the Two Lands.

211-d His seed is within 212-a my body.

212-b The shape of the god has knit together in the egg 212-c as my son,  
 the foremost of the Ennead,

212-d who will rule this land and who will inherit from Geb,

213-a and who will contend over his father

213-b and who will slay Seth, the enemy of his father Osiris.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Faulkner believes that Isis is impregnated by a lightning flash (1968: 41, note 2). B. Lesko comments that this reminds us of the later story of Zeus and Semele, except for the fact that Isis survived (1999: 289, note 9).

213-c Come, gods, and make his protection within the womb.  
 214-a Know in your heart that <sup>214-b</sup> he is your lord, this god who is in his egg,  
 214-c *tfrr* of form, the lord of gods<sup>92</sup>  
 214-d their greatest, their most perfect<sup>93</sup>  
 215-a who waves the two lapis-lazuli plumes."<sup>94</sup>  
 215-b "Oh," said Re-Atum, "Let your heart become wise, woman.  
 215-c How do you know <sup>215-d</sup> whether he is a god, <sup>216-a</sup> the lord, the heir of the Ennead  
 216-b so that you make his respect inside the egg?"  
 216-c "I am Isis, more effective and august than the gods.  
 216-d A god is within <sup>217-a</sup> this body of mine. <sup>217-b</sup> He is the seed of Osiris."  
 217-c Then Re-Atum said,  
 217-d "As you are pregnant, it means, young lady, that you should conceal from the gods  
 (the fact) that you have conceived and that you will give birth.  
 217-e and that it is the seed of Osiris  
 217-f so that this enemy who killed his father may not come  
 217-g and break the egg within its infancy,  
 218-a the one whom the Great of Magic (Seth) should respect."<sup>95</sup>  
 218-b "Hear this, gods," said Isis, "that which Re-Atum, the lord of the Enclosure of Images has said.  
 218-c He has commanded to me <sup>218-d</sup> the protection of my son within my body,  
 218-e He has knit together an entourage about him within this womb of mine  
 219-a for he knows that he is the heir of Osiris.<sup>96</sup>  
 219-b The amulet of the falcon that is in this body of mine has been placed by Re-Atum,  
 lord of the gods."  
 219-c "Please come out on the earth <sup>219-d</sup> so that I may give you praise  
 219-e so that the followers of your father Osiris may follow you.  
 219-f I will make your name <sup>220-a</sup> when you have reached *akh*  
 and passed by the Ramparts of the Enclosure of the Hidden of the Name.

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<sup>91</sup> Gilula sees *t(3)z.n jrw ntr* as the emphatic *sdm.n.f* (1971: 14, 16, note 9). Note that his translation is different from mine: "and it is as the son of the foremost of the Ennead who will rule this land and who will become heir to Geb and who will speak for his father and who will slay Seth, the enemy of his father Osiris, that I have moulded the shape of the god within (my) egg."

<sup>92</sup> For the interpretation of *tfrr* as "blue-black hair," see Faulkner 1968: 42, note 8.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. the reading *3 nfr(w).sn* in S2P, S1P and S1Chass. Faulkner (1968: 40, 42, note 9) and Gilula (1971: 14, 17, note 12) translated the sentence "great and beautiful are the barbs (?) of the two blue plumes," seeing the suffix pronoun *-sn* refers to either *jr* "forms" or *hw* "barbs(?)." Meanwhile, O'Connell regarded the two as the circumstantial *sdm.f* (1983: 72, 73): "when they [the gods] are great and they are full."

<sup>94</sup> Faulkner assumes *hw* to be the 'barbs' or feathery part of a plume as distinct from the stem (1968: 42, note 9).

<sup>95</sup> For the identification of the Great of Magic with Seth, see Münster 1968: 7, note 113 (Pyr § 204a); J. Allen 2005a: 431.

<sup>96</sup> Gilula took the two sentences (218c-e) as the emphatic Perfect Relative *sdm.n.f* (1971: 14, 18, notes 21 and 22). Note that his translation is different from mine: "It is within my body (womb) that he has decreed for me the protection of my son and it is within this womb of mine that he has arranged an entourage around him."

220-b Strength has come out from inside my flesh  
 220-c and the power (Osiris) has reached within my flesh,<sup>97</sup>  
 220-d and the power has reached its range (?).  
 220-e The sunshine shall sail forth <sup>221-a</sup> when he has made his own place,  
 221-b and is seated at the foremost of the gods in the entourage of the Fisherman (the sun-god).<sup>98</sup>  
 221-c “Falcon, my son Horus, dwell in this land <sup>221-d</sup> of your father Osiris  
 221-e in this your name of Falcon that is on the Ramparts of the Enclosure  
 of the Hidden One of the Name.<sup>99</sup>  
 221-f I will ask that you will be <sup>222-a</sup> in the suite of Re of the *akhet* in the prow of the bark  
 of the Primeval Time for ever and ever.”  
 222-b Isis went down to the Fisherman after Horus was brought<sup>100</sup>  
 222-c and Isis asked that he will be the Fisherman as the leader of eternity.  
 222-d “Behold Horus, gods!  
 222-e I am Horus, the Great Falcon <sup>223-a</sup> that is upon the Ramparts of the Enclosure  
 of the Hidden of Name.  
 223-b My flight has reached the *akhet* <sup>223-c</sup> and I have surpassed the gods of Nut.  
 223-d I will promote my position more than that of the primeval gods.  
 223-e The Combatant cannot reach my first flight  
 224-a so my place is farther than Seth, the enemy of my father Osiris.<sup>101</sup>  
 224-b I have used the paths of the Eternal Recurrence to the dawn.  
 224-c I have become distinguished in <sup>224-d</sup> my flight.  
 224-e There is no god who can do what I have done.  
 224-f My wrath is against the enemy of my father Osiris <sup>224-g</sup> placed under my sandal  
 225-a in this my name of “Avenger.”<sup>102</sup>  
 225-b I am Horus, born of Isis, whose protection was made within the egg.  
 225-c/d The fiery blast of your mouth will not catch me,  
 225-e and what you will say against me cannot reach me.  
 225-f I am Horus, more distant of place than people and gods.  
 226-a I am Horus son of Isis.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> O’Connell explains that *ʒt* is not the same type of power as *phṯy* (CT II 220b) and here refers to the surging energy of the childbirth pains of Isis (1983: 80). In addition, as for *ks.f* “its range (?)” Gilula (1971: 18, note 31) and O’Connell (1983: 80) suggest that *ks* may have some meaning of “endurance” and translate the sentence as “the power has reached its limit (?),” referring to the labor in giving birth to Horus.

<sup>98</sup> Faulkner read *wḥꜥ* as “Releaser (?)” or “Redeemer (?)” (1968: 43, note 24). Meanwhile, O’Connell assumes that it might refer to the “primeval bark of the entourage of Re-Akhty” (1983: 80).

<sup>99</sup> For the significance of the epithet *bjk hr(j) sbnw ḥwt jmn-rn* “Falcon that is on the Ramparts of the Enclosure of the Hidden of the Name,” see Gilula 1982: 263-265.

<sup>100</sup> It can be also translated as “Isis has gone down to the Fisherman who brought Horus.”

<sup>101</sup> Regarding the word *jʒʒw* “Combatant,” Faulkner (1968: 43, note 29) and O’Connell (1983: 81) propose the general field of meaning as “contender,” “adversary,” or “aggressor.”

<sup>102</sup> Faulkner (1968: 43, note 30) and O’Connell (1983: 81) assume that the word *ʒdmw* “Avenger” is related to *ʒd* “aggressive” through a “bad pun.”

<sup>103</sup> In S1P and S1Chass, it is *zʒ wsjr* “son of Osiris.”

As the spell does not elaborate on the process of the posthumous conception of Horus, the focus here should be on the role of Isis who makes sure that her child comes forth from her womb (219c) and proclaims his destiny as the successor of Osiris (220e-221e). Her role in this spell reminds us of what she did for the children of Rud-djedet in the Papyrus Westcar (Münster 1968: 8).<sup>104</sup> Her ability to proclaim the fortune of newborn children is similar to that of the Seven Hathors encountered in Late Egyptian narratives such as the Tale of Doomed Prince and the Tale of Two Brothers (B. Lesko 1999: 180).<sup>105</sup> For the details of the posthumous conception, we need to turn to a New Kingdom hymn that contains the most comprehensive account of the Osirian myth outside of Greek sources (Lichtheim 1976: 81):

### T3-6. Louvre C 286 (The Great Hymn to Osiris on the Stela of Amenmose)<sup>106</sup>

<sup>(13.)</sup> ...*jr.n snt.f mkt.f shryt hrwjw*

<sup>14.</sup> *shmt zpw šd hrw m 3hw r.s*  
*jqrt ns nj whj.n mdw.s*  
*mnht wd-mdw*

...

*jst 3ht ndt sn.s, h(j)h(j)t sw jwtt b(3)gg.s*

<sup>15.</sup> *phrt t3 pn m h3yt*  
*nj hn.n.s nj gmt.s sw*  
*jrt šwyt m šwyt.s*  
*shprt t3w m dnhwj.s*  
*jrt hnw m(j)nt sn.s*

<sup>16.</sup> *stzt nnw n wrd.(w)-jb*  
*hnpt mw.f, jrt jw<sup>c</sup>w,*  
*šdt nhn m w<sup>c</sup>w nj rh bw.fjm*  
*bst sw <sup>c</sup>.fnht.w m hnw wsh<sup>t</sup> <sup>17.</sup>gbb*

<sup>(13.)</sup> ... His sister provided his protection, she who drove away enemies,

<sup>104</sup> For Isis giving the name of each child of Rud-djedet, see p.Berlin 3033 10, 7-11, 3. It is noteworthy that it is Isis who gives names to the newborn children in Papyrus Westcar but it is Meskenet who grants them the kingship (p.Berlin 3033 10, 12-11, 1). For the proclamation of a person's fate at the time of his/her birth, see Feucht 1995: 104-107.

<sup>105</sup> Her role in proclaiming a person's fortune eventually elevated her to the position of savior goddess. For Isis as the Goddess of Fate in later periods, see Bleeker 1963: 1-16; Bergman 1967: 35-51; Witt 1971: 25-35.

<sup>106</sup> For the text, see Moret 1931: 739-748. For translations, see Moret 1931: 739-748; Lichtheim 1976: 83-84; Assmann 1999: 479-480; B. Lesko 1999: 171-172.

14. she who made a stop to the deeds of the disturber (?) by the spells of her mouth,  
excellent of tongue whose speech cannot fail (to be effective),  
effective of the governance (literally, the word of command),

...

effective Isis who protected her brother, who sought him, tirelessly,

15. who traveled around this land in mourning.

She could not alight before she found him,

who made a shade with her plumage,

who created a breeze with her two wings,

who made *henu* and who buried her brother,<sup>107</sup>

16. who lifted up the inertness of the weary-hearted,

who seized his semen (literally, water), who produced an heir,

who suckled the child in solitude, the place where he was<sup>108</sup> being unknown,

who brought him when his arm was strong into the Broad Hall of Geb.

The posthumous birth of Horus was made possible by Isis using her powerful magic to extract the creative power of the dead Osiris (creating a breeze and lifting up the inertness of Osiris) and bring Horus into life (Münster 1968: 5).<sup>109</sup> Given that the result of this process can be attributed to the latent life-force in Osiris, the Horus child not only serves as the living evidence of the vitality of Osiris (Björkman 1977: 1018), but he may also represent the *nhh*-element emerging out of the *dt*-element, which reminds us of the pattern of manifestation and reconstitution realized through the union of the sun-god and Osiris (see EXCURSUS 2-2).

### 3.5 Chemmis motif

The toponym *ḥ-bjt(j)* “Akhbit” (rendered Chemmis in Greek) means “the papyrus thicket of the Lower Egyptian king” located in the north Delta near Buto (Bergman 1968: 137; J. Allen 2005a:

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<sup>107</sup> For the *henu* gesture (A8), see R. Wilkinson 1994: 16-17; Betrò 1996: 39.

<sup>108</sup> Note that it should be *bw ntj.fjm*, rather than *bw.fjm* in the text.

<sup>109</sup> The role of Isis (as a kestrel) who used her wings to fan the breath of life into Osiris and revive the sexual power of Osiris is comparable to that of the Hand Goddess who aroused the penis of the creator god to create the first life (Pinch 2002: 80).

425).<sup>110</sup> Horus was concealed by his mother from his enemies inside the papyrus thicket or on a floating island (Fig. 3-2).<sup>111</sup>

In the Horus child pattern, Isis faithfully fulfils her caring role as a protective divine mother, which clearly contrasts with the mother of the sun-child who merely serves as a matrix of rebirth/rejuvenation.<sup>112</sup> At the birth of Horus in Akhbit, Isis, as an ideal mother, provides Horus with the care typically given to a newborn baby in ancient Egypt.<sup>113</sup> This includes (1) naming, (2) washing, (3) suckling, and (4) protecting the divine infant from various dangers.



**Fig. 3-2: Horus in the papyrus thicket of Chemmis**

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<sup>110</sup> For Akhbit as the birthplace of Horus, see Pyr. § 1703c; Pyr. §§ 1214b-1215b (see the text quoted above); Pyr. §§ 2190a-2191b (see the text quoted below); CT IV 91e-f; CT IV 37h (also Pe as the place of his conception: *jwr.j m p ms.j m 3h-bjt* "I was conceived in Pe and born in Akhbit"); CT IV 37g.

<sup>111</sup> For Isis seeking a secret place to conceal Horus, see the Book of the Dead Chapter 157, 1: *jj.n jst hns.n.s njwwt d<sup>r</sup>.n.s swt st3w.(t) n hrw m pr(t).f m jdhww.f hr.f nhs.(w)* "Isis has come and traversed towns, having searched for secret places for Horus when he goes forth from the swamp with his face being awake (?)." The idea of protecting Horus in a secret place is comparable to the emergence of the sun-child from the lotus, who had to be protected by a primeval goddess from the monstrous inhabitants of the primeval waters (Pinch 2002: 146).

<sup>112</sup> It is true that the sun-god is also purified, fed and protected after birth, as mentioned in Coffin Texts Spell 765. However, the childhood of the sun-child is not as dramatic and specific as that of the Horus child and thus did not develop into an elaborate narrative as in the case of the Horus child.

<sup>113</sup> For scholarly and philological references concerning the role of Isis as a protective mother-goddess, see Bergman 1968: 137-146, esp. 137-138.

### 3.5.1 Naming

It has already been mentioned above that Isis named Horus after his birth in Coffin Texts Spell 148 above (CT II 219f-221e): *jr.j rn.k ph.n.k 3ht sw3.t(j) hr snbw hwt jmn-rn ... bjk s3.j hrw hms r.k m B pn*<sup>221-d</sup> *n (j)t(j).k wsjr m rn.k pw n bjk hr(j) sbnw hwt jmn-rn* “I will make your name when you have reached *akhet* and passed by the Ramparts of the Enclosure of the Hidden of the Name. ... Falcon, my son Horus, dwell in this land of your father Osiris in this your name of Falcon that is on the Ramparts of the Enclosure.” Janssen notes that it was usually the mother who decided on the name given to a child at birth (1990: 14), but Feucht writes that (1) both parents could choose the name; and (2) the notion that a person’s name was determined by a cry of his/her mother (or other person present) at the time of delivery should be regarded as “*Mythologisierung der Sitte*” (1995: 107-108). Regardless of how it was accomplished, it is important to understand that the act of naming by a parent is another indicator of the generational nature of the Horus child pattern.

### 3.5.2 Washing

According to the Papyrus Westcar, a newborn baby was washed after the umbilical cord had been cut: *j<sup>c</sup>.jn.sn sw s<sup>c</sup>d hp3.f, rdj hr jfdj m dbt* “They (the goddesses) washed him (a newborn child) after his umbilical cord was cut, and he was put on a cloth in brickwork” (p.Berlin 3033: 10, 11-12; repeated in 10, 19-20 and 11, 2-3). Whereas there is no clear reference to Isis washing Horus in early texts, Münster assumes that “tying the headband” and “censing before her son Horus” in Pyramid Texts Spell 519 (Pyr. §§ 1214b-1215b; see the text quoted above) may refer to washing (or drying after the washing) and purification of Horus (1968: 6). She also writes that it can be supported by another Pyramid Texts Spell (Pyr. §§ 2190a-2191b): *pr hrw m 3h-bjt, h<sup>c</sup> p n hrw w<sup>c</sup>b.f jm, j hrw w<sup>c</sup>b.(w) nd.[fjt(j).f]* “Horus has emerged from Akhbit. Pe has awaited Horus so that he could become clean there. Clean Horus has come that [he] might tend [his father Osiris].”

However, the relationship between the two spells remains obscure. In this regard, it would be more appropriate to remember that the king in his role as the Horus child was often depicted as being washed (or suckled) by a motherly cow-goddess (Pinch 2002: 80).

### 3.5.3 Suckling

It is never mentioned specifically in the Pyramid Texts that Isis suckled Horus (Leclant 1951: 124).

However, the spells mentioning the milk of Isis that the deceased king wished to receive as an essential ingredient for his resurrection (Pyr. § 707a; Pyr. § 734a-b; Pyr. § 1873a-b; Pyr. § 1883a-b) provide a clue that she suckled her divine infant (Münster 1968: 10-11).<sup>114</sup> An indirect comment that Isis suckled Horus is also found in Coffin Texts Spell 255 (CT III 360a-e): *mw r-<sup>c</sup>wj.j, h<sup>c</sup>.j m hrw q<sup>3</sup>.j m nbwt(j), snq.j m jst 3<sup>t</sup>.n wj nbt-<sup>h</sup>wt m š n z3b* “Water is on my hands. I appear as Horus. I am exalted as Him of Nubet. I was suckled by Isis; Nephthys has nurtured me in the Jackal Lake.”<sup>115</sup>

Moreover, other protective goddesses – most frequently Nephthys – are also depicted as a wet nurse of the newborn divine child (Münster 1968: 11).<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Münster counters Leclant’s claim, saying that the myth is not told in a comprehensive form but only presents parts that correspond to the relevant rituals (1968: 10). Leclant was also unaware that CT I 280j-281a, which mentions Isis suckling the deceased (see NOTE 115 below), occurs in the pyramids of Pepi I and Pepi II.

<sup>115</sup> See also Coffin Texts Spell 66 (CT I 280j-281a-i): *jn jst snq.s tw nbt-<sup>h</sup>wt dj.s n.k mnd.s šhdhd.(w), dj n.k nbtj dp sm3w.sn, jw<sup>t</sup> n.k mjw<sup>t</sup>.k jmjtj nhb, d3.sn mnd.sn tp r.k, f3.sn tw, sdn.sn tw* “It is Isis who shall suckle you. While Nephthys gives you her pendulous breast. The Two Ladies of Dep shall let down their hair for you. Your two mothers who are in Nekheh shall come to you; they shall take their breasts to your mouth; they shall lift you up and carry you.”

<sup>116</sup> For the Pyramid Texts spells referring to Nephthys suckling the deceased king (as Horus cared for by Isis), see Pyr. § 371c; Pyr. § 623a; Pyr. § 1354a; Pyr. § 1375a. For Coffin Text spells that depict Nephthys suckling Horus, see CT I 281b; CT III 360c-d. It is noteworthy that Nephthys took her role as the wet nurse only for Horus son of Isis (as said in Pyr. § 371c: *3<sup>t</sup> sw jst, snq sw nbt-<sup>h</sup>wt* “Isis will nurture him, Nephthys will suckle him”; see Münster 1968: 10). It corresponds to the ancient Egyptian custom that a mother had a wet nurse to suckle her child(ren). For more comments regarding the royal wet nurse, see NOTE 74 above. As mentioned earlier, Hathor suckles royal children as a motherly cow goddess. Nekhebet also appears as the nurse of Horus as in Pyr. § 1118b. In this regard, the crown goddesses can appear as the two mothers of Horus (Münster 1968: 10).



What is more important than the identity of the goddess who suckles Horus (or the deceased cared for by the mother goddess) is that the divine milk (especially that of Isis) has the magical power not only of reviving the deceased king (i.e., Osiris) but also of granting kingship to the newly born or newly crowned king (i.e., Horus) (Daumas 1958: 204-206; Leclant 1960: 135-145; Darby *et al* 1977: 760; Guglielmi 1982: 126). In this regard, Assmann elucidates the idea succinctly but aptly as follows (2001: 134):

As a mother of the Horus child, Isis, who in this instance (Hathor suckling Hatshepsut) has been merged with Hathor, is not only the great healing goddess, but also the bestower of legitimate kingship. Her milk not only heals illness, it makes the child a king, it “creates,” as the Egyptian terminology puts it, “his beauty.” Isis is the “kingmaker” par excellence. ... The king steps into the role of the royal child in the constellation of the mother-goddess Isis in order to incorporate the kingship of Horus into himself by means of her milk. In Egypt, the legitimate, salvation-bringing king was not the “anointed one,” but the “suckled one.” Many temple reliefs, particularly from the New Kingdom, represent him in this role, in the arms and at the breast of the mother-goddess Isis.

#### ***3.5.4 Protecting from various dangers***

Horus is the single deity whose childhood is described in myth. However, his childhood is not depicted as idyllic and peaceful but as a time full of dangers and difficulties. At this critical stage, Horus needs to overcome these difficulties with the help of Isis so that he, as a grown-up, can fulfill his duty of taking the kingship of Egypt (Sandri 2006: 15). Another fact that attracts our attention is that Osiris (identified with the deceased on the funerary level) and the motif of his salvation from death is totally absent at this stage. Instead, Isis is, though helped by other deities, solely responsible for the safety of Horus, who is identified with those suffering from bites and

stings of venomous and dangerous animals, serving as the mythic prototype for all patients (Quirke 1992: 61).<sup>117</sup>

The poisoning (and burning) of the Horus child is a common motif in magical texts of the Late Period. It is used as an analogy for real diseases and dangers, and the narratives in them are important sources providing the most elaborate accounts about the struggles against dangerous elements threatening the life of a human infant in his/her early childhood (Pinch 1994: 143-146).<sup>118</sup> In most of these narrative spells, Horus is depicted as a sick child who needs his mother's maternal protective power, but in others he is shown to possess his own magical healing power, which eventually led to the triumphant image of Horus as a healing god who appears on a special type of Egyptian art known as *cippi* – i.e., the naked child-deity standing on the backs of crocodiles and holding dangerous animals such as snakes, scorpions, lions and antelopes.<sup>119</sup> Nonetheless, according to a few magical texts, Horus is blamed for his plight through his own foolishness and greed and viewed as an impetuous child (Pinch 2002: 81).

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<sup>117</sup> That is the reason Assmann sees this as an entirely independent cycle of myths about mother and child with a meaning of their own (2001: 133). Meanwhile, te Velde links the bites of venomous animals to the idea of homosexual acts on the part of Seth, because Horus is in distress on account of *mtwt* "poison," which can also mean "semen" (1967: 37-38).

<sup>118</sup> In this regard, Horus can be regarded as a fatherless, abandoned child. Cf. Eliade's comment about the abandoned child (1963: 250): "*The tragedy of the abandoned child is made up for by the mythological grandeur of the 'orphan,' the primeval child, with his utter and invulnerable loneliness in the universe, his uniqueness. The appearance of such a child coincides with a moment in the dawn of things: the creation of cosmos, the creation of a new world, of a new epoch of history, a 'new life' – at no matter what level of reality. A child abandoned to the Earth-Mother, saved and brought up by her, no longer has any part in the common destiny of mankind, for he re-enacts the cosmological instant of 'beginning,' and grows not in the midst of a family, but in the midst of the elements.*"

<sup>119</sup> For some magical texts regarding Horus as a sick child, see Klasens 1952: 54-58; Borghouts 1978: 58-71; Leitz 1999: 16, 19, 73. For the *cippi* of Horus, see Seele 1947: 43-52. For the Metternich Stela that contains the most comprehensive narrative spell regarding the Horus child, see Scott 1951: 201-217; J. Allen 2005b: 49-64 (including the latest translation and exhaustive references).

### 3.6 Struggles of Horus and Seth

The struggles between Horus and Seth do not take place until Horus reaches maturity and becomes capable of wresting the kingship of Egypt from Seth.<sup>120</sup> So before the conflict between the two antagonists, we first need to consider a passing reference to the rite of passage through which an Egyptian child enters the age of youth in Pyramid Texts Spell 519 (Pyr. §§ 1214b-1215b):

... *n jst wrt t(3)zt mdh m 3h-bjt, jn.s d3jw.s sjd.s tp-<sup>c</sup>wj z3.s hrw hrd nhn, d3.f B m tbwtj.f hđ.tj, j.šm.f jr m33 jt(j).f wsjr* “... for great Isis – she who tied the headband in Akhbit, using her dress and censuring before her son Horus the young child so that he might cross the land in his white sandals and go to see his father Osiris.”

In the spell Isis ties the headband of Horus. The rite of the “tying on the headband (*t3z-mdh*)” is found already in Old Kingdom inscriptions. For instance, it is mentioned in the Autobiography of Weni: *jnk jd tz mdh hr hm n (ttj)* | “I am one who tied on the headband as a child during the incarnation of Teti” (Urk. I, 98, 12).<sup>121</sup> The rite marked the beginning of manhood, probably at the age of eighteen (Brovarski 1975-76: 1-8; Feucht 1995: 238-245).<sup>122</sup> The mention of clothes and sandals in the spell also indicates that Horus is no longer naked, thus losing this characteristic of a child and leaving the protective papyrus thicket for the first time in order to avenge his deceased father and inherit the kingship as a legitimate heir (Sandri 2006: 8).

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<sup>120</sup> Pinch writes that when it comes to the royal succession, the struggle between the two antagonist deities is nothing more than a fight between might and right (2002: 84).

<sup>121</sup> For a Middle Kingdom example and its significance in Egyptian society, see Gunn 1939: 218.

<sup>122</sup> Tassie writes that (1) Hathor’s bicornate headdress represents the primordial womb and the side-lock of youth of Horus replicates the texture of the coiled umbilical cord, both symbolizing the mother-son relationship; and (2) therefore, the cutting of the side-lock of youth at the rite of “tying on the head band” signifies cutting the child free from the feminine domain and integrating him into society (2005: 65-71).

However, Horus is still regarded as a child at the beginning of the Contendings of Horus and Seth, the most complete narrative about the struggle preserved on a papyrus of the Twentieth Dynasty.<sup>123</sup> Here the sun-god prefers Seth, who is ʕ3 pḥtj, z3 nwt “great of strength, son of Nut,” (p.Chester Beatty I, 38, 8-9)<sup>124</sup> and dismisses Horus as p3 ʕdd bjnw dpt r.f “the boy whose mouth tastes bad” (*ibid.* 40, 11-12).<sup>125</sup> In this regard, among many other interpretations, the narrative of the Horus-Seth conflict can be considered as a story about bringing the young god (or the future king) through the crisis of puberty into adulthood, described by te Velde as follows (1967: 32):

In the myth of Osiris the duality of Osiris and Seth is that of death and life. Seth makes separation between death and life. Seth makes separation between life and death. The restoration of the unity of life here and yonder is symbolized by the birth of the divine child Horus. Isis receives the seed of the living dead Osiris. Yet Seth also limits the existence of Horus and his mother. The child Horus is brought forth by Isis in solitude. In the difficulties and dangers mother and child have to endure, not in ordered society, but in the inhospitable marshes of Khemmis, the glorious, original divine life is almost lost. Not only is the cosmos surrounded by primeaval chaos, the cosmos itself proves to be fissured at Seth’s first stirring. Horus no longer has a female complement, like the gods before him. In contrast with the gods of the ennead, he also displays the state of being a child (Harpocrates) and of being brought up. Bringing up had become necessary because the cosmos had become disordered through the untimely birth of Seth. The Osiris hymn of Amenmose relates (see T3-6 above), that Horus was not presented to the gathering of the gods by his mother until he was sufficiently equipped physically and mentally: strong of arm, firm of heart. Horus had to learn and win adult divine life through sad experience.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> For the early sources of the Horus-Seth conflict, see Griffiths 1960: 12-27; te Velde 1967: 32, note 5; Tobin 1993: 93-110. Many scholars including Griffiths believe that the narrative of the Horus-Seth conflict is earlier than the Osirian cycle (Griffith 1960: 17-22; Assmann 2001: 134-135). Also cf. te Velde 1967: 74-80 for a view opposing Griffiths’ tendency to see the narrative as a reflection of historical events.

<sup>124</sup> The relationship between Nut and Seth, however, is not the same as that between Isis and Horus. Seth is not a child god and there is no trace of love on the part of his mother (te Velde 1967: 28). Quoting the remarks of Hintze, te Velde comments that the strength in the epithet of Seth ʕ3 pḥtj “great of strength” is sexual strength in contrast to *tnr* “physical strength” as in the Two Brothers (p.d’Orbiney 3, 5-6): *wn.jn.sst hr g3g3 n.f m dd, wn pḥtj ʕ3 jm.k, hr tw.j hr ptrj n3y.k tnr m mnt* “Then she [the wife of Anubis] goggled at him, saying: ‘There is great strength in you, and I see your might daily.’”

<sup>125</sup> For this derogatory expression to denote an inexperienced feeble child, see Shiah 1938: 127-128.

<sup>126</sup> It is also noteworthy that the opponent with whom Horus has to engage should inevitably be the very one who wrested life from Osiris (Roberts 1995: 100).

In the course of the narrative, the introduction of Horus into adulthood is indicated by (1) the loss of innocent childhood; (2) the rupture of the maternal bond; and (3) the reconciliation with opponent power. The trend becomes apparent especially in the second half of the *Contendings of Horus and Seth*, where Horus is directly locked in fierce combat with Seth to prove himself as a potential ruler of Egypt. From this moment, Horus begins to embody violent traits and even attacks Isis.<sup>127</sup> At this stage he clearly shows that he is no longer an uncorrupted child under the protection of his mother. In addition, the appearance of Hathor (who embodies sexual regenerative power in adulthood) after the loss of his eyes at the hand of Seth also marks the surfacing of adolescence that compels the youth to leave his mother and break free from the hitherto strong but restrictive maternal bond (Roberts 1997: 106). Finally, his ordeal and reconciliation with the turbulent opponent at the end of the story demonstrates that Horus, as a physically and mentally prepared leader, has the capability of assuming the kingship of Egypt.<sup>128</sup>

### **3.7 Functions of the Horus child pattern**

As is the case with the sun-child, the Horus child also plays an important role on each of the cosmic, kingship and funerary levels.

On the cosmic level, the Horus child symbolizes the renewal of the cosmos (as a third member of the divine triad, which represents the future generation). If the sun-child is destined to begin the

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<sup>127</sup> Gardiner remarks that this story is designed to explain Hathor's form as the cow-headed goddess and how Isis was identified with Hathor as the cow-goddess (1931: 20, note 2; see also Griffiths 1960: 48).

<sup>128</sup> Seth ignores the boundaries of the ordered world and thus he is incapable of assuming leadership (te Velde 1967: 65). The *Contendings of Horus and Seth* tends to show the foolishness of Seth in many aspects (Goedicke 1961: 154), leading to his being outwitted by Horus with the help of his mother Isis. For Seth as a trickster, see te Velde 1968: 37-40.

work of creation through the first sunrise, the Horus child is destined to establish the divine order on earth when he grows up to become a revengeful king of Egypt (Pinch 2002: 146).<sup>129</sup>

On the kingship level, the whole drama of the childhood of Horus from birth to coronation provides a mythic basis for legitimizing kingship (Assmann 2001: 116). The birth of Horus and his danger-filled childhood makes his triumph all the more glorious, laying the groundwork of legitimacy for the pharaohs who compared their achievements with those of Horus (Sandri 2006: 16).<sup>130</sup> This can be supported by the fact that a number of New Kingdom pharaohs adopted the Chemmis motif as an ideal biography and identified themselves as the Horus in Akhbit (Bergman 1968: 138):

- Ahmose (Urk. IV 16, 8-9): *šm.n w3dtj n hr.f mj hrw hq3.n.f t3wj.fj jty ʿ(nh.w) (w)d3.(w) s(nb.w) jt hʿw m 3h-bjt nb hʿ* “The Two Wadjet (Greens) have controlled for his face like Horus when he has started to rule his two lands, sovereign, l.p.h., who makes his appearance in Akhbit, lord of appearance.”
- Thutmose III (Urk. IV 157, 3): *jw.j m qm3 jt jwn-mjw.f mj nhnw hrw m 3h-bjt ʿhʿ.kw m w3dyt mhʿtt* “I am the created one, the image of Iunmutef like the youth, Horus in Akhbit, standing in the colonnade of the Delta.”

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<sup>129</sup> In connection with the Horus child as a deserted and fatherless child shown in the Chemmis motif, the significance on the cosmic level can be found in Moon’s comment (1991: 232): “*The divine child is often depicted in a close connection with the powers of nature, especially the waters. In legend, then, one finds children brought by fishers such as the stork or by water dwellers such as a frog. In this image, the divine child is born out of the lotus, which is a plant that resembles symbolically the crocodile, yet another bearer of the divine child. The crocodile can live both in and out of the water; equally of a twofold nature, the lotus grows in the water but blossoms forth in the air. Both are symbols of a mode of being that connects the natural realms of the waters and the heavens. The waters represent chaos, the state in which all things are dissolved together as one; the heavens represent the world of differentiation, where things can be seen by the naked eye as discrete and separate. It is the realm that is governed by the light of the sun, whereas the deeper one goes into the waters, the darker it becomes.*”

<sup>130</sup> With regard to the triumph of Horus, Assmann point out that its “*Sitz im Leben*” may be found in the festival of the royal coronation (2001: 142): “*In the light of a prelude that tells of assassination and murder, of grief and fear, salvation, joy, and abundance now make their appearance all the more gloriously to characterize the present.*”

- Hatshepsut (Urk. IV 237, 3-5): *jj.n.(j) m p, šm.n.(j) <m> dp, hns.(j) zšw pḥw w3wt-ḥrw šḥn m 3ḥ-bjt m s3 ḥrw.j* “I have come from Pe; I have gone from Dep, traversing pools, marshlands and the ways of Horus; alighting in Akhbit in the protection of my Horus.”
- Hatshepsut (Urk. IV 239, 4-5): *hnm.(j) hmt.t m ḥnh w3s mj jrt.n.(j) n ḥrw m hnw sš n 3ḥ-bjt* “I will unite Your Incarnation with life and dominion like what I did for Horus inside the nest of Akhbit.”

Moreover, the birth of the divine child also guarantees the continuity of life and the dynastic rule through the succession of generations.

On the mortuary level, a transition between two successive generations represents the dynamic transformation from father to son, from death to life. Therefore, the deceased identified themselves with Osiris so that they might follow the mythic precedent of his salvation from death through vengeance and justification by his dutiful son.<sup>131</sup> In many spells of the Pyramid Texts and the Coffin Texts, the deceased also identified themselves with Horus in order to overcome death as the deity triumphed over dangers and enemies (Sandri 2006: 16). Moreover, as Horus emerged as *m3ḥ-ḥrw* “true of voice (= justified)” in the lawsuit with Seth, the deceased wished to emerge also as “true of voice,” just like him, in the court that will determine his/her fate in the afterlife (Assmann 2001: 137).

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<sup>131</sup> Also, in Egyptian society, the son’s duty towards his father is defined by the role that Horus plays in the Osirian cycle. In this role, the son-Horus is the protector, avenger and legal heir of his father (Leprohon 1999: 55).

### **Excursus 3-1. Harpocrates – the child deity *par excellence***

During the Twenty-first Dynasty the Horus child eventually evolves into an independent child deity, Harpocrates (*hrw p3 hrd* “Horus the Child”), who embodies the two prototypical child deities and eventually becomes the most important of all prominent child deities in the Late Period. His emergence is closely related to a new development of the New Kingdom, when the kings began to visualize themselves as a child. In this regard, it would be useful to take a look at the historical development of portraying the king as a child.

Historically, the portrayal of the king as a child is rarely known before the New Kingdom. During the Old Kingdom period, only a single image is found that depicts Pepi II as a child. In the alabaster statue (Brooklyn Museum No. 39.119), however, the king is represented not as a child but as a small adult fully attired with the *nemes* head-cloth and apron. Hall assumes this to be the representation of Pepi II as Harpocrates or an important child deity who served as a model for an ideal king who came into the world after the divine conception and birth (1977: 56). Given that Harpocrates emerged as an independent deity only in the Third Intermediate Period (Meeks 1977b: 1003), however, Hall’s assumption runs counter to his own comment that Isis and Horus were not shown together during the Old Kingdom (1977: 55). Therefore, it would be appropriate to see it as a portrayal of the real boy king Pepy II who ascended the throne at the age of six.<sup>132</sup>

From the New Kingdom onward, the king began to be depicted as a child even during his adulthood.<sup>133</sup> In this case, the visual representation shows the conventional characteristics of childhood that include nakedness, the side-lock of youth and the (right) finger at his mouth. The

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<sup>132</sup> For another Old Kingdom representation of the king being suckled by a goddess, see Ranke 1950: 228-236; Feucht 1984: 403.

<sup>133</sup> It is noteworthy that, contrary to the new trend, the visual representation of young princes and princesses is rarely found even in this period.



image of the rejuvenated king as a child originated from the pictorial image of the divine conception, whose earliest version is found in the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri, where reliefs show the queen receiving the legitimate kingship from Amun in the conventional form of a child (Sandri 2006: 201). The child-king motif was expanded during the reigns of Amenhotep III and Ramesses II and the image of the child-king was often used as a part of a rebus expressing the king's throne name (Hall 1977: Plate XXV-3). As such, it can be said that the image of the child-king was incorporated into the formal repertoire of the visual representation of the king from the Eighteenth Dynasty onward (Ranke 1950: 231).

The new trend of the child-king motif is surely connected with efforts to establish an unquestionable legitimacy by showing that the king is the child of the creator-god born through divine conception. In the course of time, however, the concept of the child-king was expanded to encompass the image of the son-god of the divine triad, who embodied the principle of rebirth and regeneration. In the process, a growing number of gods worshipped in various cultic centers began to appear as a child and to be incorporated into the third member of the local divine triads (Allam 1977: 111-112; Brunner 1977c: 650; Sandri 2006: 24-25). At the end of this process in which these child deities fulfilled many religious functions, Harpocrates emerged as the child deity *par excellence*. Based on the textual evidence regarding his cult sites and clergy, Harpocrates seems to have emerged as an independent deity with his own fixed iconography only in the Third Intermediate Period (Meeks 1977b: 1003; Sandri 2006: 200).<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Meeks writes that the name with the definite article *p3* is attested from the late New Kingdom period. For the early existence of *p3 hrd*, see Hayes 1960: 31, note 3. The number of proper names referring to the child deities, such as *p3-n-hrdw* "The One Who Belongs to the Child," *ns-p3-hrdw* "He Belongs to the Child," and *ns-p3-sf* "He Belongs to the Child," increased in the late periods (Brunner 1977c: 649).

As a conflated form of the sun-child and the Horus child, Harpocrates plays a role on each of the cosmic, kingship and funerary levels. On the cosmic level, Harpocrates is associated with the sun-god, personifying the young sun. The relationship between the sun-god and Horus can be traced from the early period (Barta 1973: 158-159; Altenmüller 1975: 145). In some texts, Horus is identified with the sun-god (CT I, 311b), while in others Horus is mentioned as the son of the sun-god (Pyr. § 1508b; CT VII 19s-20l). Later Harpocrates as the young sun is usually represented as a child deity standing or seated on the lotus blossom and crowned with the sun-disk (El-Khachab 1971: 132-145). While the relationship between the sun and Nefertem, the young god on the lotus blossom, was mentioned already in the Pyramid Texts, the idea of the birth of the sun from the lotus blossom began to appear only after the Amarna Period (Tait 1963: 134; Schlögl 1977: 33; Ryhiner 1986: 19-20, 22; Assmann 1995: 5-6, 45; Meeks 1997b: 1004). Therefore, it can be said that the relationship between Harpocrates and the lotus blossom (as well as the concept of the sun emerging out of the lotus blossom) was a late development.<sup>135</sup>

On the kingship level, Harpocrates is regarded as the firstborn (and only) son of Osiris and Isis.<sup>136</sup> Based on this familial relationship, Harpocrates assumes the role of the legitimate heir of his deceased father and thus serves as a model of the ideal king through numerous texts and images. This can also be supported by the fact that the earliest attested cultic center of Harpocrates is the Theban area<sup>137</sup> and there he was worshipped as the divine child-king who succeeds Amun, the king of the gods. As mentioned earlier, however, Harpocrates had become an independent deity

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<sup>135</sup> In the Ptolemaic-Roman period, Harpocrates personifies the sun at the first hour of the day (Daressy 1917: 200-202, Tables I and II; Meeks 1977b: 1004). For another form of the Horus child as the sun-god, see Budde 2003: 15-110.

<sup>136</sup> For the aspects and functions of Harpocrates on the kingship level, see Sandri 2006: 163-186.

<sup>137</sup> The geographical origin of Harpocrates is unclear (Meeks 1977b: 1005). But the most ancient cultic center is thought to be the Theban area from the priestly titles *hm ntr jmnw w3st*, *hm-ntr hrw-p3-hrd* "the god's servant of Amun of Thebes, the god's servant of Harpocrates." See Barguet *et al* 1951: 497-498.

who embodies certain aspects of the Horus child that include (1) the son of Osiris and Isis, (2) the legitimate heir of the divine couple, and (3) the divine child as the (re)generative principle and the model of the king (Sandri 2006: 188).<sup>138</sup> As a result, the image of the Horus child faced with the various dangers of childhood is missing in the description of Harpocrates, and the same is true in the description of the later kings who modeled themselves on the supreme child deity. In addition, Harpocrates does not inherit the functions of Horus who overcomes the murder of his father and wrests the kingship from his enemies. That role was taken over by Harendotes, another Horus-god who had also become independent in the Late Period. Harendotes is regarded as a son of Osiris and Isis, but he is assumed to be a powerful young god who fights for the kingship and fulfills his roles in the mortuary rites for his father. In fact, these independent Horus-gods, such as Harpocrates, Harendotes and Harsiese, could appear side by side in temple reliefs of later periods (Sandri 2006: 189-192).

From the divine child-king and the model of the ideal king were derived two roles of Harpocrates that were also shared by other child deities of the late periods. First, he was supposed to possess the means of provisions that he constantly distributes not only to the king but also to all human beings in abundance. In this aspect, Harpocrates played the role of fertility god (Brunner 1977c: 650) and was closely associated with the agricultural rites.<sup>139</sup> It may have to do with his early cultic center, the Theban area, where ithyphallic fertility gods such as Min and Amun were worshiped (Meeks 1977b: 1005).<sup>140</sup> Second, as the posthumous son of his deceased father Osiris, Harpocrates was also interpreted as the reincarnation ("*Erscheinungsform*") of his

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<sup>138</sup> In this regard, it is noteworthy that Harpocrates was never represented as a falcon or falcon-headed man but always portrayed in purely anthropomorphic form.

<sup>139</sup> As a fertility god, Harpocrates was worshipped as Karpocrates. See Meeks 1977b: 1009, note 22; Sandri 2006: 177-178.

<sup>140</sup> In the temple texts of the Ptolemaic Period, Harpocrates is mentioned as the lord of bread and the provider of viands (Meeks 1977b: 1005).

father (Sandri 2006: 186) and thus embodied the principle of (re)generation. With the growing importance of the child deities, which eventually led to the appearance of *mammisi*, Harpocrates became the deity of the *mammisi*.<sup>141</sup> The theology of the *mammisi*, which emphasizes the birth of a divine child as a savior of the world, led to the identification of the divine triads with the royal family, in which the king and his mother were identified with Harpocrates and Isis, respectively, while his father took the form of Min or Montu (Meeks 1977b: 1005). As such, Harpocrates served as the symbol of regeneration for the royal family.

Although Brunner notes that all Egyptian child deities share the roles of child heir, provider of provisions and symbol of regeneration (1977b: 649; also Budde 2003: 88), Harpocrates is nonetheless distinguished from other child deities in terms of his importance in the Egyptian pantheon, his role as model for the ideal king, and his uniqueness as the son of Osiris and Isis. In sum, Harpocrates became the most important, the most characteristic, and the most illustrated of the child deities who formed the third member of divine triads in many temples of the later periods. His popularity continued to increase along with that of his caring mother Isis. The two were worshipped throughout the Mediterranean world by the time of the Roman Empire and finally identified with the Virgin Mary and Jesus as the conductor of the soul.

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<sup>141</sup> While it is accepted that the cult of Harpocrates and the divine triads appeared simultaneously by the time of the Twenty-first Dynasty, nothing indicates that the same is the case with the *mammisi* (Meeks 1977b: 1009, note 25). The most ancient *mammisi* preserved is that of Nectanebo I (Daumas 1958: 83-84).

## **PART III**

# **CASE STUDIES OF THREE CHILD DEITIES**

## CHAPTER 4. IHY – DIVINE MUSICIAN

### INTRODUCTION

Ihy is a god who usually appears in a pure child form – a naked boy wearing the side-lock of youth and holding his finger to his mouth – from the early periods of the Egyptian history.

Unlike other child deities such as Khonsu and Nefertem, whose character experienced a dramatic transformation in the course of time, Ihy's iconography and role remained nearly unchanged from the Old Kingdom to the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. Moreover, he is closely associated with his mother-goddess Hathor as her divine acolyte in the temple rituals. This explains why he was the last among the three child deities to be integrated, in later periods, into a divine familial triad, namely the one of Horus (of Edfu)-Hathor-Ihy at Dendera. As a typical child deity who symbolizes perpetual regeneration, Ihy played a prominent role in the *mammisi* of Nectanebo I, where his (and the king's) divine conception and birth were celebrated.

Since there are only a few articles specifically about Ihy, we can investigate Ihy by researching the vast amount of scholarly work concerning his mother Hathor and her cult in general. Even some dictionaries of ancient Egyptian religion tend to include him in entries about Hathor.<sup>142</sup> In addition to those short entries, B. Altenmüller makes a brief statement about Ihy, who was associated with many other deities (1975: 24), and Allam examines Ihy's character in the Coffin Texts in his book about the cult of Hathor (1963: 133-138, 140-141, 144-146). Ihy's most prominent

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<sup>142</sup> Independent statements about "Ihy" („Ihi“) include Bonnet 1971: 321-322; Hoenes 1980: 125-126; Hart 1986: 98; Pinch 2002: 148, 137-139; and R. Wilkinson 2003: 132-133. Meanwhile, Somtus, who was identified and associated not only with Horus but also with Nefertem and Ihy, is treated in his own right in Bonnet 1971: 728-729 and Derchain-Urtel 1984: 1079-1082.

role, as the son of Hathor, is that of a musician and a sistrum player. Therefore, it is also necessary to take a look at previous research on the roles of the musical instruments sacred to Hathor, such as the sistrum and the *menit*, as well as those of ancient Egyptian music and dance in general.<sup>143</sup>

## NAME AND ICONOGRAPHY

### 4.1 Name of Ihy

It has been claimed by some scholars that Ihy was worshipped in the form of a calf as son of Hathor, who frequently appeared as a cow-goddess (Junker 1943: 192; Bonnet 1952: 322; Hermann 1959: 31; Allam 1963: 6 and note 6, 112-113; Hoenes 1980: 125).<sup>144</sup> In particular, Junker assumed that his name *jhj* might be the diminutive form of *jh* “young bull” (1943: 192): “*Vielleicht ist ihj nur die Koseform, ein Diminutivum, von ih ‘Rind,’ wie ja auch ih.t Hathorkuh bezeichnen kann.*”

It should be noted, however, that Ihy is always depicted in anthropomorphic form,<sup>145</sup> usually in the form of a youthful boy-god of music shaking the sistrum (ritual rattle) and the *menit* (beaded necklace – actually, a counterpoise for balancing heavy necklaces on the shoulders), the two instruments most closely associated with music played in temples and sacred to his mother-

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<sup>143</sup> General articles about ancient Egyptian music and musical instruments include Hickmann 1977: 656-659, 1982a: 230-231, 1982b: 235-239; Ziegler 1984: 958-963; Lawergren 2001: 2:450-454; and Manniche 2001: 3:292-293. For the only book-length treatment of ancient Egyptian music in English, see Manniche 1991 (esp. 57-73). Regarding ancient Egyptian performing art (music and dance) in the funerary and religious context, see Anderson 1995: 4:2555-2568; Spencer 2003: 111-121 (esp. 115-117); and Teeter 2009: 25-29, 30-32.

