

The unification of Re and Osiris in the Netherworld

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Abstract

The unification of Re and Osiris is one of the most important and complex topics in the ancient Egyptian religion. It is not only the focal event of the Netherworldly journey of the sun, but one of the most fundamental principles in all of Egyptian religion. Not surprisingly, it is the primary focus of the corpus of Underworld Books, as well as most funerary literature of the Third Intermediate Period. Many cover this subject, but it still need more study. I divided this study into the next specific points:

- 1- The reasons of the unification of Re and Osiris.
- 2- The time of this unification
- 3- The place of this unification.
- 4- The different interpretations of the relationship between Re and Osiris.
- 5- The united ba.
- 6- The benefit from this unification in the interpretation of many mysteries in the Egyptian religion.

This research deals with one of the most important and complex topics in the ancient Egyptian religion, namely the unification of Re and Osiris. This union is not only the focal event of the Netherworldly journey of the sun, but one of the most fundamental principles in all of Egyptian religion. Not surprisingly, it is the primary focus of the corpus of Underworld Books, as well as most funerary literature of the Third Intermediate Period. This subject is covered by many, but it still need more study. I saw that this study could be divided into the next specific points:

- 7- The reasons of the unification of Re and Osiris.
- 8- The time of this unification
- 9- The place of this unification.
- 10- The different interpretations of the relationship between Re and Osiris.
- 11- The united ba.
- 12- The benefit from this unification in the interpretation of many mysteries in the Egyptian religion.

1. The reasons of the unification of Re and Osiris:

The ancient Egyptians believed that every deceased person becomes Osiris, and he will receive the same fat, he will live after his death like him. At the same time, there was a belief that the dead after his death will accompany the sun god Re in his journey in the heaven, and will rise with him every morning, but how can the deceased become Osiris and descend with him to the Underworld, and at the same time become Re and ascend with him to heaven. The books of the Underworld tried to find a solution of this question, and they already succeeded to find a satisfactory answer of this difficult question. They believed that Osiris is the body, which descend to the Underworld followed by all the blessed, and Re is the ba, which separates from the body at the death and ascends to the heaven with the souls of all the blessed dead. As the life is renewed by the union of the soul with the body, it is renewed as well by the union of Re

and Osiris every night.¹ This meaning is confirmed by the text on the second gilded shrine of the king Tutankhamun, where Nephthys addresses the deceased saying:

"Your soul will go to the sky with Re
Your body will go to the earth with Osiris
Your soul will be in your body every day."

When the sun god (ba) leaves the Underworld in the morning, and ascends to the sky, the body remains in the darkness and will be as "the manifestation of Osiris who is in the darkness". Osiris remains the lord of life and the lord of the Underworld even after Re leaves him. He waits for Re in the following night to renew the life by their unification again.²

The texts upon the shrine of Thutankhamun express this meaning.

In one of these texts we read:

Nn n ntryt m shr pn m db3wt.sn m33.sn h3wt itn.f b3w.sn 3pp.sn htw.f h3w<t.sn mn m st.sn>

"These goddesses are in this fashion in their sarcophagi, they behold the light of his disk and their bas enter after him <their>corp<s>es<remaining in their places>".³

2. The time of the unification of Re and Osiris:

The ancient Egyptians believed that the journey of the sun in the Underworld takes twelve hours, and in the sixth hour at the very depth of the Netherworld, the sun reaches the water hole filled with Nun, the primeval water. Here lies the corpse of the sun (the corpse of Osiris). As ba and corpse, Re and Osiris unite at the deepest point in the Underworld, this union leads to the renewal of the energies of life in both gods and all aspects of life. The Egyptians

¹ E. Hornung, *Die Nachtfahrt der Sonne: eine altägyptische Beschreibung des Jenseits*, Düsseldorf (1998) 95; W. Barta, Osiris als Mutterleib des Unterweltlichen Sonnengottes in den Jenseitsbüchern des Neuen Reiches, *JEOL29* (1985-1986).

² S. Wiebach-Koepke, *Sonnenlauf und kosmische Regeneration zur Systematik der Lebensprozesse in den Unterweltbüchern, Ägypten und Altes Testament* 71(2007) Scheme III.