<sup>144</sup> For Hathor as a cow-goddess, see Allam 1963: 112; Bleeker 1973: 30-34.

<sup>145</sup> In the earliest mention of the deity in the Palermo Stone (Urk. I, 247, for the text see 4.2.1 below), the phrase denoting the statue of Ihy (*d<sup>c</sup>m jhj twt*) is determined by the hieroglyphic sign of an anthropomorphic standing statue.

goddess Hathor (Bonnet 1952: 321; Hoenes 1980: 125; H. Altenmüller 1991a: 18).<sup>146</sup> Here Ihy plays a role as the divine musician who through music propitiates an angered god, especially his mother Hathor (H. Altenmüller 1991a: 19, 24).

Ancient Egyptians believed that their gods could be entertained and propitiated by music and dance (Teeter 2009a: 25). Therefore, music and dance were counted as one effective method of appeasing irritated deities, especially aggressive solar goddesses, such as Hathor, Sekhmet and Tefnut (Brunner 1955: 7-8).<sup>147</sup> While worshipped as the goddess of love and happiness (Galvin 1989: 29; Robins 1994: 32), Hathor, as one of the solar goddesses, is also easily roused to anger and thus needs to be propitiated. In order to appease this irritable goddess, the ancient Egyptians relied on music and dance. As such, music and dance played a significant role in the worship of Hathor and this made her the patroness-goddess of music and dance (Bleeker 1973: 53-58; Manniche 1991: 57-58; Anderson 1995: 2555-2556).<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> H. Altenmüller disputes the idea that Ihy is depicted as a calf and decoy (*"Lockkalb"*) in the Sixth Dynasty mastaba of Kagemni (1991: 17-27). He concludes that the phrases containing Ihy on the wall of the mastaba should be interpreted as a call for the god to help the herd cross the river safely, considering the deity's aspect as a caring guide for difficult passages (*ibid.* 24-25). Regarding the concept of Ihy as a good guide, cf. Roberts 1995: 32 for a possible interpretation of the Golden Calf episode in the Biblical Exodus (32:1-6) as Ihy (in the form of a young bull-calf).

<sup>147</sup> The other methods include (1) sexual attraction, as when Hathor cheers up the sulking sun-god by exposing her genitals in the Contendings of Horus and Seth (Roth 2000: 194; Roberts 1995: 58; for the text see 4.5 below); and (2) inebriation, as described in the Destruction of Mankind (Brunner 1954: 81-83). Besides appeasing deities, music was also regarded as a source of calm and solace, as in the episode of the delivery of Rud-djedet in Papyrus Westcar (Anderson 1995: 2557).

<sup>148</sup> In the Egyptian pantheon, Merit is a goddess who is considered to personify music or the songstress who brings sacred texts to life (Manniche 1991: 57; Lawergren 2001: 453). However, she never had a cult chapel of her own. For Merit, see Berlandini 1982: 80-88; Guglielmi 1991: 57-104. Based on the Ptolemaic-Roman sources, Egyptian deities associated with music include Thoth, Osiris and Isis (= Hathor). Besides Ihy, the only Egyptian deity who appears as a musician is the dwarf god Bes.



In the worship of the patroness of music, the two most important instruments were the sistrum and the *menit* (Allam 1963: 127-128).<sup>149</sup> The sistrum is so strongly associated with Hathor that her face decorates the handle (Teeter 2009b: 30)<sup>150</sup> and the columns of Hathor's Dendera temple are shaped like the sistrum (Anderson 1995: 2555). The original function of the sistrum can be inferred from the ritual of plucking papyrus stalks and shaking them, which produced a rattling sound (Ziegler 1984: 960; Manniche 1991: 63, 2001: 292; Teeter 2009b: 30).

The practice of pacifying the goddess by plucking papyrus is already attested in the Old Kingdom, as seen in a scene showing Queen Meresankh III and her mother pulling papyrus stalks while standing on a papyrus skiff. The inscription over the stern of the skiff reads as follows (Dunham *et al* 1974: 9-10 and Fig. 4): *sš.s w3d n hwt-hrw m phw hn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.s, m33.sn ht nbt nfrt ntt m mht* "She pulls papyrus for Hathor in the marshland with her mother; they see every good thing which is in the marsh."<sup>151</sup> This is connected with the aspect of Hathor as a wild cow usually found in the papyrus thicket. However, Hathor can also be identified in this respect with Isis, who took refuge in the pyramid thicket with her infant son (Ziegler 1984: 960; Manniche 2001: 292). Meanwhile, the soothing sound of the sistrum is complemented by the sound of the *menit* that makes a swishing sound that may have been associated with the sound of papyrus blowing in the marsh (Staehelin 1982: 52).<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> For the sistrum, see Klebs 1931: 60-63; Ziegler 1984: 958-963; Manniche 2001: 292-293; Teeter 2009b: 30-32. For the *menit*, see Staehelin 1982: 52-53.

<sup>150</sup> The sistrum is later carried not only by priestess and noble ladies but also by a drunken woman in one of the erotic scenes in the Turin Papyrus (Manniche 1991: 109). Without doubt, this is connected with the concept of Hathor as the goddess of love and sex.

<sup>151</sup> Teeter points out that the words "sistrum" and "pulling" are *sšst* in ancient Egyptian and the former is onomatopoeic (2009b: 30).

<sup>152</sup> The *menit* is almost entirely associated with females but it is noteworthy that Khonsu, another child deity, wears it around his neck as one of his characteristic attributes (Staehelin 1982: 52; Teeter 2009b: 32). Interestingly, the emblem of Nefertem, the lotus blossom topped with two feathers, also features the counterpoise of the *menit*.

In religious and funerary rituals, priestesses of Hathor, who doubled as temple musicians, sang hymns to the goddess, played musical instruments and performed sacred dances.<sup>153</sup> Most importantly, they shook the two most important instruments – the sistrum and the *menit* – to entertain the goddess. At the forefront of these priestly musicians stands Ihy who is, as a divine musician, usually depicted wearing the *menit* around his neck and shaking a sistrum in the worship of his mother Hathor.

## 4.2 Iconography

As a divine musician, Ihy almost always appears in a human child form, sporting the side-lock of youth, holding the sistrum in his right hand and wearing the *menit* around his neck. This basic iconography remained unchanged throughout Egyptian history.

Ihy is attested already in the Old Kingdom Palermo Stone in the company of his mother-goddess Hathor (see 4.3 below). In the Middle Kingdom an example of Ihy as a divine sistrum player is found in the tomb of the mother of Antefoker (Davies 1920: Plate 21). The deity is also shown in a relief at Serabit el-Khadim carved during the reign of Amenemhat IV. He stands beside Hathor and extends his hand to an official (Gardiner *et al* 1917: Plate 47, 125a). Most of the visual representations of the child deity Ihy are found in the New Kingdom. For instance, he is portrayed accompanying Hatshepsut as a child deity in her Deir el-Bahri temple sanctuary (see

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<sup>153</sup> Dances performed in worship of Hathor were intended to please the goddess and promote the fertility guaranteed by her, and they are by nature impulsive and ecstatic (Bleeker 1973: 57). The dance for Hathor is already known in a type of Old Kingdom dance that shows the performers with their arms curved above the head so that they might mimic the horns of a cow (Anderson 1995: 2563). In addition, so-called mirror dances were also performed by young girls. The use of a mirror indicates Hathor's close association with the sun-god since the mirror disk is a symbol of the sun that can catch the sun light (Lilyquist 1979: 97-99 and Figs. 106, 107; B. Lesko 1999: 100; R. Wilkinson 1999: 32). It is important to note that the mirror belongs to important ritual items offered to Hathor, along with the sistrum, the *menit* and various ointments. For textual evidence, see CT IV 183b-183j.

4.11 below).<sup>154</sup> However, the prime example should be the two statues of sistrum players discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamun (Abitz 1979: Figure 16; H. Altenmüller 1991b: 13-14) and the two unfinished figures drawn on a wall of the tomb of Sety II (Abitz 1979: Figures 3a-b, 16; Hornung 1990: 181). From the late New Kingdom, Ihy began to be depicted wearing royal crowns and holding various kinds of scepters. In the Ptolemaic-Roman period, he is frequently shown sitting on the throne as a royal child (Leitz 2002-I: 542-548). It is quite rare that he appears in animal form. As a son of Hathor, however, he is portrayed as a lion-headed mummy in the Late Period and also as a bull-headed god holding two knives in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period.

Based on his name and basic iconography, Ihy has been regarded by a number of Egyptologists as the divine musician (or the divine sistrum player) *par excellence* (Sethe 1930: 23, 121; Bonnet 1952: 321-322; Hoenes 1980: 125; Hart 1986: 98; Pinch 2002: 148). His role as sistrum player is already attested in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 183h, see T4-1 below): *drwt.j pw sššt.s ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-ḥrw r snnt.s jm* “her sistrum is my (two) hands, which my mother Hathor gives to herself in order to make herself inert therewith.” In the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, one of the commonest epithets of Ihy was associated with the music that pleases his mother-goddess Hathor (Chassinat 1947: Plates CCCCXLIII and CCCCXLIX-CCCCL, for the text see Chassinat 1952: 156-157; Leitz 2002-I: 543-548): *šḥtp mjwt.f m mnjt sššt* “the one who satisfies his mother with the *menit* and the sistrum.” Given Ihy’s apparent role as the divine musician, it is appropriate to interpret his name (and iconography) as “sistrum player,” which is “the *raison d’être* of this god” (Hart 1986: 98), or as “musician” who “personifies the jubilation associated with the use of the sacred instrument” (R. Wilkinson 2003: 133).

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<sup>154</sup> Naville describes Ihy in the scene as the “divine boy-priest” (1901: 5).

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

### 4.3 The Old Kingdom

The cult of Ihy is not attested in the Old Kingdom, and no mention is made about the deity in the Pyramid Texts.<sup>155</sup> Little is known about his childhood, unlike that of the Horus child (Hoernes 1980: 126; H. Altenmüller 1991a: 19). Explicit descriptions of Ihy as a child are found in epithets of later periods (Sambin 1988: 391; Leitz 2002/I: 542-548).<sup>156</sup> However, there is a brief statement about Ihy already in the Old Kingdom, as the Palermo Stone hints at his filial relationship with his mother-goddess Hathor (Urk. I, 247): *nswt-bjt (nfr-jr-k3-rꜥ) | jr.n.f m mnw[.f] ms(t) wpt-r dꜥm twt jhj šms r hwt-hrw nht mrt-(snfrw)* “Dual King Neferirkara: he made it as [his] monument, namely the fashioning and opening of the mouth of an electrum statue of Ihy for the procession (literally, following) to Hathor of the Sycamore (in the structure called) Beloved of Sneferu.”

The statement implies that Ihy was closely connected with Hathor as his cult statue accompanied the procession to the temple of Hathor (T. Wilkinson 2000: 175). It is well attested that Ihy was worshipped as the youthful god of music and as the son of Hathor and Horus of Edfu in Dendera, the principal cultic center of Hathor, during the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. In this respect, it is noteworthy that Pepi I, the Sixth Dynasty king who was honored even in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period for his devotion to Hathor of Dendera, is shown “kneeling before Hathor and presenting

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<sup>155</sup> It should be noted, however, that Ihy already appears in many theophoric names of the Old Kingdom such as *jhjj m z3.f* “Ihy is his protection,” which indicates that the cult of Ihy might have been established in the Old Kingdom (Ranke 1935: 44.24; Junker 1943: 192; H. Altenmüller 1991a: 23). Moreover, this can be further confirmed by a number of other Old Kingdom personal names. For the Old Kingdom personal names bearing Ihy, see Ranke 1935: 44.20, 44.23-27, 45.1, 150.4, 195.12, 332.9 and 1952: 223.

<sup>156</sup> Most of the epithets are from the temples of the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. Some of them include: (1) *jhj wr z3 hwt-hrw nhn nfr* “Ihy the Great, son of Hathor, the perfect youth” (Sambin 1988: 70-71; Leitz 2001-I: 545); (2) *hwn ntr pr m wrt* “(Ihy) the divine youth who came forth from the Great One” (Sambin 1988: 70-71); and (3) *jhj n mjwt.f m st wrt* “Ihy for his mother in the great throne” (Leitz 2001-I: 545).

the figure of a child upon his outstretched hands” in scenes on the temple walls of Dendera. In one case, the figure is named “Ihy the Great, the son of Hathor” (Fischer 1968b: 40-42). According to Ranke (1935: 421.10), an Old Egyptian personal name *mrj.s jhy* “she (Hathor) loves Ihy” implies his close relationship with his mother.

#### 4.4 The Middle Kingdom

By the time of the Middle Kingdom, Ihy is more clearly described as a child deity through a few Coffin Text spells and a handful of visual representations (Sandri 2006: 198). Among those spells, the most elaborate account concerning the deity is found in Coffin Texts Spell 334, whose purpose is to help the deceased identify themselves with Ihy:

#### T4-1. Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 179a - 183j)<sup>157</sup>

<sup>179-a</sup> *hpr m jhy*  
<sup>179-b</sup> *j [...] šnwt h3t r<sup>c</sup>, m.tn h3.j [n.tn]*  
<sup>179-c</sup> *jnk mtwt jptw tpt nt r<sup>c</sup>* <sup>179-d</sup> *wtt.n.f wj m ht mjwt jst* <sup>179-e</sup> *m [rn.j pw wr n] nb wsr m pt šhm m t3*  
<sup>179-f</sup> *shr.j pw hr jt(j).j r<sup>c</sup>* <sup>179-g</sup> *hn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j [jst]*  
<sup>179-h</sup> *wnn.(j) m t3 pn hn<sup>c</sup> n<sup>h</sup>w* <sup>179-i</sup> *j.mr.j [rn].j tp r.sn m jhy z3 hwt-hr*  
<sup>179-j</sup> *dw3.sn nwj, sns.n.(sn)* <sup>179-k</sup> *wj [n c3t nt] mrwt.j r<sup>c</sup> nb*  
<sup>179-l</sup> *jnk nb t hr(j)-tp h(n)qt* <sup>179-m</sup> *sdm.j m(j) r.k m [r* <sup>179-n</sup> *n šnw]t df3yw df3ywt*  
*wnm[.j]* <sup>179-o</sup> *ddt.n.sn*  
*wj.sn n.j* <sup>179-p</sup> *njs.sn r.j* <sup>179-q</sup> *wn.sn c3w.sn* <sup>179-r</sup> *zn.sn q3[rwt.sn]*<sup>158</sup>  
<sup>179-s</sup> *[sq3].sn rn.j pw nfr r<sup>c</sup> nb n jhy* <sup>179-t</sup> *nw m r n hrpw hnt [ ... ]*  
<sup>180-a</sup> *[jn]k z3 tp(j) n r<sup>c</sup>, jnk nw mry mjwt.f* <sup>180-b</sup> *[jnk] z3 nbt-hwt* <sup>180-c</sup> *wrr.n.j sbq.n.j*  
<sup>180-d-e</sup> *nj htm.n s3mt.j m ht jt(j).j [r<sup>c</sup>] mjwt.j [hwt-hr]*  
<sup>180-f</sup> *cnh.j cnht, wnn.j wnnt*  
<sup>180-g</sup> *nd.j p<sup>c</sup>t m-<sup>c</sup> ntrw, t3z phr*  
<sup>180-h</sup> *jnk ndt(j) [...]* <sup>180-i</sup> *sq3.j m rn.j pw n jhy*  
<sup>180-j</sup> *dj.t(w) n.j hy m rn.j pw n hnzw*  
<sup>180-k</sup> *nj sk.j m pt hn<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup> hn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j hwt-hr*  
<sup>180-l</sup> *[nj sk.j] m t3 hn<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup>* <sup>180-m</sup> *hn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j hwt-hr* <sup>180-n</sup> *jw rn.j m t3 hn<sup>c</sup> n<sup>h</sup>w* <sup>180-o</sup> *jnk jhy z3 [hwt-hr]*

<sup>157</sup> For translations, see Allam 1963: 144-146; Faulkner 1973: 257-260.

<sup>158</sup> For the restoration, see Faulkner 1973: 259, note 6.

180-p *sd3 pt jm(j).s m ksw* 180-q *mnmn t3wj [tp]-m sšd*  
180-r *rs r.f hr n tp(j)w nbwt.sn hmsw hr q3bw.sn* 180-s *ᶜnhw z33w w3wt jrt rᶜ-tm* 180-t *šnwt h3t nt rᶜ*  
180-u *rs r.f hr n h3w-hr nht-wsrt z33w tbt rᶜ*  
180-v *hr hr.tn, snd sd3 n.j*  
181-a *m.tn wj j.kw m nb šnwt* 181-b *snd n.j jmjw-ht psdt* 181-c *jw šfšft.j tp-ᶜwj.j m jhy* 181-d *z3 hwt-hrw*  
181-e *jnk pw ᶜ3ᶜ.j ᶜ3ᶜt* 181-f *z3b.n.j z3bt jmtj mntj.s [m rn.j] pw n z3b jhḥ*  
181-g *sd.n.j m swht* 181-h *3s.n.j m zf.s zbn.n.j hr znfw.s*  
181-i *jnk nb dšrw, jnk k3 hnw*  
181-j *ᶜ3ᶜ.n wj mjwt.j jst* 181-k *hm.n.s dt.s hr dbᶜw nb ntrw*  
181-l *sd.n.f sj m hrw pw n f3w*<sup>159</sup> *tm3 m [...] n hdt [...] n nb ntrw hrw pw n hnnw*  
181-m *nj t3zt wsrtw* 181-n *nj znt tpw ntrw* 181-o *nj mnt jtn hr ᶜbwj, nj t3zt hr n b3t*  
181-p *hpr.n.j hprt, hnmnm.n.j hnmnmyt* 181-q *dbn.n.j dbnt, rd.n.j rdt*  
181-r *q3.n.j q3yt mj jt(j).j [rᶜ]* 181-s *[q]3.[j mj] q3.f*  
181-t *hdt.j tp.j nt hᶜ w3d* 181-u *3tfw.j m wpt.j*  
182-a *nrwt.j m h3t.j* 182-b *dj.s nrw.j n ntrw šfšf.(j) n šnwt rᶜ*  
182-c *jnk nb nrw ᶜ3 šfšft* 182-d *jn bᶜhw tz wj*  
182-e *jn [3gb] d[d ... ] zp* 182-f *snq.j m mjwt.j jst, dp.(j) bnjt.s*  
182-g *rmm.sn nwj, nj m3.n.sn wj*  
182-h *j3kb.sn wj, nj sdm.sn hrw.j*  
182-i *jnk nw n mjwt.f*<sup>182-i</sup> *jnk nhnw z3 hwt-hrw*  
182-k *jnk nny jmj nw*  
182-l *[jnk...]* 182-m *jw rh rn.j st.j*  
182-n *jw.j m h(j)h(j) bw wnn.j jm m rn.j pw n hḥw*  
182-o *gm.n.(j) wj m pwnt* 182-p *qd.n.j pr jm hr mshnt.j* 182-q *jw mjwt.j hr nhwt.s*  
182-r *s33.j dw3 [...]* *nhnw nw ntr ᶜ3*  
182-s *hw3.n.j jm, sns.n.j jm* 183-a *m rn.j pw n sns r(m)tw ntrw*  
183-b *hw33t.j pw ᶜntjw ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-hrw r tp.s*  
183-c *st.j pw sntrw [ddw n.s mjwt.j] hwt-hrw r k3p.s*  
183-d *rdw.j pw hknw* 183-e *ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-hrw r jwf.s*  
183-f *tp.j pw q3r.s ddw n.s mjwt.j r qᶜh.s*  
183-g *mhtjw.j pw t3w mnjt[.s ddw n.s] mjwt.j hwt-hrw r hḥ.s*  
183-h *drtj.j pw sššt.s ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-hrw r snnt.s jm*  
183-i *mntj.j pw hnkwt.s ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-hrw j[r ...].s jm*  
183-j *ht.j [pw s[...]] [ddw n.s] mjwt.j hwt-hrw t3z.t(w).s jm.s*

179-a TRANSFORMATION INTO IHY

179-b Oh [ ... ], entourage around Re, look, I will go down [to you].

179-c I am that first seed of Re; <sup>179-d</sup> he begot me in the belly of my mother Isis

<sup>179-e</sup> in [this my great name] of Lord who is powerful in the sky and mighty on the earth.

<sup>159</sup> For the unusual writing of *f3w*, see Faulkner 1973: 259, note 18.

<sup>179-f</sup> That is my condition with my father Re and my mother [Isis].  
<sup>179-h</sup> I will be in this world with the living,  
<sup>179-i</sup> because I want my name to be at the top of their mouths as Ihy, son of Hathor.  
<sup>179-j</sup> They will worship me and will fraternize <sup>179-k</sup> with me [because of the greatness of] the  
love of me every day.  
<sup>179-l</sup> I am the lord of bread, one in charge of beer,  
<sup>179-m</sup> because I hear “Come!” from [the mouth of the entour]age of  
<sup>179-n</sup> male and female food-gods.  
[My] food is <sup>179-o</sup> what they have given.  
Their arms are (extended) to me; <sup>179-p</sup> they will call to me;  
<sup>179-q</sup> they will open their doors <sup>179-r</sup> they will pull back [their door bolts];  
<sup>179-s</sup> they will exalt every day this my good name (= nickname) of Ihy,  
<sup>179-t</sup> a child in the speech of those who direct music (?) [ ... ].<sup>160</sup>  
<sup>180-a</sup> I am the first-born son of Re; I am a child whom his mother loves;  
<sup>180-b</sup> [I am] the son of Nephthys. <sup>180-c</sup> As I grew up, I became more splendid.<sup>161</sup>  
<sup>180-d-e</sup> My side-lock does not perish in the body of my father [Re] and my mother [Hathor].  
<sup>180-f</sup> I will indeed live; I will indeed exist.  
<sup>180-g</sup> I will protect the elite from the gods, and vice versa.  
<sup>180-h</sup> I am the protector of [...] <sup>180-i</sup> I have been exalted in this my name of Ihy.  
<sup>180-j</sup> Acclamation is given to me in this my name of Khonsu.  
<sup>180-k</sup> I will not perish in the sky with Re, with my mother Hathor.  
<sup>180-l</sup> [I will not perish] on the earth with Re, <sup>180-m</sup> with my mother Hathor,  
<sup>180-n</sup> for my name is on the earth with the living, <sup>180-o</sup> for I am Ihy, son of Hathor.  
<sup>180-p</sup> The sky trembles and the one who is in it, bowing;  
<sup>180-q</sup> the Two Lands quake in advance of the flash.  
<sup>180-r</sup> The face of those on their baskets, seated on their coils, will be watchful,  
<sup>180-s</sup> the living ones who guard the paths of the Eye of Atum,  
<sup>180-t</sup> the Entourage around Re.  
<sup>180-u</sup> The face of the dangerous ones,<sup>162</sup> the strong of neck who guard the “Sandal of Re”<sup>163</sup>  
will be watchful.  
<sup>180-v</sup> (Down) on your face. Fear and tremble at me.  
<sup>181-a</sup> Look, I have come as the lord of the Entourage;  
<sup>181-b</sup> those who follow after the Ennead fear me;  
<sup>181-c</sup> the awe of me is before me as Ihy, <sup>181-d</sup> son of Hathor.  
<sup>181-e</sup> The one who ejaculates seed/ejaculation is I;<sup>164</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Allam for another possible translation: “*im Munde der Anführer der Tänzerinnen (?)*” (1963: 144).

<sup>161</sup> It can be also read and translated as *wr rn.j sbq n.j* “My name is great and splendid for me.”

<sup>162</sup> For the translation, see Faulkner 1973: 259, note 14.

<sup>163</sup> The Sandal of Re is understood as a barge (H. Altenmüller 1991b: 14, note 22). Cf. CT I 267a-b: *dj.j d3.k ptrtj, d3.k š, nmj.k w3d wr tb.tj mj jr.n.k tp t3* “I will let you cross the Waterway of the Sky-Windows (literally, “Looking Waters”), cross the lake, stride the Great Blue-Green shod (with the sandal) as you have done on the earth.”

181-f I flowed flowing<sup>165</sup> between her thighs [in] this [my name] of Jackal of the Sunshine;

181-g I broke out of the egg; 181-h I hastened out of her *zf*; I slid out on her blood;

181-i I am the lord of redness;<sup>166</sup> I am the bull of turbulence;

181-j my mother Isis has ejaculated me,

181-k when she was unconscious<sup>167</sup> under the fingers of the Lord of the Gods;

181-l he broke it (the egg) on that day of carrying the mat (?) in [...] and  
of damaging the [ ... ] of the Lord of the Gods on the day of chaos,

181-m before the necks were tied on; 181-m before the heads of the gods were cut off;

181-o before the sun-disk came to rest on the (two) horns, before the face of Bat was tied on;<sup>168</sup>

181-p I indeed came into being; I indeed crept. 181-q I indeed encircled; I indeed grew;

181-r I indeed became high like my father [Re] 181-s [becoming] high as he becomes high.

181-t My white crown of fresh body is upon me;

181-u my *atef*-crowns are on my brow

182-a my terrible one (= *uraeus*) is in front of me

182-b so that she may give the dread of me into the gods  
and the awe of me to the Entourage of Re.

182-c I am the lord of dread, great of awe;

182-d and it is the inundation who carries me aloft; 182-e it is [ ... ] that gives [ ... ] occasion.

182-f I suckle from my mother, Isis; I taste her sweetness.

182-g They weep (for) me, when they cannot see me;

182-h they mourn me when they cannot hear my voice.

182-i I am the child of his mother; 182-j I am the baby, son of Hathor.

182-k I am the Inert One who is in Nu.

182-l [I am ...]; 182-m my name and my place are known.

182-n I am seeking the place where I will be in this my name of Huh.

182-o When I found myself in Punt, 182-p I built a house there on my birth-place,  
182-q while my mother was under her sycamores.

182-r When I linger [...] will worship the babies of the great god,

182-s for I have rotted there; I have fraternized there  
183-a in this my name of the one who fraternizes men and gods.

183-b My putrefaction is myrrh, which my mother Hathor puts for herself on her head;

183-c my smell is incense, [which my mother] Hathor [puts] for herself into her censer;

183-d my efflux is sacred, 183-e which my mother Hathor puts for herself on her flesh;

<sup>164</sup> Faulkner translates ʿ3 as “semen,” “seed,” adding that the term is used here as the result of the injection of semen, the new-born child (1973: 259, note 15).

<sup>165</sup> For the meaning of *z3b* “to flow” see Otto 1952: 190; J. Allen 1984: 561.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Ranke for an Old Kingdom personal name *jhjj dšr* “Ihy of Red” (1935: 44.23).

<sup>167</sup> For the translation of *hm.n.s dt.s*, see Allam 1963: 145, note 4.

<sup>168</sup> For the face of Bat, see Allam 1963: 145, note 5; Faulkner 1973: 259, note 20.



- <sup>183-f</sup> my head is her sack, which my mother <Hathor> puts for herself on her shoulder;
- <sup>183-g</sup> my intestines are beads of her *menit*, [which] my mother Hathor [puts for herself] on her throat;
- <sup>183-h</sup> my two hands are her sistrum, which my mother Hathor gives to herself in order to make herself inert therewith;<sup>169</sup>
- <sup>183-i</sup> my two thighs are her *hnkt*-garment,<sup>170</sup> which my mother Hathor gives to herself [in order to ...] herself therewith;
- <sup>183-j</sup> my bell is [her ...], [which] my mother [gives to herself] so that she may be knit together by it.

First of all, there are many indicators showing clearly that Ihy appears as a child deity in this Coffin Texts spell (and in others). Words that denote “child” (Feucht 1995: 503-557) are used in the spell to express the status of Ihy: (CT IV 180a) *jnk nw mry mjwt.f* “I am a child whom his mother loves”; (CT IV 182j) *jnk nhnw z3 hwt-hrw* “I am the baby, son of Hathor.”<sup>171</sup>

In addition, there is a mention of the side-lock of youth (CT IV 180d): *nj htm.n s3mt.j m ht jt(j).j mjwt.j* “my side-lock does not perish in the body of my father and mother.” In another spell, Ihy is also depicted as sitting on the lap of his-mother goddess, which is one of the typical poses of the child (deity) (CT VI 61g): *jhy.s hr mntj.s* “Her (Hathor’s) Ihy is on her thighs.”

The birthplace of Ihy as a child deity is mentioned as Punt in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 182o-q): *gm.n.(j) wj m pwnt, qd.n.j pr jm hr mshnt.j jw mjwt.j hr nhwt.s* “When I found myself in Punt, I built a house there on my birth-place, while my mother was under her sycamores.”<sup>172</sup> Doubtless,

<sup>169</sup> For the meaning of *smn* as the causative of *nnj* “to be inert,” see Faulkner 1973: 260, note 31.

<sup>170</sup> For the *hnkt*-garment, see Faulkner 1973: 260, note 32.

<sup>171</sup> It is noteworthy that Ihy is one of few child deities whose name is not incorporated with the epithet *p3-hrd* (pa-khered) “the child” after the New Kingdom (Sandri 2006: 199).

<sup>172</sup> In Coffin Texts Spell 484, it is also said that Ihy built a mansion where he will live and celebrate the monthly festival (CT VI 61g-62c): *jhy.s hr mntj.s, qd.n.f hwwt mm wrw.tn, sqr.n.f p3qw, n3.f jm, jr.f 3bd.f m wnw.f hn<sup>c</sup> jmjw s3r, jw m3.n.f m hr.f* “Her [Hathor’s] Ihy is on her thighs. He has built enclosures among your great ones. He has laid down the offering-bread on which he will live. He will celebrate his monthly festival in his time with those who are in linen, for he has looked with his face.” The spells from CT VI 61j-l are found only

the deity's birthplace that was considered as the God's Land (*t3 ntr*) is closely associated with Hathor, who is known as "Lady of Punt" and "Lady of Incense" (Bleeker 1973: 73; B. Lesko 1999: 97). Hathor's connection, as Lady of Foreign Lands, with Punt, one of Egypt's exotic trading partners from which the ancient Egyptians obtained precious products for temple rituals (Kitchen 1982: 1198-1201),<sup>173</sup> clearly shows her expansive personality but, except for the mother-son relationship between Hathor and Ihy, its significance as the birthplace of Ihy remains elusive. In connection with the moon god Khonsu, whose name means "courser" or "traveler," however, Ihy appears to demonstrate an aspect of the lunar deity, which is not impossible given his status as the son of the sun-god and as a god of light (Goebis 2008: 146).<sup>174</sup> At the same time, the mention of his birthplace stresses Ihy's position as a child deity.

It seems that Ihy's role in the pantheon is established mostly during the Middle Kingdom and his role as the divine musician is emphasized but remains almost unchanged in the New Kingdom and after (H. Altenmüller 1991a: 19-20). For instance, in the Karnak sanctuary of Amun, Ihy the son of Hathor is shown to present a sistrum to the king (Thutmose III), saying the following (Urk. IV 580, 5-6): *jw n.k ntr nfr nb t3wj jr.k jhhy* "(It) is for you, junior god, lord of the Two Lands, so that you may rejoice." He is also briefly mentioned in Chapters 103 (= Coffin Texts Spell 588) and 149 of the Book of the Dead as a divine guide and a protective deity of the deceased (see 4.6.1 and 4.6.2 below). Unlike other child deities such as Khonsu and Nefertem, he was not integrated into a divine triad until the Ptolemaic Period and thus his role was not changed or expanded as the

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in B1B0 and thus are not included in the translation. See Faulkner 1977: 129, note 5. It is apparent that the enclosures will serve as the permanent abode for the god.

<sup>173</sup> Kitchen points out that in the case of Queen Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt, the royal envoy brought Egyptian food products "officially" for Hathor, for whom a shrine was set up in Punt, but that the products were in practice goods to be traded for items sought by Egyptians (2001: 85).

<sup>174</sup> The relationship between Punt and the moon god Khonsu/Ihy will be discussed in CHAPTER 5.

child-member of a triad. His relatively constant nature as a child deity will be explored in detail next.

## NATURE OF THE DEITY

According to H. Altenmüller (1991a: 19, 24), Ihy plays two important roles:

- (1) the divine musician who propitiates the angered god through music; and
- (2) the caring guide and protector, as described in the funerary texts, who leads the deceased on the paths to the afterworld, thereby to life and resurrection.

So it will be appropriate to examine the above-mentioned functions as Ihy's major traits.

### 4.5 The divine musician (divine acolyte)

As mentioned above, Ihy is regarded as the divine musician *par excellence*. It is important, however, to note that Ihy's role as the divine musician stems from his close relationship with his mother-goddess Hathor. While she is propitiated by deities and her worshippers, Hathor herself is a divine mediator who can soothe wrathful gods with her attractiveness.

As the female principle of (re)generation, the goddess appears as a female of youthful attraction, which soothes the heart of her father, the sun-god in the Contendings of Horus and Seth: *hr jr s3 j3dt 3t wn.jn hwt-hrt nb nh3 rsj hr j3y, jw.st hr h3 m b3h jt(j).st nb-r-dr, jw.st kf3w k3t.st r hr.f h3.n p3 ntr 3 sbj3 jm.st* "So, after a long time, Hathor, Mistress of the Southern Sycamore, came and stood before her father, the Lord of the Limit, and exposed her vulva to his face. Then the elder god laughed at her" (p.Chester Beatty I = LES 41, 7-10). Here it is Hathor's stimulating intervention

that brings the sun-god back into relationship with the pantheon once again.<sup>175</sup> Regarding the enlivening attraction of Hathor, Roberts writes (1995: 58): “*In a gesture of humorous spontaneity which only a child could bring to such a situation, she displays her genitals before him, rousing him to laughter by her playful behavior.*”<sup>176</sup> Besides her sexual attractiveness, Hathor plays a mediating role through the power of music and acts as a divine intermediary between the divine and the royal/private. In particular, the two instruments sacred to her – the sistrum and the *menit* – were believed to possess the magical power of Hathor (Hart 1986: 98; S. Lesko 1999: 100).<sup>177</sup>

By the time of the New Kingdom, the sistrum had become the instrument that could be used to pacify any deity, male and female (Manniche 2001: 293). In particular, the instrument is used to propitiate important Egyptian deities such as Amun, Osiris, Horus and Re-Horakhty (Ziegler 1984: 960, 962 and note 37). Therefore, Hathor (or Isis) holding the sistrum was visualized as an effective divine intermediary. One good example is the scene on the west wall of the hypostyle hall in the temple of Karnak, where King Sety I of the Nineteenth Dynasty is led by Isis, who wears the horned headdress and shakes the sistrum before Amun-Re and Mut. While the goddess reveals herself as Isis, it is clear that she takes up the attributes and the mediating role of

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<sup>175</sup> For the goddesses of healing laughter found in other cultures, such as Baubo (a minor crone figure in Greek mythology) and Uzme (the Japanese goddess of mirth and dance), see Bolen 2001: 99-107.

<sup>176</sup> Similarly, in Papyrus Westcar, Sneferu is advised by the chief lector priest to get his heart to “grow cool” by the youthful beauty of the palace maidens (p. Westcar 5, 1-5): *hwj 3 wd3 hm.k r š n pr-š3 ʿnh(.w)-(w)d3(.w)-s(nb.w) ʿpr n.k b3w m nfrwt nbt nt hnw ʿh.k jb n hm.k r qbb nj m33 hnn.sn hnt hd m hnt* “If Your Incarnation would proceed to a pool of the Big House, l.p.h., after a boat has been equipped for you with every young girl of the interior of your palace, the heart of Your Incarnation will grow cool at seeing them row downstream and upstream.” As regards a New Kingdom example, there is a limestone *bas*-relief in which the two daughters of Amenhotep III, Iset and Sitamun, adorned with the thick side-lock of youth, are shown shaking a sistrum in their father’s *sed*-festival (Ziegler 2008: 256).

<sup>177</sup> The power of the sistrum is mentioned by a number of classical writers in late antiquity. Plutarch also noted the instrument’s power in his *De Iside et Osiride* (Griffith 1970: 219): “*The sistrum (seistron) also indicates that the things which exist should be shaken (seiesthai dei) and should never stop moving, but should be awaked and disturbed, as it were, when they are sleepy and sluggish. For they say that with the sistrum they repel and ward off Typhon, meaning that when decay confines and restricts nature, the power of creation sets her free and restores her by means of movement.*”

Hathor. Shaking the *naos*-sistrum in an act of mediation, she plays the role of an intermediary between the solar father and the son-king, who are brought face-to-face with each other (Roberts 1995: 55-56).

However, the appeasing power of music is already found in the Middle Kingdom tale of Sinuhe, where music and dance are performed by the royal children to pacify the king, who is identified with the sun-god (Anderson 1995: 2557; Manniche 1991: 64-65, 2001: 293):

#### T4-2. The Tale of Sinuhe (B 268-279)<sup>178</sup>

*jst r.f jn.n.sn mnjw.t.sn šm.w.sn* <sup>B269</sup> *zššw.t.sn m ʿ.sn*  
*mz.jn.sn st n hm.f <dd.jn.sn hft hm.f>*  
*ʿwj.k r* <sup>B270</sup> *{r} nfrt nswt w3h hkryt nt nbt-pt*  
*dj nbw* <sup>B271</sup> *ʿnh r fnd.k, hnm tw nbt sb3w*  
*hd šmʿs, hnt mhs,* <sup>B272</sup> *zm3 tt m r n hm.k*  
*dj.tw w3d(t) m wpt.k, shr* <sup>B273</sup> *n.k tw3w m dwt*  
*htp n.k rʿ nb t3wj* <sup>B274</sup> *hy n.k mj nbt-r-dr*  
*nft ʿb.k, sfh šsr.k* <sup>B275</sup> *jmj t3w <n> ntj m jtmw*  
*jmj n.n hnt.tn nfrt* <sup>B276</sup> *m mjtn pn z3 mhyt, pdtj ms m t3-mrj*  
<sup>B277</sup> *jr.n.f wʿrt n snd.k, rwj.n.f t3 n* <sup>B278</sup> *hrw.k*  
<sup>B279</sup> *nn 3yt hr n m3 hr.k, nn snd jrt dgt n.k*

Now, they (the king's children) had gotten their *menits* and their scepters,  
<sup>B269</sup> their sistra being in their hand;  
so, they presented them to His Incarnation <and said before His Incarnation,>  
“Your arms be to <sup>B270</sup> something good, lasting king, the ornaments of the Mistress of the Sky!  
May the Golden One give <sup>B271</sup> life to your nose and the Mistress of Stars join you.  
Let Valley Crown go north and Delta Crown go south,  
<sup>B272</sup> united and reconciled through the mouth of your Incarnation.  
Let the Wadjet be placed on your brow, that banishes <sup>B273</sup> for you dependents from evil.  
May the Sun, the Lord of the Two Lands, be content for you,

<sup>178</sup> For translations, see Brunner 1955: 6; Lichtheim 1975: 232; Parkinson 1997: 41; Westendorf 1977: 299; Goedicke 1998: 35; Simpson 2003b: 65. For the interpretation of the quoted section above, see Brunner 1955: 5-11; Derchain 1970: 79-83; Westendorf 1977: 293-304; Goedicke 1998: 29-36.

<sup>B274</sup> with acclaim to you, as to the Lady to the Limit.  
 Turn aside your horn, let loose your arrow, <sup>B275</sup> give breath <to> the one who is  
 suffocating.  
 Give us our good outcome, <sup>B276</sup> in this wayfarer, son of the north wind,  
 a bowman born in Canal-land.  
<sup>B277</sup> He has made flight for fear of you, and left the land for <sup>B278</sup> terror of you.  
 No face of one who might see your face should pale,  
<sup>B279</sup> no eye that looks at you should fear.”

As shown in the text above, the royal children present *menit* and *sistra* to appease the king, asking the king to be gracious. As mentioned, these instruments are offered to calm the gods and make them more amenable to helping and protecting mankind (Gardiner 1915: 95).<sup>179</sup> The appeal of the royal children is directed to the king, who is equated with the sun-god, but the epithets of Hathor, such as *nbw* “Golden One,” *nbt-pt* “Mistress of the Sky” and *nbt sb3w* “Mistress of Stars,” indicate that the ceremony is closely associated with Hathor. What merits our attention is that the queen of King Senwosret I, who is present in the ceremony, is addressed as *nbt-r-dr* “Lady to the Limit,” one of the epithets of Hathor (Brunner 1955: 10-11; Parkinson 1997: 52, note 76), which is also attested in Coffin Texts Spell 331 (CT IV 172h): *jw.j h°.kw m hwt-hrw p3tt nbt-r-dr* “I have appeared as Hathor, the Primeval One, the Lady to the Limit.” Therefore, the queen, the earthly manifestation of Hathor (Troy 1986: 53-72; B. Lesko 1999: 121-122), plays the propitiating role of the goddess between the king and Sinuhe, along with the royal children.<sup>180</sup> In this regard, the

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<sup>179</sup> In private tombs, tomb-owners are presented with these instruments in a ceremony held in their honor while music and dance are performed (Blackman 1914: Plate 2, 1915: Plate 15; Gardiner 1915: Plates 19, 20; Parkinson 1991: 78-81).

<sup>180</sup> Parkinson notes that the song of the royal children has an “erotic charge” because it evokes the king’s union with Hathor, who is embodied on the earth by the queen, to ensure his own rebirth and continual vitality (1997: 52, note 74). In this regard, Derchain sees the ceremony as the union of the sun-god and Hathor (1970: 80). Cf. Westendorf 1977: 296; he thinks the queen herself takes part in the ceremony.

ceremony of the royal children can be regarded as *“Besänftigung des Sonnengottes Re durch Hathor,”* as described in the Contendings of Horus and Seth above (Westendorf 1977: 293).<sup>181</sup>

It is apparent that, with her attraction and the power of music, Hathor can act as a divine intermediary between the two different spheres – (1) the divine and the royal (as in the case of the above-mentioned Karnak *bas-relief* of Sety I) and (2) the royal and the private (as in the case of Senwosret I and Sinuhe). In this regard, Westendorf’s observation is worth noting (1977: 295): *“Auch Brunner (1955: 6-7) geht von der Frage aus, wer mit den ‘Königskindern’ gemeint ist, wer also diesen von Gesang begleiteten Kultakt zelebriert. Mit Brunner teile ich die Ansicht, daß die Einengung auf die Prinzessinnen nicht zwingend erscheint: auch Prinzen – Abbilder des Ihi – können das Sistrum schwingen.”*

Here we can see the true nature of Ihy as a divine musician, who is usually depicted as wearing a *menit* around his neck and holding a sistrum in his hand, the sacred emblem in the worship of his mother Hathor (CT IV 183h; see Sethe 1930: 23, 121; Bonnet 1952: 321-322; Hoenes 1980: 125; Hart 1986: 98; Pinch 2002: 148).<sup>182</sup> Like his mother, who possesses the “spontaneity and playfulness of a daughter, blessed with considerable natural charm” (Roberts 1995: 58),<sup>183</sup> Ihy uses his

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<sup>181</sup> Westendorf claims that Sinuhe, whose name means “Son of the Sycamore,” is just like the king rejuvenated through his mother Hathor (1977: 298, 303-304).

<sup>182</sup> H. Altenmüller claims that Ihy’s extended arm holding a sistrum resembles the posture of the outstretched hand in the defensive magic used by ancient Egyptian herdsmen to ward off crocodiles (1991: 26). However, the connection is not supported by any decisive textual evidence.

<sup>183</sup> During the Amarna period, Akhenaten and his family worshipped the Aten, and their subjects, in turn, worshipped them. In the absence of all diversity and the richness of the traditional religious representations, Akhenaten and his family filled the vacuum for Egyptian people now deprived of ancestral busts and similar protective deities that used to protect their households. In this regard, the true childlike gestures of the royal children during the Amarna Period, found in a number of contemporary stelae and relief scenes, might have been intended to stress the royal children’s intermediary role for private worshippers with their spontaneity and playfulness. It should be remembered that Akhenaten sought to transform the “abstract mystery of traditional Egyptian mythology” into the “concrete reality of everyday life” by forming a triad or even an ennead with the living king himself and his family members (J. Allen 1996: 5; Reeves 2001: 146).

attractiveness as a child (deity) – especially in his capacity as the sun-child who emerges from the primeval water Nu (see 4.9 below) – when he acts as an intermediary deity. Towards this purpose, he is filled with power emanating from the two sacred instruments.<sup>184</sup> In this role, Ihy is not so much the son of the versatile goddess as he is her satellite – or more aptly put, her divine acolyte, who accompanies his mother in temple rituals like the royal children who accompany the queen in ceremonies, as shown in the Tale of Sinuhe.

In sum, as divine acolyte of his mother-goddess Hathor (see 4.12 below), Ihy functions in the Egyptian pantheon as the child-intermediary of the mother-intermediary Hathor, who, like his mother, plays a mediating role between the two different spheres, the divine and the mundane. This explains how the king, as Horus the son of Hathor, also served as the Ihy-musician for Hathor (as did the priests who were his delegates) (Otto 1964: 115-116; Daumas 1975: 105-106; Ryhiner 1986: 186-187, note 67).

#### **4.6 Ihy as the divine guide and protector**

##### ***4.6.1 Ihy as the divine guide***

The role of Ihy as the child-intermediary also explains his role as the guide/protector for the deceased. First, Ihy as the son of Hathor plays the role of an intermediary who guarantees to the deceased the proximity of Hathor, the Mistress of the West (*nbt jmntt*), who frequently appears as a cow emerging from the western mountain of the Theban area in order to welcome the dead

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Meanwhile, it is notable that the *menit* became totally absent in Amarna scenes, reflecting King Akhenaten's "monotheistic" drive (B. Lesko 1999: 285, note 75). Interestingly, however, the sistrum was still shaken by the queen and the royal daughters for the sun-disk Aten.

<sup>184</sup> Similarly, the deceased identified with Ihy seeks to become the sacred items that Hathor wears, in his quest for eternal life in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 183b-183j) (Otto 1952: 193).



(Bleeker 1973: 42-45; B. Lesko 1999: 99-111).<sup>185</sup> This aspect of Ihy is mentioned in Coffin Texts Spell 588 and the Book of the Dead Chapter 103:

- Coffin Texts Spell 588 (CT VI 209j-m): [*N pn ...*] *j3[s]*, *jhy zp 2*, *wnn N pn m šmsw [hwt-hrw]*  
“[This N (the deceased)] ... *j3s*-priest (= priest of Hathor). Ihy, Ihy. This N will be as the follower of [Hathor].”
- Book of the Dead Chapter 103: *r n wnn m šms(w) n hwt-hrw, dd.f, jnk s<sup>c</sup>h w<sup>c</sup>b.(w) j3s, jhy zp 2, wnn.j m šms(w) n hwt-hrw* “SPELL FOR BEING AS THE FOLLOWER OF HATHOR. He says:  
I am a pure dignitary, a *j3s*-priest. Ihy, Ihy. This N will be as the follower of Hathor.”<sup>186</sup>

In addition, music and dance sacred to Hathor played a significant role in funerary rituals (Bell 1997: 136-137; Anderson 1995: 2564-2565; Spencer 2003: 113-116).<sup>187</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that Ihy, as the son of Hathor and the divine musician, served as the caring and protective guide for the deceased with the magical power that he possessed on earth and in the hereafter (Allam 1963: 133; H. Altenmüller 1991a: 24-25, 1991b: 14).

As the divine guide, Ihy can see the path to the netherworld (see CT VI 162u-v below) and, with his power in the sky and on earth, he can also fly to the sky and stay on earth as he wishes (see CT IV 180k-o). So the deceased wishes to rise above the horizon with Ihy as the sky-god (see CT VI 76i-j below).

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<sup>185</sup> For the concept as Hathor as Mistress of the West in association with the sun-god in his form of the aged Atum, see B. Lesko 1999: 100-101, 109-111.

<sup>186</sup> Note that in the text of Ca (Navelle 1886a: 240), we find *jnk sbj w<sup>c</sup>b* “I am one who passes by clean.”

<sup>187</sup> In many Old Kingdom tomb drawings, long rows of singers, dancers and musicians are depicted at the entrance of the tomb. They are playing, singing and dancing in order to facilitate the tomb owner’s entry into the next world. The tradition is also found almost unchanged in many New Kingdom tombs.

- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180k-o): *nj sk.j m pt hn<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup> hn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j hwt-hrw, [nj sk.j] m t3 hn<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup> hn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j hwt-hrw, jw rn.j m t3 hn<sup>c</sup> n<sup>h</sup>w, jnk jhy z3 hwt-hrw* “I will not perish in the sky with Re, with my mother Hathor. [I will not perish] on the earth with Re, with my mother Hathor, for my name is on the earth with the living, for I am Ihy, son of Hathor.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 495 (CT VI 76i-j): *w<sup>c</sup>r.n.f hn<sup>c</sup> jhy, ph.n.f 3ht m bjk wr* “He has fled with Ihy, he has reached the *akhet* as a great falcon.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162u-v): *m33.j w3t m jrtj.j mj jhy z3 hwt-hrw mry.s* “I will see the path with my (two) eyes like Ihy, son of Hathor, whom she loves.”

Besides the Coffin Texts spells of the Middle Kingdom, Ihy is visualized as the protective guide/protector in two statues of sistrum players found in the tomb of Tutankhamun (Abitz 1979: Figure 16; H. Altenmüller 1991b: 13-14) and in two unfinished figures drawn on the wall in the tomb of Sety II (Abitz 1979: Figures 3a-b, 16; Hornung 1990: 181). Here Ihy plays the role of leading the deceased king to attain eternal life and resurrection.<sup>188</sup> According to the Egyptian belief about the afterlife, the deceased needs to have knowledge of the path in the netherworld and magical protection against dangerous residents and deities in the netherworld. Here Ihy is

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<sup>188</sup> Abitz sees the two statues of Ihy as the rejuvenated form of the deceased king (1979: 85-86). However, H. Altenmüller stresses the guiding role of Ihy (1991b: 14): “Ihi hat die Funktion eines Geleiters und Schützers durch unwegsame und von Feinden besetzte Regionen.” This function justifies the identification of Ihy with Khonsu in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 181i-j): *sq3(w).j m rn.j pw n jhy, dj.t(w) n.j hy [...] m rn.j pw hnsu* “I have been exalted in this my name of Ihy. Acclamation is given to me in this my name of Khonsu”; the name Khonsu after all means “wanderer” (Abitz 1979: 85). The two wooden statues of Ihy found in the shines of Tutankhamun are blackened, which represents dissolution and decay after death. In this regard, Roberts writes (1995: 31) that, as the sun-child of resurrection, Ihy emerges out of the stench and foulness as a shining child, fragrant like Hathor, as expressed in Coffin Texts Spells 334 (CT IV 182s-183e): *hw3.n.j jm, sns.j jm m rn.j pw n sns n(m)tw ntrw, hw33t.j pw ntjw ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-hrw r tp.s, st.j pw sntrw [ddw n.s mjwt.j] hwt-hrw r k3p.s, rdw.j pw hknw ddw n.s mjwt.j hwt-hrw r jwf.s* “I have rotted there; I have fraternized there in this my name of the one who fraternizes men and gods. My putrefaction is myrrh, which my mother Hathor puts for herself on her head; my smell is incense, [which my mother] Hathor [puts] for herself into her censer; my efflux is sacred oil, which my mother Hathor puts for herself on her flesh.”

the divine guide who can cross the borderlines between this world and the next and provide magical protection to the deceased (H. Altenmüller 1991a: 25).<sup>189</sup>

#### 4.6.2 *Ihy as the protector*<sup>190</sup>

As the child-intermediary, Ihy is regarded as a friendly god, as in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 182s-183a): *snsn.j jm m rn.j pw n snsn r(m)tw ntrw* “I (Ihy) have fraternized there in this my name of the one who fraternizes men and gods.” He is also praised as the protector in other funerary texts:

- Coffin Texts Spell 146 (CT II 199b) *jhy n hwt-hrw m z3 N pn n nḥ* “Ihy of Hathor is the protection of N (the deceased) for life.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180g-i) *nd.j p<sup>t</sup> m-<sup>c</sup> ntrw, t(3)z phr, jnk ndty [...], sq3(w).j m rn.j pw n jhy* “I will protect the elite from the gods, and vice versa. I am the protector [...] I have been exalted in this my name of Ihy.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 698 (CT VI 332e-f): *sh.t.n tw jhy, d.n r<sup>c</sup> ḥnmmt.f m s3 jr.k* “Ihy has driven you (a demon of the netherworld) off; Re has placed his people in protection against you.”
- Book of the Dead Chapter 149: *jn n.j jhy nb jbw sqd.f qsw.j, smn.f wrrt* “Fetch for me Ihy, lord of hearts, so that he may reconstruct (my) bones and affix the crown.”

In connection with the protective magic possessed by Ihy, Coffin Texts Spell 36 mentions that the deceased “fills his body with magic” and performs his duty as a dutiful son of Osiris. Here Ihy is

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<sup>189</sup> H. Altenmüller writes that the protective magic of Ihy that guides his followers through dangerous paths (e.g., herdsmen who guide their herd through waters infested with crocodiles) is based on the soothing effect of music (1991a: 25). However, there is no textual evidence to support this claim.

<sup>190</sup> Brunner says that the aspect of the child deity as a protector god is derived from Harpocrates, who has his own magical healing power (1977b: 650). However, Ihy as the protector clearly shows that the aspect was conceptualized earlier than, and independently of, that of Harpocrates.

said to have the “water of life” (CT I 140f): *jw jn.n.f.n.k mw ʿnhw jmjw ʿwj jhy* “He (the deceased) has brought to you (Osiris) the living water that is in the (two) hands of Ihy.”

#### 4.6.3 Identification with Ihy

In order to benefit from the magical power of the divine guide/intermediary, the deceased expresses his/her wish to take the name (identity) of Ihy as the strong means of protection (see CT IV 180i and CT V 30b-c below). In another spell, the deceased who has become Horus and attained the power of the sun-god boasts that he will seize the power of Ihy for eternity (see CT IV 161d-f below). The deceased also claims that he is the embodiment of Ihy (see CT VI 54f-h).

- Coffin Texts Spell 326 (CT IV 161d-f): *jt wsjr N pn jhy, jnt wsjr N pn jhy nhh, smn wsjr N pn sj3 r rdwj wsjr N pn* “This Osiris N (the deceased) will take possession of Ihy. This Osiris N will get Ihy for eternity. This Osiris N will set Perception at the (two) feet of this Osiris N.”<sup>191</sup>
- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180i): *sq3(w).j m rn.j pw n jhy* “I have been exalted in this my name of Ihy.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 368 (CT V 30b-c): *nj hs js rn.k, rʿ rn.k jhy rn.k* “Your name is not Excrement; Re is your name, Ihy is your name.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 484 (CT VI 54f-h): *jhy m ht.j jwf wʿb n mjwt.f* “Ihy is in my belly, the pure flesh of his mother.”<sup>192</sup>

Most importantly, however, the ultimate wish of the deceased is to transform himself into Ihy in the child form as in Coffin Texts Spell 334 above (Allam 1963: 133).<sup>193</sup> In this regard, it should be

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<sup>191</sup> This part of the spell is found only in Sq6C. See Faulkner 1973: 253, note 8. For the relationship between Ihy and Sia (Perception), see Otto 1952: 193.

<sup>192</sup> See Faulkner 1977: 129, notes 3 and 4.

noted that a child deity can symbolize rebirth after death and Ihy can appear as the primeval child deity born from Nu (see 4.9 below). Connected with the concept of the primeval time (Nu and Heh), the deceased identified with the divine child who is created at the time of creation can represent himself here as a strong symbol of eternal resurrection and rejuvenation (Allam 1963: 135-136). The wish of the deceased to become a child, the embodiment of resurrection and rejuvenation, is repeated in Coffin Texts Spell 290, where the deceased becomes a weaned child (Otto 1952: 193):

**T4-3. Coffin Texts Spell 290 (CT IV 42a-e)<sup>194</sup>**

<sup>42-a</sup> *hpr m wdḥ*

<sup>42-b</sup> *jnk jr.j hpr m wdḥ* <sup>42-c</sup> *jr w ʿ.f, ddw mjwt.f*

<sup>42-d</sup> *nnk hprw n ntr nb<sup>195</sup>*

<sup>42-e</sup> *jr r z(j) hprw m ntr nb mrrw z(j) jrt hprw jm*

<sup>42-a</sup> TRANSFORMATION INTO A WEANLING

<sup>42-b</sup> So I am the one who has transformed into a weanling

<sup>42-c</sup> whose document has been made; one (about) whom his mother has said:

<sup>42-d</sup> "Mine are the transformations of every god."

<sup>42-e</sup> How a man changes into any god into which a man wishes to change.

The spell above is interesting in that the focus is on the unlimited potential of the divine child who is able to transform into any divine form. Other spells directly mention the young god who attained resurrection in the hereafter:

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<sup>193</sup> It is also noteworthy that the deceased is identified with Hathor in Coffin Texts Spells 331 and 332.

<sup>194</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1973: 217. For the mention of the young god, see Coffin Texts Spell 46. There is a shorter version that expresses the wish of the deceased to become a child. It is Coffin Texts Spell 291 (CT IV 42f-j): *dd-mdw hpr m hrd, jnk jr.f hprw m hrdw, jr r w (j)t(j).f ddw mjwt.f, jnk pw* "RECITATION. TRANSFORMATION INTO A CHILD. Mine are the forms of a child whom his father makes and (about) whom his mother said: "It is him" (literally, "It is I")."

<sup>195</sup> Cf. B1B0 reads *n.f jm(y) hpry nb* in B1B0.

#### T4-4. Coffin Texts Spell 30 (CT I 88b-93b)<sup>196</sup>

<sup>88/89-b</sup> *jj.(w) m htp <n> jmnt, ntr rnpw ms.n jmnt nfrt, jj.(w) mjn m t3 ʿnh.(w)*<sup>197</sup>

<sup>90/91-a</sup> *dr.n.f hmw r.f<sup>90/91-b</sup> mh.n.f ht.f m hk3w*

<sup>90/91-c</sup> *htm.n.f jbt.f jm.f<sup>90/91-d</sup> sd3 n.f wršw.f jm.f<sup>92/93-a</sup> mj 3pd*

<sup>92/93-b</sup> *hrw.sn ntrw 3htjw r N pn jmj jmnt*<sup>198</sup>

<sup>88/89-b</sup> Welcome <to> the West, the young god whom the Beautiful West bore,  
who has come here from earth alive,

<sup>90/91-a</sup> having removed his dust from him; <sup>90/91-b</sup> having filled his belly with magic;

<sup>90/91-c</sup> having quenched his thirst with it;

<sup>90/91-d</sup> at whom those who watch for him tremble <sup>92/93-a</sup> like a bird.

<sup>92/93-b</sup> So they say, the gods of the *akhet* regarding this N who is in the west.

By the same token, Ihy, as the first creation after the creation and as a young god who has tremendous magical power, can lead the deceased to resurrection. Through identification, however, the deceased no longer seeks magical protection from him. Rather, he becomes one with this divine guide/intermediary.

### IHY AS A CHILD DEITY

As shown above, the concept of Ihy as a child deity is firmly established by the Middle Kingdom. What should be remembered here is that, as a child deity, Ihy follows the pattern of the sun-child, rather than that of the Horus child. As the son of the sun-god, Ihy has the aspects of the sun-child and demonstrates the common feature of Egyptian child deities, such as Khonsu and Nefertem, who embody the *n/hh*-element as a symbol of the periodical rejuvenation of the sun-god/creator god (Westendorf 1974: 136-141; Brunner 1977b: 649).

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<sup>196</sup> For a translation, see Faulkner 1973: 19.

<sup>197</sup> For the variations among the spells, see Faulkner 1973: 19, note 10.

<sup>198</sup> Note that T1L reads: *hrw.sn wrw 3htj r N pn* "So say the great ones of the two *akhets* regarding this N." See Faulkner 1973: 20, note 15.

#### 4.7 Son of the sun-god

When it comes to the father-god of Ihy, the sun-god Re and Horus of Edfu are both mentioned. With regard to the fatherly role of the sun-god, the close relationship between Re and Hathor should be considered first. In fact, their relationship is attested throughout Egyptian history in a number of funerary texts and hymns.<sup>199</sup> B. Lesko argues that Hathor was not one of the earliest goddesses whose origin could be traced back to the Pre-Dynastic Period, but one who was deliberately invented by the priests of the sun-god as their deity's spouse, playing the role of the universal female creative principle with a number of attributes borrowed from earlier goddesses (1999: 83). The fact that numerous priests had titles combining the two also points to the close association between Re and Hathor (Allam 1963: 7; Galvin 1981: 78). In addition, *nbw* "Golden One," one of the commonest epithets of Hathor, which identifies the goddess as the personification of the solar disk (Allam 1963: 131; Bleeker 1973: 26; H. Altenmüller 1975: 134), also attests to the complementary relationship between Re and Hathor as the male and female elements of the solar deity (Troy 1986: 21; Hassan 1998: 103).

According to Coffin Texts Spell 334, the sun-god is regarded as the spouse of Hathor-Isis and the father-god of Ihy (Allam 1963: 113). In the spell, Ihy is called: (CT IV 179c) *mtwt jptw tpt nt r<sup>c</sup>* "that first seed of Re"; and (CT IV 180a; see also CT IV 179f) *z3 tp(j) n r<sup>c</sup>* "the first-born son of Re."<sup>200</sup> In addition, as in the case of the sun-god and Hathor (Allam 1963: 114), Ihy, as the sun-child, is

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<sup>199</sup> The major cultic centers of the sun-god and Hathor can give a clue to understanding the close relationship between the two deities. Allam assumes that *jwnt*, the ancient Egyptian name of Dendera, is probably the female form of *jwnw* or Heliopolis, which is the major cultic center of the sun-god during the Old Kingdom (1963: 113; see also Fischer 1968b: 40).

<sup>200</sup> Later, Ihy is worshipped as the son of Hathor and Horus of Edfu in Dendera (Hoenes 1980: 125), but it can be said that Ihy still remains the solar child because Horus of Edfu had become solarized and identified with the sun-god.

mentioned side by side with the sun-god in some Coffin Texts spells for the protection of the deceased against demons and unpleasant events:

- Coffin Texts Spell 368 (CT V 30b-c): *nj ḥs js rn.k, r<sup>c</sup> rn.k jḥy rn.k* “Your name is not Excrement; Re is your name, Ihy is your name.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 698 (CT VI 332e-f): *sh.t.n tw jḥy, d.n r<sup>c</sup> ḥnmmt.f m s3 jr.k* “Ihy has driven you (a demon of the netherworld) off; Re has placed his people in protection against you.”

There is no doubt that these spells indicate the position of Ihy as the son of the sun-god.

#### 4.8 The sun-child

As the son of the sky-goddess and the consort of the sun-god, it is not surprising that Ihy is closely associated with the sun-god, especially the rising sun-god, as shown in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (Bonnet 1952: 322):

- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180c): *wrr.n.j sbq.n.j* “as I grew up, I became more splendid.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 181r): *q3.n.j q3yt mj jt(j).j* “I have become high like my father.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180k-o): *nj sk.j m pt ḥn<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup> ḥn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j ḥwt-ḥrw, [nj sk.j] m t3 ḥn<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup> ḥn<sup>c</sup> mjwt.j ḥwt-ḥrw, jw rn.j m t3 ḥn<sup>c</sup> ḥnw, jnk jḥy z3 ḥwt-ḥrw* “I will not perish in the sky with Re, with my mother Hathor. [I will not perish] on the earth with Re, with my mother Hathor, for my name is on the earth with the living, for I am Ihy, son of Hathor.”<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> For Ihy’s aspect as the sky-god, see 4.6.1 above.



#### 4.9 The primeval god

As the sun-child, Ihy can also appear as the primeval deity emerging from the primeval water, as in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (Brunner 1977b: 648; Hoenes 1980: 126). Here the deceased who is identified with Ihy emerges as the new-born child deity born from the primeval water when mourning is over (CT IV 182i-n): *jnk nw n mjwt.f, jnk nhnw z3 hwt-hrw, jnk nny jmj nw [jnk ...] jw rh rn.j st.j, jw.j m h(j)h(j) bw wnn.j jm m rn.j pw n hhw* "I am the child of his mother; I am the baby, son of Hathor. I am the Inert One in Nu;<sup>202</sup> [I am ...], my name and my place are known. I am seeking the place where I will be in this my name of Huh."<sup>203</sup>

In this regard, it should be noted that a child deity can symbolize rebirth after death just as the regular rebirth of the sun-child in the eternal cycle symbolizes the resurrection of the dead, the renewal of the cosmos and the yearly renewal of Egypt's fertility.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, like other deities, especially the sun-child and the Horus child (CT II 209d), his appearance is depicted as awe-inspiring to other divine beings, as mentioned in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180p-q): *sd3 pt jm(j).s m ksw mnmn b3wj [tp]-m s3d* "The sky trembles and the one who is in it, bowing; the Two Lands quake in advance of the flash."

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<sup>202</sup> With regard to Ihy as the divine child emerging from Nu, it should be noted that Hathor can be identified with Mehet-Weret, the primeval ocean in the form of the cow-goddess (Kákosy 1982: 4).

<sup>203</sup> For Huh and his relationship with *hjhj* "to seek," see Sethe 1929: 76; Allam 1963: 146, note 1.

<sup>204</sup> As mentioned earlier, Hathor is visualized as the cow emerging from the western cliff to welcome the deceased. In the Book of the Dead Chapter 186 (Ani), the hippopotamus goddess Taweret is standing in front of the cow-goddess (Goelet *et al* 1998: Plate 37). Given that Taweret, along with Bes, is especially associated with pregnancy and childbirth, the vignette indicates the (re)birth of the deceased in the embrace of Hathor, Mistress of the West. For the cow-goddess Hathor of the western Theban cliff, see Donohue 1992: 871-885.

#### 4.10 The *kamutef*

With Ihy as the sun-child, it is especially noteworthy that he displays the characteristic of *kamutef*, as cited above in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 181e-r). Here Ihy is called *z3b jhhw* “Jackal of the Sunshine.” The exact meaning remains unclear but since the jackal is an animal whose tracks can lead travelers through difficult desert terrain, the role of this animal well befits the role of Ihy, who guides the deceased in difficult paths of the netherworld into a new life (Roberts 1995: 30). In this regard, it would be useful to consider the mortuary role of Anubis. Hollis sees Anubis as the regenerator of the deceased (2008: 85), while Noblecourt considers him as the patron of the traveler (2007: 90-98). If the jackal here is connected with Anubis, it is possible to link it to the term *jnpw* “the royal child who has not yet ascended the throne” or “heir apparent to the throne” (Feucht 1995: 503-512). Assuming that the connection is correct, the Jackal of the Sunshine can be interpreted as the heir apparent of the sun-god, who impregnates his mother by “flowing between her thighs” for the ultimate and eternal regeneration.

The *kamutef* character becomes clearer when Ihy reveals himself as *k3 hnw* “the bull of turbulence” (CT IV 181i), adding (CT IV 181j): *ꜥꜥ.n wj mjwt.j jst* “my mother Isis has ejaculated me.” Then, as the new-born sun-child born of his consort/mother and as the primeval god who came into being before many events mentioned in the spell, Ihy grows up to be the splendid midday sun (CT IV 181r): *q3.n.j q3yt mj jt(j).j* “I have indeed become high like my father.”

In sum, it is clear that Ihy possesses many characteristics that identify him as the sun-child. This can be reinforced by (1) the close relationship between the sun-god and his mother-goddess Hathor and (2) the mother-son relationship between Hathor and Ihy.

#### 4.11 Son of Hathor (= Isis)

In most cases where he shows up as a child deity, Ihy is said to be *z3 hwt-hrw* “the son of Hathor,” as mentioned in the spells above (CT IV 179i; CT 180d; CT IV 180k-o; CT IV 181c; CT IV 182i; CT IV 183b-j).<sup>205</sup> His filial status as the son of Hathor is also confirmed in other Coffin Texts spells:

- Coffin Texts Spell 146 (CT II 199b): *jhy n hwt-hrw m z3 N pn n nh* “Ihy of Hathor is the protection of this N (the deceased) for life.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162u-v): *m33.j w3t m jrtj.j mj jhy z3 hwt-hrw mry.s* “I will see the path with my (two) eyes like Ihy, son of Hathor, whom she loves.”<sup>206</sup>

Although the visual representation of Ihy as the youthful deity close to Hathor is very rare, the child deity is mentioned in company with his mother-goddess already in the Old Kingdom Palermo Stone, as mentioned above. In a Middle Kingdom relief at Serabit el-Khadim, Ihy is depicted standing beside Hathor, extending his hand to an official (Gardiner *et al* 1917: Plate 47, 125a). During the New Kingdom, Ihy is shown accompanying Hatshepsut as the child deity in her Deir el-Bahari temple sanctuary. In this scene he is wearing the side-lock of youth and the

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<sup>205</sup> Besides Hathor, Isis also plays the role of mother of Ihy (CT IV 179b; CT IV 182f) and this seems to be the result of the ongoing syncretism of Isis with Hathor and the expanding identification of Horus with other child deities. It can be observed in Coffin Texts Spell 51 that Horus is taking over the role of Ihy for the deceased, who is identified with the sun-god (CT I 236h-237a): *h<sup>c</sup> hrw z3 wsjr, qm3.f jhy m hw* “Stand, Horus son of Osiris; he creates (= acts the part of) Ihy with Authoritative Annunciation.” For the interpretation of *qm3* “to act the part of,” see Faulkner 1973: 51, note 16. However, the interpretation of the verb remains problematic, because the meaning is not attested in other usages found in the Coffin Texts. If it means “to create,” the above passage presents the solarized Horus as father of Ihy. For the similarity of Ihy and Hu (the Authoritative Annunciation), see B. Altenmüller 1975: 24; Allam 1963: 135-136. Nephthys also appears as the mother of Ihy in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180b). With the identification of Ihy with the Horus child, Isis and Nephthys, the two protector-goddesses of the Horus child, can appear here as the mother of Ihy (B. Altenmüller 1975: 24, 177).

<sup>206</sup> Other Coffin Texts spells that show the indirect relationship of Ihy with Hathor include CT VI 54f; CT VI 61g; CT VI 139h. Moreover, an interesting mention of Ihy’s son is found in Coffin Texts Spell 939 (CT VII 151a): *hn<sup>c</sup> z3 jhy* “... (together) with the son of Ihy.” The exact meaning of the spell remains elusive (Faulkner 1978: 79).

*menit* around the neck, and shaking the sistrum before the sacred barge of his mother-goddess Hathor (Neville 1901: Plate 104).

#### 4.12 Genuine mother?

When it comes to the role of Hathor as the caring divine mother-goddess, however, it remains doubtful if Hathor can be considered the “genuine” mother-goddess of Ihy. What should be noted at this point is that Ihy does not enjoy the same status of Horus (the Elder) or the king who is cared for and suckled by Hathor (Goedicke 1970: 262, 1975: 208; Bleeker 1973: 25; Frankfort: 1978: 173; Troy 1986: 21-22; Hollis 1994: 84-85, note 9).<sup>207</sup> Nor does he spend the dramatic childhood that Horus did (Sandri 2006: 15). At this point, his role in association with Hathor can be a clue to his nature as the divine acolyte and intermediary (see NATURE OF THE DEITY above).

His role as the divine acolyte explains Ihy’s superficial filial relation with his mother-goddess Hathor, which is different from that between Hathor and Horus (and the king).<sup>208</sup> This also explains why Hathor and Ihy did not form part of a divine triad until the Ptolemaic Period. The bond between Hathor as the master-goddess and Ihy as the acolyte-son was so strong that there was no room for the father-god to complete the generational succession as in the case of the Horus child.

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<sup>207</sup> In this regard, see Coffin Texts Spell 331 (CT IV 172b, CT IV 173e): *jnk hwt-hrw jnt hrw.s hwt hrw.s ... jnk wnnt wtz nfr.f jbt 3hw.f* “I am Hathor who got her Horus and announced her Horus. ... I [Hathor] am indeed the one who carries his [Horus’s] perfection and unites his effectiveness.”

<sup>208</sup> Note that Bleeker casts doubt on the aspect of Hathor as a mother-goddess and claims (1973: 38-42) that she “jealously guarded her independence and never allowed herself to be trapped in any mythological system that could detract from her true nature.”

## CONCLUSION

So far, we have seen how the specific role of Ihy started to be fixed by the time of the Middle Kingdom. In the process, it has become clear that Ihy usually follows the pattern of the sun-child. Regarding his role, Ihy is the divine musician *par excellence*, who accompanies his mother-goddess Hathor and fulfills his role as the divine acolyte and intermediary. This illustrates his strong bond with Hathor, which does not allow the entry of the generational succession that characterizes the pattern of the Horus child. It also explains the late development of the divine triad.

In addition, Ihy plays his role as a child deity on three different levels. On the cosmic level, Ihy is a form of the sun-child who embodies the primeval creative power and the *nḥḥ*-element that maintains the eternal cycle of rejuvenation and resurrection in the universe. He also projects the personality of the *kamutef*.

On the kingship level, the king is identified with Ihy and serves as the Ihy-musician playing the instruments sacred to his divine mother in order to propitiate the goddess and guarantee peace and order in the world. The role of the king (and his delegate priests) as the devoted musician is well described in the Eleventh Dynasty royal stela below:

### **T4-5. Intef Stela (MMA 13.182.3; TPPI § 15)<sup>209</sup>**

*<sup>7</sup> j srjw jpw jmntjw pt, j ntrw jpw jmntjw pt, [j] hrjw <sup>8</sup> jdbw jmntjw pt*

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<sup>209</sup> For the text, see Winlock 1943: 258-259 and Plate 36, 1947:18-19 and Plate 4; Clère-Vandier 1948: 10 (TPPI § 15). For translations, see Wilson 1953: 221; Hermann 1959: 25-26; Allam 1963: 140-141; B. Lesko 1999: 100 (from line 12).

*h<sup>c</sup>yw m hsfw hwt-hrw, mrrw m33wt<sup>9</sup> q3 nfr.s*  
*dy rh.(j) s(j) dd.(j) r-gs.s n[t]t w(j) h<sup>c</sup>.kw m<sup>10</sup> m3.s*  
*drjt.(j) m m(j) n.j zp 2*  
*ht.(j) dd.s sptj.(j) whm.snj jhy w<sup>c</sup>b<sup>11</sup> n hwt-hrw jhy hhw hfnw*  
*jr dr mrr.t jhy, jw hh n jhy n k3.t r swt.t nb*  
<sup>12</sup> *jnk wnnt dd srs dw3 jhy n hwt-hrw r<sup>c</sup> nb r wnwt nb mrrt.s*  
*htp jb.t m<sup>13</sup> jhy*  
*s3 r.t nfr m htp, hkn.t m <sup>c</sup>nh m 3wt jb hn<sup>c</sup> hrw mrr tn*  
<sup>14</sup> *w3b.(j) hn<sup>c</sup>.t m htpwt.t, wnm.(j) hn<sup>c</sup>.t m df3w, jp.t w(j) r.s r<sup>c</sup> nb*  
<sup>15</sup> *hrw w3h-<sup>c</sup>nh jm3hw hr wsjr (z3-r<sup>c</sup> jn-(j)t(j).f<sup>c</sup>3)| ms nfrw*

- <sup>7</sup> Oh you officials of the west of the sky,  
 Oh gods of the west of the sky,  
 Oh you on <sup>8</sup> the western shores of the sky,  
 who are excited at meeting Hathor, who love the sight of <sup>9</sup> how high her beauty is!  
 Let me know her, that I may say beside her that I am excited <sup>10</sup> at seeing her;  
 my two hands in “Come to me! Come to me!”  
 my body speaking, my two lips repeating pure songs <sup>11</sup> to Hathor,  
 infinite hundreds of thousands of song:  
 Since you love song, there shall be millions of songs for your *ka* in all your places.
- <sup>12</sup> I am truly the one who makes the morning awaken song to Hathor every day,  
 at every hour she desires.  
 May your heart be content with <sup>13</sup> the song!  
 So, proceed well, in peace, endowed with life and with happiness,  
 together with Horus, who loves you.
- <sup>14</sup> Let me feed with you from your offerings; let me eat with you from sustenance:  
 may you allot me to it every day.
- <sup>15</sup> Horus Wah-ankh, honored with Osiris, son of Re Intef the Great, whom Neferu bore.

Finally, in the funerary sphere, Ihy is the trusted guide/protector who can lead the deceased king and others to eternal life, as discussed in detail above.

After the New Kingdom, Ihy’s role as divine musician is emphasized and his iconography is fixed as the divine musician playing the sistrum and the *menit* for deities (H. Altenmüller 1991a: 19-20, also note 15). In later periods, Ihy also played important roles in the *mammisi*. In the *mammisi* of Nectanebo I at Dendera, his conception, was identified with that of the king, was

celebrated, and the divine play of his mysterious conception was performed (R. Wilkinson 2003: 133).

## CHAPTER 5. KHONSU – FERTILIZING MOON

### INTRODUCTION

Khonsu is an interesting case demonstrating that a deity's character is subject to changes in the course of time. His nature in the Old Kingdom is completely different from that in the New Kingdom, when he was included as a divine child in a local triad. In the spells of the Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts, Khonsu is generally portrayed as an aggressive, bloodthirsty deity who hunts, slaughters and devours other deities and men in order to absorb their (magical) power (R. Wilkinson 2003: 113). As a member of the Theban Triad, however, Khonsu appears as a benevolent child deity with great healing power, and his cult gained great popularity among worshippers. Unlike other child deities, he had his own temple within the precincts of the great Amun temple at Karnak, probably as the son of the state-god Amun,. Later, Khonsu was elevated to become a creator god and identified with the great snake that fertilized the cosmic egg according to the so-called "Khonsu Cosmology," which is preserved on the walls of the Khonsu temple at Karnak (Parker & Lesko 1988: 168-175; Cruz-Uribe 1994: 169-189; Mendel 2003: 74-78).<sup>210</sup>

As a versatile child deity, Khonsu is the subject of numerous scholarly entries, articles and sections dedicated to his various characteristics. Apart from numerous encyclopedia entries

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<sup>210</sup> Cruz-Uribe provides an interesting "hypothetical interpretation" of the growing importance of Khonsu the Child in the Late Period and of the integration of the Osirian theme into the Amun-Re theology (1994: 185-186, 188). His work clarifies the development of the Amun-Mut-Khonsu triad in light of the extended role of Osiris, which will be discussed in detail later.



about the child deity,<sup>211</sup> Derchain devotes special attention to Khonsu as a lunar deity in his *Mythes et dieux lunaires en Égypte* (1962: 40-44) and he examines Khonsu along with other lunar deities such as Thoth, Osiris and Min.<sup>212</sup> Roberts also provides penetrating remarks on Khonsu as the “fertilizing moon” (1995: 78-80). Regarded as outdated are scholarly works exploring Khonsu’s function as the king’s placenta, including those by Blackman (1916: 235-249), van der Leeuw (1918: 64) and Frankfort (1978: 71-72). Finally, the most comprehensive iconographic analysis of Khonsu is an article “Khonsu,” posted by Salis on the website of the Iconography of Deities and Demons (2009).<sup>213</sup>

## NAME AND ICONOGRAPHY

### 5.1 The Name of Khonsu

As regards the etymology of Khonsu’s name, there has been an attempt to interpret it as *ḥ-nsw(t)* “the placenta of the king” (Blackman 1916: 235-249). According to this interpretation, Khonsu is a personification of the royal placenta, which is considered the twin or the double of the royal child. Blackman claims that Khonsu’s role as the “representative of all royal placentae” explains his “lack of individuality, his youth, his princely attributes, and his name *ḥnzw*” because “the placenta was never, like the majority of Egyptian gods, conceived of as a person who had once actually *lived* on the earth” (1916: 248). The theory was accepted by van der Leeuw, who saw Khonsu as the moon-god who is the “twin” or the double of the sun-god (as the king *par*

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<sup>211</sup> Independent treatments of “Khonsu” (“Khons,” „Chons”) include Bonnet 1971: 140-144; Brunner 1975: 960-963; Hart 1986: 112-115; Houser-Wegner 2001a: 233; Pinch 2002: 155-156; and R. Wilkinson 2003: 113-114.

<sup>212</sup> Hall and Brunner cite Posener’s articles on Khonsu in *Annuaire du Collège de France* 65-70. Unfortunately, however, I did not have a chance to take a look at these articles. For the reference, see Hall 1977: 55 no. 5 and Brunner 1975: 963.

<sup>213</sup> See <http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd>.

*excellence*), just as the royal placenta was the twin of the royal child (1918: 64). Frankfort also speculated, in his subsection on the royal *ka*, about a possible relationship between Khonsu and the practice of worshipping the royal placenta (1978: 71-72).

However, the theory was questioned (Posener 1965: 193-195) and it is now generally agreed that, as first suggested by Brugsch (1891: 359),<sup>214</sup> the name of Khonsu, or *h<sub>n</sub>z<sub>w</sub>*, means “the one who travels” or “courser” and the image is that of the moon-god sailing the night sky (Bonnet 1952: 141; Derchain 1962: 40; Posener 1966: 115; B. Altenmüller 1975: 167; Brunner 1975b: 960; Houser-Wegner 2001a: 233; R. Wilkinson 2003: 113; J. Allen 2005: 428; Salis 2009: 1). B. Altenmüller (1975: 167) interprets the name *h<sub>n</sub>z<sub>w</sub>* as “traveler” based on Coffin Texts Spell 806 (CT VII 11i): *h<sub>n</sub>z.k m h<sub>n</sub>z<sub>w</sub>* “You will travel as Khonsu.”<sup>215</sup>

## 5.2 Iconography<sup>216</sup>

Khonsu was a marginal deity before the New Kingdom. Only one Old Kingdom depiction of Khonsu in full human form is known, namely along with other deities such as Sobek, Sokar, Hathor and Khnum in the funerary complex of Pepi II (Jéquier 1940: 15 and Plate 21). During the Middle Kingdom, he remains marginal. He is not mentioned or depicted in the White Chapel of Senwosret I, as Brunner notes (1975b: 960). Therefore, it can be said that the typical iconography

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<sup>214</sup> It is interesting that Blackman was aware of the opinion that the name *h<sub>n</sub>z<sub>w</sub>* might be derived from the verb *h<sub>n</sub>z* “travel around,” but he says that the idea is less compelling than his theory (1916: 246-247).

<sup>215</sup> She also cites Coffin Texts Spell 257 (CT III 369a): *jnk jm<sup>3</sup>hy n h<sub>n</sub>z<sub>w</sub> n pt* “I am a revered one of Khonsu/the traveler of the sky. However, *h<sub>n</sub>z<sub>w</sub>* appears only in S1C<sup>a</sup>. Also, cf. Coffin Texts Spell 279: CT IV 26j. The verb *h<sub>n</sub>z* appears in association with the moon god Thoth already in Pyramid Texts Spell 210 (Pyr. § 130d): *dbn (wnjs)| pt mr r<sup>c</sup>, h<sub>n</sub>z (wnjs)| pt mr dhwtj* “Unis will circumnavigate the sun like the Sun, Unis shall course the sky like Thoth.”

<sup>216</sup> For an exhaustive study of the iconography, see Salis 2009:1-8 (<http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd>).

of Khonsu as a youthful deity (with the side-lock of youth) is first attested during the New Kingdom (Leitz 2002-V: 764).

In the New Kingdom, the following iconographic patterns can be established:

- In the archaic form, Khonsu is visualized as a youthful deity in a fully anthropomorphic form wearing the *shendyt*, the long-haired wig and the divine beard (The Epigraphic Survey 1963: Plate 478, 1979: Plate 60).
- As a god of light and as a sky-god, Khonsu is also depicted as a falcon-headed god with the lunar headdress. The falcon-headed form is especially prominent in the Khonsu Temple (The Epigraphic Survey 1936: Plate 48A; The Epigraphic Survey 1979: Plates 8, 15, 43, 49, 57A, 102; The Epigraphic Survey 1981: Plates 113, 117), and this iconography is also found in a royal tomb (Guilmant 1907: Plate 48).
- Khonsu's most typical iconography is that as child-member of the Theban Triad. Here, he appears as a youthful god enveloped in a mummy wrapping and wearing the headdress of the full lunar disc above a crescent new moon. In addition, the *menit* is placed around his neck and his hands, almost invisible in the wrapping, hold the two royal insignia or additional scepters (The Epigraphic Survey 1936: Plate 46F; The Epigraphic Survey 1981: Plate 114A; also cf. Fakhry 1942: Plate XLV). Probably the most prominent example in this pattern is the statue of Khonsu with the face of Tutankhamun (CG 38488; also see Tiradritti 1999: 197). In line with the growing popularity of Khonsu in the age of "personal piety" and later, the typical form of Khonsu is widely represented in votive statues (Legrain 1909: Plate 27; Borchardt 1934: 9/no. 971; Wiese 2001: 165/ no. 115), stelae (Černý 1958: Bankes Stela 8; Tosi 1972: 87-88, 283/Turin 50052), amulets (Andrews 1998: 17 and Figs. 11d, 13e, 20c, 24a, 24c, 26d, 98c) and bronze statuettes (Read 1917: 121).

Khonsu can also appear in theriomorphic forms as a falcon, a crocodile or a baboon (due to his association with Thoth) (Leitz 2002-V: 761). However, he is rarely depicted in animal form before the Late Period (Salis 2009: 2-3). Likewise, the deity does not appear in a pure child form (or conflated with Harpocrates) – a chubby boy with one hand in his mouth and a huge side-lock of youth – until the Late Period (for examples of the Twentieth Dynasty, however, see Černý 1958: Bankes Stela 10; Daressy 1905: Plate XII, 1906: 65-66; see also Hall 1977: 56 and Plate XXIV-1; Fakhry 1942: Figs. 32, 106 and Plate XXV), when the importance of the child deity increased substantially. Details about the deity's iconography will be discussed in association with his nature as the god of the fertilizing moon.

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

### 5.3 Before the New Kingdom

Khonsu is mentioned only once in the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts (Pyramid Texts Spell 273: Pyr. §§ 402a-c): *jn hnzw mds nbw d3d.f sn n wnjs, mh4.f n.f jmt ht.sn, wp(w)t(j) pw h3bw.fr hsf* "Khonsu, the lords' knife-bearer, is the one who will slit their throats for Unis and take out for him what is in their belly – he is the messenger he sends to confront."<sup>217</sup> Here Khonsu reveals a demonic streak as he catches gods for the deceased king (Zandee 1960: 213).

There is little documentary evidence about the deity during the Middle Kingdom (Brunner 1975b: 960). Most of the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts depict Khonsu as a cruel god, as in Coffin Texts Spell 310 (CT IV 65f-66q):

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<sup>217</sup> For a detailed discussion about Pyramid Texts Spell 273, see Eyre 2002: 89-91. The same spell was later integrated into the Coffin Texts and it mentions about Khonsu as the dreadful messenger of the deceased (Coffin Texts Spell 573: VI 179g): *wp(w)t(j).j pw hnzw h3bw r hsfw* "Khonsu is my messenger who is sent against the one who opposes."

**T5-1. Coffin Texts Spell 310 (CT IV 65f-66q; also cf. BD Chapter 83)<sup>218</sup>**

- 65-f *dd mdw 3h m pt, 3h m pt*  
 65-g *j<sup>c</sup>nw n.tn ntrw jm(j)w pt* 65-h *3hw 3ht*  
 65-i *jnk js z3 šzmtt*  
 65-j *jnk hnzw zb dnd bhhw h3tjw*  
 65-k *q.n.j m db<sup>c</sup> s3h n wsjr, ht wsjr* 65-l *m hpš m m3st m d3d3*  
 66-a *rd.n.j m rdwt, št.n.j m štw,* 66-b *3.n.j m rwt, hpr.n.j m hprw*  
 66-c *jnk w<sup>c</sup> dqrw ntrw*  
 66-d *jnk sfhnw n sfht jptw j<sup>c</sup>rwt nhmt m<sup>c</sup>.s*  
 66-e *wr shm m dt.f* 66-f *ntr pw jwt(j) mjn.n.f hrw pw n zrw*  
 66-g *m nhm stt m-<sup>c</sup> 3h pw* 66-h *m wp.f hnt (j)t(j).f hn<sup>c</sup> jnw* 66-i *m wpt.f hrw hn<sup>c</sup> stš*  
 66-j *j(w) t jmt.snj hrw pw h<sup>c</sup>.n.f jm* 66-k *m ntr pw šps jr(j) wpw*  
 66-l *šmsw ntrw hr.tjwnj jr.j wrt* 66-m *jnk hnzw dnd nb nbw* 66-n *jnk bhhw nb h3tjw*  
 66-o *jnk mds jmj.tn* 66-p *jnk hnz<k>tj tpt f3kw* 66-q *jnk hwt nwh jmj tpw wšb, wšb.sn*
- 65-f RECITATION Becoming *akh* in the sky; becoming *akh* in the sky  
 65-g Woe to you, gods who are in the sky, 65-h *akhs* of the *akhet*,  
 65-i for I am the son of Shezmetet,<sup>219</sup>  
 65-j for I am Khonsu who sends out rage, the burner of hearts,  
 65-k I have entered into the finger and toe of Osiris and the belly of Osiris,  
     65-l into the forearm, into the knee and into the head.  
 66-a I have grown as what grows, I have covered myself (?) as tortoises,<sup>220</sup>  
     66-b I have become big in anuses, I have come into being in forms  
 66-c I am a unique one of those who press the gods.  
 66-d I am the seventh of those seven cobras from which it is taken away,  
     66-e the great one who has control over his body,

<sup>218</sup> For translations, see Zandee 1953: 109; Derchain 1962: 41; Faulkner 1973: 227-228.

<sup>219</sup> Shezmetet is one of the ancient Egyptian leonine goddesses. She might in origin have been as an independent deity but later she was generally believed to be a form of Sekhmet or Bastet (Wilkinson 2003: 183). In the spell, Shezmetet is closely associated with the redness of the sun-rise or birth, signaling the identification of the deceased (and Khonsu) with the sun.

<sup>220</sup> For the translation of the text, it should be noted that the turtle *štw* was sometimes written as though it meant *št3* "mysterious one" (Fischer 1966: 195). In ancient Egypt, the tortoise and the Nile turtle were regarded as an animal of darkness. They are nocturnal and prefer darkness, keeping themselves out of sight most of time. Their furtive and shadowy existence brought them into opposition with the sun-god and thus they were later called as an enemy of Re, as in the Book of the Dead Chapter 161 (Fischer 1966: 195, 1968a: 7): *nh r<sup>c</sup>, m(w)t štw* "May the sun-god Re live and my the turtle die." In addition, their carapace can represent the dark hemisphere that the sun god had to sail through during his nocturnal journey. As such, the tortoise and the turtle stand in opposition to the rising sun and thus they are depicted being ritually harpooned by the king in the temple reliefs of the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. However, it might be equally valid to assume that their round carapace represents the full moon as indicated in Coffin Texts Spell 310 above. In this regard, Roberts mentions that the deceased covered with the tortoise shell represents an incarnation of the moon (1995: 78). For details about Egyptian turtles, see Fischer 1966: 193-200, 1968a: 5-20.

<sup>66-f</sup> that god who does not die on the day of rams,<sup>221</sup>  
<sup>66-g</sup> when seed was taken from that *akh*,  
<sup>66-h</sup> when he was judged in front of his father with Heliopolis,  
<sup>66-i</sup> when he parted Horus and Seth,  
<sup>66-j</sup> Thoth being between them on that day when he appeared  
<sup>66-k</sup> as that august god pertaining to missions.  
<sup>66-l</sup> Followers of the gods, be very far from me,  
<sup>66-m</sup> I am Khonsu, the raging one of the lord of lords,  
<sup>66-n</sup> I am the burner, the lord of hearts.  
<sup>66-o</sup> I am a slayer among you,  
<sup>66-p</sup> I am the double-lock of hair atop shorn ones,  
<sup>66-q</sup> I am the enclosure of the cord that is upon the heads of the bulls,  
 their bull.

In the spell, Khonsu is considered a cruel god, as in Pyramid Texts Spell 273 mentioned above (CT IV 65j; see also NOTE 6 above): *jnk hnzw zb dnd bhhw h3tjw* "I am Khonsu who sends out the rage that burns hearts." Žabkar (1985: 379) understands Khonsu as a violent and angry god who asserts his power over enemies in the netherworld as the deity penetrates the main parts of the body of Osiris for a complete identification with Osiris, the ruler of the afterlife (CT IV 65k-l): *ꜥq.n.j m dbꜥ s3h n wsjr ht wsjr m hps m m3st m d3d3* "I have entered into the finger and toe of Osiris and the body of Osiris, into the forearm, into the knee and into the head."

In Coffin Texts Spell 311, Khonsu is portrayed as a cannibalistic deity who eats people alive (CT IV 67o-t): *jw t n N pn m r(m)t, htp-ntr n.j m hrw, snd n N pn dj n.f ntrw j3w, hꜥy m hnzw ꜥnh m h3wt pw N pn, <jrt> hprw m hnzw m hrj-ntr* "The bread of this N is (made) of people; the god's offering for me is (made) of children. There is fear of this N, the gods make homage to him, apparent as as Khonsu. This N is the one who lives on hearts. CHANGING INTO KHONSU IN THE

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<sup>221</sup> In many translations, the phrase *hrw pw n nzw* is translated as "on the day of flame," as in the comment of Faulkner regarding his translation (1973: 228, note 6). However, I followed the translations of Zandee (1953: 109) and Derchain (1962: 41). The reason is given in the section on Khonsu's function as a moon god below.

NECROPOLIS." In Coffin Texts Spell 994, Khonsu lives on the body of gods (CT VII 209b-c): *ḥnj m tpw, jnk ḥnzw* "I will live on heads as I am Khonsu."

As depicted in the spells mentioned above, Khonsu is a bloodthirsty deity who devours his victims in order to appropriate their magical powers. Therefore, he becomes a god with great power, as in Coffin Texts Spell 945, in which the deceased's body parts are identified with various deities (CT VII 161i): *ʒt.(j) ḥnzw* "My striking-power is Khonsu."