³ J.C. Darnell, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the solar-osirian unity: cryptographic compositions in the tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramesses VI, and Ramesses IX* (Chicago, 1995) 118f.

believed that the emergence of the first thread of light in the sky at dawn dues to this union.⁴

3. Place of the union of Ra and Osiris

This is the place where the corpse was placed, which was set by the Books of the Underworld as a place where the events of the sixth hour of the night revolve. This place is always risky, therefore, it is surrounded either by the coffin or by the Urobors, which represents the continuity and the renewal of life, and this place can be the burial chamber itself.⁵ This place is described in the Books of the Netherworld in several descriptions as:

The West *imnt*⁶

The earth *3kr -t3*⁷

Underworld *d3t*⁸

Depth *md3t*⁹

Primeval water *Nun*.

The realm of the dead *igr*.¹⁰

The hidden place *imnt*.

The House of *bnbn*.¹¹

In the Book of the Gates when Re reaches to the place of the sixth hour, he addressed the guards of this place saying:

"Receive my forms and embrace me in your Mysteries. You shall be in the Hwt-Benben, where my body rests."¹²

In the litany of Re we read:

⁴ Barta, *Die Bedeutung der Jenseitstexte für den verstorbenen König*, MÄS42 (Berlin, 1985) 80.

⁵ W. Westendorf, *Altägyptische Darstellungen des Sonnenlaufes auf der abschüssigen Himmelsbahn*, MÄS 10 (1966) 4.

⁶ A. Piankoff, *Le livre des quererts* (Kairo 1953) Tf. 33,5.

⁷ E. Hornung, *Das Amduat. Die Schrift des Verborgenen Raums. Teil I: Text*, ÄA 7 (Wiesbaden, 1963) 88, 1

⁸ E. Hornung, *Das Amduat*, Teil I, 59,8.

⁹ I. Hegenbarth-Reichardt, *Der Raum der Zeit (Eine Untersuchung zu den altägyptischen Vorstellungen und Konzeptionen von Zeit und Raum anhand des Unterweltbuches Amduat)*, (Wiesbaden, 2006) 222.

¹⁰ E. Hornung, *Das Buch von den Pforten des Jenseits. Teil I: Text*, AH7 (Genf 1979) 263.

¹¹ E. Hornung, *Das Buch von den Pforten, Teil I*, 225; 233; Idem, *Die Nachtfahrt der Sonne, eine altägyptische Beschreibung des Jenseits*, 93.

¹² J. Assman, *Liturgische Lieder an den Sonnengott*, MÄS 19 (Berlin, 1969) 85.

ḥkn n k R̄ k̄3 šm nb b3w imy bnbn.f

"Hail to you, Re, high of might, lord of bas, who is in his Benben sanctuary.¹³"

4. Different interpretations of the union of Re and Osiris

The union between Re and Osiris is quite different from the union of other gods, such as Amun Re, Ptah Soker, because the union of those gods is a result of the convergence between them in qualities, or a try to reconcile them. In the case of Re and Osiris, it is completely different, because each one of them does not live stand-alone, but they are two parts of one entity. There is no life for Re without Osiris and the contrary. The representation of the union of Re and Osiris as a union of a head and a body, confirms this idea, because the body cannot live without the head, and the head cannot live without the body.¹⁴ There are several attempts to imagine the way of this union as follows:

4.1 The interpretation of the union as a sexual connection

The Egyptians imagine that this union, which results a new life every night must have the two requisite elements of life; the feminine and masculine. They believed that Re is a male and Osiris is a female. They believed that when the sun absents every night, it pollinates Osiris and that the twelve hours of this absence at night represent the duration of the pregnancy, where the sun remains in the womb of Osiris until it regenerates and reborn to a new life in the twelfth hour of the journey. Therefore, they looked to Osiris as a female complementary of Re. The text of chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead emphasizes this relationship.

¹³ E. Hornung, *Das Buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen (Sonnenlitanei)* nach den Versionen des Neuen Reiches (*Aegyptiaca Helvetica* 2), vol.1, 82.

¹⁴ For the relationship between the head and the sun disk see:

B.R. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation of head and sun as expressed by headrests, *SAK* 29 (2001) 61-95.

Ptr rf sw Wsir pw ky dd hknw R^c rn.f b3 pw n R^c nk.f im.f ds.f

"Who is he? He is Osiris. Alternatively: Acclaimer of Re is his name; he is the ba of Re, with whom he himself copulates."

Along with the explicit statement that "he is the ba of Re with whom he (Re) himself copulates" the name "Acclaimer of Re" also bears sexual connotation.¹⁵

4.1.1 Osiris as a Horizon

There is another conception shows this sexual relationship, where Osiris identifies with the horizon. Osiris as the horizon can be a female counterpart to the sun.

Every night the sun submerges in the western horizon, in the form of Atum or Aiof (setting sun), to pollinate Osiris, who embraces the seed and renews it throughout the twelve-hour of the night, which represent the duration of pregnancy for the morning sun. He gives it birth in the morning at the eastern gate of the horizon as a scarab or a child of the sun. The following pyramid text confirms the equality of Osiris with the horizon as it describes Osiris as:

3ht prrt R^cw im.s

"The 3ht from which Re goes forth."¹⁶ Osiris assumes the role of 3ht from which the sun emerges each morning.

Osiris is represented in many scenes as a horizon. He appears in the Book of Earth and the Book of Caverns as a large male figure whose head and feet curve upward, recalling the twin mountains of horizon from which the sun emerges, and forms a mirror of the arching, spread-eagle posture of the sky goddess Nut, who gives birth to the sun on the ceiling, above. A hawk-headed deity with a small disc behind his head emerges from the center of the god's body. Regarding the figure, the text states unambiguously: "the Behdet (i.e.Horus), emerges from the corpse of his father." (Fig. 1)

¹⁵ J.C. Darnell, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books*, 583.

¹⁶ *Pyr.*585a; 621b, 636c, 1887;

for the equal of Osiris with the horizon see: F. Friedman, *On the Meaning of Akh 3h in Egyptian Mortuary Texts* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation; Brandeis University, 1981) 87-9.

The oval within which Osiris reclines is identified as *nnwt*, a word that originally signified the dung ball of the scarab beetle. Its use here was doubtless meant to evoke the beetle's own (perceived) parthenogenesis, and the associated concepts of solar re-birth.¹⁷

Here the Egyptians wanted to link between the resurrection of Osiris through the birth of his son Horus, and the rebirth of the sun in the morning.

This linkage between the birth of Horus, and the rising of Re appears also in the litany of Re, which talk about the rising of Re because of his father Osiris, thus it equals between Re and Horus.

"You shine in the arms of your father Osiris, you live because of him; you are healthy because of him."¹⁸

There is another similar scene depicting Osiris in the same form, and next to his raised feet appears the solar disk as if he is born from the corpse of Osiris (Fig 2).

The scene of the First Hour of Imy Duat (Fig. 3) confirms the equality of Osiris with the horizon. It represents Osiris twice, kneeling on both sides of a scarab, which represents the sun of the morning¹⁹. Osiris through this dualism represents the two mountains of the horizon. This jubilation emphasizes the sexual relationship between Re and Osiris.²⁰

4.1.2. Re as a feminine element

In some cases, the Egyptians express this sexual relationship from another point of view, by making the solar disk a feminine element, which descends to the Underworld to unite with the corpse of Osiris, like Isis when she united with Osiris to give birth to her son Horus. The morning sun *itn* , which is treated as a male, emerges

¹⁷ J.A. Roberson, *The Book of the Earth: A study of ancient Egyptian symbol-system and the evolution of New Kingdom cosmographic models*. (unpublished Ph.D.dissertation; Pennsylvania Univesity,2007) 148f.

¹⁸ J. Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder*, 104f.

¹⁹ E. Hornung, *Das Amduat II*, (Wiesbaden, 1963),25.

²⁰ *Wb* III, 178.

from this feminine disk, which is known in the texts as *itnt*. Namely the disk of the day is Re, *itn*, masculine, that of the night is *itnt*, feminine, the womb in which the sun god regenerates. This explains the describing of Isis as "the one who illumines the divine corpse of the lord of Netjery (Osiris)" *shd dt ntr n nb ntry*".²¹ She is the disk of the sun visiting the corpse of Osiris in the Netherworld. This *itnt*, as the womb of the sun of the day, is also the sun at the eastern horizon, as it enters the day.