#### 5.4 The New Kingdom

As mentioned above, the name of Khonsu refers to his nightly journey across the sky in a boat and thus "*exprime tout un programme lunaire*" (Derchain 1962: 40).<sup>222</sup> For this reason, Khonsu figures as a moon god in the ancient Egyptian pantheon. It is during the New Kingdom that Khonsu began to be considered as such, integrating various features from the well-known moon gods (Bonnet 1952: 141).

Khonsu's most prominent iconographical feature as a moon god is the headdress consisting of the full lunar disc above a crescent new moon. Khonsu is usually visualized as a young man enveloped in a mummy wrapping. Derchain maintains that the mummiform appearance suggests the deity's antiquity, as in the case of Ptah and Min (1962: 40).<sup>223</sup> The form may also

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<sup>222</sup> In this regard, note Helck (1982: 192): "*Dieser Vorgang führte zur Benennung verschiedener lokaler Mondgottheiten, so etwa des 'wandelnden' Chons oder des 'schreitenden' Nmtj.*" Nemty is an ancient falcon deity who squats on a curved, stylized boat resembling a lunar crescent. He is also believed to supervise the *henu* boat of the falcon deity Sokar and serves as a ferry man transporting the sun-god Re and other deities (R. Wilkinson 2003: 204-205).

<sup>223</sup> For the representational similarities and difficulties between Ptah and Khonsu, see Teeter 1989: 145-153. Hassan sees the mummiform (or the form of a cloaked body with the arms straight on both sides of the body and the legs drawn together in an erect posture) found in deities such as Min, Ptah and Osiris, as the "phallic symbolism," noting (1992: 317-318): "*The portrayal of Osiris as a body wrapped in a rigid and mummy-like form may also be identified with a phallic iconography marking the transitivity between death and birth through*

indicate his association with night and rebirth/rejuvenation (Osiris) as a moon god.<sup>224</sup> While he is wrapped in mummy bandages or a tightly fitting garment, his arms remain unstrained, holding the crook and flail associated with Osiris and Horus, as well as a *was*-scepter or a *djed*-headed staff. As an ever-rejuvenating moon god and as a divine child of the Theban Triad, Khonsu is depicted as wearing the side-lock of youth and the *menit*-necklace around his neck with the counterpoise on his back (especially as *ḥnsw-m-w3st* “Khonsu in Thebes,” see Leitz 2002-V: 764). Despite the juvenile features, he also sports the curved beard of the gods, showing that he ranks among the important deities of the Egyptian pantheon.

As a god of light and as a sky-god, Khonsu is also depicted as a falcon-headed god who is differentiated from Horus and Re by the lunar headdress (see 5.2 above).<sup>225</sup> As in the case of Thoth, the baboon is the sacred animal of Khonsu, but Khonsu himself does not appear in this form as frequently as Thoth (R. Wilkinson 2003: 114). In this form, he was feared as the Keeper of the Books of the End of Year, in which the gods wrote the names of those who were going to die during the year (Pinch 2002: 155).

In order to understand his nature as a moon god, it is necessary to take a look at the role and status of the moon in Egyptian religious thought, as well as those of moon gods in the Egyptian pantheon.

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*the act of procreation.*” In fact, the deities represented in the “phallic symbolism” are usually or sometimes portrayed as an ithyphallic god. Even though Khonsu is never depicted as an ithyphallic god, his mummiform appearance (or possible “phallic symbolism”) may have some connection with his role as a fertility god and his association with semen (see 5.7.4 below).

<sup>224</sup> Osiris is believed to have been killed at night and special rituals were performed in order to protect the deity from his nightly enemies (Hornung 1982b: 291). For the mixed iconographic attributes of Khonsu, see Griffiths 1976: 155-156.

<sup>225</sup> Grieshammer notes that divine brilliance is visualized by ancient Egyptians in the form of the falcon, as well as the two eyes of the sky god (1980: 1033). R. Wilkinson writes that the falcon represents the greatest cosmic power and its two eyes are seen as the sun and the moon, with its speckled plumage as stars (2003: 200).



## NATURE OF THE DEITY

### 5.5 The moon in Egyptian religious thought

Along with the sun, the moon is one of the most apparent celestial bodies and the most changeable of astronomical phenomena. Personified as a male or female deity and often paired with the sun as father, son, wife, sister or daughter, the moon plays various roles in religion and mythology. Sometimes the moon and the sun are regarded as twins.<sup>226</sup> As a male god, the moon can appear as the strong bull of heaven caring for cows that represent the stars (Bram 1987: 84). The waxing and waning of the moon symbolizes death and rebirth and the phases of the moon are believed to reflect the life cycle of men and women.<sup>227</sup> The moon has served as the most obvious natural measure of time from early times (Eliade 1963: 154-156). The important qualities of the moon include fertility, moisture, change, darkness and magic.

In ancient Egyptian religious thought, the moon was considered as a nightly replacement of the sun – that is, the sun of the night or the vizier of the sun-god (Helck 1982: 194; Derchain 1962: 36-37, 39; Säve-Söderberg 1977: 688)<sup>228</sup> and its role remained modest, whereas the role of the sun was always paramount (Kaper 2001: 480). The sacred animal to the moon, or the Egyptian “man in the

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<sup>226</sup> In this case, the moon is usually considered as a weaker one doomed to live in the underworld, while the other rises high in the sky (Bram 1987: 84). Note van der Leeuw’s comment that the moon can only be considered as twin to the sun (1918: 64).

<sup>227</sup> To quote Eliade (1963: 154): “*The moon, on the other hand, is a body which waxes, wanes and disappears, a body whose existence is subject to the universal law of becoming, of birth and death. ... This perpetual return to its beginning, and this ever recurring cycle make the moon the heavenly body above all others concerned with the rhythms of life.*”

With regard to the lifecycle of women, the moon is connected with the Triple Goddess who presides over the three important phases of life: birth, initiation and death. When it comes to ancient Egyptian religious thought, Isis manifests the triple aspects of the moon goddess by turning herself into a virgin, a mother and a crone in the Contendings of Horus and Seth (Roberts 1995: 102).

<sup>228</sup> For the status of the moon in parallelism with the sun, note Pyramid Texts Spell 210 (Pyr. § 310): *dbn (wnjs)| pt mr rʿ, hnz (wnjs)| pt mr dhwtj* “Unis will circumnavigate the sun like the Sun, Unis shall course the sky like Thoth.”

moon,” was a great white baboon (Pinch 2002: 166).<sup>229</sup> The moon was also thought of as the left eye of Horus and the heavenly falcon (Helck 1982: 193-194; Kaper 2001: 480).<sup>230</sup>

As a symbol of fecundity, the moon is compared to a bull based on the similarity in shape of the crescent moon and horns of a bull (Derchain 1962: 33; Helck 1982: 194; Kaper 2001: 481; Labrique 2003: 197). In the waxing phase, the moon is identified with the great bull, as in the following Coffin Texts spells:

- Coffin Texts Spell 824 (CT VII 25h-k): *wbn jꜥḥ r šrt šꜥyt dḥwtj kꜥ wr mꜥ[ꜥ] ḥnmmt shdd jr(j)w dwꜥt ꜥwj.f ꜥw.(w), wd <n> spwt šḥr ꜥwy ꜥnwt m(w)tw* “The moon rises at the nose of the mysterious one: Thoth the Great Bull, who sees humans, who attacks those who belong to the netherworld with his arms outstretched; who gives commands to the lips and who overthrows the long-nailed dead.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 833 (CT VII 35a-d): *N pn dꜥ(j).k kꜥ wr r jwn wꜥdt, r šḥwt kꜥ wr, jr mrwt.f* “This N, may you ferry the Great Bull to the Pillar of Greenness, to the fields of the Great Bull; do what he wishes.”<sup>231</sup>

In the waning phase, the moon is viewed as a castrated ox (Bonnet 1952: 471-472; Bram 1987: 84).

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<sup>229</sup> For the difference between the solar and lunar baboons, note R. Wilkinson (2003: 216-217): “Unlike solar apes which are often depicted standing with their arms raised in adoration, Thoth as a baboon is usually shown as a seated animal, heavily maned, resting on its rear with its legs drawn up against its body and with its paws resting on its knees.”

<sup>230</sup> The concept of the solar eye and the lunar eye gave rise to specialized forms of Horus such as Khenty-Khety of Letopolis and Hor-Merty of Horbeit. For the mythologies surrounding the divine eyes, see Kaper 2001: 480-481.

<sup>231</sup> For the moon-god Thoth as the bull, see also an inscription of a New Kingdom stele (Berlin 2293): *zhꜥw-nswt jmj-r pr ḥrw.f dd.f, jj.n.j ḥr.k kꜥ m sbꜥw dḥwtj jꜥḥ jmj pt, jw.k m pt, ꜥḥw.k m tꜥ stwt.k shꜥ.sn tꜥwj jn zhꜥw-nswt ḥrw.f* “Royal scribe, steward Kheruef, says: I have come before you, the Bull in stars, Thoth-Moon, who is in the sky. You are in the sky; your brightness is on earth; your rays have brightened the Two Lands. By royal scribe Kheruef.” For the text, see Turajeff 1895: 124-125; Roeder 1924: 40.

The ancient Egyptian belief that the waxing and waning cycle of the moon represented different stages of fertility and growth aptly fits the *kamutef* concept (see CHAPTER 2 above).<sup>232</sup> To the Egyptians, the moon seemed to have the capability of rejuvenating itself each month, so it was regarded as *kamutef* and called “Bull of the Ennead,” a concept derived from its new moon form (Jacobsohn 1980: 308). In the tripartite lunar cycle, (1) the full moon symbolizes fertility; (2) the new moon, its conception for a new month; and (3) the waning moon, the decline that is equal to the castration of the bull (Jacobsohn 1939: 22-24; Derchain 1962: 27, 33).

When the moon is bright during the waxing phase, it is a heated bull provoking growth and fertility, stimulating the protective power of men and impregnating women like the light of the sun.<sup>233</sup> When it is waning, it is a castrated bull deprived of its generative power and thus needs to rejuvenate itself. In connection with the eternal cycle, the king and the moon are considered to be the incarnation of the creator-god in the form of *kamutef*, the bull of his mother, and the “Bull of the Ennead” (Derchain 1962: 33). In this aspect, the moon probably plays a role similar to that of Amun, who appears as a divine consort in the divine birth of the New Kingdom kings (Jacobsohn 1939: 24). Therefore, the moon can be equated with the royal *ka*, the bull (*ka*) and Amun in disguise, and this may explain the meaning of the birth names of the New Kingdom kings, including (1) Kamose (= the one whom the bull gave birth to); (2) Ahmose (= the one whom the moon gave birth to); and (3) Thutmose (= the one whom (the moon-god) Thoth gave birth to).<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> For a detailed study of *kamutef* as the moon, see Jacobsohn 1939: 22-27. Also, cf. Troy 1986: 27-32, 45-48.

<sup>233</sup> With regard to the moon’s influence on the inundation of the Nile and the moon as a symbol of fecundity, see Derchain 1962: 33-34. Most of the texts cited are from Ptolemaic temples. For the connection of the moon with water, see Eliade 1963: 159-161.

<sup>234</sup> The concept of the king as *kamutef* goes back to as early as Montuhotep II, who is depicted as Amun-*kamutef* in certain reliefs (Traunecker 2001: 221). Redford connects the moon cult of the early New Kingdom with the Nubian origin of the Seventeenth Dynasty (1967: 68-69).

In those names, the moon should be understood as *kamutef*, whose essence can be cyclically returned to the new-born king.

Because of its monthly disappearance and return, the moon is also connected with the concept of death and renewal.<sup>235</sup> As a symbol of renewal and rejuvenation, the moon is represented as a youth (Bonnet 1952: 471) – especially as Khonsu, who symbolizes the new moon (Pinch 2002: 166).<sup>236</sup> In the Ptolemaic temple of Edfu the adult Horus (Harsiese) was regarded as a lunar deity who was born on the second lunar day and matured into an adult in the full moon (Kaper 2001: 481). On the kingship level, the lunar cycle is linked with the renewal of royal powers, as Amenhotep III identified himself as the moon in his temple at Soleb (Kozloff *et al* 1992: 108 and Fig IV.28). On the funerary level, the deceased was identified with the moon on the basis of the interpretation of the lunar cycle as the cycle of rejuvenation and resurrection, as in Book of the Dead Chapter 131: *jnk r<sup>c</sup> pwj psd m grh, jr z(j) nb ntj m šms.f, jw.f<sup>c</sup>nh.(w) m šms n dhwtj, dj.f h<sup>c</sup>w n hrw pn m grh, 3w jb n wsjr N dr ntt wn.f m w<sup>c</sup> mm nw, jw hfjw.f dr.(w) m šnyt* “I am that Re who shines in the night. As for any man who is in his following, he is alive in the following of Thoth. He will permit the appearance of this Horus in the night. The heart of Osiris N becomes happy because he is as one of those while his enemies are driven off from the entourage.”

While presenting no textual evidence, Kaper writes that, as in many other ancient cultures, the Egyptians believed that the moon had influence on the growth of plants and that sowing was

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<sup>235</sup> Cf. Eliade (1963: 171): “Death belongs to another kind of ‘life.’ And because what happens to the moon, and to the earth (for as people discovered the agricultural cycle they came to see the Earth as related to the Moon) proves that there is a ‘life in death’ and give the idea meaning, the dead either go to the moon or return to the underworld to be regenerated and to absorb the forces needed to start a new existence. That is why so many lunar divinities are in addition chthonian and funereal divinities (Min, Persephone, probably Hermes, and so on).”

<sup>236</sup> Griffiths notes that the side-lock of youth is a distinctive feature of Khonsu among Egyptian moon gods (1970: 453, note 3, 1976: 156 and note 2).

best done at the time of full moon (2001: 481).<sup>237</sup> In accordance with this belief, they also thought that minerals in the desert came into being under the influence of the moon.

## 5.6 Egyptian moon gods

In ancient Egypt the moon is personified by many deities, including Iah, Thoth, Khonsu, Osiris and Min. Iah, the divine personification of the moon itself, never gained great importance in cult and myth (Bonnet 1952: 471). In his association with water and vegetation (Griffiths 1966: 96-114), Osiris was also identified with the moon in the New Kingdom and his murder and resurrection was recognized in the lunar cycle.<sup>238</sup> Min, as a god of sexual procreativity and protective deity of the mining regions in the eastern desert (Gundlach 1982: 137-138), also exhibited features of the moon-god (Bonnet 1952: 465-466; Derchain 1962: 46-48). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation, however, to present a comprehensive study of ancient Egyptian deities associated with the moon, a task already done in part by Derchain (1962: 17-68). In the current study, it will be appropriate to take a look at the important properties of Thoth as a moon-god, since Khonsu's role as moon god seems to have been expanded after he was integrated into the Theban Traid (Bonnet 1952: 142), in the process absorbing a number of aspects as a moon god from Thoth (Derchain 1962: 42).

In ancient Egyptian religious thought, Thoth is the moon god *par excellence*.<sup>239</sup> As a moon god he appears as the moon itself and, at the same time, as the protector of the moon (Boylan 1922: 62-75; Derchain 1962: 36-37; B. Altenmüller 1975: 237; Kurth 1986: 504-505 and note 92), as in Coffin Texts Spell 156 (CT II 322c-324b): *jw.j rh.kw b3w hmnw, šrt m 3bd pw, ʕ3t m mddjnt, dhwtj pw* "I KNOW

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<sup>237</sup> For the association of the moon with vegetation and fertility, see Eliade 1963: 161-167.

<sup>238</sup> For Osiris as the moon god, see Frazer 1913: 129-150; Derchain 1962: 11-25; Griffiths 1976: 153-159, 1979: 174-175; Graefe 1979: 171-173; Labrique 2003: 195-196.

<sup>239</sup> For comprehensive studies of Thoth, see Boylan 1922: 1-172; Bleeker 1973: 106-157; Kurth 1986: 497-523.

THE BAS OF KHEMENU. WHAT IS SMALL IN LUNAR DAY 2 AND GREAT IN LUNAR DAY  
15. IT IS THOTH.”<sup>240</sup>

Thoth usually appears in two important manifestations – as an ibis (or an ibis-headed man) and as a baboon.<sup>241</sup> The sacred animals made their appearance by the First Dynasty (Hart 1986: 214). In the light of frequent comments about the deity in the Pyramid Texts, it can be assumed that Thoth was an important deity in the Old Kingdom. During the same period, however, Thoth was incorporated into the solar theology along with Osiris (R. Wilkinson 2003: 215). As a result, Thoth was often placed in juxtaposition to the sun-god Re (Boylan 1922: 63-64), as in Pyramid Texts Spell 210 (Pyr. § 130d): *dbn (wnjs)| pt mr r<sup>c</sup>, hnz (wnjs)| pt mr dhwtj* “Unis will circumnavigate the sun like the Sun, Unis shall course the sky like Thoth.” In his role as nightly manifestation of the sun, Thoth was also considered to be the vizier of the sun-god, who appears as the king and the most powerful of natural phenomena (Boylan 1922: 81-82; Derchain 1962: 37; Bleeker 1973: 119-121; B. Altenmüller 1975: 237).

From the very early period of Egyptian history, the moon god Thoth was thought to be the chief measurer of time (Boylan 1922: 83; Bleeker 1973: 115).<sup>242</sup> As the master of time and counter of years, Thoth was believed to inscribe the length of a king’s long reign on the leaves of the *ished-*

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<sup>240</sup> Faulkner quotes Sethe’s allocation of the half-month and the full month to the fifteenth and the second days of the month in the 360-day calendar, respectively (1973: 135, note 8). For detailed discussion of this passage regarding the movement of the moon, see Depuydt 1998: 71. See also the Book of the Dead Chapter 114 (114, 7-8).

<sup>241</sup> For the explanation regarding the selection of the ibis and the baboon as the animals sacred to Thoth, see Bleeker 1973: 110-111; Griffiths 1970: 559.

<sup>242</sup> Kurth sees the moon god Thoth as the reckoner of time (1986: 505): “*Andererseits ist Thot in weit stärkerem Maße als Iah und Chons für einen speziellen Aspekt des Mondes zuständig; Thot der Rechner par excellence, verkörpert den Mond, der monatlich als Himmelskörper Subtraktion und Addition vorexerziert – also den dynamischen Aspekt des Mondes. In den Götterverbindungen Iah-Thot und Chons-Thot ist es Thot, der das Wesen der beiden jeweils erstgenannten Götter bereichert, im aufgezeigten Sinne, jedoch auch darüber hinausgehend; aber keiner der drei Götter verliert in solchen Verbindungen seinen eigenen Charakter.*”

tree. In the Ptolemaic Period, the deity's role of determining the length of a pharaoh's reign was expanded and he became a "reckoner of time for gods and men" generally and thus a god of fate (Boylan 1922: 85). In connection with his closely associated with astronomy and counting and his status as the vizier of the Egyptian pantheon, Thoth was also believed to be the god of writing and wisdom (Kurth 1986: 506).

In his capacity as the god of writing and recording, Thoth is depicted as the scribe of the Ennead of Heliopolis who writes letters on behalf of the Ennead, as in the Contendings of Horus and Seth (p.Chester Beatty I, 39, 4-6): *wn.jn t3 psdt hr dd n dhwtj m b3h nb-r-dr: jh jry.k wh3 n nt wr mjwt-ntr hr rn n nb-dr k3 hrj jb jwnw, wn.jn dhwtj hr dd: jry.j m.k jry.(j) zp 2, wn.jn.f hms r jrt p3 wh3* "Then the Ennead said to Thoth before the Lord to the Limit: 'So, you should make a letter to Neith the great, mother of the god, in the name of the Lord to the Limit, the bull at home in Heliopolis.' Then Thoth said: 'I will do it. Look, I will do it, I will do it.' Then he sat down to make the letter."<sup>243</sup> In the funerary sphere, it was the duty of Thoth, as divine scribe, to stand in front of the scale in which the heart of the deceased was weighed against the feather of *ma'at* and to write down the result of the examination, as shown in the famous vignette of the Book of the Dead Chapter 125. In this regard, Thoth appears as the judge and the guardian of justice, which is one of the duties of the vizier as well (Derchain 1962: 39).

Owing to his close association with writing and wisdom, Thoth was regarded as a god endowed with great magical power (Boylan 1922: 124-135).<sup>244</sup> The deity's wisdom and knowledge seem to

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<sup>243</sup> See also the following to see Thoth's role as the divine scribe in the Contendings of Horus and Seth (p.Chester Beatty I, 40, 8-9): *jw.tw djt p3 wh3 m drt dhwtj, h5.n dhwtj s5.f m b3h nb-r-dr hn5 t3 psd r dr.st* "... and the letter was put in Thoth's hand. Then Thoth read it before the Lord to the Limit and the entire Ennead."

<sup>244</sup> Thoth was one of many Egyptian deities who were called *wr/wrt hk3w* "great of magic" (Boylan 1922: 125). In this role, this deity was also called the "Heart of the sun-god Re," which is comparable to the roles of Hu

have been transmitted to selected initiates, as indicated in the story of the magician Djedi in the Papyrus Westcar (p.Berlin 3033: 7, 5-6): *jw.f rh.(w) tnw jp3wt nt wnt nt dhwtj* “He (Djedi) knows the number of private rooms of the sanctuary of Thoth.” As a divine source of great magic, Thoth was believed to author funerary spells<sup>245</sup> and especially during the New Kingdom the authorship of some spells in the Book of the Dead was claimed to be divine in order to reinforce their authority, as in the postscript of the Book of the Dead Chapter 30 (Kemp 2008: 15-16): *gm.n.tw r pn m hmnw hr rdwj n hm n ntr pn, [zh3.w] hr dbt n bj3 smcw m zh3w ntr ds.f m h3w hm n nswt-bjt (mn-k3w-rf) m3f-hrw, jn z3-nswt hrw-dd.f gm sw m w3.f r jrt sjpt m rw-prw* “This spell has been found in Hermopolis, under the feet of the incarnation of this god. It was written on a brick of metal of the Upper Egypt in the writing of the god himself, in the time of the Incarnation of the Dual King Menkaure, justified. It was the king’s son Hardedef who found it when he started conducting an inventory of the temples.”

The deity was eventually regarded as the patron of all areas of knowledge and credited with having written the Book of Thoth that contains all the wisdom of the world (Boylan 1922: 94-95; Morenz 1973: 219-221).<sup>246</sup> So in the Demotic Story of Setne and the Magical Scroll (p.Cairo 30646, 3, 12-14): *[j].jr.k wh3 fsh, jm n.j, tw.j Bj.w tk r p3 m3f ntj jw p3y dmf n-jm.f, jw dhwtj p3 j.jr sh.f n drt.f hf.f, jw.f nfj r hrj m-s3 n3 ntrw, hp 2 n sh n3 ntj hr 3tj.f, jr.k [fsh p3 hp mh 1, jw.k r] phr t3 pt p3 t3 dw3t n3 tww n3 ymw ... jr.k fsh p3 hp mh 2, jw.f hpr jr.k hn jmntj jr.k n p3y.k gj hr p3 t3 fn, jw.k r nw r p3 rf, jw.f hf n t3 pt jrm t3y.f psdt jrm p3 jfh n p3y.f gj n wbn* “[If] you (Naneferkaptah) want to read writing, come to me and

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(Annunciation), Sia (Perception) and Heka (Magic), the deities who are depicted as accompanying the sun-god in the solar barque (Kurth 1986: 499, 506; also cf. Boylan 1922: 103-106).

<sup>245</sup> In the same context, Thoth was also credited with establishing sacred rituals (Boylan 1922: 88-91; B. Altenmüller 1975: 235)

<sup>246</sup> For Thoth as the writer of the sacred books and the purpose and significance of these sacred books, see Gardiner 1938: 167-168. In the Ptolemaic Period, Thoth was identified with Hermes Trismegistos (Boylan 1922: 140, note 3). The epithet Trismegistos “thrice great” may have been derived from the Egyptian epithet *p3 f3 f3* (Doxey 2001: 398; cf. Boylan 1922: 129, note 2). Boylan cites a Coptic epithet of Thoth, **πιο πιο πιαβε**, from the Magical Papyrus of Paris (1922: 129).



I will take you to the place where this scroll is, Thoth being the one who wrote it with his own hand when he was going down after the gods. Two formulae of writing are what are on it. If you [recite the first formula, you will] go around the sky, the earth, the *duat*, the mountains, and the seas. ... If you recite the second formula, whether you happen to be in the west or in your body on earth, you will see that the sun has risen in the sky with his Ennead, along with the moon in his manner of rising.”

Given that medicine and magic remained complementary throughout ancient Egyptian history (Pinch 1994: 133; J. Allen 2005b: 9), it is not surprising that Thoth, whose magical power was rivaled only by Isis,<sup>247</sup> was deemed as a healer during the New Kingdom and Late Period (Boylan 1922: 133), as mentioned in the following texts:

- Papyrus Ebers Chapter 1 (1, 7-10): *n(j) wj rꜥ dd.n.f, jnk nd.j sw m-ꜥ hftjw.f, sšmw.f pw dhwtj, jw.f dj.f mdw dr.f, jr.f dmdt, dj.f 3h n rhw ht n zwnw jmjw-ht.f r whꜥ, mrr ntr sꜥnh.f sw* “I belong to Re, and he has said, ‘I am the one who will save him from his enemies, and Thoth is his guide. He gives the speech of his writing and makes the compendium, gives effectiveness to the knowledgeable and physicians who are in his following in order to solve; the one whom the god loves, he will enliven him”
- Book of the Dead Chapter 71 (71, 6): *dhwtj swd3.k wj mj swd3.k tw ds.f* “Thoth, may you make me sound like you make yourself sound.”

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<sup>247</sup> According to the Osirian cycle, Thoth was the one who taught Isis the spell for restoring the procreative ability of Osiris and helped her to reassemble the dismembered body of Osiris (Bleeker 1973: 132-133; Zandee 1966: 60-61).

As a healing deity, Thoth restored the head of Isis in the Contendings of Horus and Seth and also renewed the damaged Eye of Horus, as in Coffin Texts Spell 335 (CT IV 232a-238a): *jw mh.n.j jrt m-ht hqs.s hrw pw n ḥ3 rhwj, ptr r.f sw ḥ3 rhwj, hrw pw ḥ3.n hrw jm.f hnḥ stš m-ht wdt.f st3w m hr.f m-ht jtt hrw hrwj stš, jn dhwtj jr nn m dbḥw.f* "I filled the Eye after it had shrunken on that day when the Two Companions fought. *What is the fighting of the Two Companions? It means the day in which Horus fought with Seth after his (Seth) inflicting a wound on the face of Horus and after Horus took the testicles of Seth. It was Thoth who did this with his fingers.*"<sup>248</sup> In this role, Thoth also appears as the mediator of the conflict (as he restores order)<sup>249</sup> and thus as the protector of the cosmic and social order or *ma'at* (Bleeker 1973: 118, 136-143).<sup>250</sup>

### 5.7 Khonsu as the moon god

It has been mentioned that Khonsu's features as a moon god were expanded when Khonsu assumed functions of Thoth after he became the child-member of the Theban Triad (Bonnet 1952: 142; Derchain 1962: 42). However, Egyptologists seem to disagree on (1) the origin of Khonsu as moon god and (2) the exact relationship between Thoth and Khonsu as moon god.<sup>251</sup>

- Boylan (1922: 205-206): (1) Khonsu was a moon god whose worship was well attested in Thebes during the Middle Kingdom; (2) as both gods possessed lunar aspects, Thoth and Khonsu were inevitably associated and gradually identified with each other until the

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<sup>248</sup> Pinch writes that Thoth's offering of the restored Eye became the precedent for all offerings, along with the offering of Horus to Osiris (2002: 210).

<sup>249</sup> For the reconciliatory role of Thoth, who separates Horus and Seth, see Griffiths 1960: 82; te Velde 1967: 60-61.

<sup>250</sup> From the Middle Kingdom, Thoth was connected with *ma'at* as the personification of rightness and order (B. Altenmüller 1975: 237; Kurth 1986: 504). For the relationship between *ma'at* and Thoth as the divine scribe of the sun-god Re, see Bleeker 1973: 121-123.

<sup>251</sup> In this regard, Bonnet asks the following questions: (1) whether Khonsu was originally a moon god; or (2) whether those aspects were added to him through contact with Thoth (1971: 141).

complete identification of the two during the New Kingdom; and (3) while Khonsu lost his non-lunar elements in the process, Thoth retained much of his local and non-lunar traits.

- Derchain (1962: 40, 42-43): (1) while Khonsu's mummiform appearance indicates that he existed from very primitive times, the assimilation of Thoth and Khonsu was in progress before the Middle Kingdom and the assimilation was accelerated in the course of time; and (2) Khonsu, as a moon god, took a number of traits from Thoth, which include his identity as a counter of time and dispenser of life-span, a divine vizier and judge, and a magical counselor and healer.
- Bleeker (1973: 116-117): (1) Khonsu may once have been an important moon god but he was gradually eclipsed by Thoth: "*Khonsu held his place as moon-god alongside of Thoth, but was greatly overshadowed by this mighty and so much more talented god*"; and (2) Khonsu was originally the god of chronology but later his role was expanded to that of counselor and healer.

I contend that Khonsu was originally a moon god, or at least possessed some characteristics of a lunar deity, but his role expanded through assimilation, and later identification, with a number of moon gods, especially Thoth. In addition, being a god of light may have played a certain role in his integration into the Theban Triad as a child-member. My assumption is based on the following observations regarding the properties of Khonsu as a moon god.

### **5.7.1 Traveler**

It has been mentioned that the name of Khonsu, *ḥnzw*, means "the one who travels" or "courser" and refers to the fact that he completes his course in the nightly sky as a moon god, as in Coffin Texts Spell 806 (CT VII 11i-j): *ḥnz.k m ḥnzw* "You will travel as Khonsu." This image of the moon

god sailing in his barque is also already attested in Pyramid Texts Spell 210 (Pyr. § 130d): *dbn (wnjs)| pt mr r<sup>c</sup>, hnz (wnjs)| pt mr dhwtj* “Unis will circumnavigate the sun like the Sun, Unis shall course the sky like Thoth.” It is also noteworthy that, as a traveler, Khonsu serves as a messenger, as in Pyramid Texts Spell 273 (Pyr. §§ 402c): *wp(w)t(j) pw h3bw.fr hsf* “he (Khonsu) is the messenger he (the deceased king) sends to confront.” As such, the deity’s name, which denotes the movement of the moon, suggests that Khonsu was originally a moon god.

Regarding the aspect of the moon god Khonsu as a “traveler,” some Coffin Texts spells draw our attention. In the following two spells, the deceased finds Khonsu on his way to or from Punt:

- Coffin Texts Spell 187 (CT III 90b-91e): *jj.n.j mjn r-gs pth, jw jr.n.f wj m sšm h3w.sn, jw jr.n.f hms.j hr db3t tw hrt pg3w 3ht nt pt, gm.n.j hnzw hr w3t h3.n.f pwnt, rdj.n.f h<sup>c</sup> n.j h3w hms n.j šwt m sn m snt m nhw m nhwt m r(m)t m 3bt.j m njwtjw.j m njwtjw.j ... hw swr.k hr.sn 3htjw r.j nh.k m nht.n jm, wnm.k m wnm.t.n jm, swr.k m swrt.n jm* “I have come today beside Ptah, and he has made me as the whip of their fighters, he has made my seat on that mound (?) that is upon the openings of the *akhet* of the sky. I found Khonsu on the way. When he descended on Punt, he made thousands stand up for me and hundreds sit down for me, as brother and sister, as male living and female living, as people, as my family, as my male villagers and my female villagers. ... ‘Would that you drink,’ say they, those of the *akhet* about me. ‘You will live on what we live on, you will eat of what we eat of, you will drink of what we drink of.’”
- Coffin Texts Spell 195 (CT III 114a-1): *jj.n N pn mjn hr pth jr.n.f N pn sšm hw hww.sn, hms N pn hr nst m hnt 3ht, gm.n N pn hnzw h<sup>c</sup>.(w) m w3t.f m h3t.f m pwnt, jw rdj.n.f h<sup>c</sup> n N pn m h3w hms n N pn m šwt m snw snwt m njwtjw njwtjw, smš jj.(w) hr.sn 3htjw r N pn, nh.f m nht.n jm, wn(m).k m wnm.t.n jm, swr.k m swrt.n jm* “This N has come today to Ptah, he has made this N a whip that beats their beaters. This N sits on a throne in front of the *akhet*; this N has found Khonsu standing

in his path when he descended on from Punt, and he has caused standing for this N in thousands and sitting for this N in hundreds, as male and female siblings and as male and female villagers. 'The Follower has come,' say they, those of the *akhet* about this N. 'He will live on what we live on, you will eat of what we eat of, you will drink of what we drink of.'"

In those spells, it is apparent that the deceased is elevated to membership in the celestial bodies who sit on the seat in front of the *akhet* and thus he does not have to eat feces. Here the deceased-celestial body finds Khonsu in his way to or from Punt. It makes clear that Khonsu is the celestial body, most likely a moon god. Those spells remind us of Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180o-q): *gm.n.(j) wj m pwnt, qd.n.j pr jm hr mshnt.j jw mjwt.j hr nhwt.s* "I found myself in Punt; I built a house there in my birth-place, while my mother was under her sycamores." In the preceding section of the same spell, Ihy is identified with Khonsu (CT IV 180i-j): *sq3(w).j m rn.j pw n jhy, dj.t(w) n.j hy m rn.j pw n hntzw* "I have been exalted in this my name of Ihy. Acclamation is given to me in this my name of Khonsu." Because Ihy is regarded as the son of the sun-god and thus appears as a god of light, it can be said that the two deities are depicted traveling to and from Punt, which was regarded as the far-away God's Land by ancient Egyptians (Goebis 2008: 148).<sup>252</sup> In addition, this aspect of Khonsu as a moon god is significant, in that it is independent of traits that he borrowed from Thoth.

### 5.7.2 "Schlächter" or violent god

Another indicator that points to Khonsu's lunar character may be the fact that the deity is portrayed as a violent god already in Pyramid Texts Spell 273 and Coffin Texts Spells 310, 311

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<sup>252</sup> B. Altenmüller cites Coffin Texts Spells 181 and 195 to explain the relationship between Ihy-Khonsu and Hathor, who was said to be the "Lady of Punt" (1975: 168). In the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, Khonsu was addressed as *nb-5ntjw* "Lord of Myrrh" in a ritual scene (Leitz 2002-III: 602), but this does not seem to have any special relationship with the Coffin Text spells mentioned above.

and 994, cited above. This same aspect is also attested in Coffin Texts Spell 573 (CT VI 179g):

*wp(w)t(j).j pw hnzw h3bw r hfsw* “Khonsu is my messenger who is sent against the one who opposes.”

In relation to Khonsu’s close relationship with Thoth, it should be noted that Thoth also appears as a cruel deity, bearing a knife to slaughter the enemies of the sun-god, or of the deceased identified with the sun-god or of Osiris, as in the following funerary spells:

- Pyramid Texts Spell 367 (Pyr. § 635c-d): *ndr.n n.k dhwtj hftj.k, hsk.(j) hn<sup>c</sup> jmjw-ht.f, nj h3tb.n.f jm.f*  
“Thoth has seized your opponent for you, beheaded along with his retinue; he cannot be merciful to him.”
- Pyramid Texts Spell 477 (Pyr. §§ 962a-963d): *dm ds.k dhwtj, nsm mds dr tpw hsq h3tjw, j.dr.f tpw hsk.f h3tjw nw d3tj.sn sn m (pjpp)| pn sd3.f hr.k wjsr, nw hsfj.sn sn m (pjpp)| pn sd3.f hr.k wjsr* “Knap your flint-knife, Thoth. File the bronze-knife that removes heads and severs hearts so that it will remove the heads and sever the hearts of those who will oppose themselves to this Pepi when he goes to you, Osiris, and of those who will make themselves a barrier to this Pepi when he goes to you, Osiris.”
- Pyramid Texts Spell 674 (Pyr. § 1999c): *dhwtj mds pr m stš* “Thoth, the knife-bearer who came forth as Seth”
- Coffin Texts Spell 47 (CT I 208b-d): *dhwtj dj<sup>c</sup>.k r.sn ds.k jm.sn, šn<sup>c</sup>.k sn hr w3wt<sup>c</sup> ftt mm nbw 3wwt, jw.sn n htm jmt dw3t mm jr w dwt* “Thoth, set your hand against them and your knife into them, confine them upon the narrow paths among the owners of gifts. They are for the annihilation of that which is in the *duat* among the evil-doers.”

- Coffin Texts Spell 246 (CT III 337b-g): *jnk sfg jr w pw hr(j)-jb j3hw, °q.j m sdt, pr.j m sdt, nj dm wj j3hw, nj ns wj gmmw wr, jnk ds mds jmj ° dhwtj* “I am this mysterious of form in the midst of the sunshine; I enter into the fire, I come forth from the fire; the sunshine has not pierced me, those who find the Great One have not burnt me; I am the flint-knife and the bronze-knife in the hand of Thoth.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 555 (CT VI 155h-156c): *wnn r-gs dhwtj, jnk d(j) nrw m nšn(j), ss33 wr hryt, jw hw.n.j m ds, jw sqbb.j n3š, jr.n.j z3 wrt hryt, srwd.n.j ds mds jmj ° dhwtj m nšn(j)* “To exist beside Thoth. I am the one who has given dread by raging, who satisfies the one who is great of enmity. I have struck with the flint-knife; I cool off the one who is proscribed (?); I have made a protection of the one who is great of enmity; I have made firm the flint-knife that is in the hand of Thoth in raging.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 995 (CT VII 211b): *jj wr ds.f m ° f wp.f bqsw ... jj wbn hnwt.f m ° f šd.f h3tj ...* “The Great One comes with his knife in his hand so that he can sever the spine of ... The Rising One comes with his horn in his hand so that he can remove the heart of ...”
- Book of the Dead Chapter 134: *d3yw nb d3wt nbt hm.t(j).sn m wsjr h3.tj.f(j) m pt pr.t(j).f(j) m t3, jw.t(j).sn hr mw š3s.t(j).sn m ° b sb3w, hsq st dhwtj z3 jnr pr m jnrtj* “Every male and female enemy who will harm Osiris, whether he will descend from the sky or come forth from the earth, whether they will come upon the water or travel among the stars, Thoth, the son of stone (eggshell), who came forth from the two stones (eggshells), will cut them off.”

In this regard, Bleeker suggests that Thoth shows cruel or demonic traits because the moon, as a mysterious and exceptional celestial body that has stirred man’s fantasy since the beginning of time, possessed malicious and sinister features (1973: 117). It is necessary to consider, however, that Thoth appears merciless only when he needs to defend the sun-god or the deceased from his

enemies and restore harmony in the cosmos, or when he plays the role of defender of light against darkness (Boylan 1922: 71).<sup>253</sup> The merciless nature of Thoth as a staunch supporter of *ma'at* can be glimpsed from a speech of the Eloquent Peasant (p. Berlin 3023, 179-181): *jn jw jwsw tnm.f, jn jw mh3t hr rdjt hr gs, jn jw r.f dhwtj zfn.f, jh jr.k jyt* "Does the crossbar waver? Does the scale show partiality? Is Thoth then merciful? Then you may do wrong." The fearful nature of Khonsu mentioned above should be understood in the light of his role as a god of light who slays opponents of the sun-god or the deceased and dispels the force of darkness. Pinch points out that Khonsu, in this role, acts as a lunar equivalent of the merciless Eye of Re (2002: 166).<sup>254</sup>

It is apparent that Thoth and Khonsu, as moon gods, are typically associated with the knife and act as knife-bearers, as the crescent moon was equated by the ancient Egyptians with a knife blade (Kees 1925: 2-3, 5). In this regard, Brunner suggested that Khonsu was primarily a bloodthirsty demon and his quality as a moon is only secondary (1975: 960). However, this suggestion should be questioned because (1) their violent nature may be the remnant of certain archaic attributes of the moon (Derchain 1962: 40); and (2) Thoth shows the same violent traits already in the Pyramid Texts as a defender of the cosmic and social order (Zandee 1953: 111; Goebis 2008: 151, 244).

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<sup>253</sup> In Pyramid Texts Spell 534 (Pyr. § 1271a-c), Thoth appears as a god hostile against the deceased king: *jw jwt dhwtj m jwt.f jtw dwt, m wn.k wj.k n.f, kw j.dd.t(j) n.f rn.fn nj mjwt.k, j.zj hsf jr jn(r)tj.k, j.zj jr p jr hrj dhwtj* "If Thoth tries to come in that bad coming of his, you do not open your arms to him, but let there be said to him his name of You Have No Mother, (and say): "Go, you who have been barred from your testicles! Go to Pe, to the abode of Thoth!" However, Thoth is not unique in the matter, given that names of other deities are also listed in the same spell. Rather it reflects the fact that ancient Egyptians saw their gods as a personification of powers in nature, who can be either benevolent or malicious to them (Bleeker 1973: 117).

<sup>254</sup> Note the comment of Goebis about the role of Khonsu in Pyramid Texts Spell 273 (2008: 244): "Demons and gods like the ones enumerated in this spell occur in contexts where the enemies of the sungod are punished in much later descriptions of the solar journey." With regard to the aspect of Khonsu as the god of light in the astronomical context, see Krauss 1997: 282.



### 5.7.3 Divine healer

Khonsu's violent streak befits him as a moon god. As the crescent moon can be seen as a knife, it was believed that the moon and the violent moon god can cause diseases (Bonnet 1952: 144; Grapow *et al* 1956: 34; Ghalioungui 1963: 79, 1973: 62; Brunner 1975b: 960 and 962, note 4). In regard to his role as a deity who causes diseases, it is necessary to take a look at Papyrus Ebers Chapters 873, 874 and 877, which refer to the so-called "Khonsu-swelling":<sup>255</sup>

- p.Ebers 873 (108, 9-17): *šš3w ʕ3t nt mtw ... jm.k wdj ʕ r mjtt, nw pw j3t ʕt m ʕ.f. jr.hr.k sndm mtw m ʕwt nbt nt z(j), ddtw m hk3w.s m wn m3ʕ šp.k, mt štyw štyw wj fift m jmjtw nj ʕt jptn, nj zm3.k m zm3w hnsu, jr wp.k ʕ3t nt hnsu m3ʕ ndm nhq wj dj.k mz.j m3ʕt n rʕ thnt m nhpw, dd mdw zp 4 dw3 zp 2* "Practices for a swelling of vessels ... You should not lay a hand on the like: that would be to injure a limb of his. You have to make comfortable the vessels in every limb of a man. What is spoken as its real magic: 'You shall flow out, štyw-vessel that laces me and leaps between those limbs. You have not joined with the joining of Khonsu.' And when you lance the swelling of Khonsu properly and easily: 'You who damage (?) me, let me bring *ma'at* to the sun-god Re, the faience at dawn.' Recite four times very early in the morning."<sup>256</sup>
- p.Ebers 874 (108, 17-109, 2): *šš3w n ʕ3t nt hnzw jr wp.k ʕ3t nt hnsu ʕ3t m ʕwt nb nt z(j), jw.s nh3.tj, jr.n.s ʕ3wt ʕš3wt, jw.(w) hpr jm.f ht jm mj ntt t3w jm, jw.s jr.s j3tw ʕ3t, jw.s šn.tj m hr.k ... dd.jn.k r.s ʕ3t*

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<sup>255</sup> The Khonsu-swelling is also mentioned in the title of the Papyrus Berlin 3038 Chapter 52 (5, 1): *phrt nt sdt ʕwt r-pw hnsu bsw nbt hprw r z(j)* "Prescription of the fracture or Khonsu-swelling or any *bs*-swelling that happens to a man." For the treatise of tumors in the Papyrus Ebers, see Grapow 1956: 56-58; Ghalioungui 1963: 84-91; Bardinnet 1995: 196-197; Veiga 2009: 28-41. The swellings mentioned in the texts above appear to be related to Khonsu's role as a knife-bearer, because, in Papyrus Ebers Chapter 875, a series of knives used to excise a tumor are mentioned. However, there is no direct connection between the roles of Khonsu and the knives mentioned in the medical text.

<sup>256</sup> Ebbell thinks that the swelling in p.Ebers 873 probably refers to aneurysma arterioso-venosum (1937: 126). Grapow remarks that the statement in the magic spell *nj zm3.k m zm3w hnsu* "You have not joined with the joining of Khonsu," may be a wish that the swelling of the vessels will not develop into the swelling of Khonsu mentioned in p.Ebers 874 (1958b: 177). Ghalioungui believes the swelling that forms externally and is recognizable as the "joining of Khonsu" may be lymphariasis, which was treated with both medicine and magic (1987: 248-249).

*pw nt hnsu, jm.k jr ht nbt r.s* “Practices for a swelling of Khonsu. If you lance a large swelling of Khonsu in any limbs of a man, and it is bumpy, having made many swellings and having come in him with something developing there like that which air is in, and causing a large injury, and noticeable to you ... then you say concerning it: ‘It is the swelling of Khonsu.’ You should not do anything against it.”<sup>257</sup>

- p.Ebers 877 (109, 18-110, 3): *šs3w ʿnwt nt šʿt hnsu jr wp.k ʿnwt nt šʿt hnsu m ʿwt nb nt zj, gmm.k tp.s spd.(w), kf3.s mʿʿ(w) jrtj.fj w3d šsm.tj, jw jwf.f šm3.(w) hr.f ʿh3.tw r.<f> pw, jr hm gm.k m htj.fj m gb3wj.fj m nphw.fj m mntj.fj, ryt jm, jm.k jr ht r.s* “Practices for an ʿnwt-swelling of the cut of Khonsu. If you lance an ʿnwt -swelling of the cut of Khonsu in any limbs of a man, and you find its head pointed and its base (?) straight, his two eyes red and bloodshot, and his flesh hot with it, it means that one fights against. If, however, you find in his shoulders, in his upper arms, in his loins, in his thighs, pus there, you should not do anything against it.”<sup>258</sup>

Some Egyptologists cite those chapters to demonstrate Khonsu’s unfavorable trait as a god who causes diseases. It should be noted, however, that those texts do not speak of the deity’s role in the spread of diseases. Rather, they should be seen as medical descriptions of pure physical symptoms about the swellings and knots named “Khonsu” for reasons that we cannot know

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<sup>257</sup> Ebbell considers the swelling in p.Ebers 874 to be tubercular leprosy (1937: 126, see also Grapow 1958a: 128). In his article about dracunculiasis (guinea worm disease), however, Miller notes that if there is any connection between p.Ebers 874 and 875, the swelling described in p.Ebers 874 may be a blister accompanying the emergence of the guinea worm (1989: 251). Nunn puts those two symptoms in the category of leprosy (1996: 74-75).

<sup>258</sup> Ebbell notes that the swelling in p.Ebers 877 may refer to lepra mutilans (anesthetic leprosy), a disfiguring disease (1937: 127). While putting the swelling under the same category of leprosy, Nunn doubts Ebbell’s interpretation and adds that the swelling may equally relate to cancer, bubonic plague or neurofibromatosis (1996: 75). Veiga sees the swelling as a symptom of a bubonic plague, where the eyes of a patient turn yellow because of jaundice caused by liver failure (2008: 41). But the observation is based on the word *w3d* that usually means “green.” However, it can also mean “raw” and thus “red,” as translated above. The translation is also supported by the following word *šsm.tj* “bloodshot.”

(perhaps because its shape that looks like the moon). The connection between Khonsu and the swellings may refer to his role as a waxing moon-child, which will be discussed below.

While his role as a deity who spreads diseases remains doubtful, it is apparent that Khonsu was believed to cure diseases. One example is a Nineteenth Dynasty limestone stela found in Deir el-Medina, in which the owner of the stela beseeches Khonsu to cure his blindness or loss of light:

**T5-2. Stela Turin 50052 (Catalogue No. 1553)<sup>259</sup>**

**Title facing left before the seated Khonsu**

*ḥnsw m w3st nfr-ḥtp*

**Upper registers before and above the male prayer**

(1) *šzp b(w) nfr nb ntrw ḥnsw nfr-ḥtp*, (2) *dḥwtj nb jwnw-šmꜥ, ḥrw ḥrj mꜥb3y*  
(3) *ḥtp zp 2 p3 ꜥn ḥtp.(w)* (4) *mtw.k mr ḥtpw* (5) *jn zh3w-qd(wt)* (6) *n jmn p3y m3ꜥ-ḥrw*

**Lower registers before and above the female prayer**

(1) *rdjt j3w n ḥnsw m w3st nfr-ḥtp, ḥrw nb 3wt-jb*  
*dj.j* (2) *n.fj3wt šḥtp.j k3.f ḥtp.f n.j rꜥ nb*  
(3) *mk dj.k m3.j kk(w) n jrr.k, ḥtp.k n.j sdd.(j)* (4) *sw ndmwj ḥtp.k ḥnsw n nmḥ* (5) *n njwt.k*  
*n k3 n nbt pr w3dt-rnpt jn z3.s jr wd pn* (6) *ḥr rn n nb.f ḥnsw zh3w-qd(wt) p3y m3ꜥ-ḥrw*  
(7) *dd.f, jm(j)* (8) *ḥr.k*, (9) *jr ḥtp, sdm n.j jw[j ...]*

**Title facing left before the seated Khonsu**

Khonsu in Thebes Neferhotep

**Upper registers before and above the male prayer**

(1) Receive goodness, lord of the gods Khonsu Neferhotep,  
(2) Thoth, lord of Southern Heliopolis, Horus who is upon the Court of Thirty;  
(3) Be content, be content, you who are beautiful of contentment, (4) and desire the offerings.  
(5) By the outline-scribe (6) of Amun Pay, justified.

**Lower registers before and above the female prayer**

(1) Giving praise to Khonsu in Thebes Neferhotep, Horus Lord of Happiness.  
I give (2) to him praises so that I may pacify his *ka* and he may be content with me every

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<sup>259</sup> For the text, see Tosi 1972: 87-88, 283. For translations, see Gunn 1916: 90; Tosi 1972: 87-88; Assmann 1999: 379-381 (ÄHG 152); Galán 1999: 26-27.

day.

(3) Look, you made me see darkness by your doing. May you be content with me so that (I) relate (4) it: How sweet your grace, Khonsu, to the orphan (5) of your village. For *ka* of Lady of House Wadjet-renepet, justified.

By her son who made this stela (6) in the name of his lord Khonsu, outline-scribe Pay, justified, (7) saying: Pay (8) attention; (9) be merciful; listen to me when [I ...]

In ancient Egypt, blindness represented a life-threatening situation, not just because it is a serious physical disability that can affect the afflicted person's daily life,<sup>260</sup> but also because it is closely connected with the concept of darkness and "*Gottesferne/Gottverlassenheit*" (i.e. abandonment by the gods) (Brunner 1975a: 830; Reinhard 1980: 1033). During the late Nineteenth Dynasty, when expressions of "personal piety" were numerous, blindness was usually attributed to divine action as punishment for sin (Borghouts 1982: 9; Assmann 2001: 226-227).<sup>261</sup>

Brunner points out that Egyptians implored especially Khonsu to cure blindness (1975b: 960).

While Egyptologists are divided in their opinions about whether the statement – *dj.k m3.j kk(w) n*

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<sup>260</sup> For eye diseases in ancient Egyptian medical texts, see Nunn 1996: 197-202. Especially, the term *kkw* "darkness" is mentioned in the title of p.Ebers 415 (62, 18-19) (Ebell 1937: 75; Grapow 1958: 47, 52; Nunn 1996: 200): *kt nt dr h3tj kkw h'w swt-<sup>c</sup> hpr m jrtj* "Another (prescription) of expelling obfuscation, darkness, dim sight (amblyopia) and impacts that happens in the eyes."

<sup>261</sup> For instance, see the reverse side of the Nineteenth Dynasty Stela of Neferabu (Stela British Museum 589): (1) *h3t m sddwt b3w n pth rsj-jnb.f jn sdm-<sup>c</sup>s m st-m3't hr jmntt w3st* (2) *nfr-<sup>c</sup>bw m3'-hrw dd.f, jnk z(j) <sup>c</sup>rqy m <sup>c</sup>d3 n pth* (3) *nb m3't, dj.f ptr.(j) kkw m hrw, jw.j r dd b3w.f n hm* (4) *sw rh sw n šrjw <sup>c</sup>3w, z3w.tn r pth nb m3't, m.k b(w) w3h.f* (5) *zp n r(m)t nb, hry.tn r dm rn n pth m <sup>c</sup>d3, m.k dm* (6) *sw m <sup>c</sup>d3, m.k whn.f, dj.f wnn.j mj jw3w n* (7) *jwyt, jw.j m drt.f, dj.f ptr r(m)t ntrw jm.j, jw.j* (8) *mj z(j) jry.f bwt r nb.f, m3'tj pth nb m3't jr.j, jr.n.f n.j sb3y,* (9) *h3p n.j, m33 n.j, h3p.k jn sdm-<sup>c</sup>s m st-m3't* (10) *hr jmntt w3st nfr-<sup>c</sup>bw m3'-hrw hr ntr <sup>c</sup>3* "(1) Beginning of the recitation of the impressiveness of Ptah, South of His Wall, by the tomb-worker on the west of Thebes, (2) Neferabu, saying, 'I am a man who swore falsely in the name of Ptah, (3) the lord of *ma'at*. He made me see darkness by day. I will recite his impressiveness to the one who does not know (4) him and the one who knows him, to young and old. Beware of Ptah, the lord of *ma'at*! Look, he does not leave alone (5) the misdeed of anyone. Be far from pronouncing the name of Ptah falsely: look, he who speaks (6) it falsely – look, he will topple. He made me exist like a dog of (7) the street, and I am in his hand. He made people and gods see in me when I was (8) like a man who does what is abominable to his lord. Ptah, the lord of *ma'at*, is just against me, for he has made an instruction for me. (9) Be merciful to me. Look at me and be content!' By the tomb-worker (10) on the west of Thebes, Neferabu justified under the great god." For other examples of diseases inflicted upon a person in act of punishment, see Gunn 1916: 86-87, 92; Assmann 1999: 375-376 (ÄHG 149), 384-385 (ÄHG 157), 387 (ÄHG 160); Galán 1999: 21-27. Most of the stelae containing the statement of "seeing the darkness" are found in Deir el-Medina.

*jrr.k* “You made me see darkness by your doing” – in the Stela Turin 50052 refers to physical or spiritual blindness,<sup>262</sup> I think that the darkness in this case mean actual blindness, considering that (1) Egypt was well known for a high incidence of infectious eye diseases; and (2) cramped and dusty working conditions in royal tombs might have caused irritation and ulceration of the eyes (Miller 1991: 19-21).<sup>263</sup> In addition, blinding is mentioned as a type of punishment in the divine sphere, as in the Blinding of Truth by Falsehood (p.Chester Beatty II, 2, 1-4): *wn.jn grg hr dd n t3 psdt, jm [jn.tw m3t] mtw.tw k3mn.f t3y.f jrt 2, mtw.tw djt.f r jrj 3c n p3y.j pr, wn.[jn t3] psdt [hr] jrt mj j.dd.f nbt* “Then the Falsehood said to the Ennead, ‘Cause that the [Tru]th [be brought] and blinded <in> his two eyes and assigned to be doorkeeper of my house.’ [The] Ennead then did according to all that he said.”<sup>264</sup>

Regardless of the nature of the blindness (or lack of light) described in the stela, however, Khonsu appears here as a healing deity who can offer either spiritual redemption or miraculous cure to the owner of the stela. The fact that the prayer was directed to Khonsu may refer to the deity’s aspect as the Moon Eye.<sup>265</sup> It is equally important to keep in mind that Khonsu is a god of light and, like other child deities, can expel darkness and thus blindness.<sup>266</sup> This is also supported

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<sup>262</sup> Pinch remains ambivalent about the real significance of the statement (1993: 257). Some scholars think that the expression of “seeing the darkness (by day)” refers to real blindness (Gunn 1916: 88-89; Černý 1958: Bankes Stela No. 6; Janssen 1980: 136) while others think it is a metaphor alluding to spiritual blindness (Brunner 1975a: 830-831; Manniche 1978: 17; Galán 1999: 29-30). Assmann sees physical blindness as a metaphor itself (1994: 26).

<sup>263</sup> Manniche claims that the depiction of normal eyes in images on the stelae suggests that the “darkness” is just a metaphor (1978: 17), but it can also indicate that the blindness was not permanent but temporary.

<sup>264</sup> The theme is reminiscent of a scene in the Contendings of Horus and Seth, in which Re-Horakhty and the Ennead decide to “make a great instruction for him.” It should be noted, however, that Horus is punished by Seth, who removes his two eyes and buries them on the mountain but hides the fact from Re-Horakhty.

<sup>265</sup> In his role as an “Augengott,” Horus is said to cure the eye disease of Khenty-irty in the Late Period (Brunner 1977: 646, see also Brunner 1975a: 831-832). For the injury of the divine eye, see Meeks 1996: 72-73.

<sup>266</sup> The sensitivity of the human eye to light forms the basis of the belief that the blindness can metaphorically symbolize the alienation from the gods, and a deity’s effectiveness as a healing deity can be stressed with his treatment of the human eye (Otto 1964: 47-49). In the stela of Deir el-Medina, Khonsu, shedding his image as a violent god, appears as a benevolent god who hears the prayer of the owner of the stela. Also note Brunner (1975a: 831): “,Licht sehen lassen’ ist dementsprechend ein Bild für ,gnädig sein.’”

by the fact that Khonsu is identified with Horus, as well as Thoth, in the stela of Deir el-Medina above.<sup>267</sup> Horus himself is a god of light who usually appears in the form of falcon and, according to Reinhard, the divine brilliance is especially visualized as a falcon (1980: 1033).<sup>268</sup>

The moon god Thoth was also believed to possess great magical and healing powers. Both Thoth and Khonsu are thus healing deities. Thoth appears as a healing god who uses his skills and proven methods to cure a disease, as in Coffin Texts Spell 335 (CT IV 238a): *jn dhwtj jr nm m dbw.f* “It was Thoth who did this (filled the shrunken Eye) with his fingers.” Khonsu, however, is usually credited with miraculous cures based on exorcism (Derchain 1962: 43).<sup>269</sup> The most famous account of his miraculous cure is recorded in the so-called Bentresh Stela, dating to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty or later (Lichtheim 1980: 90; Ritner 2003: 361). The text relates how a statue of Khonsu was sent to help a foreign princess who was possessed by a spirit:

### T5-3. The Bentresh Stela (Louvre C 284)<sup>270</sup>

*spr ntr pn r bhtn n km rnpt jbd 5*  
*h<sup>c</sup>.n jj.n wr n bhtn hn<sup>c</sup> mš<sup>c</sup>.f wr.f h3t n hnsu p3 jr sh<sup>r</sup>*  
*rdj.n.f sw (18) hr h(t).f m dd, jw.k n.n, htp.k n.n m wdt n nsw-bjt wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup>*  
*h<sup>c</sup>.n sm.n ntr pn r bt ntj jw bnt-rš jm*  
*h<sup>c</sup> jr.n.f z3 n z3t n p3 wr n bhtn nfr.s (19) hr<sup>c</sup>*  
*h<sup>c</sup>.n dd.n 3ht pn ntj hn<sup>c</sup>.s m b3h hnsu p3 jr sh<sup>r</sup> m w3st jj.t m htp ntr<sup>c</sup> 3 sh<sup>r</sup> sm3*  
*dmj.k pw bhtn, hm.k pw rmt.f, jnk pw hm.k, (20) jw.j r sm r bt jw.j jm r rdjt htp jb.k hr jw.k hr.s,*  
*jw mj wdt hm.k r jr hrw nfr hn<sup>c</sup>.j hn<sup>c</sup> p(3) wr n bhtn*

<sup>267</sup> The deities addressed by the troubled worshippers include Amun-Re (Cairo 12202), Ptah (Stela British Museum 589), Iah-Thoth (Banks Stela No. 6; Stela Turin 50046), Sobek (Stela Turin 50051) and Meretseger (British Museum Stela 374). Kings (Nebkheperure: a stela of Huy) and queens (Ahmose Nefertari: Stela Turin 50050) are also mentioned. Except for Meretseger, most of the deities and royal figures mentioned above can be regarded as a god of light in the Egyptian religious thought. For Ptah as a god of light, see Holmberg 1946: 105-107, 150-154.

<sup>268</sup> Khonsu also appears as a falcon or a falcon-headed man (Leitz 2002-V: 761, 764, 766, 767; Salis 2009: 2, 3), like the sun god.

<sup>269</sup> While admitting the aspect of Khonsu who can expel demons as a healing deity, Grapow thinks that Khonsu as the divine exorcist may not be identical with Khonsu as the moon god of Thebes (1956: 139).

<sup>270</sup> For the text, see de Buck 1948: 108-109; Kitchen 1971: II, 286. For the translation, see Lichtheim 1980: 92; Ritner 2003: 365.

*ḥꜥ.n nhn.n ntr pn r p3.f hm-ntr m dd*  
 (21) *mj jr p3 wr n bhṯn ʿ3bt ʿ3t m b3ḥ 3ḥt pw*  
*jr wnn nn, jr ḥnsw p3 jr shꜣr m w3st ḥnꜥ p(3) 3ḥt, jw p(3) wr n bhṯn ʿḥꜥ ḥnꜥ mšꜥ.f, jw.f snd r ʿ3 wr*  
*ḥꜥ.n (22) {ḥꜥ.nn} jr.n.f ʿ3bt ʿ3t m b3ḥ ḥnsw p3 jr shꜣr m w3st ḥnꜥ p(3) 3ḥt (n z3t) n p(3) wr n bhṯn*  
*ḥr jr hrw nfr ḥr.w*  
*ḥꜥ šm n.f p3 3ḥt m ḥtp r bt mr.f m wdt ḥnsw p3 jr shꜣr m w3st*  
 (23) *wn p3 wr n bhṯn ḥr nhm r ʿ3 wr ḥnꜥ z(j) nb ntj m bhṯn*

This god (the statue of Khonsu) arrived at Bekhten in the completion of a year and five months.

Then the king of Bekhten came with his army and officials to the front of Khonsu the plan-maker,

and he put himself (18) on his belly, saying, “Now that you have come to us, may you be content for us, by command of the Dual King Usermaatre-Stepenre.”

Then this god went to the place that Bentresh was in.

Then he made protection for the daughter of the king of Bekhten, and she got well (19) immediately.

Then that spirit who was with her said before Khonsu the plan-maker in Thebes,

“Welcome in peace, great god who drives off indigents.

Bekhten is your town, its people are your servants, I am your servant. (20) I will go to the place I came from, to cause your heart to be content with what you came for, and let Your Incarnation command to make a holiday with me and the king of Bekhten.”

Then this god indicated to his priest, saying, (21)

“Have the king of Bekhten make a big celebration before this spirit.”

When that was, Khonsu the plan-maker in Thebes was with the spirit, while the king of Bekhten was standing with his army, being very afraid.

Then (22) he made a big oblation before Khonsu the plan-maker in Thebes and the spirit (of the daughter) of the king of Bekhten, making a holiday about them.

Then the spirit went away in peace to the place he wanted by command of Khonsu the plan-maker in Thebes.

(23) The king of Bekhten was celebrating very much along with every man who was in Bekhten.

Khonsu’s power as a healing deity expelling evil spirits and curing patients gained importance in the course of time and his popularity as a healing deity increased substantially in the Late Period.

His fame as an effective healing god continued into the Ptolemaic Period, and Ptolemy IV

Philadelphus claimed that he was healed of an unknown illness through an intervention of

Khonsu (Grapow 1956: 139; Houser-Wegner 2001a: 233). Khonsu himself was regarded as a

violent and bloodthirsty deity, so it was believed that he could also ward off threats from evil ones. Given that exorcism is a religious practice of casting out shadowy spiritual entities from a possessed person or place through the command or presence of a more powerful being, Khonsu's ability to conduct a miraculous cure through exorcism points to his role as a god of light, who drives the dark force with his divine brilliance.

Roberts sees an association of Khonsu, as a healing deity, with Sekhmet in Coffin Texts Spell 311.<sup>271</sup> Because both of them can bring diseases and cure them at the same time, their connection does not seem impossible, as Roberts notes (1995: 80): *"Raging Sekhmet and violent Khons, powers of blood and semen,<sup>272</sup> reveal in their own ways the destructive sides of sun and moon. Both are propitiated in their cults by blood offerings of slaughtering animals. And just as the priests of Sekhmet were renowned in Egypt as great healers, especially of diseases connected with the blood, so too Khons was able to expel demons, being venerated as a great healer in the New Kingdom and later."<sup>273</sup>*

#### **5.7.4 Fertility god**

It has been mentioned above that the changing cycles of the moon correspond to different stages of fertility and growth. Khonsu, as a moon god, therefore, functions as a fertility god, who is born and grows in accordance with the moon's waxing and waning cycle.<sup>274</sup> In this function, he is equated with a bull that brings growth and fertility in the waxing stage and with a castrated ox of

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<sup>271</sup> In Coffin Texts Spell 311, Khonsu is said to be the son of Shezemetet (CT IV 65i): *jnk js z3 šzmtt* "For I am the son of Shezemetet." According to B. Altenmüller (1975: 167), (1) Shezemetet is closely associated with Sekhmet, as in Pyramid Texts Spell 248 (PT § 262b): *jwr (wnjs)| jn šhmt jn šzmtt mst (wnjs)|* "Unis has been conceived by Sekhmet, and Shezemetet is the one who gave birth to Unis"; and (2) his association with Sekhmet plays a critical role in explaining his role in Pyramid Texts Spell 273 (Pyr. § 402a-b).

<sup>272</sup> For the association of the male semen with the moon god Khonsu, see the section below on Khonsu as a fertility god.

<sup>273</sup> In this regard, Roberts also observes that the *menit*-necklace around Khonsu's neck may symbolize the appeased aspect of the turbulent moon god.

<sup>274</sup> Ancient Egyptians believed that the moon's waxing and waning phases also affect a mother's milk production (Brunner-Traut 1970: 158-159).



darkness in the waning stage. The identification of Khonsu as the lunar bull/ox is found only in a text of the Ptolemaic Period, when the deity had already firmly established his status as the powerful moon god within the Theban Triad:

**T5-4. Urk. VIII 74 (= 89b)<sup>275</sup>**

*h̄nsw m w3st nfr-h̄tp, nb m3ct, hrj st wrt, jch m grh, snnw n šww  
 mh wd3t, db3 j3bt, nhh rct nb r tr n mr.f, rnp r nw šzp jb.f  
 b3q.tw.f m psdntjw, bh.tw.f m jbd, tnj n.f m-h̄t smdt  
 jdn.n.f rct shr.f r h̄bt, bd.f t3 rct nb hr nhm.f, hr nwt.f hnct (j)t.f m-h̄t tm  
 dd.w ms.w hr t3-wr, sns.n.sn js m sns k3wj, h3ytj k3.tw r rnwj.sn  
 jw.f m nhn tp w3h.(w), šb.(w) hr.tw m whm qj.f  
 jch ch.(w) m jr.w.f dr shrd.f, k3 ps m khkh.f  
 scb pw hr jr n.f snk, w3h qj.f hr jn(t) cnd  
 sts k3w sb3q kt, srwd swht m ht  
 nšp h̄nmj m t3w jm(j).f srq.n.f h̄tyt g3.t(j)*

Khonsu in Thebes Neferhotep, Lord of *ma'at*, the one who is upon the great place,  
 the moon at night, the second of the sun-light,  
 who fills the Wadjet-Eye, the one who restores the left eye,  
 who becomes old everyday at the time that he desires,  
 who becomes young at the time his heart seizes.  
 He is conceived on the day of the new moon,  
 born on the second day of the month, and becomes old (for himself) after the fifteenth  
 day.  
 He has replaced the sun when he goes down to the Hall of Judgment,  
 he illuminates the land everyday with his protection (?),  
 he divides his time with his father after Atum.  
 They say that they are born in the east, they unite on the Day of Union of Two Bulls.  
 Two lights, one will call them.  
 He comes as a child with the head bent; mysterious, they say, as the one who repeats his  
 form.  
 The moon is captured in his form as he rejuvenates (himself).  
 He is a germinating bull when he is old; he is an ox, making darkness for himself.  
 His waxing moon, however, brings light,  
 the one who makes bulls fertile and cows pregnant, who makes the egg strong in the  
 womb;  
 the one, from the air which is in him nostrils breathe

<sup>275</sup> For the translation, see Derchain 1962: 43.

as he has caused to breathe the needy throat.

The text clearly describes the development of the moon god Khonsu in accordance with the lunar cycle. More importantly, however, the reference to semen may be evidence of Khonsu as fertility god. In various cultures, male seed is believed to belong to the essence of the moon.<sup>276</sup> As regards the castration of Seth, te Velde makes an interesting comment that the loss of semen takes place when the moon begins to wane and lose its virile powers (1967: 43)<sup>277</sup> and refers to Coffin Texts Spell 310 (CT IV 65j, 66c, 66f-j) above.

With regard to *hrw pw n zrw* or the “day of rams” in Coffin Texts Spell 310 (CT IV 66f), Derchain thinks of it as the fifteenth day of the month, when the moon begins to wane, which leads to the loss of semen and the decline of virility (1962: 41). However, Khonsu is the “god who does not die” on that day and, as a symbol of the ever-renewing moon, he survives the waning period and reappears as the tumescent and swelling moon. His aspect as the ever-renewing/waxing moon is, according to Roberts, his most differentiating factor in relation to the moon god Thoth (1995: 78):

*“Khons is not the moon then in the sense of time-reckoner, reconciler, restorer, all of which are functions of the ibis-headed wise moon god, Thoth of Hermopolis. Nor is he the celestial Moon Eye which fragments into pieces each month so that its shattered parts have to be reunited and made whole during the first quarter, a fragmentation that belongs to the struggle of Horus with Seth.”*

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<sup>276</sup> Cf. Eliade 1970: 239. See also in the Contendings of Horus and Seth, the semen of Seth appears from the forehead of Seth as the moon-disk (54, 4-8): *wn.jn dhwtj hr dd n.s, mj r bnr m wpt.f, wn.jn.s pry m w<sup>c</sup> n jtnw n nbw hr tpj n sth, wn.jn sth kndt r jkr zp 2, jw.f 3wj drt.f r mh m p3 jtnw n nbw, wn.jn dhwtj hr nhm.f m-drt.f, jw.f dj.twf m h<sup>c</sup>w hr tpj.f* “So Thoth said to it [the semen of Seth]: ‘Come out from his forehead.’ So it came out as a disk of gold on the head of Seth. So Seth got very very angry, and he stretched out his hand to take hold of the disk of gold. So Thoth took it from him and put it on his head as a crown.”

<sup>277</sup> For the connection between light (“eye”) and sexuality (“testicles”), see Griffiths 1960: 51-52.

Interestingly, his aspect as a waxing moon god who promotes growth of plants and animals is most prominently displayed in the aforementioned medical texts, where the swellings in a person's body are referred to as the "Khonsu-swelling." The tumor in those texts seems to have no direct or apparent connection with the moon god Khonsu from the medical point of view.

While there is no textual evidence to support it, it is equally enlightening to note that the tortoise shell in Coffin Texts Spell 310 (CT IV 66a), which the deceased identified with Khonsu uses as his shell, may also refer to Khonsu's role as a waxing/full moon because of its round shape, reminiscent of the full moon.

#### *5.7.5 Other important aspects: vizier, judge, time-reckoner/dispenser*

In the course of time, the moon god Khonsu assumed a number of traits of the moon god Thoth and, at the end of the conflation between the two deities, they became one god most frequently called Khonsu-Thoth (Derchain 1962: 42). In the process, the roles of Thoth, such as vizier of the sun, judge and time-reckoner/dispenser, were transferred to Khonsu.

The assimilation of Thoth and Khonsu is already seen in the Middle Kingdom text known as the Debate Between a Man and His Soul, in which the two gods show up side by side (p. Berlin 3024, 23-25): *wḏꜥ wj ḏḥwtj ḥtp ntrw, ḥsf ḥnzw ḥr.j zh3 m m3ꜥt* "May Thoth judge me so that the gods might become content; May Khonsu defend me – he who writes correctly." The role of Khonsu in the text is that of recorder of the judgment, which points to the assimilation between Thoth and Khonsu (J. Allen 2011: 41).<sup>278</sup> During the New Kingdom, the conflation of the two deities became more apparent. For example, on a wooden statuette of the Nineteenth Dynasty, around whose

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<sup>278</sup> For a composition of the divine judges that is different from the quartet of gods specified in the Book of the Dead, see J. Allen 2011: 142-143.

pedestal a hymn to Amun is carved, Khonsu is praised as vizier of the sun, judge and time-reckoner/dispenser:

**T5-5. Statuette of Amenemopet and Hathor (Berlin Museum No. 6910)<sup>279</sup>**

**Top of the pedestal in front of the two statuettes**

(1) *šzp-ḥ nḥ pr m-b3ḥ m ḥwt-ntr nt jmn m jpt-swt, jw.k* (2) *ḥr ḥzwt jw šzp.k snw, ḥnm.n ḥḥw.k sntr,*  
(3) *n k3 n zh3w-nswt n ḥd nbw (j)m(j)-r jzwt m st-m3ḥt jmn-m-jpt m3ḥ-[ḥrw]*

**First register around the pedestal: Titles of and a prayer to Amun**

(a) *ḥtp-dj-(n)swt jmn-rḥ nb nswt t3wj, ntr špsj ḥtp.(w) ḥr m3ḥt, p3wt(j) ḥpr m ḥ3t* (b) *wḥ jwty snnw.f,*  
*jr pt, smn jdbwj, qm3 ntrw, (c) jr r(m)t, nb šft, wr mrt, ḥ3 pḥtj m ḥnw psdt, (d) dj.f qrs nfrt <m>-ḥt*  
*j3w ḥr jmnt wrt nt w3st*

**Second register around the pedestal: Titles of and a prayer to Mut**

(a) *ḥtp-dj-(n)swt mjwt wrt, nbt jšrw, nbt pt, ḥnt thnt, (b) m rn.s pw n wrt ḥk3w, ḥnwt t3w nbw, wḥt m*  
*t3 pt jwty (c) snnw.t.s, ḥnwt jdbwj ḥrw, ḥnmt st m wj3 n ḥḥ, ḥnwt (d) pr-jmn, dj.s rn.j mn.(w) m st-*  
*m3ḥt mj m3ḥtj nb*

**Third register around the pedestal: Titles of and a prayer to Khonsu**

(a) *ḥtp-dj-(n)swt ḥnsw m w3st nfr-ḥtp, dhwtj nb jwnw šmḥ, (b) t(3)tj wpw m3ḥt, ḥsb m3ḥt, mr m3ḥt, dd*  
*m3ḥt n jr m3ḥt, dj.f ḥḥ q3 (c) n jr m3ḥt rnpwt nn ḥsbt.sn, jw jrtj.j ḥr m33, ḥnhwj.(j) (d) ḥr sdm, jb.(j)*  
*ḥtp.(w) ḥr m3ḥt rḥ nb mj jrnt n ḥzj*

**Top of the pedestal in front of the two statuettes**

(1) Receive garlands that come forth into the presence in the god's enclosure of Amun in Karnak. You will (2) have blessings when you have received offerings and your limbs have smelled incense. (3) To the *ka* of the royal scribe of silver and gold, the overseer of the tomb-crew Amenemopet, justified.

**First register around the pedestal: Titles of and a prayer to Amun**

(a) A royal offering of Amun-Re, lord of thrones of the Two Lands, the august god who is content with *ma'at*, the primeval one who came into being in the beginning, (b) the sole one without his equal, the one who created the sky, established the Two Banks, created gods, (c) created people, lord of awe, great of love, great of strength inside the Ennead, (d) giving a good burial after old age on the great west of Thebes.

**Second register around the pedestal: Titles of and a prayer to Mut**

(a) A royal offering of Mut the Great, lady of Isheru, lady of the sky, beautiful and

<sup>279</sup> For the text, see Günther 1924: 64-65.

glittering (b) in this name of hers of “Great of Magic,” lady of all lands, the unique one in the sky without (c) her equal, lady of the Two Banks of Horus, the one who takes a place in the barque of Millions, lady (d) of the House of Amun, making my name established in the place of *ma’at* like every righteous man.

**Third register around the pedestal: Titles of and a prayer to Khonsu**

(a) A royal offering of Khonsu in Thebes Neferhotep, Thoth of the Southern Heliopolis, (b) the vizier who separates *ma’at*, the one who counts *ma’at*, loves *ma’at*, and gives *ma’at* to the one who does *ma’at*, giving a long lifetime (c) to the one who does *ma’at*, and countless years, my eyes seeing, (my) ears hearing, (my) heart content with *ma’at* every day like that which is done for a blessed one.

Here, Khonsu is identified with *dhwtj nb jwnw šmꜥ* “Thoth of the Southern Heliopolis” (as in the Stela Turin 50052), and his roles include (1) the vizier and judge: *t(?)t(j) wpw m3ꜥt* “the vizier who separates *ma’at*”; and (2) the time-reckoner/dispenser: *dj.fꜥhꜥ q3 n jr m3ꜥt rnpw nn ḥsbt.sn* “giving a long lifetime to the one who does *ma’at*, and countless years.”<sup>280</sup>

In a limestone stela of the Nineteenth Dynasty, Thoth and Khonsu are so completely identified that they share the traits of a moon god (Montet 1952: 65-66; Derchain 1962: 42; Leclant 1965: 250, notes 2 and 3; Quaegebeur 1975: 103):

**T5-6. Bankes Stela No. 8<sup>281</sup>**

**Title facing left above the falcon head of Khonsu**

(1) *ḥnzw* (2) *m w3st* (3) *nfr-ḥtp ḥrw* [ ... ]

**Title facing left above the falcon head of Khonsu**

(1) *ḥtp-dj-(n)swt ḥnzw m w3st nfr-ḥtp*, (2) *dhwtj nb jwnw šmꜥ zh3w m3ꜥ n psdt* (3) *dj j3t n mr.n.fꜥhꜥ m ḥnw.f t3w* (4) *m ḥfꜥ.f š3y rnnt ḥr.f, w3dwtj ntj* (5) *m ḥzt.f, nn ph.n sw dwt, dj.fꜥnhꜥ wd3 snb ndm-jb* (6) *j3wt nfrt r wd3, nn jnt zp.fr pht st n m3ꜥtj*, (7) *n k3 n t3j-md3t m st nhḥ pjy3y whm ꜥnhꜥ, t3j-md3t n jmn pjy3y*

<sup>280</sup> For an example of Khonsu-Thoth as a divine judge in the Late Period, see Labrique 2003: 211-216.

<sup>281</sup> For the text, see Černý 1958: Bankes Stela No. 8. For translations, see Černý 1958: Bankes Stela No. 8; Assmann 1999: 388 (ÄHG 162).

**Title facing left above the falcon head of Khonsu**

(1) Khonsu (2) in Thebes (3) Neferhotep, Horus [ ... ]

**Title facing left above the falcon head of Khonsu**

(1) A royal offering of Khonsu in Thebes Neferhotep, (2) Thoth of the Southern Heliopolis, the true scribe of the Ennead, (3) who gives the office to whom he wanted and a lifetime in it. Air is (4) in his grip; fate and nursing are with him. How happy is the one who is (5) in his blessing. No evil can reach him, giving life, soundness, health, joy, (6) good old age soundly without his misdeed being brought to reach the place of the judgement (i.e. the Hall of Two Truths). (7) To the *ka* of the chisel-bearer in the Place of Eternity, Piyay, repeating life, and (to) the chisel-bearer of Amun, Piyay.

Khonsu acquired a number of syncretistic features during the late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period, as well as many identities and epithets. Ultimately, the deity was elevated to the position of creator god. According to the so-called Khonsu Cosmology, composed during the Ptolemaic-Roman Period,<sup>282</sup> the creator god (Ptah), who came into being from Nun through the cycle mentioned in the creation account, comes to Thebes in his name/identity of Khonsu and creates Hathor. Then he has intercourse with the goddess, and this leads to the formation of the Ogdoad (Parker & Lesko 1988: 174-175; Cruz-Uribe 1994: 188; Mendel 2003: 74-78). Along with the waning influence of Amun-Re amid the political turmoil after the New Kingdom, Khonsu finally became the creator god whose importance even overshadowed that of Amun-Re (Cruz-Uribe 1994: 186-189).

Finally, it needs to be briefly mentioned that Khonsu's personality tends to split into several Khonsu-deities during the late New Kingdom (Hart 1986: 113-114; Brunner 1975b: 961): Khonsu-the-Child (Khonsupakhered), Khonsu-in-Thebes Neferhotep, Khonsu-who-is-always young (Khonsuwennekhu), Khonsu the plan maker (Khonsupairskher) and Khonsu the reckoner of

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<sup>282</sup> For the study of the Khonsu Cosmogony, see Lesko *et al* 1988:168-175; Cruz-Uribe 1994: 169-189; Mendel 2003: 29-177.

lifetime (Khonsuhesebahau). Those forms of Khonsu became very popular in the Late Period and most of the forms were transmitted almost unchanged to the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. What attracts our attention is the fact that the "*Götterspaltung*," or the personality-splitting of a god (Hornung 1982a: 86-91; Jankuhn 1977: 709-711), is also observed in the case of the Horus child, who splits into more than ten forms. Some of them, such as Harsiese, Harpocrates, Harendotes and Harsomtus, become independent child deities in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period. As in the case of Horus, the "*Götterspaltung*" of Khonsu derives from the different traits of the deity, but I do not believe that the traits each represent a different god. Rather, they are specialized traits of a versatile god. Each of the Khonsu-deities retains specific aspects of Khonsu as the moon god.

## **KHONSU AS A CHILD DEITY**

In her analysis of the Ptolemaic registrations inscribed on the Propylon of Khonsu at Karnak, Labrique writes that there are two reasons why Khonsu appears as a child-deity in the Theban region (2003: 198-203): (1) the new moon's rejuvenated form in the beginning of the lunar month is closely associated with Khonsu the Child, who constantly changes his form and repeats the cycle of rejuvenation; and (2) Khonsu is regarded as the child-son in the Theban Triad and, in this role, the deity is the moon-son/heir to the sun-god/creator and thus merges with the royal child who finally succeeds the ruling king. Our present concern is, however, how Khonsu was integrated into the Theban Triad as a third member of the divine family.

Though Sandri writes that Khonsu was one of the deities depicted as a child deity from earliest times (2006: 198), the typical iconography of Khonsu as a youthful deity with a side-lock of youth is first attested during the New Kingdom (Leitz 2002-V: 764) and the earliest record of Khonsu-

Thoth as a child is found in a Theban stele dated to the early Twentieth Dynasty (Černý 1958: Bankes Stela No. 10). Here, Khonsu-Thoth is depicted as a naked child sitting on the shrine behind two deified royal figures (Amenhotep I and Ahmes-Nefertari), sporting a side-lock and holding his right index finger to his mouth. Over the child deity is inscribed an epithet reading: [ḥn]zw-dḥwtj ntr nfr “Khonsu-Thoth the youthful god.” Like Harpocrates, Khonsu also bore the epithet p3 ḥrd “the child” in the later New Kingdom. According to Leitz (2002-V: 769-770), eleven sources are dated to the 21st-24th Dynasties. The earliest evidence, however, is the inscription on the sarcophagus that belongs to Queen Mutnodjeme, the queen of Psusennes I, dating to the Third Intermediate Period (Sandri 2006: 198, note 1218). The inscription reads (Montet 1951: 164):

*wšjr ḥm-ntr snnw n jmn-rꜥ (n)swt-ntrw ḥmt-(n)sw(t) wrt tpt n ḥm.f wrt ḥnrt tpt n jmn-rꜥ (n)swt-ntrw ʕ3 n pr n mwt wrt nb(t) jšrw ḥm-ntr n mwt wrt nbt-jšrw ḥm-ntr n ḥnsw m w3st nfr-ḥtp mwt ntr n ḥnsw p3 ḥrd tp n jmn z3t-(n)sw(t) snt-(n)sw(t) ḥmt-(n)sw(t) nbt t3wj (mwt ndmt) m3ꜥ ḥrw ḥr wšsr* “Osiris the God’s Second Servant of Amun-Re, king of gods; the First Great Royal Wife of His Incarnation, the elder of the private apartment of Amun-Re, king of the gods, the great one of the House of Mut the Great, Lady of Isheru; the god’s servant of Mut the Great, lady of Isheru; the god’s servant of Khonsu in Thebes Neferhotep, the god’s mother of Khonsu-the-Child and First Born of Amun-Re; the king’s daughter, the king’s sister and the king’s wife, lady of the Two Lands Mutnodjeme, justified before Osiris.”

## 5.8 Parent deities

Khonsu’s father Amun was promoted to the position of supreme god in the Egyptian pantheon at the ascendance of the Theban kings in the Middle and New Kingdom. While his role as a mysterious and hidden god was primary to his nature, his divinity was enhanced during the New Kingdom through an interpretation of his nature as a mysterious manifestation of the



ancient sun-god of Heliopolis, which resulted in a fusion of the hidden deity with the visible sun. Accordingly, the deity attained the status of cosmic creator god known as *jmn-rꜥ nswt-ntrw* “Amun-Re, King of the Gods,” which the Greeks rendered as “Amonrasothes.” Moreover, Amun was also visualized in an ithyphallic form as *Amun-kamutef* from the Twelfth Dynasty and, in this role, he was related to the fertility god Min and sometimes called Amun-Min (Sethe 1929: 19-22/§22-30; Otto 1975: 243). His aspects as the solar god and fertility god are the key to understanding the father-son relationship between Amun and Khonsu, who appear as the luminating and fertilizing moon god.

Mut made a relatively late appearance in the history of Egyptian religion. The goddess may have had a longer history than is attested in Lower Egypt in her relationship with Ptah (te Velde 1988: 397; B. Lesko 1999: 134). Her emergence into great prominence coincides with the ascendance of Amun as the supreme state god during the New Kingdom. As a companion of Amun-Re who overshadowed Amaunet, the original consort of Amun, Mut appears as the wife of Amun and mother of Khonsu. It should be noted, however, that (1) it is Isis and not Mut who usually appears when Amun is portrayed as an ithyphallic god; and (2) Mut remained prominent on the east bank of Thebes – therefore, the realm of the living – while Hathor was relegated to the west side of the region, playing one of her prime roles in welcoming the deceased into the hereafter (B. Lesko 1999: 135-138). With regard to the downplayed sexual nature of the goddess, Sethe states that Mut was not just Amun’s spouse but also his mother and daughter in the sense of a female counterpart of *kamutef* (1929: 29-30/§§45-48).<sup>283</sup> His comment is very revealing in that (1) one of

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<sup>283</sup> In this regard, te Velde notes that the femininity of Mut has something to do with the femininity of the old wise woman, which can be contrasted with that of Hathor or the femininity of sexual excitement (1979-1980: 8-9, 1982a: 247). Also note B. Lesko (1999: 143): “Again it is this wise, older woman who best conveys the role and personality of Mut. She is not the nubile fertile girl, at the height of her sexual powers, embodied in Hathor, or the

Amun's aspects was the ithyphallic *kamutef*; and (2) his son Khonsu was also regarded as fertilizing moon-god.

As the mother-goddess of Khonsu, Mut is called as *mwt-hnsw* "mother of Khonsu" in a New Kingdom stela (Leitz 2002-VIII: 269).<sup>284</sup> In this role, she appears as an adopted mother in the theologically (or more likely politically) created divine triad. In that (1) she was generally regarded as a mother goddess; and (2) the New Kingdom queens were identified with the deity, the role of Mut in the Theban Triad seems to be that of the mother-intermediary who binds the state god-king (the sun) and his heir (the moon and the king). With this in mind, Roberts points out that the goddess binds together the great luminaries of the sky – Amun-Re, the sun, and Khonsu, the moon (1995: 75).

Meanwhile, Khonsu's afore-mentioned association with Shezmetet and Sekhmet can be explained by the fact that, at least in the New Kingdom, Mut was often visualized as a lioness, like many other goddesses who appear as the Eye of Re,<sup>285</sup> and closely associated with Sekhmet (B. Lesko 1999: 141). In addition, it is also noteworthy that Mut was most frequently called *nbt jšrw* "lady of Isheru" and the name Isheru is given to a crescent-shaped lake in several places of Egypt, where lion-goddesses such as Bastet, Sekhmet and Shezmetet were appeased (te Velde 1982a: 247).

### 5.9 Child-member of the Theban Triad

Regarding the historical background of Khonsu's integration into the Theban Triad, Cruz-Uribe observes that Khonsu became the child-deity of the Theban Triad during the early New Kingdom

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*devoted young wife and mother personified by Isis. Mut may be regarded as the mature, wise, and public-spirited woman of middle age."*

<sup>284</sup> Isis is also mentioned as the mother-goddess of Khonsu like *ms.n-jst* "born of Isis" (Leitz 2002-III: 400).

<sup>285</sup> For Mut as the Eye of Re, see te Velde 1988: 395-403; B. Lesko 1999: 144-146.

period when Amun-Re was elevated to a universal deity, absorbing many aspects of the Osirian tradition and, as a result, the Amun-Mut-Khonsu triad was created in parallel with the Osirian triad (1994: 186). The earliest representation of the Theban Triad seems to be either on the north side of the east half of the Eighth Pylon in the Karnak temple or in the reliefs of the bark of Amun at Queen Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri (te Velde 1979-1980: 5, 1982a: 247 and note 14). Unfortunately, however, there is no lengthy New Kingdom text that can elaborate the familial relationship in the Theban Triad. The image of the Theban divine family is inscribed on the wall of the temples, stelae and statue bases, but comments about their relationship cannot be found in any texts. Interestingly, Amun-Re is not mentioned as the "father of Khonsu" but some of the epithets that belonged to Khonsu-the-Child show the father-son relationship between the two deities: (1) *ʿ3-wr-tpj-n-jmn* "the Great and First Born of Amun" (Edwards 1960a: 73; Montet 1951: 164; Leitz 2002-V: 17-18) and (2) *ʿ3-wr-tpj-n-jmn-rʿ* "the Great and First Born of Amun-Re" (Montet 1960: Plate LIV, 1-3; Leitz 2002-V: 18).<sup>286</sup>

With regard to the aspect of Khonsu as the son of Amun(-Re), it should be noted that Khonsu was identified with Shu already in the New Kingdom, because (1) Amun was syncretized with the sun-god Re and thus functioned as a sun-god; and (2) according to the Heliopolitan Cosmology, Shu is the first-born son of the sun-god (Bonnet 1971: 142; Leitz 2005-V: 768, 770-771).<sup>287</sup> In addition, Sethe notes that (1) the identification of Khonsu with Shu is associated with Amun as air-god (1929: 102/§ 217); and (2) Shu, as the son of the sun-god, is also the god of sunlight, which

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<sup>286</sup> The sun-god Re is sometimes mentioned as the father of Khonsu, as in (1) *jm3-jb-n-jt(j).f-rʿ* "the one who is well-disposed to his father Re" (Leitz 2002-I: 300) and (2) *pr-m-rʿ* "the one who came forth from Re" (2002-III: 71). Khonsu is also called *z3-wsjr* "the son of Osiris" (2002-VI: 76-78).

<sup>287</sup> Khonsu-Shu inherited the characters of Shu as (1) the god of air and (2) the bearer of the sky. This explains why Khonsu was identified with Heracles during the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, because (1) Heracles, like Khonsu-Shu, held up the sky for Atlas in his Eleventh Labor; and (2) his father was Zeus, who was worshipped as Amun (the father of Khonsu) in Egypt (Bonnet 1961: 142; also cf. Redford 1979: 34).

corresponds to Khonsu as god of light in his capacity of moon-god (or the sun of night) (*ibid.* 113-114/§ 242). In the funerary sphere, Khonsu-Shu appears as divine helper of the deceased, like other child deities, as he (1) guides the deceased to the sky as god of the sky and (2) imparts air to the deceased as god of air (Bonnet 1971: 142). Khonsu's role as a god of light is very important in an attempt to explain his filial relationship with Amun(-Re). As mentioned earlier, the moon was believed to replace the sun after sunset and, in this regard, the sun-god could frequently appear as father of the moon. That explains why the moon-god Khonsu is the son of Amun(-Re) in the New Kingdom Theban Triad. Here he plays the role of *kamutef* (Jacobsohn 1939: 23; Labrique 2003: 204), as confirmed by the double "father-daughter" relationship of Amun-Re and Mut mentioned above.

The role of Khonsu as a god of light became apparent in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, as described in the Khonsu Cosmogony:

**T5-7. Text on the East Wall of the Second Hypostyle Hall of the Khonsu Temple (KM 583)<sup>288</sup>**

(4) *dd mdw n hnsw [m] w3st nfr-htp hrw nb 3wt-jb m jpt swt  
jtn wr shd t3wj, (5) r<sup>c</sup> pw n šm<sup>c</sup>w [mh<sup>w</sup>], sn.f jr<sup>w</sup>.f wh<sup>m</sup>.n.f hr<sup>w</sup>.f,  
pr.f hr n<sup>h</sup>b (6) m š, sw mj šw, z3 jšš.n tm  
wbn n n<sup>h</sup>b m š (7) pn pw, r[*dj*] n<sup>h</sup>b hr.f, h<sup>c</sup>.w m sšm.f m t3r(w)  
(8) sw m h<sup>c</sup>w n<sup>h</sup> m z3 n (j)t(j).f pr hr n<sup>h</sup>b mj [...]*

(4) Recitation of Khonsu [in] Thebes Neferhotep, Horus, the lord of happiness in Karnak, the great disk that illuminates the Two Lands.

(5) He is Re in Upper and Lower Egypt.

passing (i.e. rejuvenating) his form, after repeating his evolution, coming forth from the lotus flower (6) in the pool.

He is like Shu, the son whom Atum spat out.

He is the rising one of the lotus flower from this (7) pool,

<sup>288</sup> For the text, see Cruz-Urbe 1994: 172; Mendel 2003: Plate 11. For the translation, see Lesko *et al* 1988:172; Cruz-Urbe 1994: 174; Mendel 2003: 105-109.

under whom the lotus flower was placed when he had appeared in his image in Tjaru.  
(8) He is the living body as the son of his father, who appears on the lotus flower like [...]

As a god of light, Khonsu was eventually identified with the sun-god Re (Leitz 2005-V: 769). As was shown above, especially in the Ptolemaic-Roman Period Khonsu was believed to follow the course of the sun. In a hymn on the wall of the propylon of the Khonsu temple at Karnak, Khonsu and the sun-god merge together. On the second day of the month, after an absence of two days, the moon reappears in the east once the sun goes down in the west. The phenomenon was interpreted as the union of the two stars in the underworld (Depuydt 1998: 76-85). In addition, the concept of *kamutef* is applied to explain the phenomenon, stressing the role of the mother-goddess in the daily rebirth of the sun (in this case, the moon combined with the sun). Here, we witness anew the *kamutef* pattern – that is, the Mut-Khonsu cycle (Labrique 2003: 204-205).

Most importantly, however, Khonsu became identified with Horus, another god of light, who symbolized the waxing moon always recovering its youth and thus the renewal of royal power (Goyon 1983: 2-7; Fazzini 1988: 19).<sup>289</sup> The evidence of the identification between the two deities is attested in a Nineteenth Dynasty sculpture of a life-size child who wears a side-lock of youth and the moon on his head and crouches at the feet of Horus the Elder (Hall 1977: 56). At any rate, Khonsu as a god of light and the fertilizing moon stands face-to-face with his hidden but also revealed father deity Amun-Re (Sethe 1929: 31/§51).<sup>290</sup> The father-son relationship between the two gods of light is also seen in the fact that Khonsu appears as the child of the solarized

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<sup>289</sup> For the iconographic details in the syncretism of Khonsu and Horus (Harpocrates), see Salis 2009: 2.

<sup>290</sup> In the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, Horus-child deities possessing the solar aspect (such as Har-pa-Re-pa-khered and Harpocrates) appear side by side with those with the lunar aspect (such as Khonsu the Child and Khonsu-Thoth). In a text, the two deities are named together, showing their special relationship as deities who can stand on an equal footing (Sandri 2006: 204-206; see also Budde 2003: 37 and notes 86, 44): *mrj hnzw-p3-hrd ʿ3 wr tpj n jmn hrw-p3-hrd* “beloved by Khonsu the Child, the great and first born of Amun and Harpocrates.”

crocodile deity Sobek and the goddess Hathor in the Ptolemaic-Roman temple of Kom Ombo (B. Altenmüller 1975: 167; Brunner 1975b: 961; Hart 1986: 114).<sup>291</sup>

Another facet of the father-son relationship between Amun(-Re) and Khonsu is the fact that, in the Late Period, Khonsu's name was reinterpreted as *ḥ-nsw(t)* "the child of the king" (Blackman 1916: 238; Posener 1996: 118-119). Especially, Posener notes Khonsu's status in the Theban Triad as follows (1996: 119): *"Il ne semble pas que Khonsou ait eu des relations particulières avec la royauté terrestre et c'est un «roi» divin qu'il faut lui supposer pour père; ce ne peut être qu'Amon. Il est à peine nécessaire de rappeler la place que tient l'idée de souveraineté dans la religion du dieu thébain. Il est le «roi des dieux» et Imn-R<sup>c</sup>-nsw.t-ntr.w est une de ses désignations courantes depuis la XVIII<sup>e</sup> dynastie jusqu'à la fin du paganisme."*

In an example of the Ptolemaic-Roman Period (from the reign of Cleopatra VII), Khonsu the Child bears the epithet *ḥnsw-p3-ḥrd ʿ3 wr tpj n jmn nsw n ḥrdw nb* "Khonsu the Child, the great and first-born of Amun, king of all children." Khonsu is the bodily son of Amun, which legitimizes his status as the heir of the king of all gods. As such, Khonsu appears as an heir/ruler who has dominating power over all other child-deities (Sandri 2006: 205 and note 1264). Needless to say, the prominent status of Khonsu is determined by the status of his father Amun, who is the king of all gods.

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<sup>291</sup> Khonsu himself is sometimes represented in the form of a crocodile, an amphibian creature that serves as a symbol of the sun. For Khonsu as a crocodile, see Cruz-Urbe 1994: 178; Salis 2009: 2.

## CONCLUSION

As demonstrated in this chapter, the basis of understanding Khonsu as a child deity should be that he functions as a god of light. Therefore, it would not be entirely wrong to say that traits of Khonsu as the child deity stem from his fundamental status as a moon god. It should be also noted that, as the child-member of the Theban Triad, Khonsu is mainly depicted as a youthful deity rather than a little child, with a side-lock of youth but also with the god's beard and holding *ankh*- and *was*-staves.

First of all, Khonsu was imagined as the perpetually rejuvenating moon in the cosmic sphere. In his role as a youthful god of light, Khonsu became the child of Amun and Mut in Thebes. He represents the moon who acts as the deputy of the sun-god by illuminating the world with his light at night and, in particular, as heir of the solarized Amun-Re. When the importance of Khonsu the Child grew, the emphasis shifted to his role of a rejuvenated moon-child acting as an heir and savior of the world (Cruz-Uribe 1994: 189): *"The child Khonsu is presented as the creator. Khonsu the child serves as the energetic and rejuvenated leader of today, as well as the hope for the future. This last is tied to the role that Khonsu derives from the Osirian program for the death and rebirth of the godhead. ... The rejuvenation is simply a closing of the cycle of creation, death and recreation. Khonsu the moon parallels Khonsu the falcon, the sun and the moon, aspects of day and night."*

On the kingship level, Khonsu plays a Horus-like role from the New Kingdom and the king is often identified with the youthful Khonsu moon-god, as in the case of the granite statue of Tutankhamen found in the Khonsu Temple at Karnak. As a symbol of the ever-rejuvenating moon and the powerful and legitimate heir of the throne, Khonsu is depicted as receiving

offerings from the king. In the Late Period, Khonsu, mostly identified with Horus, blesses and protects the pharaoh after the victory in the divine tribunal. Here, Khonsu-Horus is equated with the waxing moon that can always recover its youth and, at the same time, perpetuate the validity of kingship (Goyon 1983: 2-7; Fazzini 1988: 19). One good example is King Osorkon, who portrays himself in the form of “Horian” Khonsu (Redford 1979: 35-36).

There are few texts mentioning Khonsu’s role in the funerary sphere. In the Pyramid Texts, Khonsu is depicted as a violent deity who helps the deceased king gain magical power from the gods. As a powerful and dreadful deity, Khonsu is frequently identified with the deceased who wish to transform themselves into the deity, namely in the following Coffin Texts spells:

- Coffin Texts Spell 310 (CT IV 65j, 66m): *jnk hnzw zb dnd bhhw h3tjw ... jnk hnzw dnd nb nbw* “for I am Khonsu who sends out rage, the burner of hearts ... I am Khonsu, the raging one of the lord of lords.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 311 (CT IV 67q-r): *snd n N pn dj n.f ntrw j3, h<sup>c</sup>.y m hnzw* “There is fear of this N, the gods make homage to him, apparent as as Khonsu.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180j): *dj.t(w) n.j hy m rn.j pw n hnzw* “Acclamation is given to me in this my name of Khonsu.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 943 (CT VII 158b): *nh.j m hnzw, jnk nhb-k3w* “I will live as Khonsu; I am Nehebkau.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 945 (CT VII 161i): *3t.(j) hnzw* “My striking-power is Khonsu.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 994 (CT VII 209b-c): *nh.j m tpw, jnk hnzw* “I will live on heads as I am Khonsu.”



In addition, Khonsu, when identified with Shu, appears as a divine helper of the deceased, playing a guiding and reviving role (Bonnet 1971: 142). He is also the lord of provision, like other child deities, as in Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162t) (Posener 1966: 118, note 38): *snn.j t3w m fnd.j mj hnzw hq3 df3w* "I will sniff air with my nose like Khonsu, the ruler of sustenance."

The living also sought help from Khonsu, especially in the age of "personal piety." In the sphere of personal contact with the divine, Khonsu is depicted on numerous private stelae, receiving offerings from non-royal individuals or being adored by his worshippers alone or along with the other members of the Theban Triad. Here Khonsu is considered a friendly deity and a god of light who protects his followers by curing diseases and driving away evil spirits. This can be demonstrated by the fact that the most frequently used epithet of the deity during the New Kingdom was Neferhotep, which means "perfect of grace" and was widely used in a personal name since the Middle Kingdom (Ranke 1935: 198). In addition, in the Twentieth Dynasty Khonsu, in the form of Khonsu the plan maker (Khonsupairskher), became the most popular oracular deity, whose oracles were obtained at the time of a child's birth (Brunner 1975b: 961).

Khonsu clearly became a very popular protective deity during the New Kingdom Period. What was behind his growing popularity and importance, as well as the elaboration of his forms and iconography? I think that the answer should be found in his role as a divine intermediary – i.e., as the god of light (the moon god) who stands face to face with his father Amun-Re (the sun), the supreme state god. It is true that Mut also played the role of a divine intermediary between the cosmic and kingship spheres. However, it was Khonsu who was sought most by the deceased

and living to mediate between the divine and the human, on the basis of his status as the ever-rejuvenating child/heir, coupled with mysteries of the moon.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> In this regard, it is noteworthy that Khonsu was identified with Bes in the Late Period (Meeks 1992: 425-427).

## CHAPTER 6. NEFERTEM – MEDIATOR WITH FRAGRANT SCENT

### INTRODUCTION

Nefertem is one of the ancient gods who are already attested in the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts. He is usually depicted as a youthful god wearing a lotus headdress composed of a lotus blossom flanked by two tall plumes. However, he is probably the least attested child deity in the Egyptian pantheon during the period that spans the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom. He is mentioned in only a few spells from important funerary documents, such as the Pyramid Texts, the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead – and mostly in a passing manner. As a result, his true nature remains unclear and scholars have filled the gap with their own assumptions and theories.

Nefertem has been generally identified with the primeval water-lily (conventionally, “lotus blossom”) or the newborn sun-god standing on it. However, scholars do not agree about the exact nature of the child deity.<sup>293</sup> The most comprehensive work regarding this child deity is *Der Gott auf der Blume*, co-authored by Morenz and Schubert. A section of the first chapter deals with the roles of Nefertem and the primeval lotus (“*Urlotos*”) in detail (1954: 14-22). While many scholars associate Nefertem with the sun-child, Morenz regarded Nefertem as perfume and distinguished him from the primeval lotus. Morenz also notes that Harpocrates as the young sun-god was usually depicted as a child deity crowned with the sun-disk in the lotus blossom. In this regard, Meeks points out that the relationship between the sun and the lotus-Nefertem is well attested in the Pyramid Texts but the birth of the sun-god in the lotus blossom is known only

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<sup>293</sup> Independent treatments of “Nefertem” (“Nefertum”) include Bonnet 1971: 508-510; Schlögl 1982: 378-380; Hart 1986: 130; Houser-Wegner 2001b: 2:514-516; Pinch 2002: 169, 158; and R. Wilkinson 2003: 133-135.

after the Amarna period (1977b: 1004). Considering that Nefertem is referred to as *zššn r šrt rʿ* “the lotus blossom at the nose of (the sun-god) Re” (Pyr. § 266a), Harer’s pharmaceutical and toxicological analysis of the blue lotus (*Nymphaea cerula*), with which the deity is often identified, also provides interesting clues regarding his role in the Egyptian pantheon (1985: 49-54, 2001: 304-305). It is less easy to find scholarly interpretation of Nefertem’s violent and warlike features as the son of Sekhmet, as far as descriptions from primary sources such as the Book of the Dead are concerned (Bonnet 1971: 510; Schlögl 1982: 379).

## NAME AND ICONOGRAPHY

### 6.1 Name of Nefertem

Along with his manifestation as the blue lotus blossom,<sup>294</sup> Nefertem’s name may reveal his connection with the sun-god. There have been many attempts to penetrate the meaning of the deity’s name Nefertem (*nfr-tm*), which many scholars believe includes Atum (*tm*), the creator-god of the Heliopolitan cosmogony.

Spiegel interprets Nefertem as “*Gut ist Atum*” and regards Nefertem as (1) the lotus blossom that emerged from the primeval waters; and (2) the embodiment of the life-force of *ka* that flows from Atum to Re and into the world through the two deities (“*Symbol der von Atum zu Re und über ihn in die Welt einströmenden göttlichen Kraft des Ka*”). In this regard, he notes that Pyramid Texts Spell 249 (Pyr. § 266a): *hʿ (wnjs) | m nfr-tm m zššn r šrt rʿ* “Unis will appear as Nefertem, as the lotus at the sun-god’s nose” corresponds to the image of the Egyptian deities giving life (*nḥ*) to the nose of

<sup>294</sup> As the embodiment of the lotus blossom, Nefertem has a few epithets related to the plant, such as (1) *nḥb-wr* “Great Lotus-blossom” (Leitz 2002-IV: 298); (2) *ḥ3-ʿ3* “Great Lotus” (Leitz 2002-V: 624); (3) *zšn* “Lotus” (Leitz 2002-VI: 642-643); (4) *zšn-nfr* “Beautiful Lotus” (Leitz 2002-VI: 643). The epithet *nḥb-wr* “Great Lotus-blossom” is attested in the New Kingdom and the others are all from the Ptolemaic-Roman Period.

the king and thus the life-force of the creator god Atum is transmitted to the sun-god Re through Nefertem (1953: 216-223). As such, Nefertem is a mediator that connects the two great gods.<sup>295</sup>

Spiegel further observes that when the sun-god Re holds the lotus flower to his nose, the deity can be identified with Atum at that moment and the image serves as an illustration of divine self-development. In either case, Nefertem plays a role as the embodiment of the creator's *ka* through the visual manifestation of the sun-god.<sup>296</sup> His view of Nefertem as the embodiment of the life-force corresponds to the generally accepted view that Nefertem gives life-giving forces to the sun-god Re. He goes on to say that, in the Late Period, the king was identified with Nefertem because he, as the embodiment of divine essence on the earth and the mediator between gods and humans, shared the same characteristics with that deity. To support this claim, Spiegel quotes Pyramid Texts Spell 307 (Pyr. §§ 482a-483c, see T6-2 below) and the Third Dynasty royal name of Neferkare, which he translates as "*Gut is der Ka des Re,*" a name similar in meaning to Nefertem's "*Gut is Atum.*"<sup>297</sup> His understanding of Nefertem as a mediator between Atum and Re is interesting in connection with the king's role as a mediator between the two worlds and the child deity's aspect as a mediator of his parent deities. Unfortunately, however, there is no textual or representational evidence to substantiate his claim.

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<sup>295</sup> Without giving any textual or representational source, Spiegel also mentions that Atum, Nefertem and Re form a trinity ("*Dreieinigkeit*"), in which Atum is the original creator, Re his visual manifestation, and Nefertem the embodiment/nature ("*Wesenhaft*") of *ka* that binds up the two deities. He also says that the altered Hermopolitan concept about the emergence of the creator on the primeval hill gave a deeper spiritual significance to the Heliopolitan Theology through the combination with the concept of the ancient Lower Egyptian idea of the self-developing god and the divine creative power of *ka* (1953, 217).

<sup>296</sup> However, Spiegel also points out that Nefertem may not be a deliverer of *ka* but an emblem of the sun-god Re – that is, the life-force *ka* that comes from the sun-god Re ("*von Re ausgehende Kraft des Ka*").

<sup>297</sup> Spiegel notes, however, that the two names are not contemporary but come from the Turin Canon and the king list of the Nineteenth Dynasty cult temple of Seti I at Abydos (1953: 620, note 32).

Meanwhile, Anthes suggests that Nefertem may mean (1) “*Atum ist in neuer Form erschienen*” (1955: 87); or (2) “*der neu Erschienenene ist eine vollzählige Gesamtheit*” (1958: 2). According to his hypothesis of the Egyptian theology of the early Old Kingdom period (1955: 87, 1958: 1-6, 1959: 169-212, 1961: 33-50), there were three stages in the development of the Heliopolitan Theology:

- First Stage: Different concepts about the creation coexisted in the prehistoric period. There were different primeval beings such as beetles, snakes, frogs and water-lilies that came out of the primeval flood and the sun is also associated with them.
- Second Stage: A new theology was developed to justify the divine kingship after the unification of Egypt. In the newly developed theology, the earthly king was the manifestation of the supreme sky god Horus. At the same time, all the previous primeval beings were incorporated into a new form of god named Atum that meant “*Vollendet,*” or “*Erfüllt.*”<sup>298</sup> According to this theology, Atum and the Horus-king were two primeval deities, as stated in Pyramid Texts Spell 571:<sup>299</sup>

#### T6-1. Pyramid Texts Spell 571 (Pyr. § 1466)<sup>300</sup>

<sup>1466-a</sup> *dd-mdw j(w)r mwt nt (pjpj)| jm.f jm(j) njwt*

<sup>1466-b</sup> *ms (pjpj)| pn jn jt.f tm*

<sup>1466-c</sup> *nj hprr pt, nj hprr t3*

<sup>1466-d</sup> *nj hprr r(m)l, nj mst ntrw, nj hprr m(w)t*

<sup>1466-a</sup> RECITATION. The mother of Pepi became pregnant with him,

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<sup>298</sup> So Anthes interprets his name “the completed one who absorbed all the other first living beings” (1958, 2; 1959, 177). He compares the name of Atum and that of Nefertem to explain the parallel development of the two deities. See below for the detail. Also note J. Allen for the concept of the Atum as “lord of totality” (*nb tm*) – the monad from whom all the elements and forces in the world derived, and the “Finisher” (*j.tmw*) – the one who both “brings to completion” and “finishes” in the [creative] process (1988: 9-10).

<sup>299</sup> Finally, for the evidence of the king as the primeval existence, Anthes also cites Pyr. § 1040 and Pyr. § 1063.

<sup>300</sup> For translations, see Faulkner 1969: 226; J. Allen 2005: 179.

he who is in the undersky,  
<sup>1466-b</sup> this Pepi was given birth to by his father Atum,  
<sup>1466-c</sup> when the sky had not yet come into being, when the earth had not yet come into  
being,  
<sup>1466-d</sup> when people had not yet come into being, when the gods had not yet come into  
being,  
when death had not yet come into being.

- Third Stage: The importance of the sun-god Re as primeval god began to increase during the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties. This made it necessary to harmonize his primeval existence with the existing theologies, especially the Heliopolitan Theology of Atum and Horus.<sup>301</sup>

Considering the supreme position of the sun-god Re, it was impossible to subjugate him into the existing cult system as a secondary deity. For this reason, (1) Egyptian theologians combined Re with Atum into Re-Atum and Horus with Re into Re-Horakhthy; and (2) the early concept of the king and Atum as the primeval being was replaced by a parallel one introducing Re. This means that “according to the old concept, the king and Atum existed in the primeval beginning and, according to the new concept, Re and Nefertem” (1959, 177), as stated in Pyramid Texts Spell 307:<sup>302</sup>

## T6-2. Pyramid Texts Spell 307 (Pyr. §§ 482a-483c)<sup>303</sup>

<sup>482-a</sup> *dd-mdw jwnw(j) m (wnjs)| ntr jwnw(j).k m (wnjs)| ntr*

<sup>482-b</sup> *jwnw(j) m (wnjs)| r<sup>c</sup> jwnw(j).k m (wnjs)| r<sup>c</sup>*

<sup>482-c</sup> *mwt nt (wnjs)| jwnw(t) (j)t(j) n (wnjs)| jwnw(j)*

<sup>483-a</sup> *(wnjs)| ds.f jwnw(j) msjj m jwnw*

<sup>483-b</sup> *sk r<sup>c</sup> hr(j)-tp psdtj hr(j)-tp rhwt nfr-tm*

<sup>483-c</sup> *jwtj snw.f jw<sup>c</sup>w (j)t(j).f gbb*

<sup>301</sup> For the sun-god Re as the primeval deity, Anthes quotes Pyr. § 264.

<sup>302</sup> For the reason why Nefertem was selected as the old parallel of Atum, Anthes cites Pyramid Texts Spell 249 (1958: 1): *m nfr-tm m r šrt r<sup>c</sup>* “as Nefertem, as the lotus at Re’s nose,” cited above.

<sup>303</sup> For translations, see Faulkner 1969: 95; J. Allen 2005: 58.

482-a RECITATION. There is a Heliopolitan in Unis, god: your Heliopolitan is in Unis, god.  
 482-b There is a Heliopolitan in Unis, Sun: your Heliopolitan is in Unis, Sun.  
 482-c The mother of Unis is a Heliopolitan, the father of Unis is a Heliopolitan,  
 483-a and Unis himself is a Heliopolitan, born in Heliopolis  
 483-b when Re was above the Dual Ennead and above the subjects, Nefertem  
 483-c without peer, heir of his father Geb.

In the text above, the earthly king is neither Re nor a member of the Ennead, so he should be Nefertem, who is the ruler of the subjects and the heir of Geb.<sup>304</sup> Here Anthes reflects on “the meaning of their complements, Atum beside the divine king, and Nefertem beside Re” (1959: 177):

Both names, Atum and Nefertem, can be translated. ... The verb which is common to both names is *tm* which is closely related to the Semitic *tm*. Its two meanings appear contradictory. They are best evidenced as “to become non-existent” and “to be completed in number.” Choosing the second meaning we must translate the names as followings: “Atum” is “he that is completed in number,” and “Nefertem” is “the Nefer is completed in number.” Nefer (*nfr*) means something like “the new one,” “the youthful one,” “the regenerate one,” and later on, it occurs as “lotus flower.”<sup>305</sup> Thus the regenerate primeval lotus flower is called a unit which was completed by absorbing a number of individuals. Seeing that Nefertem is the primeval living being, the primeval lotus flower, it is a good guess that the various forms of appearance of the first living being, which had been conceived from prehistoric times, were absorbed and regenerated in the one primeval lotus flower, Nefertem.

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<sup>304</sup> According to Anthes, unlike Atum and Horus who were heavenly and earthly king at the same time, the sun-god Re was exclusively sun and heavenly god. Moreover, the king became his successor – that is the Son of Re and earthly king. He states: (1) the introduction of Re eventually led to an “unexpected” separation of the heavenly and earthly kingship; and (2) that is why Nefertem features kingly attributes, such as the double-feather crown, and the epithet “*der die beiden Länder schützt*” (1958: 3-4). In addition, Anthes believes that Nefertem can be identified with the Osiris-king because of the following facts: (1) Nefertem’s sprouting blossom reflects the vegetation character of Osiris expressed in Pyr. §264 and § 483; and (2) the deceased king identified with Nefertem is called heir of Geb in Pyramid Texts Spell 307: *jw<sup>w</sup> (j)t(j).f gbb* “heir of his father Geb” (1955: 83, note 3).

<sup>305</sup> The word *nfr* came to mean “lotus” or more precisely, “*die Blume des Nefertem*” (as in WB II 262) during the New Kingdom. However, the new meaning might stem from the already-established association between Nefertem and lotus, and not the other way around. It was pointed out by Anthes that the meaning of *nfr* as “*die Blume des Nefertem*” can be explained because of this association (1958: 2). See also Ryhiner: 1986 6-7.



In sum, Atum and Nefertem were created in exactly the same way. Atum is the eldest deity in the divine genealogy reaching down to the living king. He passes life-force on to Horus, who symbolizes both heavenly and earthly kingship. Nefertem, on the other hand, represents a deity who embodies the primeval time, giving life, in the form of the lotus fragrance, to the sun-god Re (Anthes 1958: 4-5). In one role comparable to that of Atum, Nefertem reveals his true nature. As the partner of Re, Nefertem is the primeval lotus that emerged from the primeval waters and whose fragrance bestows life on the sun-god Re every morning. However, the fragrance of the primeval lotus flower was not just a pleasant scent but also a life-force (Anthes 1955: 82): *“Der dem Re durch die Nase eingehende Duft ist dabei gewiß nicht nur eine Liebkosung, sondern durch die Nase geht das Leben ein: der Duft der Lotosblume gibt dem im Horizonte aufsteigenden Re das Leben für seinen Tageslauf,”* and therefore Nefertem was *“der Urlotus, der der Sonne Lebens- und Schöpferkraft gab.”*<sup>306</sup>

The problem with the views of Spiegel and Anthes is that, while they try to base their arguments on a handful of relevant texts, there is no conclusive textual and representational evidence to substantiate the relationship between Atum and Nefertem. Anthes himself admits this (1958: 5): *“Ich habe diese Darlegungen einen Versuch genannt, und sie müssen klärlich hypothetisch bleiben, da unsere Quellen für das behandelte Thema niemals einen endgültig schlüssigen Beweis liefern können.”* Therefore, the only fact that can be derived from the textual evidence presented by the two scholars is that Nefertem is a god of lotus blossom whose fragrance has the creative power to awaken and enliven the creator/sun-god.

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<sup>306</sup> Regarding Nefertem's live-giving power, Anthes assumes that it might have originated from a kind of temple ceremony of offering flowers to the sun-god Re every morning. For a parallel example, the offering of *ma'at*, see Anthes: 1955: 82, note 3.

Morenz, who consistently argues that Nefertem should be distinguished from the primeval lotus, interprets the name of Nefertem “*völlig Schöne*” and sees the deity as the god of fragrance (for a detailed discussion about the nature of Nefertem as the god of fragrance, see 6.6 below). At any rate, the name of Nefertem seems to indicate the two aspects of the deity: (1) his close connection with the creator/sun-god who receives the creative power from him; and (2) his nature as the god of fragrance.

## 6.2 Iconography

Nefertem is rarely attested before the New Kingdom and his iconography seems to have been firmly taken shape during the New Kingdom (Leitz 2004-IV: 221). According to Schlögl (1982: 379), Nefertem can appear in one of three forms:

- (1) the blue lotus (*Nymphaea cerulea*) with the two tall plumes on the top of the blossom;
- (2) a pure anthropomorphic form as a youthful male god wearing a headdress composed of a lotus blossom also flanked by the two tall plumes; and
- (3) a lion-headed male god or a god in a pure leonine form who is usually depicted as destroying his enemies.

First, as the primeval water-lily, Nefertem can appear as the blue lotus blossom. Schlögl cites an example of the plant in the so-called Horbeit stela (Naville 1910: Plate II), but Barta identifies the plant in question not as lotus blossom but as the *ḥnh-jmj* plant, an aromatic herb that was used as a medicine and also offered to the dead for its life-giving fragrance (1973a: 86; for the details about the plant emblem see EXCURSUS 6-1). I think that it is a combined image of the bulbous root that has powerful scent and the emblem of Nefertem (see 6.6.3 below). Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that the blue lotus emblem is often attested in the top register of *cippi*, where

the lotus-plant emblem with the two *menit* counterpoises is shown flanking the Horus child at his left (Seele 1947: 44 and Plates I-III; Scott 1951: 202, 206; J. Allen 2005b: 50, 51, 63, 64). The emblem is identified with Nefertem in a label saying *nfr-tm hww Bwj* "Nefertem, Protector of the Two Lands" in a *cippus* (British Museum No. 362150: see also Seele 1947: 44). Given that a Horus-falcon with the plume crown sitting on the papyrus stalk and blossom stands at the right of the Horus child in the same register, it seems apparent that the two must have been regarded as a standard of the infant deity.

Second, Nefertem is normally anthropomorphic, wearing a headdress of the above-mentioned lotus-plant emblem (that is, the lotus blossom embellished with the two tall plumes and the two *menit* counterpoises hanging at its sides).<sup>307</sup> The lotiform emblem on the top of his head symbolizes his nature as the god of fragrance as well as the role of the lotus flower in ancient Egyptian cosmogony (R. Wilkinson 2003: 134). The most prominent depiction of the god is the one carved on a wall in the royal tomb of Horemheb in the Valley of the Kings (Hornung 1971: Plates 20b and 21a). In the Late Period, the typical iconography of Nefertem is widely represented in bronze statues (Daressy 1905: Plate VII, 1906: 28-34; Hayes 1938: 182-184 and Figs. 1 and 2; Hornemann 1975a: Plates 212, 213) and amulets (Andrews 1998: 18-19 and Fig. 12c; for Nefertem in the Memphite Triad, see Figs. 13b and 13d).

Third, as the child-member of the Memphite Triad, Nefertem is also depicted as a lion-headed god in his close relation with the lioness mother-goddess Sekhmet (see 6.8 below). In a few cases, he is shown standing on the back of a lion (Hornemann 1975b: Plate 1334; also cf. Seton-Williams 1965: 14); as a lion that attacks his enemy (Naville 1888: Plate 3-3; Piankoff 1933: 99-105 and Fig.

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<sup>307</sup> For Nefertem as mummiform, see Mariette 1869: Plate 38a.

1)<sup>308</sup> or as a crouching lion (Andrews 1998: 21d). In these examples, a falcon wearing the plume-crown is perched on the top of the deity's head. The images of the lion-headed Nefertem are frequently found in his chapel in the mortuary temple of Seti I at Abydos, where he is accompanied with other Memphite deities such as Ptah-Sokar, Sekhmet and Tatjenen (Mariette 1869: Plates 37a, 38c, 39c; also see David 1981: 97-108).

Like Khonsu, Nefertem appears in pure child form only in the Late Period. In this case, the deity is represented often in bronze and sometimes in silver, sitting on the lotus blossom and wearing the lotus-emblem or the triple *atef*-crown (Hall 1977: 55 and Plate XXIV-2).

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

### 6.3 Before the New Kingdom

Nefertem is a very ancient god attested already in the Old Kingdom, as in Pyramid Texts Spell 249 (Pyr. § 266a-b; for the full text, see T6-3 below), which may well be the source quoted most frequently to explain his nature. The deity is visualized as the lotus bud at the nose of the sun-god and this indicates that the deity was viewed as the "*Duftgott*," or the god of fragrance, already in the Old Kingdom (see 6.6 below). Pyramid Texts Spell 307 also reveals his relationship with Atum in Heliopolis, as mentioned in 6.2 above.

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<sup>308</sup> Piankoff's article is about the identification of Nefertem with Mahes (or Miysis). Mahes is a lion god who appears as the son of Bastet or Sekhmet from the New Kingdom and whose role is to help the sun-god in the fight against Apophis. He is associated with war-like gods such as Horhekenu, Horus-Montu and Horus of Hebenu, and is sometimes depicted wearing the lotus emblem of Nefertem (Piankoff 1934: 103; Žabkar 1982: 163).

Nefertem also appears in the Coffin Texts but the passages in question fail to give any decisive clue to the deity's true nature or role in the ancient Egyptian pantheon. Unfortunately, the significance of the spells listed below remains elusive, except for Coffin Texts Spell 355, which shows that the deity's filial relationship with Sekhmet was established already in the Middle Kingdom (see 6.8 below).

- Coffin Texts Spell 295 (CT IV 47f-48a): *jnk ḥms z3 tm, jw zh3.j m sḥt-ḥtpw n ḥwt-ḥrw, jw dmd.n.j m w3ḏw, jhmsw z3 nfr-tm zh3w wḏḥw n sḥt-ḥtpw n ḥwt-ḥrw* "I am the sitter, Atum's son. I write in the Field of Offering for Hathor, and I have assembed (some) papyri, *jhmsw*, son of Nefertem, scribe of the altars of the Field of Offering for Hathor."
- Coffin Texts Spell 335 (CT IV 302d): *nfr-tm z3 sḥmt ʿ3t* "Nefertem (is) son of Sekhmet the Great."<sup>309</sup>
- Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162s): *jrr.j šmwt ḥr rdwj.j mj nfr-tm* "I will make marches on my feet like Nefertem."<sup>310</sup>
- Coffin Texts Spell 571 (CT VI 173r-174c): *jr ḥwwt jptn jmt mw pt ʔ, nj rdj.t(w) jb p[n n] N pn jwt r.s ḥb.k3 pt ʔ, ḥb.k3.t(w) ḥbnnt ḥntt pr nfr-tm, ḥb.k3 ḏrtj ndt z3t ḥc-k(3)w.s, ḥb.k3.t(w) ḥbt nt* "As for these enclosures in the water of the sky and earth, this desire of this N to go to it has not been allowed. Then the sky will plow down the earth, the *ḥbnnt* (the name of an offering cake) that is in front of the house of Nefertem will be plowed down, the hands of Spindle will plow down the daughter of Khakaues, the ... of Neith will be plowed down."

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<sup>309</sup> Note that the phrase is attested only in M57C.

<sup>310</sup> For the full text, see T1-1 above. In the spell, Nefertem seems to play the role of guide of the deceased like Ihy (see NOTE 330 below) but there may also be reference to his role as moon god, in light of his epithet *ḥpty ntrw* "runner of the gods," mentioned in the mortuary temple of Seti I at Abydos (for the text, see Mariette 1869: Plate 37b). In this regard, it is worth noting that the attribute of free movement is particularly stressed for some of the Egyptian moon gods. For instance, the names Khonsu and Nemty mean "courser" and "strider," respectively. For the details, see SECTION 5.4 of CHAPTER 3 above.

- Coffin Texts Spell 653 (CT VI 2741-y): (the list of gods after the spell) *zj.fpw pw m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw rn.f hwt-hrw, szmtt, b3stt, jrt-hrw, jrt-r<sup>c</sup>, w3dt, shmt, wd3t, hnzw, hw, sj3, nfr-tm, dhwtj* “He is this justified man of his, whose name is Hathor, Shezmetet, Bastet, Eye of Horus, Eye of Re, Wadjet, Sekhmet, the *wedjat*-eye, Khonsu, Hu, Sia, Nefertem, Thoth.”

#### 6.4 From the New Kingdom onward

In the New Kingdom, Nefertem’s image as the embodiment of the blue lotus mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 249 is reiterated and emphasized in the Book of the Dead Chapters 81 and 174 (see 6.6.3 below). In the Chapter 125, Nefertem appears as the judge of the deceased, who punishes those who committed evil during their lifetime; this attribute may stem from his connection with his mother-goddess Sekhmet (Schlöggl 1982: 379).

- Book of the Dead Chapter 81: *jrt hprw m zsn jnk zsn w<sup>c</sup>b pr m j3hw jrj šrt r<sup>c</sup>, jry.j h3y, wh3.j sw n hrw ntr<sup>c</sup>3 mrytj, jnk zsn w<sup>c</sup>b pr m sh<sup>t</sup>* “Changing into a lotus. I am the pure lotus which came forth from the light and is at the nose of the sun-god. I will make jubilation and seek it for Horus, the great and beloved god. I am the pure lotus which came forth from the field.”<sup>311</sup>
- Book of the Dead Chapter 125: *j nfr-tm pr m hwt-k3-pt<sup>h</sup>, nj jr.j jwyt r r(m)t / nj jr.j bjn* “O Nefertem who came from Memphis, I have not done any wrong against people / I have done no evil.
- Book of the Dead Chapter 174: *h<sup>c</sup>{w}.n.j m nfr-tm zšš<n> r šrt r<sup>c</sup> pr.f m 3ht r<sup>c</sup> nb w<sup>c</sup>b.n ntrw jrt.<f>* “I have appeared as Nefertem, the lotus at the sun-god’s nose when he emerges from the *akhet* every day, whose eye the gods have purified.”

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<sup>311</sup> Chapter 81B in the Papyrus of Paqerer (Leiden T6) contains the following phrases (Neville 1886a: Plate XCIII; Carrier 2009: 295-296): *r n jrt hprw m zsnw ... j zsnw pn tw(t) pn n nfr-tmw, jnk z(j) {jw.j <rh>.kw r(w) n} jw.j rh.kw r nt(j)w m n3 ntrw nbw hrt-ntr, jnk w<sup>c</sup> jm.sn* “Spell for changing into a lotus. ... O lotus, this form of Nefertem, I am a man. I know the spell of those who are all the gods of the necropolis. I am one of them.”

As mentioned in the Hymn to Nefertem found in the mortuary temple of Seti I at Abydos (for details, see T6-4 in 6.6.3 below), however, the most prominent aspect of Nefertem is that he is the god of fragrance and this aspect will be discussed detail in 6.6 below.<sup>312</sup> In sum, it can be said that: (1) the basic concept of Nefertem as the embodiment of the blue lotus and as the mediator with the creative power of fragrant scent is already attested in the Old Kingdom; and (2) later his image of the primeval lotus comes to the surface again in some of the Book of the Dead Chapters and his aspect is further intensified as the god of scented oil/ointment during the New Kingdom.

## NATURE OF THE DEITY

One obvious fact is that Nefertem is a god who embodies the blue lotus – more precisely, the blue water-lily.<sup>313</sup> As mentioned in CHAPTER 2, a blue lotus rising above the surface of the primeval ocean is one of the symbols depicting the first sunrise, as is a naked child sitting on the lotus blossom (Pinch 2002: 59-61). Therefore, it can be said that Nefertem is a solar deity (Houser-Wegner 2001b: 514; Wilkinson 2003: 133). It remains to be seen, however, if he can appear as the solar child like Ihy in his manifestation as the blue lotus.

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<sup>312</sup> It is noteworthy that the phrase that Nefertem is “at the nose of Re” can be seen from a different perspective: lotuses have a yellow, sun-like center, which those “smelling” the lotus could be contemplating. I am grateful to Professor J. Allen for the comment.

<sup>313</sup> Two water-lilies are known to ancient Egyptians: blue water-lily (*Nymphaea cerulea*) and white water-lily (*Nymphaea albicans*), which were both native to the Nile River in antiquity. The term “lotus” can be botanically applicable only to the pink lotus (*Nelumbo*), which probably entered Egypt in the wake of the Persian conquest c. 525 BCE (Harer 2001: 304). As mentioned in CHAPTER 2, the misnomer “lotus” is so entrenched in Egyptology that terms such as “blue lotus,” “white lotus” and “lotus-blossom” will be retained here (Harer 1985: 49-51; 2001: 304-305). For the detailed description of the blue lotus flower, see Tait 1963: 96. For the general discussion about the plants, ancient Egyptian terms and mythological motifs, see Ryhiner 1986: 1-10. For the comprehensive studies on the motif of gods on the plant, see Morenz & Schubert 1954: 13-82; Schlögl 1977: 11-61.

With his identity as the lotus blossom, Nefertem seems to possess two significant traits, as follows:

- (1) the primeval lotus (“*Urlotos*”) that emerged from Nun or the primeval ocean at the time of the creation; and
- (2) the god of fragrance who delivers creative power to the creator/sun-god.

Therefore, the focus should be on determining his nature based on the two traits mentioned above.

### 6.5 Nefertem as blue lotus blossom

First of all, it is necessary to take a look at Nefertem’s attribute as the embodiment of the blue lotus blossom, as mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 249:

#### T6-3. Pyramid Texts Spell 249 (Pyr. §§ 264a-266b)<sup>314</sup>

<sup>264-a</sup> *dd-mdw j j33w(j), dd m(j) n špsj m rn.f pw* <sup>264-b</sup> *(wnjs)| pj nw n zšzš wbn m t3* <sup>264-c</sup> *w<sup>c</sup>b.(w)*  
<sup>264-b</sup> *šzp (wnjs)| jn jr st.f* <sup>265-a</sup> *(wnjs)| pj (j)r(j) šrt šhm wr*  
<sup>265-b</sup> *jj.n (wnjs)| pn m jw nsjsj* <sup>265-c</sup> *d.n (wnjs)| m3<sup>c</sup>t jm.f jm st jzft*  
<sup>265-d</sup> *(wnjs)| pj (j)r(j) šsrw z33 j<sup>c</sup>rwt* <sup>265-e</sup> *grh pw n 3gbjw wr pr m wrt*  
<sup>266-a</sup> *h<sup>c</sup> (wnjs)| m nfr-tm m zššn r šrt r<sup>c</sup>* <sup>266-b</sup> *pr.f m 3ht r<sup>c</sup> nb w<sup>c</sup>bw ntrw n m3.f*

<sup>264-a</sup> RECITATION. Oh you two combatants, please tell the noble one, of whatever name,

<sup>264-b</sup> Unis is that lotus that rises clean from the earth.

<sup>264-c</sup> Unis has been received by the one who made his seat;

<sup>265-a</sup> Unis is the one at the Great Controlling Power’s nose.

<sup>265-b</sup> This Unis has come from the Isle of Flame,

<sup>265-c</sup> Unis having put *ma’at* in it in place of disorder.

<sup>265-d</sup> Unis is the one to whom belongs the red linen that the *uraei* guard

<sup>265-e</sup> during that night of the great flood that comes forth from the great goddess.

<sup>266-a</sup> Unis will appear as Nefertem, as the lotus at the sun-god’s nose

<sup>314</sup> For translations, see Faulkner 1969: 60-61; J. Allen 2005: 42.



<sup>266-b</sup> when he emerges from the *akhet* every day,  
the one at the sight of whom the gods become clean.

In the spell, King Unis is identified with (1) the sun-god who rises on the east horizon; and (2) the lotus flower that rises clean from the earth as Nefertem, who is at the nose of the sun-god Re. As such, the spell clearly shows that Nefertem is an embodiment of the lotus flower and, at the same time, indicates the close relationship between the sun-god and the lotus flower.

The blue lotus flower closes during the night and opens at the time of sunrise. The ancient Egyptians thought that the plant's habit mimics the daily course of the sun. In this regard, the lotus blossom mentioned in the spell above can be considered as the primeval lotus, whose conventional image is summarized as follows: (1) it emerged from Nun or the primeval ocean; and (2) in association with the daily rebirth of the sun, the creator/sun-god appears standing or squatting on the primeval lotus blossom.<sup>315</sup> However, it does not mean that Nefertem, as the embodiment of the blue lotus blossom, can manifest himself as the sun-child who is usually associated with the motif of a god on a plant or blossom (Schlögl 1977: 33). First, it should be noted that (1) the image of the sun-child on the lotus flower is attested only after the Amarna period, and notably during the Twenty-first Dynasty; and (2) the image and role of the youthful sun-god became associated predominantly with Harpocrates (Tait 1963: 134; El-Khachab 1971: 132-145; Schlögl 1977: 33; Ryhiner 1986: 19-20, 22; Meeks 1997b: 1004).<sup>316</sup> As mentioned in

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<sup>315</sup> For the definition of the primeval lotus, see Morenz: 1954, 15-17. Regarding the primeval lotus that emerges from the primeval ocean, he presents phrases from the Temple of Dendera. Building on the motif of emerging from the primeval ocean, the primeval lotus is also said to have sprouted from the land as mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 249 (Pyr. § 264b): (*wnjs*) | *pj nw n zšzš wbn m B* "Unis is that lotus that rises clean from the earth." The motif of the creator god in the form of a child deity will be discussed later.

<sup>316</sup> After a careful review of the motif of an ancient Egyptian deity standing on plants, which is frequently attested in important funerary texts such as the Pyramid Texts and the Coffin Texts, Schlögl concludes that such a motif, while serving as a definite attribute for the god in question, provided the image ("*das Bild*") but did not deliver content for the cosmogony of the late periods (1977: 16). Ryhiner writes that while the image

CHAPTER 2, the first textual evidence for the sun-child on the lotus blossom is found in a private hymn to the rising sun dating to the Nineteenth Dynasty (Schlögl 1977: 20-22; Ryhiner 1986: 19; Assmann 1995: 5-6, 45): *j.nd hr.<k> nḥn jmy mn[yt].f wbn m zšn, ḥwnw nfr pr m 3ḥt šḥd [ḫwj m] šzp.f* “Hail to you, youth who is in his [root] who ascends in the lotus flower. Beautiful youth, who comes from the *akhet* and illuminates the [Two Lands] with his light.”

Prominent examples that visually realized the idea include the famed vignette of the Book of the Dead Chapter 81, which depicts the deceased’s head on the lotus flower, and the head of King Tutankhamum bursting forth from the lotus flower (Munro 1981: 40-41). As such, the sun-child on the lotus flower appeared at a relatively later stage in the development of ancient Egyptian religious thought. Moreover, though Nefertem is closely linked to the solar realm, there is no textual evidence whatsoever that identifies Nefertem with the sun-god or the sun-child. Schlögl observes that Nefertem is depicted wearing the lotus headdress on the top of his head, but he is never shown as a god sitting on the lotus blossom (1977: 31). Therefore, the widespread concept that Nefertem manifests himself as a god on the blossom is not proven,<sup>317</sup> and even though the lotus plays a significant part in the Egyptian cosmogony, this cannot justify identifying Nefertem as the creator god or the sun-child in attribute of the embodiment of the blue lotus blossom (Schlögl: 1977: 30-33; 1982: 379).

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of the child squatting with his finger to his mouth is attested already in the Old Kingdom period, the artistic representation of a child on the lotus flower did not appear until the Third Intermediate Period, after which the motif was widely exploited in various forms and materials (1986: 20).

<sup>317</sup> In this regard, Schlögl asks why Nefertem did not appear in text or visual representations as a god on the plant or blossom while all other child deities were depicted as the sun-child sitting on the blossom after the Twenty First Dynasty and answers (1977: 33): “*Es [the reason] läge im Charakter des Nefertem als jugendlicher Urgott mit seiner engen Verbindung zum Sonnengott, auch als Gott auf der Blüte in Erscheinung zu treten. Dagegen muss man einwenden, dass in der kosmogonischen Vorstellung Lotus und Schöpfergott als zwei selbständige Wesen zu verstehen sind. Nefertem als personifizierter Lotus kann vielleicht eben deshalb als ‘Gott auf der Blüte’ gar nicht in Betracht kommen.*”

## 6.6 Nefertem as “Duftgott”

As noted by Spiegel and Anthes, Nefertem can be viewed as the “*Duftgott*,” or the god of fragrance, who delivers creative power to the creator/sun-god. In particular, Morenz repeatedly argues that Nefertem is a mere “*Duftgott*” and thus he should be distinguished from the primeval lotus on which the creator/sun-god sits (1954: 14-22): “*Nefertem ist, streng genommen, nur der Duftgott. Der Urlotos aber ist nicht an ihn gebunden.*” In this regard, he reads the name of Nefertem as “*völlig Schöne*”<sup>318</sup> and remarks that it might have belonged to the aesthetical/ceremonial sphere (1954: 15). According to him, Nefertem, as the god of fragrance, is to be regarded as a personification of perfume, as defined by Kees as “*Gott des königlichen Hofparfümes*” (1956: 288).

In order to understand the aspect of Nefertem as the “*Duftgott*,” it is necessary to take a look at the role of fragrant scent and the blue lotus blossom, as an important medium of fragrant scent, in ancient Egyptian religious thoughts and beliefs of the afterlife.

### 6.6.1 Role of fragrant scent

Fragrant scent played an important role in ancient Egyptian religion and beliefs of the afterlife. First of all, the ancient Egyptians believed that the body of a god has distinct divine scent (Brunner 1964: 51; Hornung 1982a: 133-134; Meeks *et al* 1996: 59). The divine fragrance indicates his/her divine essence and serves to announce his/her presence, as shown in the inscription in Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple in Deir el-Bahari (Urk. IV 220, 4): [*ḥ bḥj.(w) m st(j) ntr*], [*hnmw*].*f nbw m pwnt* “[the palace was flooded with the fragrance of the god], all of his [odors] from

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<sup>318</sup> It is worth noting that the interpretation of the name is based on the later etymology found in the Ptolemaic temple of Edfu.

Punt.”<sup>319</sup> In addition, fragrant substances were believed to originate from the gods.<sup>320</sup> Fragrant incense and ointments offered to the deities was called “Eye of Horus,” like many items offered to gods in temple rituals.

Burning and offering scented incense was also regarded as a means of communicating with the god. In temple rituals, burning incense allows priests to attain the part of divine power and anointing the divine statue with fragrant oils provided them with an opportunity to directly contact the deity.<sup>321</sup> In opposition to the divine scent stands the stink of decaying corpses; the deceased wished to absorb the body fragrance of the god with the help of scent in an unguent so that he could be removed from the foul odor of death and decay.<sup>322</sup>

Given that scent can have a profound influence on the senses, it holds a special place in creating the mood for sexual union and procreation (and thus rebirth/resurrection as well). The most prominent example is in the texts in Hatshepsut (and Amenhotep III) mentioned above. In addition, there are numerous cases showing the link between fragrance and sexuality in literary

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<sup>319</sup> Restored after the parallel in the Luxor Temple. Fragrance from burning incense also served to open a way for the deceased to reach the divine world, as shown in Pyramid Texts Spell 269 (Pyr. 376a-378a): *dj sdt, wbn sdt, dj sntr hr sdt, wbn sntr, jj st(j).k jr (wnjs) | sntr, jj st(j) (wnjs) | jr.k sntr, jj st(j).tn jr (wnjs) | ntrw, jj st(j) (wnjs) | jr.tn ntrw, wn (wnjs) | hn<sup>c</sup>.tn ntrw, wn.tn hn<sup>c</sup> (wnjs) | ntrw, <sup>c</sup>nh (wnjs) | hn<sup>c</sup>.tn ntrw, <sup>c</sup>nh.tn hn<sup>c</sup> (wnjs) | ntrw, mr tn (wnjs) | ntrw, mr sw ntrw* “The fire has been set. The fire has arisen. The incense has been set on the fire, the incense has arisen. Your scent has come to Unis, incense; Unis’s scent has come to you, incense. Your scent has come to Unis, gods; Unis’s scent has come to you, gods. Unis shall be with you, gods; you shall be with Unis, gods. Unis shall live with you, gods; you shall live with Unis, gods. Unis shall desire you, gods; desire him, gods.”

<sup>320</sup> The divine origin of the incense can be attested by the comment of the divine snake in the Shipwrecked Sailor (p.Leningrad 1115, I. 149-152): *h<sup>c</sup>.n sbt.n.f jm.j m nn dd.n.j m nf m jb.f, dd.f n.j, nj wr n.k <sup>c</sup>ntjw, hpr.t(j) nb sntr, jnk js hq3 pwnt, <sup>c</sup>ntjw n.j jm sw, hknw pf dd.n.k jn.t(w).f bw pw wr n jw pn* “Then he (the divine snake) laughed at me [the shipwrecked sailor] for this which I had spoken wrongly in his opinion, saying to me: ‘Do you have so much myrrh, and have you become the lord of incense? But I am the ruler of Punt and myrrh belongs to me. That *hknw*-oil you said would be brought: it is the chief thing of this island.’”

<sup>321</sup> For the role of fragrance in ancient Egyptian thought and temple rituals, see Manniche 1999: 33-46.

<sup>322</sup> While the exact nature of scents offered to the dead king remains unknown, it seems to have been similar to the “Seven Sacred Oils” used in funerary cults and temple rites. For the “Seven Sacred Oils,” see Manniche 1999: 108-109. It is also noticeable that the same fragrant oils were used during the Rite of Opening of Mouth.

tales and love poems (Manniche 1999: 91-93). For instance, in the Tale of Two Brothers, the scent from a lock of hair triggers the king to send expeditions to track down the owner of the hair tress (Papyrus d'Orbiney 21, 3-9): *wn.jn.sn hr dd n pr-<sup>3</sup> <sup>c</sup>-w-s, jr t3j nbd šntj nsj w<sup>c</sup> šrjw n p3 r<sup>c</sup> hrw-3htj, jw mw n ntr nbt jm.st, hr sw m nd hr.k kwij h<sup>c</sup>st, jmj šmt wpwt r h3st nb r wh3h.st, hr jr p3 wpwt ntj jw.fr t3 jnt p3 <sup>c</sup>š jmj šm rmt qnw hn<sup>c</sup> r jntw.s, <sup>c</sup>h<sup>c</sup>.n dd hm.f <sup>c</sup>-w-s nfr r jqr zp 2 p3 j.dd.<t>n, jw.tw hr djt hn.w* “Then they (the learned scribes of the pharaoh) said to Pharaoh l.p.h.: ‘As for this hair-tress, it belongs to a daughter of the Sun Horakhti, in whom is the water of every god, and it is a greeting to you from another land. Have a mission go to every foreign land to seek her, and as for the mission that will be to the wadi of the cedar, have many people go along to fetch her.’ Then His Incarnation l.p.h. said: ‘What you have said is very good,’ and they were made to go.” The role of scent in lovemaking is important in that sexuality is closely related to the concept of rebirth. Because resurrection from death was thought of in terms of rebirth, it was necessary for sexual competence to be expressed by all means possible.

### ***6.6.2 Blue lotus blossom as a medium of fragrant scent***

In connection with the prominent role of fragrant scent mentioned above, the close association between lotus and soothing aroma comes to the fore. It is noteworthy in this regard that the pale blue lotus blossom is the most popular of all flowers depicted in Egyptian art (Manniche 1999: 97). In the banquet scenes linked to the Festival of Valley, men and women are depicted adorned with a lotus-shaped unguent cone on their heads, wearing necklaces of lotus petals sewn together and burying their noses into the scented petals. Moreover, there are countless tomb scenes in which the deceased tomb-owner and his family members are shown smelling the lotus flower.

As for the significance of the lotus flower's strong scent in the ritual and funerary context, its narcotic nature draws our attention (Emboden 1978: 395-407; Harer 1985: 49-54, 2001: 304-305). Manniche claims that the scent of the blue lotus flower has a strong impact that can alter the consciousness of the sniffer (1999: 99). However, Harer points out that the pleasant aroma of the blue lotus flower is in no way intoxicating and thus the common interpretation of Egyptian nobles smelling the lotus is erroneous (1985: 53). He adds that (1) the narcotic alkaloids are found only in the blossoms and rhizomes of the blue lotus; and (2) they are soluble in alcohol but not in water (1985: 53, 2001: 304). Given that modern wines have alcohol content in the 10-17% range, ancient wines could be strong enough to dissolve the narcotic alkaloids by merely soaking the blossom in it for a while. Egyptians may have appreciated the effect of lotus-enhanced wine, since the alkaloids in the lotus flower may have psychoactive properties to induce hallucinations or vivid dreams (Emboden 1978: 401-402; Harer 1985: 53).<sup>323</sup> Accordingly, it is possible to interpret the image of Egyptian gods, kings and elites sniffing blue lotus flowers as a visual (and simplified) metaphor of the actual ingestion of the narcotic alkaloids. In this regard, Harer's remark is particularly illuminating (1985: 54): *"The association of wine and lotus is particularly common during the New Kingdom in Egypt. Wine vessels are often shown with the blossom suspended over them or wrapped around them in a fashion unlikely to exist in real life."*

The blue lotus flower is also prominent in the funerary sphere (Emboden 1978: 397). As mentioned above, the deceased are frequently portrayed holding the blue lotus flower to their noses and breathing in its perfume that gives them new life as the followers of the sun-god, who himself receives the enlivening power from the divine embodiment of the lotus flower,

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<sup>323</sup> The hallucinating effect of the blue lotus flower reminds us of the "lotus-eaters" in Homer's *Odyssey* (9, 84-96). However, the lotus-eaters feast on the honeyed fruits of the "lotus tree" that made the men of Odysseus forgetful of home. According to Herodotus (IV, 177), however, a sort of wine may be used as the magical medium even in this case (Darby *et al* 1977: 641-642).

Nefertem.<sup>324</sup> Moreover, in the funerary sphere, there is a close link between sexuality and rebirth/resurrection, and fragrant scent plays a critical role here, too. The connection between fragrance and sexual power could be expressed by means of wordplay: *stj* “scent” can be also read *stj* “engender” with a different determinative, both derived from *stj* “shoot” or “pour.” This wordplay is perfectly visualized in the golden shrine of Tutankhamun, which shows (1) King Tutankhamun “shooting” arrows with his wife Ankhesenamun holding an arrow; (2) the king “pouring” forth liquid into the hand of his youthful wife; (3) the queen “pouring” liquid into her husband’s cup decorated with the motif of lotus and poppy-pod on their rims; and (4) Ankhesenamun anointing Tutankhamun with “scented” unguents from a dish containing an ointment cone draped with two lotus blossoms (Westendorf 1967: 139-150; Manniche 1999: 97; Roberts 2008: 16-46). As shown in the scene, the lotus assumes a prominent position in images related to sexuality and fragrance (as well as anointing). In fact, a number of Late Egyptian love poems reveal a close association between the lotus and the concept of lovemaking (Lichtheim 1976: 182-193; Tobin 2003b: 308-331). The Turin Papyrus 55001 serves as another example portraying the social use of the lotus flower to enhance sexual activity. In one of the vignettes, a playful young lady is depicted with a lotus over her head: even her posture is upside down, placing herself “under the lotus” – that is, under the influence of the lotus to release her sexual inhibitions (Harer 1985: 54; also cf. Omlin 1971: 50).

### ***6.6.3. Nefertem as mediator with the power of fragrant scent***

So far we have seen the power of fragrant scent in the cosmic and funerary spheres and the prominent place of the blue lotus flower as a source of the fragrant scent. This can serve as

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<sup>324</sup> As a symbol of regeneration, the lotus was also a funerary flower to the Greeks, Romans and early Christians. The reason is that the seedpods, open flowers and buds of a lotus are all visible at the same time, which thus contains past present and future (Brereton 1987: 29).

circumstantial evidence that will supplement the lack of textual evidence and help us better to understand the nature of Nefertem as the “*Duftgott*” and the mediator with the creative power of fragrant scent.

First of all, the fact that the chemical nature of the blue lotus flower is strong enough to alter consciousness of the sniffer leads us to appreciate the role of Nefertem, as the god of lotus blossom, whose fragrance gives the creative power to awaken and enliven the creator/sun-god, as mentioned in Pyramid Texts spell (Pyr. § 266a): *ḥꜥ (wnj)s | m nfr-tm m zššn r šrt rꜥ* “Unis will appear as Nefertem, as the lotus at the sun-god’s nose.” The same concept is still found in the Book of the Dead Chapters 81 and 174, cited above.

The effectiveness of the fragrant lotus flower also elucidates the mediating role of the king, who is frequently depicted on the inner walls and columns of the temple offering a lotus to a deity (Anthes 1958: 6-7; Ryhiner 1986: 31, 43, 53). The mediating function of the king and Nefertem through the medium of fragrant scent suggests another possibility: that Nefertem can be associated with the oil/ointment made of the lotus, which was used to anoint officials at their installation into office. In this regard, Spiegel writes that (1) through the practice of anointing officials the king gave some of the divine power that he obtained from the creator/sun-god as a mediator between the divine and mundane worlds to designated officials who would act on his behalf; and (2) this practice served to realize the state ideology that sees Egypt as the realm of the sun-god (1953: 220-223). However, Thompson makes it clear that the practice of anointing officials by the king at their installment into office did not originate in Egypt and might have been adopted from the practice of the Syro-Palestinian region (1994: 15-25). Nonetheless, it can be said that Nefertem fulfills his mediating role between the supreme creator/sun-god and the rest



of the pantheon through the medium of soothing odor, which is emulated by the king in the human world.<sup>325</sup>

In the funerary sphere, the deceased breathing in the enlivening scent of the lotus flower can be equated with the sun-god who receives the creative power from the divine embodiment of the lotus flower, Nefertem. To further understand the power of scent in the funerary realm and its possible association with Nefertem, it is necessary to take a look at a hymn to an unnamed deity that will be discussed in detail in EXCURSUS 6-1. The hymn has several textual sources, including the oldest one from a Middle Kingdom sarcophagus.<sup>326</sup> What merits our attention here is a stela of the Late Period found in Horbeit that features, along with the hymn in question, a peculiar bulbous root-symbol that has the stalk and the lotus flower with a sprouting double feather (Neville 1910: Plates I and II).<sup>327</sup> The root is identified as the so-called “*nh-jmj* plant,” a fragrant herb that was not only used as a medicine but also offered to the dead for its life-giving fragrance, since its scent arouses the deceased to a new life and enabled them to regain the control over their limbs (H. Altenmüller 1968: 7-9; Barta 1973a: 86). This quality is significant: the image of the plant in the Horbeit stela can be seen as a combination of the *nh-jmj* plant and the emblem of Nefertem that usually appears on the left of the Horus child on *cippi* (see 6.2 above).<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> As a first creation at the beginning of the world, the lotus is not only a bridge between pre-creation and creation but also a mediating symbol as it rises out of the mud and the waters, bridging the amorphous waters and the created earth (Brereton 1987: 28).

<sup>326</sup> While Kees identifies the unnamed deity as Nefertem (1922: 92-120), H. Altenmüller believes that a solar deity and Horus are combined in the hymn (1967: 9-18) and Barta concludes that the hymn is composed in the praise of Horus (1973a: 84-91).

<sup>327</sup> Neville identified the vignette not as an image of the lotus but as “*l’image d’une plante spécialement révéérée à Horbéit*” (1910: 191).

<sup>328</sup> Kees considers the vignette of the Horbeit stela as the flower of Nefertem (1922: 116). H. Altenmüller identifies the *smw*-plant in the text as the lotus flower based on the same vignette (1967: 10). However, Barta thinks that the vignette has no connection with the text in the stela (1973a: 86). I think that (1) Barta’s conclusion is hasty, since a number of visual representations confirm that the lotus blossom with the two feathers is the emblem of Nefertem. Therefore, it is not impossible to see the vignette as a combination of the

The combined image of the bulbous root that has powerful scent and the emblem of Nefertem can evidence the role of the deity as the “*Duftgott*,” a mediator who enlivens the creator/sun-god and the deceased with his power of fragrant scent.

Finally, regarding the rebirth/resurrection connected with sexuality, it is clear that the lotus flower plays an important role in the concept of lovemaking through its scent and narcotic property. While Nefertem is not directly associated in this sphere, it is noteworthy that the lotus flower appears with the sistrum in many depictions that visualize the rebirth/resurrection through sexuality, such as the golden shrine of Tutankhamun (with Ankhesenamun shaking a sistrum before her husband) and the aforementioned Turin Papyrus 55001 (a woman “under the influence of the lotus” having sex with a man on the chair under which a sistrum and a mirror are placed).<sup>329</sup> As said before, music and fragrant scent appeal to our senses through their soothing effects. Moreover, the sistrum is an instrument of Ihy, who plays a mediating role for his mother-goddess Hathor. The presence of the lotus flower and the sistrum in these examples, as well as their common soothing and stimulating effects, coupled with their common status as an offering item to the god, indirectly justify the mediating role of Nefertem, who embodies the blue lotus flower that delivers strong and stimulating fragrance to the god in the cosmic sphere and to the deceased in the funerary sphere, as mentioned in Pyramid Texts Spell 249 and in the Book of the Dead Chapters 81 and 174 (Bonnet 1952: 510).<sup>330</sup>

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*ḥh-jmj* plant and Nefertem’s lotus emblem. For the relationship between the lotus emblem and Nefertem, see Munro 1969: 34-40.

<sup>329</sup> The symbolism is interchangeable in ancient Egypt. As an example of the interchangeability of the symbols, see R. Wilkinson 1999: 32-33 for the interaction of forms in cosmetic spoons and mirrors.

<sup>330</sup> However, there is no direct mention that Nefertem plays a role of a caring guide like Ihy in the funerary sphere, except for a short, elusive statement in Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162s): *jrr.j šmwt hr rdwj.j mj nfr-tm* “I will make marches on my feet like Nefertem.” His close connection with Sokar seems to have derived from his filial relationship with Ptah. Munro assumes that the Nefertem-Sokar connection may be based on the fact that they share the same place of origin (1969: 36).

Meanwhile, as the god of fragrance, Nefertem is also regarded as the god of scented oil/ointment (Kees 1956: 288).<sup>331</sup> His role as the god of scented oil/ointment is expressed in a hymn found in the mortuary temple of Seti I:

#### T6-4. Hymn to Nefertem<sup>332</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *dd-mdw (n)sw(t) (mn-mʒʿt-rʿ)| dwʒ ntr*  
<sup>2</sup> *qʒ shmt, hʿ.s hʿ bʒw.s hknw.s* <sup>3</sup> *m wʒd.s zʒ.s hrw* <sup>4</sup> *nfr-tm*  
*hwj tʒwj, sʿnh* <sup>5</sup> *rhyt, ms ntrw* <sup>6</sup> *šw hnʿ tfnwt m msw jmj-ʿ tm*  
<sup>7</sup> *qʒ t(w)t, hnt(j) jrjw, hʿ hʿw, [nf]r jrtjw, jwf nby dʿmy* <sup>8</sup> *hsb[d] mfk(ʒt)*  
*snn n pth, mh(ʒ)tj jnt-hrw, mʒwt rʿ, bjk n psdt*  
*jʒm jb, hwn n mjwt, nb fndw srq (n)h(b)t*  
<sup>10</sup> *jʒm m šrt ntrw, mh (m) mdt, dmd.(w) h(r).jʒmw, r(w)d jrt, mn mrwt, smr ntr špsj*  
*mj hkn jr.k nfr-tm, hʿʿ kʒw nb m* <sup>12</sup> *mʒn.f, bʒ shm spd wʒš, sns ntr hnʿ sn.f*  
*dwʒ.n tw* <sup>13</sup> *pth nfr hr dhwtj srs ntr jʒmw ntrw* <sup>14</sup> *h*  
*dwʒ.k rʿ pr.f* <sup>14</sup> *m ʒht jʒmw ntrw ʒhtj*  
*dj.k ʿwj.k n skr m hnw, sšm.k* <sup>15</sup> *hrw r wʒt jt(j).f*  
*dj.k n.f hq.k r ntrw, shb.k sn m st(j) drtj.k* <sup>16</sup> *jr.sn n.k hy hnw sn tʒ tp rdwj.k*  
*shtp.k hnw n pr.f*  
<sup>17</sup> *mrwt.k r jb ntrw dj.k mrwt (n)sw(t) (mn-mʒʿt-rʿ)| m ht n jdbwj tʒwj tm.(wj)*  
<sup>18</sup> *hw.k zʒ-rʿ mr.k nb hʿw (stšj mr-n-ptḥ)| m-ʿ ht nb(t) dwt nj hpr.s r.f dt*

<sup>1</sup> RECITATION of the king Menma'atre; praising god.

Sekhmet shall become high. <sup>2</sup> When she appears her impressiveness appears;

when she provides <sup>3</sup> her green one, her son Horus <sup>4</sup> Nefertem,

who protects the Two Lands; who nourishes <sup>5</sup> people;

who gives birth to the gods, <sup>6</sup> Shu and Tefnut, in the birth from the hand of Atum,

High of form, foremost <sup>7</sup> of shapes, joyful of members, beautiful of color;

Flesh of gold, electrum, <sup>8</sup> lapis-lazuli and turquoise;

Likeness of Ptah, equal of Onuris, new form of the sun-god, <sup>9</sup> falcon of the Ennead;

Gentle of heart; child of the mother, lord of noses who lets the throat breathe;

<sup>10</sup> Pleasing in the nose of the gods, full of ointment, united with charm, firm in action,

<sup>331</sup> Regarding the significant part that the ointment plays in the temple ritual and transformation of the deceased into eternal resurrection, an oil container shaped in two juxtaposed cartouches of Tutankhamun will serve as a good example because it shows the king in four stages of child, adult, old age and child in the womb. The connection of the function of the vessel and its decorative motifs can serve as an indirect indicator of Nefertem's mediating role, as the god of scented oil/ointment, in the life-death-rebirth cycle. For the significance of anointing in the kingship and mortuary spheres see Roberts 2008: 27-36.

<sup>332</sup> For text, see Mariette 1869: 38c. For a translation, see Assmann 1999: 455-456 (ÄHG 202).

<sup>11</sup> enduring of love, courtier of august god.  
 Give praise, Nefertem, at <sup>12</sup> whose sight all *kas* rejoice.  
 Powerful, sharp and esteemed ram, who unites a god with his brother.  
<sup>13</sup> Ptah, merciful of face, and Thoth who awakens the gods, have praised you,  
 (oh) graceful one of the gods of the palace.  
 May you praise the sun-god when he comes forth <sup>14</sup> from the *akhet*,  
 (oh) graceful one of the gods of the *akhet*;  
 may you give your hands to Sokar in the *henu*-barque;  
 may you guide <sup>15</sup> Horus to the path of his father;  
 may you give him your mace against the gods  
 may you make them festive from the scent of your hands  
<sup>16</sup> so that they will do for you shouting, jubilation, and kissing the earth at your feet;  
 may you (then) cause the *henu*-barque to rest to his house.  
 Since your love is <sup>17</sup> to the heart of the gods;  
 may you place the love of the king Menma'atre  
 in the body of the Two Shores and the Two Lands as a whole;  
<sup>18</sup> if you protect the Sun's son, your beloved one, lord of appearance Seti-Merenptah  
 from all evil things, it will not happen against him for eternity.

In the Late Period, Nefertem was syncretized with Horus, especially Horhekenu (*ḥrw-ḥknw*), namely "Horus of Ointment," whose major cult center was Bubastis (Piankoff 1933: 100-101; de Wit 1951: 235-236; Leitz 2002-IV: 224). It remains an open question whether the syncretization of Nefertem with Horhekenu stems from the fact that the two deities played the same role as a deity of perfume and ointment (Kees 1922: 117-118).<sup>333</sup>

## NEFERTEM AS A CHILD DEITY

As mentioned earlier, Nefertem is, among child deities, the god who is least attested by textual sources and artistic representations before the end of the New Kingdom. For instance, most of the

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<sup>333</sup> It needs to be remembered that ointment as an item in the offering ritual was also called the Horus-Eye. In the light of the close association between Nefertem and Horhekenu, Kees assumed that the divine field personified by the field-goddess mentioned in the hymn might have been located in Bubastis. For Horhekenu, see Jankuhn: 1980: 3, 1.

Coffin Texts where Nefertem appears (CT IV 48a; CT IV 302d; CT VI 162s; CT VI 174c; CT VI 274x) fail to give decisive clues as to the nature and function of the deity. Moreover, unlike Ihy and Khonsu, Nefertem is not found in theophoric personal names, which suggests that the deity was not commonly worshipped (R. Wilkinson 2003: 135). Lack of textual sources about him forces us to rely on circumstantial evidence to grasp the nature of Nefertem. On the basis of the little evidence at hand, Nefertem cannot be included in the category of the child deity because he does not appear in the conventional image of a child with a side-lock of youth and a finger at his mouth before the Late Period (Hall 1977: 55 and Plate XXIV-2). Nefertem is treated as such in this dissertation, however, only because he is called son of Sekhmet in a Coffin Texts Spell (CT IV 302d) and some New Kingdom texts.

### 6.7 Parent deities

In the Memphite triad, Ptah and Sekhmet are the parent deities of Nefertem. Ptah was one of the most prominent deities in the Egyptian pantheon and remained the chief deity of the royal residence of Memphis throughout Egyptian history.<sup>334</sup> Te Velde notes that Ptah, like Amun in the New Kingdom, could acquire the status of state deity because he was worshipped in the royal capital (1982: 1177). His status as one of the state gods, along with Amun and Re especially during the New Kingdom period, can be illustrated by the famous statement in the Leiden Hymn to Amun (p.Leiden I 350, 4, 21-22): *3 pw ntrw nbw, jmn rꜥ pth nn snnw.sn, jmn rn.f m jmn, ntf rꜥ m hr dt.f pth* “All the gods are three: Amun, Re, and Ptah, without their second. His name (identity) is hidden in Amun, his is Re as face, his body is Ptah.”

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<sup>334</sup> For a comprehensive study of Ptah, see Sandman-Holmberg 1946. Ptah’s association with Memphis can be supported by toponyms, names of his temple, many of his epithets, including *hwt-k3-ptḥ* “Enclosure of the ka of Ptah”; *rsw(j) jnb.f* “he who is south of (his) city’s wall”; *hrj st wrt* “the one who is upon the Great Throne (where the king was crowned); and *nb ḥt-ḥwy* “Lord of Ankhtawy” (Dijk 2003: 74; Wilkinson 2003: 124).

Ptah was grouped into the Memphite triad with Sekhmet and Nefertem. This divine triad is not attested before the New Kingdom (Schlögl 1982: 378). While he was associated with a number of goddesses, his primary consort was Sekhmet in the Memphite triad, who was regarded as both daughter and beloved of Ptah (te Velde 1982b: 1179).<sup>335</sup> Given that Ptah was *nb ḥt-ḥwj* “Lord of Ankhtawy” (the area on the west bank of the Nile between Memphis and the necropolis) and that Sekhmet was known as *nbt ḥt-ḥwj* “Mistress of Ankhtawy” already during the Middle Kingdom period, the two might be associated as husband and wife because of the fact that they shared the common cult center.<sup>336</sup> As such, the two might have been considered as a couple before the New Kingdom, but there is no textual evidence to support this (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 188-189). Along with *ḥt* “the Great,” however, *mrt pth* “beloved of Ptah” was the most frequent epithet of Sekhmet from the New Kingdom on and the close relationship between the two deities is also attested by the fact that Sekhmet was usually depicted standing behind Ptah instead of appearing alone in reliefs (Hoenes 1976: 197).<sup>337</sup> One New Kingdom example pointing to the relationship between Ptah and Sekhmet is an inscription on the base of a life-size granite statue of Horemheb, which dates back to the reign of Tutankhamun. The text inscribed on the right side of the statue reads:

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<sup>335</sup> It is interesting to note te Velde’s observation that Sekhmet’s relationship to Ptah as the consort-daughter is the most common form of marital relationship in the Egyptian pantheon. He also claims, without giving any specific reason to support his claim, that Ptah was too important to be placed in a marriage relationship of the mother-son or brother-sister type (1982: 1179). For Ptah’s relation with Egyptian goddesses, see Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 188-193.

<sup>336</sup> Regarding the origin of Sekhmet, Hoenes believes that Sekhmet’s appearance in the Old Kingdom royal mortuary temples can support her Memphite origin (1976: 142-145). Sternberg notes, however, that the epithet *nbt ḥt-ḥwj* “Mistress of Ankhtawy,” which Sekhmet carried from Middle Kingdom, may have been taken from Bastet, who also carried that epithet until the Late Period (1984: 330). Allam points out that Memphite Hathor was originally closer to Ptah than Sekhmet (1963: 9).

<sup>337</sup> For various examples of the close relationship between Ptah and Sekhmet, see Hoenes 1976: 197-199.

**T6-5. Prayer and Hymn of General Horemheb (Urk. IV 2090)** <sup>338</sup>

*ḥtp-dj-nswt pth rsw(j) jnb.f sḥmt mrt pth  
pth-skr nb št wsjr nb r-st3w  
dj.tn [p]rt b3 m hrw r m3 jtn  
sdm.tn n.f sprt r<sup>c</sup> nb mj 3ḥw n s3ḥ.tn*

A royal offering of Ptah, South-of-His-Wall, Sekhmet, the beloved of Ptah,  
Ptah-Sokar, lord of Shetit, Osiris, lord of Rostau.  
May you give the *ba*'s emergence by day to see the sun disk;  
may you listen to petition for him each day like the *akhs* whom you made effective.

**6.7.1 Nefertem as the son of Sekhmet**

Nefertem was rarely called son of Sekhmet before New Kingdom but the mother-son relationship between the two deities is already attested in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts Spell 335 (CT IV 302d), which briefly mentions Nefertem as the son of Sekhmet. Interestingly, the statement is found only in one copy (M57C) of the spell (see 6.3 above). Hoenes mentions that it is likely that the filial relationship of Nefertem with Sekhmet is based on the fact that the two deities share the same origin of Memphis as their cult center and adds that the relationship between the two gods may not come from their relationship to the sun-god, because while Nefertem already shows a close association with the sun-god in the Pyramid Texts (Pyr. § 266a), Sekhmet becomes closely linked to the sun-god only after the New Kingdom (1976: 201; also cf. Rössler-Köhler 1980: 1083-1084). As Nefertem is identified with Horhekenu in the Late Period, Bastet is also considered as the mother of Nefertem as in the Book of the Dead Chapter 17 (Hoenes 1976: 210): *ky dd nfr-tm pw z3 b3stt, d3d3t pw ḥsfwt ḥt n ḥfijw nw nb r dr* "Variant: he is Nefertem, son of Bastet; it is the council that punishes the enemies of the Lord of All."<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> For the text, see Winlock 1924: Plate IV; for a translation, see Lichtheim: 1976-II, 101.

<sup>339</sup> For the relationship between Sekhmet and Bastet, see Hoenes 1976: 21-23; de Jong 2001: 512.

Regarding the protective motherly role of Sekhmet, it is important to remember that the goddess appears as the divine mother of the king, as in Pyramid Texts Spell 248 (Sternberg 1984: 323):<sup>340</sup>

**T6-6. Pyramid Texts Spell 248 (Pyr. §§ 262a-263c)**<sup>341</sup>

<sup>262-a</sup> *dd-mdw (wnjs)| pj ʕ3, pr.n (wnjs)| jmt mntj psdt*

<sup>262-b</sup> *jwr (wnjs)| jn shmt, jn szmtt mst (wnjs)|*

<sup>263-a</sup> *sb3 spd h3t w3 smwt, jnn hrt hrt n rʕ rʕ nb*

<sup>263-b</sup> *j.n (wnjs)| r st.f tpt nbtj, hʕ (wnjs)| m sb3*

<sup>262-a</sup> RECITATION. Unis is a great one: Unis has emerged from the Ennead's thighs.

<sup>262-b</sup> Unis has been conceived by Sekhmet, and Shezmetet is the one who gave birth to Unis,

<sup>263-a</sup> a star, sharp of front and extensive of goings,

who fetches what the above has for the Sun every day.

<sup>263-b</sup> Unis has come to his seat with the Two Ladies on it, Unis appearing as a star.

In the mortuary temples of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties, a lion-headed goddess is portrayed embracing and suckling the king (Sternberg 1984: 324 and 330, note 33). From the New Kingdom, Sekhmet played the role of the divine mother for the king, who sometimes took the place of Nefertem as the divine son of Sekhmet (and Ptah).<sup>342</sup> Therefore, Amenhotep III claimed that he is “son of Ptah, born of Sekhmet” in the Luxor Temple while Ramesses II described himself as *z3 rʕ, pr m t3-tnn(j) hnwt wrt* “son of Re, emerged from Tatjenen and born of the Great Lady (determined by the hieroglyphic sign of Sekhmet)” (Sternberg 1984: 327 and 332, note 77).

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<sup>340</sup> See also Pyramid Texts Spell 704 (Pyr. § 2206a-c) for a similar statement. In that spell, however, the deceased king (or queen) appears not as a star but as a falcon. The deceased claims in the Book of the Dead Chapter 66: *jwr.kw jn shmt, ms.kw jn nt, jnk hrw* “I was conceived by Sekhmet. I was born of Neith. I am Horus.”

<sup>341</sup> For translations, see Faulkner 1969: 60; J. Allen 2005: 42.

<sup>342</sup> For examples of the king taking the place of Nefertem in the Memphite Triad, see Schulman 1963: 178,180; Helck 1966: 32-34. The identification of the king as the son of Sekhmet is the surest way of guaranteeing protection from the powerful goddess, who plays the role of a protective mother (Germond 1981: 191-193).



In his close relationship with his mother-goddess Sekhmet, Nefertem was frequently depicted as a lion-headed god from the time of the New Kingdom period (Schlögl 1982: 379; Leitz 2002-IV: 221). Because the lion is a solar animal (Germond 2001: 126-129, 154-157), the appearance of the god as a human with a lion's head indicates his solar connections. More importantly, however, Sekhmet's protective nature of destroying the enemies of the king explains the warlike character of Nefertem and his close association with other Egyptian warrior gods such as Montu, Sopdu and Harmerti (Houser-Wegner 2001b: 314). Kees observes that Nefertem and Horheneku could both appear as a lion-headed god and they were regarded as a powerful god who annihilates enemies of Egypt (Kees 1922: 112; de Wit 1951: 235-237). His association with the war gods explains the presence of the *kepesh*, or a sharp sickle-shaped knife, in his left hand (Schlögl 1982: 379), and one of his epithets is *ḥwj t3wj* "Protector of the Two Lands." As the son of Sekhmet, Nefertem also appears as a dreadful deity who brings evildoers to the slaughter block and as a member of the council of gods who judge the dead, as mentioned in the Chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead above (Schlögl 1982: 378).<sup>343</sup>

Finally, as the goddess of epidemic, Sekhmet is also a healer of illness and plague (Hoenes 1976: 42-46) and, by virtue of the filial relationship with his mother-goddess and the therapeutic potential of the blue lotus flower (and its fragrant scent), Nefertem can also appear as a god of protection and healing (Bonnet 1952: 510).<sup>344</sup> It should be noted, however, that Nefertem's role as the protective and healing god does not stem from the model of the Horus child in Chemmis

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<sup>343</sup> However, his role as the judge of the deceased, as well as his warlike attribute, may have been derived from his role as a god of light, as Seeber aptly points out (1976: 132): "*Als Bringer des Lichts nimmt Nefertem aber auch kriegerische Züge an und bekämpft die Mächte der Dunkelheit, alle feindlichen und bösen Wesen. So tritt er in Tb 17, 23 als straffender Gott gegen die Sünder auf und zählt sogar zu den 42 Totenrichtern.*"

<sup>344</sup> For the medical use of the blue lotus flower, see Manniche 1989: 126-127; Nunn 1996: 157-158. This can be indirectly supported by the fact that Imhotep was later worshiped as the son of Ptah. Interestingly, Imhotep's mother is not Sekhmet but a woman named Kherdankh and Hathor (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 194-196).

(Brunner 1977b: 646). His healing and protective powers can be demonstrated by the fact that his emblem appears as one of the apotropaic images on the *cippi*, which include the face of Bes and the Horus falcon on the papyrus stem (Brunner 1971: 510).<sup>345</sup>

### 6.7.2 Nefertem as the son of Ptah

Compared with the relatively close relationship with his mother-goddess Sekhmet, Nefertem's connection with Ptah is weak and less attested. Ptah is coupled with Nefertem only in the Memphite Theology carved on the Shabaka Stone (Line 52b) (Munro 1969: 36, note 13): *pth ... [nfr-  
tm] r šrt rꜥ rꜥ nb* "Ptah ... [Nefertem] at the nose of the sun-god every day." In addition, the text is damaged, so it is not clear whether there is any meaningful connection between Ptah and Nefertem. The statement in Pyramid Texts Spell 249 that Nefertem (identified with the deceased king) rises from the earth and the primeval flood in the form of the lotus flower tempts us to picture Nefertem, as the son of Ptah, emerging from the primeval ocean Nun or the primeval hill Tatjenen, because Ptah is identified with Nun (and Naunet) (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 115-120) and with Tatjenen (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 56-63; Schlögl 1980: 54-55).

While he became the member of the Memphite Triad in the New Kingdom, Nefertem is very closely associated with the sun-god and thus it is appealing to view him as the divine child of light equipped with the power of life-giving fragrance, who comes out of the dark and abysmal primeval material represented by Ptah. In this regard, Anthes raises the question whether the rivalry of Heliopolitan and Memphite theologies is the reason behind the incorporation of Nefertem into the Ptah-Sekhmet-Nefertem triad (1955: 88; also cf. Munro 1969: 36-38).

Unfortunately, however, there is no conclusive evidence to support the image of Nefertem as the

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<sup>345</sup> As a protective god, Nefertem was assimilated with the pantheistic protective god Bes in the Late Period (Schlögl 1982: 379).

divine child of light. What is clear is the fact that only one ancient Egyptian text definitely states that Nefertem is the son of Ptah (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 194; Hoenes 1976: 200).<sup>346</sup>

## 6.8 Child-member of the Memphite Triad

From the New Kingdom until the Ptolemaic-Roman Period, Nefertem was expressly represented as the son of Sekhmet. In addition, the familial relationship of the Memphite triad is attested from the New Kingdom on (te Velde 1982b: 1180; Sternberg 1984: 326). Among other examples,<sup>347</sup> Papyrus Harris I mentions the three gods as a group (44, 1-2) and confirms that the three deities were worshipped together in a sanctuary of the Memphite mortuary temple of Ramesses III (47, 6-7) (Hoenes 1976: 200; Germond 1981: 183).<sup>348</sup>

### T6-7. Papyrus Harris I<sup>349</sup>

<sup>44.1</sup> *n3 snmh s3hw dw3w sns w tnr 3hw*  
*j.jrw nsw bjt (wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>t-r<sup>c</sup> mr-jmn)| <sup>c</sup>-w-s p3 ntr <sup>c</sup>3 n <sup>44.2</sup> jt(j).f pth <sup>c</sup>3 rsw(j) jnb.f nb <sup>c</sup>nh-t3wj*  
*shmt <sup>c</sup>3t mry pth nfr-tm hw t3wj psdt nbw hwt-k3-ptj*  
 ...  
<sup>47.6</sup> *jry.j n.k k3rj st3 m jnr n 3bw smnh.(w) m k3wt (n)hh m <sup>c</sup>t w<sup>c</sup> hr <sup>c</sup>3wj r n hmt m sm3 nt 6*  
*hty.(w) hr rn.k špsj r-š3<sup>c</sup> (n)hh*  
<sup>47.7</sup> *pth shmt nfr-tm htp.(w) m hnw.f twtw n nb r-gs.w r hnk m-b3h.sn*  
*w3h.j n.w htpw-ntr m3<sup>c</sup>w hft-hr.w mn.(w) n.k (n)hh n hr.k nfr*

<sup>346</sup> The epithet *z3 shmt pth* "son of Sekhmet and Ptah" is attested on a faience statue of the Twenty-fourth Dynasty (Leitz 2002-VI: 95). It is noteworthy that: (1) Sekhmet precedes Ptah in this epithet; and (2) there is no phrase such as *z3 pth* "son of Ptah" that clearly mentions the father-son relationship between the two. Nefertem is shown at the back of the statuette of Ptah-Pataikoi, a dwarf-form of Ptah that began to appear at the end of the New Kingdom (Dasen 1993: 91-92 and Plate 16-2b). This may also indicate the filial relationship between the two deities.

<sup>347</sup> Other textual sources indicating the grouping of the three deities include the Hymn to Nefertem at the mortuary temple of Seti I at Abydos (see T6-4). For small objects such as scarabs, rings and vases that indicate the relationship of the three deities, see Germond 1981: 319, 330-331. Cf. Munro 1969: 36 for the New Year's ritual with regard to the so-called "linsenförmige Neujahrflaschen," Germond's (1981: 329) "gourdes du Nouvel An."

<sup>348</sup> Other stelae dating to the New Kingdom or later list Ptah, Sekhmet and Nefertem, but sometimes it is not clear whether they represent the familial relationship or whether they are just a list of deities from the Memphite area (cf. Griffith 1927: 196).

<sup>349</sup> For the text, see Erichsen 1933: 49, 52. For a translation, Breasted 1906b: 161-162, 166.

<sup>44,1</sup> The prayers, praises, adorations, mighty laudations and benefactions  
that the king of Upper and Lower Egypt (Usermaatre-Meryamun) | l.p.h. the great  
god

did for his father Ptah the Great, South-of-his-Wall, lord of Ankhtawy;  
Sekhmet the Great, beloved of Ptah; Nefertem, Protector of the Two Lands; and  
all the Enneads of the Enclosure of the *ka* of Ptah (Memphis).

...

<sup>47,6</sup> I made for you a mysterious shrine in the stone of Elephantine, established with  
works

of eternity, of a single block, with double doors of bronze, of an alloy of six, engraved  
with

your august name, for eternity.

<sup>47,7</sup> Ptah, Sekhmet, and Nefertem rest inside it, statues of the Lord beside them  
in order to present offerings in their presence.

I set for them divine offerings presented before them, enduring for you for eternity  
to your gracious face.

The Memphite Triad is much different from the triad of Osiris-Isis-Horus that represents an ideal family as conceived by the ancient Egyptians. Nefertem is never shown performing his mediating role for his father-god Ptah (neither in his role as the creator god nor as the divine craftsman) or for his mother-goddess Sekhmet (like Ihy who shakes the sistrum to appease his irritable mother-goddess Hathor). Moreover, there is no mention of a dramatic childhood as in the case of the Horus child or of a generational transition like the one between Osiris and Horus. Hornung cites the Memphite Triad as an example that follows the pattern of grouping deities worshiped side by side into a familial triad (1982a: 218-219). In sum, it can be concluded that the three deities were put together merely in order to form a triad because their cult centers were all located in Memphis (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 194; Säve-Söderberg 1977: 689).

## CONCLUSION

Historically, Nefertem seems to have become fixed in image and function as the the embodiment of the blue lotus blossom already in the Old Kingdom, as evidenced by Pyramid Texts Spell 249. What is interesting is that the Coffin Texts do not provide any conclusive lead to the role of this elusive deity in the pantheon. The image fixed in the Pyramid Texts spell appears again in the Book of the Dead Chapters 81 and 174. As such, Nefertem plays his role as the embodiment of the blue lotus flower at dawn in the cosmic and funerary spheres, offering the enlivening fragrance to the creator god/sun-god and the deceased. On the kingship level, the king is depicted as offering the scented lotus flower and aromatic oil/unguent jars to the god as a mediator and can take the place of Nefertem as a member of the Memphite Triad.

As a divine child, Nefertem displays common characteristics of a child deity. He is supposed to have healing power, perhaps deriving from the pharmacological properties of the blue lotus flower. He is also considered a caring guide who leads the deceased to eternal life and resurrection through the power of soothing odor. At the same time, Nefertem is called *nb k3w df3w* “lord of sustenance and provisions” (Bonnet 1952: 510; Schlögl 1982: 379)<sup>350</sup> and *hwj t3wj* “Protector of the Two Lands” (as an annihilator of the enemies of Egypt in the form of lion).

While he is incorporated into the Memphite Triad, Nefertem is closely connected to the solar realm (as in Pyramid Texts Spell 249 and the Book of the Dead Chapters 81 and 174) and, considering the behavior of the lotus flower that he embodies, he can be considered a solar deity.

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<sup>350</sup> Leaves, stalks and seeds of the blue lotus flower are very nutritious and can be taken as food (Harer 1985: 53; also cf. Darby *et al* 1977: 620-644).

In this regard, his being symbolized by lotus flower as provider of enlivening energy to the sun-god may be interpreted as the reverse of the *kamutef* concept, in that the sun-god receives the life force, equivalent to *ka*, as Spiegel suggested (1953: 216-223), from his youthful alter ego, Nefertem. In a sense, it is different from the concept of the *kamutef* regeneration since the consort-mother goddess is excluded. Therefore, it is rather reminiscent of the Opet Festival, in which Amun-Re at Karnak receives regenerative power from the Amun of Luxor (Bell 1985: 258-259, 1997: 174-176).

In sum, it can be said that Nefertem is, like other child deities, a mediator; he fulfils his mediating role through the creative power of fragrant scent. But since his relationship with his parent deities is superficial, Nefertem does not perform the mediating role on behalf of his parents, like Ihy, who shakes the sistrum to please his mother-goddess Hathor.<sup>351</sup> The close association with the sun-god rather makes him the child of light emerging from the primeval ocean<sup>352</sup> or the first land, laden with the power that appeals to another sense.

#### **Excursus 6-1: Unnamed deity in a hymn**

In 1922 Kees wrote an article titled "*Ein alter Götterhymnus als Begleittext zur Opfertafel*" and published a body of hieroglyphic texts and his translation of the hymn for an unnamed god (1922: 92-120). According to him, there are five parallel texts, including the oldest from a Middle Kingdom sarcophagus, two New Kingdom texts on the wall of the southern offering hall of Hatshepsut's Deir el-Bahri mortuary temple, and two other texts from the Late Period.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> In some of the private tomb scenes, the son of the tomb owner is shown presenting the lotus flower to the nose of his father.

<sup>352</sup> In the Ptolemaic-Roman period, Nefertem was syncretized with Re-Horakhty (Leitz 2002-IV: 224).

<sup>353</sup> For the dating of the original text, see Altenmüller: 1967: 17-18. He assumes that the original text might have been composed during the Fifth Dynasty while the offering ritual related to the text might have come into existence in the beginning of the Fifth Dynasty.

**T6-8. Hymn to an Unnamed God<sup>354</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> *dd-mdw wr pw nn pr m t3 sn nw*  
<sup>2</sup> *pr m nwt |<sup>3</sup> shm wr msy n gbb*  
<sup>4</sup> *hsfstš m nšn.f |<sup>5</sup> wdy hr h3swt rw.sn*  
<sup>6</sup> *kj.n psdt hr rh rn.f*  
<sup>7</sup> *rd m h<sup>c</sup>w sht tw spst |<sup>8</sup> jmjt h<sup>c</sup>w j3btt*  
<sup>9</sup> *hrt-<sup>c</sup> nmtj |<sup>10</sup> z3wt spdwn nb j3btt*  
<sup>11</sup> *ntt m-gs dpt nt wsjr*  
<sup>12</sup> *t3z.n nbwj j3bt <sup>c</sup>wj.sn hr.f |<sup>13</sup> š<sup>cc</sup> drwt nt msw jtw.sn hr fd.f m sht*

<sup>14</sup> *m.k jn n.k mj qd tm zp 2 dmd.(w) hr j3wt*  
<sup>15</sup> *j.tj jn mwt.k jst |<sup>16</sup> j.mr.n.j nd.k jrt.k m-<sup>c</sup> jr r.k*  
<sup>17</sup> *j.rh mj n.n shm <sup>c</sup>nh<sup>h</sup> |<sup>18</sup> jn.t(j).f(j) nn n hrw hr rnpt tn*  
<sup>19</sup> *jn.t(j).f(j) n.f pt m jgp t3 m smj*  
<sup>20</sup> *rd qb tbt h3p.tj |<sup>21</sup> jm gm nbd z3 nwt w3t r.f*  
<sup>22</sup> *jr r (j)t.k m-hnw gmwt jw.f r.t jrt hrw |<sup>23</sup> t3z phr*  
<sup>24</sup> *jrt.k jmnt m msktt jrt.k j3bt m m<sup>c</sup>ndt*  
<sup>25</sup> *jrtj.k hrw prt m tm šw pw hn<sup>c</sup> tfnwt*  
<sup>26</sup> *bwt.sn j.hr <sup>c</sup> ntr hr-ht.s n mns3 šwt ntr hr-ht.sn |<sup>27</sup> nj <sup>c</sup>q mtwt.f jm*  
<sup>28</sup> *nf<sup>c</sup>.n.(j) m<sup>c</sup>ndt hr jrtj.k hrw*  
<sup>29</sup> *rdj.n.(j) sn m msktt rdj.n.(j) sn m m<sup>c</sup>ndt n hrw m3jnw*  
<sup>30</sup> *špw hwd <sup>c</sup>3<sup>c</sup> r h3 hw<sup>c</sup> m33 tp rdwj hrw m3jnw nj bn.sn |<sup>31</sup> nj d3.sn hr db<sup>c</sup>w hrw m3jnw*

<sup>1</sup> RECITATION. The Great is the one who came from the earth and who broke away from Nu,  
<sup>2</sup> who came from Nut, <sup>3</sup> the Great Power born of Geb,  
<sup>4</sup> who repelled Seth in his rage/storm, <sup>5</sup> who is set on the foreign lands so that they withdraw,  
<sup>6</sup> the one whom the Ennead acclaim because of knowing his name,  
<sup>7</sup> the one who grows out of the body of the august field-goddess <sup>8</sup> who is in the body of the East  
<sup>9</sup> the assistant of Nemti, <sup>10</sup> the one whom Sopdu, Lord of the East, guards,  
<sup>11</sup> who is on board the boat of Osiris,  
<sup>12</sup> the one over whom the two Lords of the East tied their hands together,

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<sup>354</sup> For the texts, see Kees 1922: 96-116. The hymn was later incorporated into Coffin Texts Spell 607. For translations, see Kees 1922: 96-116; H. Altenmüller 1967: 9-10; Barta 1973a: 87-90; Faulkner 1977: 195-196. The text is divided into two sections: the first section (Lines 1-13) comprises epithets describing the various aspects of the unspecified deity; the second section is a text about an offering ritual. My translation of Lines 1-13 here is based largely on that of Kees in order to show his interpretation of the unspecified deity as Nefertem. Another translation of the first section based on that of Barta is presented below. See also Kees 1922: 96-116; Altenmüller 1967: 9-10; Faulkner 1977: 195-196.

<sup>13</sup> because of whose removal from the earth the hands of the children of their fathers are cut off.

<sup>14</sup> "Look, all things are brought fully and completely to you from the mound,"

<sup>15</sup> says your mother, Isis.

<sup>16</sup> "I have wished you to save your eye from the one who acted against you.

<sup>17</sup> Please learn the life-power for us

<sup>18</sup> that will bring these to Horus for this year,

<sup>19</sup> that will bring him the sky in clouds and the earth in haze

<sup>20</sup> with refreshing stride and mysterious sole

<sup>21</sup> so that the Tressed One, son of Nut, may not find a way to him.

<sup>22</sup> The one who acted against your father in weakness, he is against you, Horus-Eye, and

<sup>23</sup> vice versa

<sup>24</sup> Your right eye is the Evening Barque; your left eye is the Morning Barque.

<sup>25</sup> Your two eyes, Horus, that came out of Atum, they are Shu and Tefnut.

<sup>26</sup> Their abomination is that the god's arm fall after it because of the ejaculation of the god's shadow after them.

<sup>27</sup> His semen does not enter there.

<sup>28</sup> I have removed the Morning Barque because of your two eyes, Horus.

<sup>29</sup> I have given them as the Evening Barque;

I have given them as the Morning Barque to Horus of Manu.

<sup>30</sup> The blind eye, rich of outflow, teary and short-sighted before Horus of Manu,

they do not swell, <sup>31</sup> they do not ejaculate under the fingers of Horus of Manu."

Kees notes that the god in this hymn shows two clear features: (1) he is a plant that sprouts out of the field under the protection of deities in the East (Lines 5, 7-13); and (2) he is Horus, with Isis as his mother. But Kees asserts that the god's association with Horus is secondary because Horus, as son of Osiris and Isis, has little to do with the primeval deity who came out of Nut and Geb, as described in the introductory statements (Lines 1-3). In addition, the deity is also the one who came out of the primeval waters Nu, like Atum at the beginning of the creation, and that is why the deity is called "the Great" in the beginning of the hymn, which can also be interpreted as the greatest, meaning the oldest and the most primeval (1922: 116). In addition, Kees points out that a



peculiar root-symbol in a fragmentary stela of the Late Period found in Horbeit shows a double-feather sprouting from the bulbous root, which is the typical symbol of Nefertem.<sup>355</sup>

On the basis of this, Kees identifies the deity in the hymn with Nefertem. He points out that the deity is mentioned as the plant “that rises from the earth” and as the one that emerged from the primeval water, as described in Pyramid Texts Spell 249: (*wnjs*)| *pj nw n zšzš wbn m t3 w<sup>c</sup>b.(w)* “Unis is that lotus that rises clean from the earth.”

As regards the origin of the deity in the hymn (identified by Kees as Nefertem), Kees focuses on his nature as a plant-god who sprouts out of the field-goddess. To support this, Kees quotes a line from the Book of the Dead Chapter 81 that mentions the appearance of Nefertem from the earth: *jnk zšn w<sup>c</sup>b pr m j3hw* “I am the pure lotus that came forth clean from the light.” He maintains that the Book of Dead statement corresponds to Lines 7-8 of the hymn (1922: 117).

Moreover, Kees points out: (1) Nefertem was closely associated with the sun-god Re as indicated in Pyramid Texts Spell 249, cited above; (2) the lotus emblem of Nefertem was frequently accompanied by the symbol of the solar barque or that of Sokar, which explains why Morning and Evening Barques are mentioned in the hymn.<sup>356</sup> In the light of the abovementioned remarks on the hymn, Kees concludes that the unspecified deity in the hymn is indisputably Nefertem: *“Soviel Uneinheitliches und Widersprechendes in dieser Auffassung liegt, die Beziehung unseres Textes auf Nefertem scheint mir unbestreitbar.”*<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> For the vignette, see Naville 1910: Plates I and II.

<sup>356</sup> For representations of the Nefertem emblem in association with the solar barque and the barque of Sokar, see Kees 1922: 117, note 2.

<sup>357</sup> In making this conclusion, he assumes: (1) the close relationship between Nefertem and the eastern region and its local gods – especially Sopdu – might be quite old, probably going back to the early Old Kingdom

H. Altenmüller wrote two articles regarding the above-mentioned hymn in 1967 and 1968. He divides the text into two parts (as shown above) and concentrates most of his focus on the interpretation of the second part as a text connected with the offering ritual for the deceased (1967: 12-17). In his analysis of the text, H. Altenmüller shows his reservations regarding Kees's identification of the unnamed deity as Nefertem by observing that the unnamed deity in the first part is a solar god while the deity in the second part is a form of Horus. Regarding the identity of the first god, he says that the first part reveals conclusive and uniform characteristics of the deity: (1) the deity is called "the Great" (Line 1) and, therefore, can be regarded to be the eldest ("Uralter") and the primeval god ("Uranfänglicher"), like the sun-god Re, although he is also mentioned as a son of Nut and Geb; (2) a deity in the form of the *snw*-plant (Line 2), which is regarded as the lotus flower (cf. Line 13) according to the vignette of the Horbeit stela; (3) the plant grows from the earth (Line 8) and is protected by Nemti and Sopdu (Line 12). He notes that Kees assumed the solar deity in this part to be Nefertem (1922: 10). He goes on to explain that the second part is a text addressed by one or more gods to a deity in a form of Horus who is the possessor of the Horus Eyes. At the end of his analysis, H. Altenmüller concludes that a solar deity and Horus are combined in the hymn through: (1) the mother deity – the field-goddess of the east (Lines 8-11), on the one hand, and Isis (Line 15), on the other hand, whose identities are combined in Line 11 (1967: 11); and (2) the mention of a solar mythology in the last section of the second part that refers back to the identity of the deity as a solar deity (1967: 12). Still, he remains cautious, adding: *"Vom geschilderten mythologischen Geschehn her haben jedoch weder die beiden Hauptteile, noch die einzelnen Abschnitte des zweiten Teils ursprünglich miteinander viel gemeinsam. Ihre Zusammenfügung ist locker, aber dennoch wahrscheinlich nicht zufällig."*

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period ("die Zeiten des memphitischen Reiches"); and (2) if the first assumption is right, the hymn might have been composed during the same period, possibly by Memphite priests. In addition, he observes that the repeating theme of the Eye Legend, which might stem from the local tradition of Letopolis (the cult center of Horhekenu), was influenced by the Heliopolitan Theology (as evidenced by the mention of Shu and Tefnut).

Through the detailed analysis of the second part of the hymn, H. Altenmüller points out that the whole text was not just a hymn that accompanied the offering list ("*Begleittext zur Opfertafel*") but that it fulfilled a specific role in the offering ritual (1967: 12). The texts that accompany the offering ritual served to establish mythological precedence for the cult objects handled in this world and offerings in the funerary offering rituals were generally identified as the Eye of Horus, as is the case in the hymn in question. At this point, H. Altenmüller assumes that wordplay ("*Wortgleichklang*" and "*Wortähnlichkeit*") was adopted here to mention those offerings and he used it as a key to interpret the second part of the hymn. So he concludes that the second part deals with the presentation of milk (Lines 15-16), an offering of water (Lines 17-20), the presentation of a white jar and a black jar (Lines 21-24), and the two *mensa* jars (Lines 28-31) (1967: 16-17; 1968: 4). H. Altenmüller's comments about the assumed role of the lotus flower in the ritual are interesting. He points out that the hymn does not give any mythological precedence to the rituals of purification and mouth-opening of the deceased that usually precede the actual presentation of the offerings. So he assumes that another method must have been used to enliven the deceased. He focuses on the plant-like nature of the unspecified deity mentioned in the first part of the hymn. As mentioned earlier, Kees identifies this god as Nefertem, a personification of the lotus blossom. Here, H. Altenmüller says, while citing no specific sources, that the lotus was regarded in ancient Egypt as a plant with a strong scent that had a life-giving power that could open the nose of dead and make them breathe again. When we follow his logic, it means that the mention of the purification and mouth-opening rituals was replaced by the mention of the deity that personifies the lotus flower. In this regard, H. Altenmüller assumes: (1) the introduction of the unnamed deity in the first part might have to do with the offering of the lotus blossom to the

deceased;<sup>358</sup> and (2) that is why the deity that could be identified with Nefertem shows up only in Lines 1-13 while Lines 15-31 deal with a different god in the form of Horus (1968: 3).

Kees's identification of the deity as Nefertem and the deity's characteristics described in the hymn were quoted by many scholars for fifty years until Barta refuted Kees's observations and claimed that the hymn was composed for Horus, and not for Nefertem (1973: 84-89).<sup>360</sup> Barta questions Kees's two assumptions that led him to identify the deity in the hymn as Nefertem. According to Barta, (1) Kees used the epithet in Lines 7-8 of the hymn to understand the deity as the plant-deity: *rd m ḥꜥw sḥt tw špst jmjt ḥꜥw j3bt* "the one who grows out of the body of the august field-goddess who is in the body of the East"; and (2) Kees also saw the vignette of a root-like plant on the Horbeit stela as lotus.<sup>361</sup> In order to prove his counter-interpretation, Barta first identifies the plant in question not as the lotus but as the *ḥꜥw-jmj* plant, a fragrant herb that was not only used as a medicine but also offered to the dead for its live-giving fragrance (1973a: 86; also see H. Altenmüller 1968: 7-9).<sup>362</sup> Then he presents his own translation up to the line 13, where the long epithets of the deity end, as shown below.

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<sup>358</sup> To quote the original text (Altenmüller: 1968, 3): "Da dieser aber als Gott der Lotosblume gilt, ist zu fragen, ob die Einführung des Gottes in den Opfertext nicht erst durch die Übergabe einer Lotospflanze veranlaßt wurde."

<sup>360</sup> For the scholarly works based on Kees's identification of the deity as Nefertem, see Barta 1973a: 85, note 2.

<sup>361</sup> Kees did mention the close association of the deity in the hymn with the Osiris mythology: (1) the identification of the field-goddess with Isis (Line 15); (2) the protection of Osiris (Line 11); (3) the son of Isis chased by Seth (Lines 19-21); (4) Seth who did evil to the father of the deity (Line 22); (5) the deity's eye that was lost and recovered (Line 16); and (6) the deity's victory over Seth (Line 4). He added that Osiris himself played no active role in the hymn (1922: 118). However, he thought the hymn was "influenced" by the Osiris mythology, as well as by the Heliopolitan Theology.

<sup>362</sup> In his article of 1968, H. Altenmüller reports two newly found parallel texts to the hymn, one of which contains the "Spell of the *ḥꜥw-jmj* Plants of Each Day That Are Brought to the Grave" (1968: 1, note 5). As for the plant, he explains: (1) the *ḥꜥw-jmj* plant's strong scent was, like that of the water-lily blossom, regarded to have power to make the deceased breathe again and open his/her eyes, ears and mouth; and (2) the plant was therefore used in the embalming process. For the use of the plant and its identification with henna (*Lawsonia inermis*), see Altenmüller 1968: 6-8. Focusing on the title mentioned above, Barta points out (1973: 85-86): "Die Frage, welche Pflanze auf der Horbeit Stele dargestellt gewesen ist, kann uns am ehesten der Spruchtitel des Louvre-Textes [one of the two parallel texts mentioned above] beantworten; denn der oben erwähnten

**T6-8a. Hymn to an Unnamed God<sup>363</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> *dd-mdw wr pw nn prj m t3 sn njw*  
<sup>2</sup> *pr m nwt* <sup>3</sup> *sh̄m wr msj n gbb*  
<sup>4</sup> *hsf stš m nšn.f* <sup>5</sup> *wdj hr h3swt rwj.sn*  
<sup>6</sup> *kj.n psdt hr rh rn.f*  
<sup>7</sup> *rd m h̄c sht tw špst* | <sup>8</sup> *jmjt h̄cw j3bt*  
<sup>9</sup> *hrjt c nmtj* | <sup>10</sup> *z3wt spd̄w nb j3bt*  
<sup>11</sup> *njt m-gs dpt wst-jrt*  
<sup>12</sup> *tz nbwj j3bt cwn.sn hr.f* | <sup>13</sup> *šcc drwt njwt msw jtw.sn hr fdjt.f m sht*

<sup>1</sup> RECITATION. This is the Great One who came from the earth and  
who separated himself from Nu,  
<sup>2</sup> who came from Nut, <sup>3</sup> the Great Power born of Geb,  
<sup>4</sup> who fended off Seth in his rage/storm, <sup>5</sup> who is set on the foreign lands so that they  
withdraw,  
<sup>6</sup> the one who instills respect into the Ennead upon knowing his name,  
<sup>7</sup> the one who grows out of the body of the august field-goddess <sup>8</sup> who is in the body of  
the East  
<sup>9</sup> who stands under the (protecting) arm of Nemty,  
<sup>10</sup> who is protected by Sopdu, Lord of the East, protects,  
<sup>11</sup> who is onboard (beside) the boat of Osiris,  
<sup>12</sup> the one for whom the two Lords of the East tied their hands together,  
<sup>13</sup> the one for whose pulling out of the field the hands of the children of their fathers are  
cut off.

Regarding the description of the deity's birth in Lines 1-2, Barta explains that the Great One is the sun-god, who comes out of the earth and the primeval waters, and that the mention of his parent deities serves as a clue for the exact origin of the sun-god, because Nefertem was not represented

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*formalen Parallele zwischen Spruchtitel und Vignette wird eine gleichgerichtete inhaltliche Aussage entsprochen haben. Wenn deshalb der Spruchtitel von einer täglich zum Grabe gebrachten c̄nh-jmj-Pflanze handelt, so wird auch die Vignette eine c̄nh-jmj-Pflanze abbilden wollen, d.h. die Stele aus Horbeit drückte im Bilde genau das aus, was der Spruchtitel mit Worten besagt; denn die Vignette wäre dann wie der Titel als Überschrift zu verstehen. Dazu kommt, dass die c̄nh-jmj-Pflanze – der Darstellung auf der Horbeit-Stele entsprechend – einen kugeligen Wurzelknollen besessen haben könnte; zumindest spricht ein später Zusatz zu Totenbuchkapitel 13 bzw. 121 von einer Kugel (bnn) der c̄nh-jmj-Pflanze.“*

<sup>363</sup> Transliteration and translation here are largely based on Barta's work in German.

as the son of Geb and Nut.<sup>364</sup> The Great One was also used as the epithet of Horus (Barta 1973a: 85) and, therefore, the deity can be Horus the Elder (*hrw-smsw*) who is mentioned as son of Geb and Nut.<sup>365</sup> In addition, the contender against Seth in Line 14 is not Nefertem but Horus, although it is not clear whether Horus is here brother or nephew of Seth. For Line 6, Barta cites the Pyramid and Coffin Texts spells that mention Horus who (sometimes identified with the deceased king) receives the kingship from Atum and appears as the ruler of the Ennead.<sup>366</sup> As for the deity's mother-goddess described in Lines 7-11, he observes that the "august field-goddess" is the personification of the sun-god's birthplace,<sup>367</sup> who is under the protection of the "Lords of the East" in Lines 12-13 (Barta 1973a: 89-90).

Barta says that the text from Line 14 does not reveal the nature of the deity in the question, but Isis's statement is addressed to the sky-god Horus, whose two eyes are identified with the two solar barques and who loses his sight in the evening as Horus of Manu, thus identified with the sightless Horus of Letopolis. He concludes: (1) the hymn encompasses the aspects of Horus the Elder (Lines 1-6, 24-31) and Horus, son of Isis and Osiris (Lines 24-31); and (2) the alternating pattern is a significant feature of the hymn, because it illustrates the life cycle not only through the course of the sun (as Horus the Elder) but also the death-resurrection found in nature, without presenting a unified image of the god (Barta 1973a: 91).

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<sup>364</sup> In this regard, Barta admits that the sun-god Re is a son of Nut but is not mentioned as son of Geb (Barta 1973a: 87).

<sup>365</sup> CT III 264 e-g.

<sup>366</sup> Pyr. § 301 a-b; CT II 216a; CT IV 36e; CT IV 84k.

<sup>367</sup> Barta believes that the birthplace of the sun-god can be identified with the Field of Rushes (*sh-t-j3rw*) where the sun-god rises each morning after the purification. Therefore, the birth/emergence from the field-goddess does not confirm the origin of the plant-god; rather, it should be construed as a general reference to the birth of a solar deity who can be Re, Horus or Nefertem. There is no evidence to support that the birth from the field-goddess exclusively refers to Nefertem (Barta 1973a: 87). For the Field of Rushes, see J. Allen 2003: 24.

## CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

### INTRODUCTION

So far, we have conducted cases studies of the three child deities – Ihy, Khonsu and Nefertem. While they share the same status as members of a divine triad, they all possess different characteristics and follow different paths of evolution before their integration into the divine triads of major cultic centers. Therefore, the first step should be to take a look at the changes that these deities experienced in the course of time. In some aspects, they share some features but otherwise do not exhibit an overall common pattern. In this final chapter, I will examine the peculiar characteristics of the three child deities in areas such as name, iconography and evolution of traits, and then move on to see if there is any shared trait that may have facilitated their integration into the divine triad. The final step is to use the two prototypes of the child deities – the sun-child and the Horus child – to examine their roles on the cosmic, kingship and funerary levels.

### NAME, ICONOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

#### 7.1 Name

Regarding the names of the three child deities, there is always more than one theory to explain their meanings and the owner's nature and function based on them.<sup>369</sup> Ihy can be counted as an exception among the three child deities in that his name, iconography and roles are relatively

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<sup>369</sup> For the meaning (or etymology) of the divine name, which contributes to a better understanding of the owner's nature and function, see Hornung 1982: 66-69.

firmly established already in the Old Kingdom. However, the key attributes of the other child deities are still evolving during the Middle Kingdom or the New Kingdom.

While there have been attempts to understand the name of Ihy in connection with the diminutive form of *jh* "cattle," the meaning seems to refer directly to his role as the "musician" who shakes a sistrum in the worship of his mother Hathor. In the case of Khonsu, the name was interpreted by some scholars as *h-nsw(t)* "the placenta of the king," but it is now generally accepted that the name *honzw* means "the one who travels" or the "courser," which is derived from the verb *honz* "to traverse." His name expresses the image of the moon-god sailing the night sky. Finally, the exact meaning of Nefertem remains obscure. Some scholars point to a close connection with the sun-god Atum but it seems more likely that the name indicates his role as a god of fragrance in the meaning of "completely beautiful one" (Morenz & Schubert 1954: 15).

## 7.2 Iconography

Regarding the iconography of child deity, Ihy is the only one who appears in a pure child form from the Old Kingdom. He is usually depicted as sporting the side-lock of youth, holding the sistrum in his hand and wearing the *menit* around his neck. Khonsu and Nefertem are rarely shown in the form of a child up to as late as the New Kingdom. Rather, they appear as a youthful god symbolizing the concept of rejuvenation and resurrection as the youngest member of the divine triad. They are visualized in pure child form – a naked child with his finger in his mouth – only after the Third Intermediate Period. Therefore, while they wear the side-lock of youth and the *menit* to denote their status as a child-member of the divine triad, they display a few iconographic features found in adult deities, such as the divine beard and various scepters. They are also depicted as wearing the *shendyt* or the mummy sheath. These iconographic features



clearly indicate that they are not a mere child but rather a youthful god as a symbol of rejuvenation and resurrection.

### 7.3 Historical development

The concept of the child deity is found already in the Old Kingdom. Horus is described as a child in Pyramid Texts Spell 378 (Pyr. §§ 663c-664a): *nhj n hrw hrd nhn db<sup>c</sup>.f m r.f, (ttj)| pw hm hrw hrd nhn db<sup>c</sup>.f m r.f* “*nhj*-Horus, the young boy with his finger in his mouth. And Teti is Horus, the young boy with his finger in his mouth.” In addition, Brunner mentions an Old Kingdom inscription of a child god from Buto (*nb-jmt, jmtj*), whose writing includes a determinative of a seated child wearing the Red Crown (1977c: 648).

All three child deities are attested already in the Old Kingdom. Ihy is mentioned in the Palermo Stone, and Khonsu and Nefertem are mentioned in the Pyramid Texts. As mentioned earlier, however, their traits developed differently over time. In the case of Ihy, his role as the divine musician and acolyte of his mother-goddess Hathor is established already in the Old Kingdom and further bolstered during the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom. However, Khonsu appears in most cases as a violent deity who devours his enemies in the Old and Middle Kingdom textual sources. The violent aspect can be considered as one of the traits possessed by the moon god but it is only during the New Kingdom that the deity began to be considered as a moon-god, absorbing various features from other well-known moon gods including Thoth. Nefertem shows a more complicated pattern of evolution. He is styled in the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts as the lotus bud at the nose of the sun-god but his role is not refined during the Middle Kingdom; the Coffin Text spells fail to give any decisive clue as to the deity's true nature. During the New Kingdom, his image established in the Pyramid Texts is reiterated in some

chapters of the Book of the Dead. Fortunately, some late New Kingdom hymns to Nefertem and other related Memphite deities offer us tantalizing evidence for his role as the god of fragrance.

During the New Kingdom, Khonsu and Nefertem are integrated into divine triads as child-member in their respective cultic centers in line with (1) the new trends of visualizing the king as a child (deity) and (2) the influence of the Osirian cycle on the theology of other cultic centers. In this regard, it is noteworthy that Ihy, whose specific role is fixed earlier than the other child deities, is the last one who became the child-member of a divine triad, due largely to the strong bond with his mother-goddess Hathor.

## NATURE OF THE DEITIES

### 7.4 Primary roles

Usually depicted as a youthful deity wearing the *menit* around his neck and holding a sistrum in his hand, Ihy is the divine musician *par excellence*. He personifies the jubilation associated with the use of the sacred instruments. As the son of the versatile goddess Hathor, Ihy also plays the role of child-intermediary for his mother-goddess, mediating the two different spheres – the divine and the mundane – through the medium of music.

Khonsu is a moon-god whose role is gradually expanded through assimilation and identification with other lunar deities, especially Thoth. By the New Kingdom, the deity appears as the benevolent son of Amun and Mut. According to ancient Egyptian religious thought, the moon can replace the sun after sunset and the sun-god is considered father of the moon. As Amun was syncretized with the sun-god Re and thus became a sun-god, Khonsu the moon god could stand

vis-à-vis his solarized father Amun through the mediation of the mother-goddess Mut, who played the role of binding force between the two luminaries of the sky. In the Theban Triad, the role of Khonsu is, like Ihy's, a divine intermediary who can mediate between the divine and human spheres in the light of his status as rejuvenating child and heir of the supreme state god.

Nefertem is the embodiment of the blue lotus blossom and the god of fragrance who delivers the creative power to the creator/sun-god (and the deceased). Considering the weak familial ties with his parent deities, it is safe to say that Nefertem is a youthful deity who fulfils his mediatory role through the creative power of fragrant scent in his close relationship with the sun-god.

To sum up, the primary role of the three child deities is as divine intermediary between the divine sphere and the human world through the medium of music (Ihy) or fragrance (Nefertem), or through the status as the prominent celestial body that can stand face-to-face with the sun (Khonsu). In addition, their mediating role explains why the king can frequently replace them in their respective familial triads in his role as an intermediary between the divine and human spheres. Therefore, the king serves as the Ihy-musician for Hathor (along with the priests who were his delegates). He is also identified with Khonsu, as evidenced by the granite statue of Tutankhamen in the Khonsu Temple. Sometimes the king also takes the place of Nefertem and plays the role of offering the scented lotus flower and aromatic oil/unguent jars to the god in his capacity as divine mediator.

Finally, their status as divine intermediary explains why the child deities became so important and popular in the Late and Ptolemaic-Roman Periods. Possessing the charm and spontaneity of

a child,<sup>370</sup> they are friendlier and more accessible than other major deities in the Egyptian pantheon in the time of “personal piety.” They are regarded as the “great god” who retains full divine power in the form of a child who hears prayers for help and provides protection to his followers (Brunner 1977b: 648).<sup>371</sup>

### 7.5 Other roles of the deities

As shown above, the three child deities can serve as a divine intermediary between the divine sphere and the human world, even though they display different traits and roles in the Egyptian pantheon. As a divine intermediary, they appear as a benevolent god who plays significant roles, such as (1) a divine guide/protector, (2) a healing deity and (3) a fertility god, for the deceased and his followers.

First of all, Ihy comes to the fore in his role as a divine guide/protector. As the son of Hathor, the goddess of the afterlife, he appears as an intermediary who guarantees the deceased proximity to Hathor. Khonsu appears as a divine helper who guides the deceased to heaven as the god of sky. Nefertem is considered a caring guide who leads the deceased to eternal life and resurrection through the power of soothing fragrance.

As regards their role as healing deity, Khonsu plays a prominent role as a moon-god who possesses great magical and healing power. Therefore, he is credited with offering either spiritual redemption or miraculous cure to his followers. As the son of Sekhmet (the goddess of plague),

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<sup>370</sup> In this regard, Clift lists the virtues of a child, which include “innocence, purity, wonder, receptivity, freshness, non-calculation, the absence of narrow ambition and purpose” (1987: 243).

<sup>371</sup> Cf. Jung (1978: 77): “This archetype of the ‘child god’ is extremely widespread and intimately bound up with all the other mythological aspects of the child motif. It is hardly necessary to allude to the still living ‘Christ-child,’ who, in the legend of Saint Christopher, also has the typical feature of being ‘smaller than small and bigger than big.’”

and based on the medical properties of the lotus blossom that he embodies, Nefertem is also considered as a god of healing and protection. It is particularly noteworthy that their function as healing deity does not stem from the model of the Horus child in Chemmis. Each deity retains healing power based on his own respective functions.

Basically, a child deity can symbolize rebirth after death, renewal of the cosmos and yearly renewal of Egypt's fertility. As such, most of the child deities are believed to bring fertility (Brunner 1977b: 650). In this regard, it should be noted that Khonsu represents the fertilizing moon, as opposed to Thoth who is the measurer of time and the god of writing and recording. As regards the other child deities, this trait is mostly attested by epithets such as *nb df3w* "lord of provisions."

Finally, it is important to consider that the three child deities also demonstrate turbulent or violent traits. Ihy's turbulent nature is mentioned in the Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 181i): *jnk nb dšrw, jnk k3 hnnw* "I am the lord of blood; I am the bull of turbulence." As mentioned earlier, Khonsu is originally a blood-thirsty god who devours the hearts of victims in order to assert his power. Nefertem also appears as a raging god when he appears as a human with a lion's head, a form that is attributable to his close association with Sekhmet, who is frequently depicted as a lioness who destroys the enemies of the king. But once they become child-member of a divine triad, these child deities function as benevolent gods. In fact, the most frequently used epithet of Khonsu during the New Kingdom is Neferhotep, which means "perfect of grace." Finally, it should be mentioned that the Horus child and other child deities are later identified with the pantheistic Bes – a popular divine mediator (Meeks 1992: 425-427; Dasen 1993: 74).

## TRAITS OF CHILD DEITIES

### 7.6 Divine family

Säve-Söderberg proposes three classification systems (principles) for grouping and subordinating ancient Egyptian deities (1977: 688). They include: (1) the social system; (2) the locality-based system; and (3) the numerical-genealogical system. The social system assumes that the same social order found in ancient Egyptian society can be applicable to the Egyptian pantheon but it actually plays a marginal role in theological developments. The locality-based system focuses on the locality of gods who are worshipped in major cultic centers and analyzes the composition and hierarchy of the divine groups from the perspective of geographical proximity. Finally, the numerical-genealogical system is the simplest way of grouping deities into a unit and the smallest unit in this type of grouping is the pair or couple. As a rule, couples of deities are composed of a god and a goddess and the male-female opposition naturally leads to a triad – or a divine family – when a child deity is added (te Velde 1971: 83; Säve-Söderberg 1977: 692). In fact, the familial triad is “the preferred and the most frequently encountered grouping of Egyptian deities” (Hornung 1982a: 218).

Here, we can see the different stages of the development of the familial triad of the three child deities. As mentioned in CHAPTER FOUR, Ihy was integrated in the triad only after the Ptolemaic Period and the late development of his triad is to some extent attributable to the close and exclusive bond between Ihy and Hathor, who are in relationship of master goddess and divine acolyte. The other child deities – Khonsu and Nefertem – also took different paths when their respective familial triads were formed. Khonsu, like the Horus child, became the child-member when the Theban triad was formed – in other words, without any intervening stage of

Amun and Mut alone as a couple. However, Nefertem joined the Memphite triad only after Ptah and Sekhmet had already been worshipped side by side for a long time (Hornung 1982a: 218; Säve-Söderberg 1977: 692).

### 7.6.1 Father gods

As creator gods or state gods, the father gods of the three child deities always form the center of each divine triad. In fact, Re, Amun and Ptah formed a triad of supreme deities representing Egypt's major cultic centers of Heliopolis, Thebes and Memphis during the late Eighteenth Dynasty and the Ramesside Period, as mentioned in the Leiden Hymn to Amun (Leiden I 350, 4, 21-22): *3 pw ntrw nbw, jmn r<sup>c</sup> pth nn snnw.sn, jmn rn.f m jmn, ntf r<sup>c</sup> m hr dt.f pth* "All the gods are three: Amun, Re, and Ptah, without their second. His name (identity) is hidden in Amun; his is Re as face; his body is Ptah." In addition to the textual evidence, there are a few visual representations of this supreme triad united together as a group, the most prominent example probably being the group of Ptah, Amun, Ramesses II (or his royal *ka*) and Re in the sanctuary of the Abu Simbel temple.

One prominent feature that should not be missed regarding the father gods is the fact that they remain passive in their relationship with the child deities. Even in the Osirian triad, which is regarded as a model divine family, the birth of Horus is posthumous and thus Osiris plays no significant role in nurturing and caring for Horus.<sup>372</sup> In the case of the other child deities, the

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<sup>372</sup> In ancient Egyptian society, the father's role in the upbringing of his son is limited to (vocational) education and social activities (Assmann 1991: 104-115). In this regard, it is interesting that Osiris plays an active role in securing his son's position in the pantheon with the following threat in the Contendings of Horus and Seth (p. Chester Beatty I, 57, 5-8 ... 58, 2-5): *j.jr.tw g3bw z3.j hrw hr jh, jw jnk.j.jrw tn m nht, hr jw jnk.jrw jtj btj r s<sup>c</sup>nh ntr mj n3 j3wt hr s3 ntr, jw bw gm sw ntr nb ntr nb r jr.f ... jr p3 t3 ntj tw.j jm.f sw mh.(w) m wpw hs3 hr, jw bn st sndw n ntr nb ntr, jw.j djt pry.sn mtw.sn jn h3tj n p3 ntj nb jrt zpw bjn mtw.sn hprw dj r hn<sup>c</sup>.j* " (In his letter to the Ennead) Why is my son Horus cheated, since I am the one who made you by force, and I am the one

father gods play a limited role in the divine familial triad and, more importantly, they are only very rarely mentioned as father of the child deity. In fact, their aloofness to their sons stands in stark contrast to relatively close interactions between the mother goddesses and their sons.

### *7.6.2 Mother goddesses*

At the core of Egyptian religious thought lie the fundamental notions of birth, death and resurrection on the cosmic, kingship and funerary levels. And in these notions, mother-goddesses play an essential role as the generative and protective force.

- On the cosmic level, creation and regeneration (rejuvenation) was an act that requires the agency of the feminine creative principle. For instance, the sky-goddess Nut in the sun-child pattern serves as the matrix of the cyclical rejuvenation with the sun (along with the stars) travelling through her body and completing the perpetual cycle of rejuvenation. In the Horus child pattern, Isis appears as a nurturing, protective mother of Horus.
- On the kingship level, mother-goddesses give birth to the king, nurture and protect him, and ensure the integrity of his body. Here, they play a role of ensuring the divine kingship and, in this regard, Hassan claims that the king becomes divine by assimilating the sacred power of motherly goddesses (1992: 312, 315, 316-318).
- On the funerary level, mother-goddesses receive or embrace the deceased king (or non-royal person) for rebirth/resurrection, defend him against their enemies in the netherworld, help him claim his rightful position in the afterlife, and assist him in ascending to the sky to join the sun-god.

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who makes barley and emmer to enliven the gods like the herds after gods, and no god or goddess can discover how to make it. ... As for the land that I am in, it is full of envoys of fierce force, who are not afraid of any god or goddess. I will let them come out and get the heart of everyone who does bad deeds, and they will come to be here with me."



In the case of the three child deities, their mother-goddesses, to some extent, fulfill the roles mentioned above. Apparently, their relationship with their son-gods is more intimate than that of the father gods.

The mother goddesses of the three child deities can be grouped into the so-called "Hathorian" goddesses in a number of aspects that they share as a mother of the child deity:

- (1) Eye of Re: The Hathorian goddesses are closely connected with the sun-god Re. They wear the sun-disk and they are regarded as the wife (and at the same time the daughter) of the sun-god or the solarized creator god. They are also feared as the vengeful "Eye of Re," and, like their children, frequently show violent and blood-thirsty traits.
- (2) Goddess of female sexuality and motherhood: The Hathorian goddesses are inextricably associated with love and female sexuality, as well as with motherhood. With Hathor as the chief goddess, they represent the female creative principle in their close association with all aspects of motherhood. In this regard, it is worth noting that they play a role of binding the father and son as a divine intermediary in the familial triad. Through their mediating power, the mother-goddesses serve to weld together the creator/sun-god with the child deity in the triads.
- (3) Mother (and wife) of the king: As mentioned above, the king can take the place of the child-member of the divine triads. Therefore, the Hathorian goddesses play a role as the mother of the king. In addition, they can appear as the "wife" of the king from an early date, since the king's chief wife is viewed as the earthly manifestation of the goddess (especially in the case of Hathor and Mut) and also serves as her chief priestess.

In contrast to the divine father-son relationship, that between the child deities and their mother goddesses is clearly confirmed from the textual evidence: Ihy and Nefertem are mentioned as *z3 hwt-hrw* “son of Hathor” and *z3 shmt ʿ3t* “son of Sekhmet the Great,” respectively. In the case of Khonsu, Mut is identified as *mwt hnzw* “mother of Khonsu.” In addition, the close mother-son relationship of Ihy and Nefertem is attested by the fact that they are frequently depicted as a pair with the child deities standing before or at the side of their mother goddesses. Khonsu shows a relatively weak filial bond with his mother, which is substituted by Mut’s role as the great mother goddess to the son/heir of the supreme state deity. In this regard, it is also notable that Khonsu is usually represented with both of his parent deities.

### ***7.6.3 Dysfunctional family***

Even though the Hathorian goddesses play the role of caring mother, the child deities of those goddesses do not seem to enjoy the care and protection provided to the Horus child by his mother-goddess Isis or Hathor. Moreover, those child deities do not experience any dramatic childhood like the Horus child nor is there any mention of the generational succession like the one between Osiris and Horus. In the case of Ihy, his role as the divine acolyte explains his superficial filial relationship with his mother-goddess Hathor. Khonsu is considered the child of Amun and Mut due largely to his status as the perpetually rejuvenating moon. As the heir of the supreme state god, his name was reinterpreted as *h-nsw(t)* “the child of the king” in the Late Period. But Khonsu’s childhood otherwise lacks any detailed account of a conflict in which he engages to win the kingship from his adversary. The filial relationship of Nefertem is the most superficial. He is never shown performing the mediating role for his parents.

In sum, it turns out that the divine families of Ihy, Khonsu and Nefertem are dysfunctional in many respects. There is no hint of a loving couple or caring parents in their familial triads. There is no dramatic childhood or a meaningful interaction between the mother goddesses and their children. There is no struggle against the formidable opponent at the time of transition from puberty into adulthood. For this reason, it seems likely that the members of each divine family were simply consolidated into a triad in order to emulate the ideal model of the divine family of Osiris-Isis-Horus and rival the tradition of other major cultic centers (Meeks & Favard-Meeks 1996: 184).

### 7.7 Shared traits

It is true that the three child deities have taken their own path of development and played diverse roles in the Egyptian pantheon. Still, there are some traits that they share in common. First of all, they meet the definition of the child deity mentioned in CHAPTER ONE (see 1.1 above).

- They are child-members of the familial triads consisting of a father, mother and son.
- They are usually represented in juvenile or youthful human form.
- They symbolize the cyclical rejuvenation of the universe (and the legitimate succession of the king).

The fact that the three deities share common traits is indicated in Coffin Texts Spell 563 (CT VI 162s-v): *jrr.j šmwt hr rdwj.j mj nfr-tm, ssn.j ʔw m fnd.j mj hnzw hq3 dfw, m33.j w3t m jrtj.j mj jhy z3 hwt-hrw mry.s* “I will make marches on my feet like Nefertem. I will sniff air with my nose like Khonsu, the lord of sustenance. I will see the path with my eyes like Ihy, son of Hathor, whom

she loves.” In the spell, the three deities are mentioned side by side as if to form a group as child-members of important triads. In this regard, it is also noteworthy that they are identified with each other, especially in the case of Ihy and Khonsu (Allam 1963: 135). Thus, Khonsu is identified with Ihy in Coffin Texts Spell 334 (CT IV 180i-j): *sq3.j m rn.j pw n jhy, dj.t(w) n.j hy m rn.j pw n hnzw* “I have been exalted in this my name of Ihy. Acclamation is given to me in this my name of Khonsu.” In other spells, their identification is not direct but implied in their shared relationship with Hathor (B. Altenmüller 1975: 168):

- Coffin Texts Spell 187 (CT III 90e-91a): *gm.n.j hnzw hr w3t h3.n.f pwnt, rdj.n.f h̄ n.j h3w hms n.j šwt m sn m snt m n̄hw m n̄hwt m r(m)t m 3bt.j m njwtjw.j m njwtwt.j* “I found Khonsu on the way. When he descended on Punt, he made thousands stand up for me and hundreds sit down for me, as brother and sister, as male living and female living, as people, as my family, as my male villagers and my female villagers.”
- Coffin Texts Spell 195 (CT III 114d-g): *gm.n N pn hnzw h̄.(w) m w3t.f m h3t.f m pwnt, jw rdj.n.f h̄ n N pn m h3w hms n N pn m šwt m snw snwt m njwtjw njwtwt* “this N has found Khonsu standing in his path when he came down from Punt, and he has caused standing for this N in thousands and sitting for this N in hundreds, as male and female siblings and as male and female villagers.”

More importantly, however, the most salient trait they have in common is the fact that they are all gods of light.<sup>373</sup> As the son of Hathor and the sun-god, Ihy clearly exhibits the traits of the sun-

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<sup>373</sup> In the mythology of the primordial child, the moment in which the light first appears represents simultaneously the dawn of creation and the moment when a human being awakens from the sleep of the unconscious (Moon 1991: 232). In this regard, also note Fossum (1999: 315): “*Emerging out of the night and the subterranean cave, the child god stands for the ego emerging from the dark realm of the unconscious. The dark cavern represents chaos, the state in which it is impossible to distinguish between things. The divine child brought out into the*

child and thus a god of light. He also appears as the primeval god who emerges from the primeval waters. Needless to say, Khonsu is the god of light in his capacity as the moon god. In fact, his role as god of light explains a number of his traits that seem to be confusing. For instance, his fear-inspiring nature can be explained in the light of his role as a god of light who slays opponents of the sun-god (or the deceased) and dispels the force of darkness (Pinch 2002: 166). In addition, as a healing deity, Khonsu is capable of expelling darkness (or exorcising demons) and blindness in his role of the god of light. Nefertem is also considered the god of light in that he is the embodiment of the lotus blossom (one of the powerful symbols of the sun) and thus very closely associated with the sun-god. Therefore, it would not be wrong to view him as the divine child of light equipped with the power of life-giving fragrance who comes out of the dark and abysmal primeval material represented by Ptah. This aspect also helps us understand his role as the judge of the deceased (Seeber 1976: 132).

As the light of god, the three child deities (1) guarantee the eternal renewal of the cosmos and the resurrection of the deceased; and (2) represent the concept of *kamutef*.<sup>374</sup> Therefore, we can conclude that the three child deities embody the *nḥḥ*-cycle and thus follow the pattern of the sun-child, rather than that of the Horus child. Their closeness to the sun-child pattern is also supported by other factors such as (1) the superficial familial relationship with their parent

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*light of day signals the new creation and the moment when the human being awakens from the sleep of the unconscious."*

<sup>374</sup> There is no textual evidence that clearly designates these child deities as *kamutef*. However, their role as god of light can also shed light on their nature as *kamutef*. First, the *kamutef* aspect of Ihy is hinted at in Coffin Texts Spell 334 through the epithet *k3 ḥnmw* "the bull of turbulence" and the phrase describing him growing into the splendid midday sun. In the case of Khonsu, the following should be considered: (1) the moon is regarded as *kamutef* in the name of "Bull of Ennead" due to its capacity of rejuvenating itself each month; and (2) one of his father-deity Amun's aspects is the ithyphallic *kamutef*. Most importantly, however, the union of the sun and moon mentioned on the wall of the Ptolemaic propylon of the Khonsu temple suggests a *kamutef* pattern or the Mut-Khonsu cycle. Finally, Nefertem's role as the solar deity who provides enlivening energy to the sun-god leaves us a possibility of interpreting it as a reverse image of the *kamutef* concept because the sun-god receives the life force in the form of fragrance from his youthful alter ego Nefertem.

deities; (2) the absence of the dramatic childhood and the conflict with the formidable opponent at the crisis of puberty; and (3) the lack of evidence for the generational transmission from father to son. It is also important to note that the three child deities are all syncretized with Harpocrates in the Late Period. When he emerged as an independent (and supreme) child deity, Harpocrates had already become fully solarized and thus embodied the child-god of light.

This common trait as the god of light also played the pivotal role of promoting the three child deities as the child-member of a divine triad. As gods of light and as gods of the sky (i.e. luminary of the sky), they naturally appear as benevolent deities, playing important roles as divine guide, protector and healer. In addition, these luminary children can stand face-to-face with their father deities who are the creator god, the sun-god or the primeval god as a rejuvenated form of the light on the basis of their close relationship with their Hathorian mother-goddess. In their role of benevolent deity, they must have been friendlier and thus more accessible to those who wished to ask help and salvation from the gods, especially during the period of "personal piety."

## SUMMARY

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the sun symbolizes the *nhh*-element that completes its perpetual cycle by uniting the mother-goddess who represents the *dt*-matrix. In this aspect, the sun represents a cyclical and reversible rejuvenation and regeneration.

The Horus child pattern focuses on a generational transmission and succession. According to the Heliopolitan cosmogony, the familial triad of Osiris-Isis-Horus forms an inverted triangle that is

antipodal to the first triad of Atum-Shu-Tefnut (see Fig. 3-1 above). This antipodal structure stresses the role of the Horus child, who stands at the terminus of the divine generation. Here, he is a successor of the future generation and, at the same time, the fruition of the perpetual creation.

At the same time, the divine family of the Horus child pattern was considered ideal by the ancient Egyptians. In the family, a productive sexual union of father and mother is not suppressed and this leads to a birth of a child – Horus and the living king. In addition, the dramatic childhood of the Horus child underscores the generational nature of the Horus child pattern. Here, Isis faithfully fulfills her caring roles as a protective mother, which is clearly contrasted with the mother-goddess of the sun-child, who merely serves as a matrix of rebirth and rejuvenation. Finally, the conflict of Horus and Seth that forms the final part of the childhood of the Horus child validates the succession from father to son, through the burial of the deceased father and the coronation of the living son.

With regard to the two basic patterns of the prototypical child deities, the three child deities seem to follow the pattern of the sun-child as mentioned above, because they embody the *nḥḥ*-element and symbolize the cyclical rebirth and rejuvenation as a god of light. Therefore, on the cosmic level, the child deities serve as a guarantor of eternal renewal of the universe. Obviously, Ihy and Nefertem are the solar child and the embodiment of the *nḥḥ*-cycle with their close association with the sun-god. As the moon god, Khonsu plays the role of the deputy of the sun-god illuminating the world with his light at night. On the kingship level, they are closely linked to the concept of the divine birth of the king, who frequently identifies himself with those child deities in order to present himself as the child-member of the powerful divine families and fulfill his role as the intermediary of the divine and human spheres. In addition, the king is also depicted as

presenting offerings to those versatile deities for the bliss of rejuvenation and the continuity of the legitimate royal succession. On the funerary level, the child deities play the role of a trusted guide and protector of the deceased and lead them to eternal life. At the same time, the deceased identify themselves with those deities in order to take advantage of their formidable magical power and seek to benefit from the powerful medium in their possession such as music and enlivening fragrance.

## CODA

As mentioned earlier, the New Kingdom saw the emergence of a new trend that depicts the living king as a child (god) in connection with the concept of the king's divine birth. The child-king motif was continuously expanded to encompass the image of the child deity as an embodiment of rebirth and regeneration and incorporated into the formal repertoire of royal artistic convention from the end of the New Kingdom onward.

Nonetheless, the worship of child deities in temples and private cults began in earnest only after the Third Intermediate Period. The earliest development of theologies involving child deities can be observed in the Theban region with the growing importance of Khonsu and other child forms of Horus. Later the number of child deities increased substantially,<sup>375</sup> with specialized roles such as protector from illness and danger. In the process, while sharing common iconography and functions, child deities began to evolve into independent deities. The phenomenon can be most

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<sup>375</sup> Budde enumerates child deities attested in the Late Period, such as Harpocrates, Ihy, Khonsu, Heka, Harpara, Harsomtus, Somtus, Horus-wedja, Horhekenu, Horus-Shu, Re, Neferhotep, Shemanefer, Panebtawy, Mandulis and Tutu (2010: 7).



clearly observed in the independent child forms of Horus, such as Harpocrates, Harendotes and Harsiese, which can appear side by side in temple reliefs.

In the ritual scenes in the temple, those child deities are depicted as accompanying their parent deities, but sometimes they appear as the sole recipient of offerings. However, the most interesting features in the late representation of child deities are the following: (1) local child deities and other child deities show up in a ritual scene according to a certain hierarchy in which local child deities take precedence over the others; and (2) sometimes they were treated as a group of seven, a configuration perhaps influenced by the concept of the seven Hathors. For instance, Ihy is shown in seven manifestations in the temple of Hathor in Dendera (Budde 2010: 6, Fig. 8) and the seven child deities depicted on the northern outer wall of the mammisi in Armant symbolize all child deities worshipped throughout Egypt during the reign of Cleopatra VII (Sandri 2006: 203-206).

The most decisive factor that contributed to the dissemination of the theology of child deities was the idea of a divine child who was expected to bring hope and stability to the world during the period when Egypt was under successive foreign rules (Budde 2010: 8). Here, the birth of a child deity showed a marked difference from the New Kingdom notion of the divine birth in two aspects: (1) the child deity was no longer identified with the ruler but regarded as a divine savior who assured the well-being of Egypt and her people; and (2) therefore, the queen no longer played the significant role of conceiving the future king by the supreme god Amun; rather the child deity could bring himself into the world through the mother-consort goddess. The hope for a divine child allowed Egyptians in the grip of foreign rulers to see the present as divine providence and retain hope for divine salvation (Assmann 1992: 264).

The conception, birth, and enthronement of the young deity were celebrated each year in the *mammisi* throughout Egypt and local worshippers actively took part in the festivals and processions. In the pursuit of their legitimacy, foreign rulers identified themselves with the child deity, with their mothers assumed the role of the mother-goddess. By doing so, they also hoped for blessings of child deities – especially the eternal rejuvenation of the royal family. This tradition is ultimately reflected in the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ, because for Christians, Jesus is also an example of the divine child born from a divine father and destined to become the Savior of the whole world.

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