The scenes of the religious Books, especially the Book of the Earth and the Book of Caverns, express this idea clearly. A scene in the Book of the Earth (Fig 4) represents the mummy of Osiris lies beneath a large solar disc, and he is labeled *h3t imjt R^c* "corpse in which Re is", suggesting that the figure represents Osiris at the time of his union with the sun god.²²

The accompanying annotation provides the additional epithet Unuti (*wnwtj*) He of the Hour). A falcon head descends from the bottom of the central solar disc, with a vertical line connecting the top of its head with the middle of the recumbent mummy's body. The annotation in the tomb of Ramesses VI explains that this line is a beam of light, which enters the corpse as an utterance that has emerged from the solar disc. A semi circle of alternating stars and discs, twelve of each in the version of Ramesses VI, flanks the central disc and surrounds the mummy. The text refers to these images as the hours (*wnwt*), which become mysterious with (Unuti). The larger solar disc hovers in the middle of this group, at the mid-point of the twenty-four hour cycle. Despite the earlier texts, reluctance toward naming the central mummified figure, this image undoubtedly represented the mysterious union of Re and Osiris. This event is the very apotheosis of resurrection and the mythological model on which the king and later, private individuals hung their hope for rebirth.

²¹ Darnell, *Solar-Osirian Unity*, 328.

²² J.A. Roberson, *The Book of the Earth*, 294, (64).

In the former scene, the solar disc represents the female, and the corpse of Osiris represents the male. Through their union, Horus emerges from the womb of the solar disc. It is noticed in this scene that the union of Re and Osiris takes place in the midpoint, and on the both sides appear six discs and six stars, which represent the twelve hours of the night.

This exchange of roles between Re and Osiris emphasizes the important meaning, that each of them revives and regenerates the other, when the sun lights up the body of Osiris, it alerts the latent forces of life and at the same time it gives Osiris rebirth, coincides with the birth of his son Horus.

4.2. Osiris as a mother of Re

4.2.1. The identification of Osiris with Nut

As the Egyptians believed that the body of Nut represents the Duat, and that she swallows the sun every evening to give birth to it every morning, they also believed that the body of Osiris represents the Dwat, and that he embraces the sun throughout the twelve hours of the night to give birth to it in the morning. They represented him in the same large form of Nut, which appears on the ceilings of the tombs. Probably the most famous scenes depicting Osiris with this form is the scene on the second gilded shrine of Tutankhamun (Fig.5), which shows Osiris as a giant deity, within his belly appears the ram-headed soul of the sun in a disk.²³ The location of the soul within the belly of Osiris is a symbol of the regeneration of the sun in the belly of Nut. It also symbolizes the regeneration of Osiris through his union with Re. The sun within the belly of Osiris parallels depictions of the solar child within the disk/womb of the pregnant goddess. Barta sees that the emergence of Osiris in this form expresses always that he is the mother of Re.²⁴

Here Osiris replaces Nut, who give birth to the sun every morning.

²³ A. Piankoff, Une Représentation rare sur l'une des chapelles de Toutankhâmun,"*JEA* 35(1949),113f.

²⁴ W. Barta, Osiris als Mutterleib, 103(88).

In the Book of Caverns Nut confronts the giant, ithyphallic figure of Osiris, on the opposite side of the fifth cavern. The confrontation of Nut and Osiris appears most clearly in the sarcophagus hall of Ramesses IX, where the two giant figures appear on the left and right door-jamb (Fig.6), respectively, thereby facing one another from either side of the entrance to the chamber.²⁵

The appearance of the Osiride king in the place of the goddess Nut on the scene on the sarcophagus lid of Siptah, and again on the lids decorated for Tawosret/Setnakht, Ramesses III, and Ramesses IV emphasizes the identification of Osiris with Nut.

4.2.2. The identification of Osiris's corpse with št3t:

In addition to the identification of Osiris with Nut, which make Osiris as mother of the dead such as Nut, we find that the corpse of Osiris itself have been treated in the texts as a feminine. It is labeled as št3t, namely the mystery the "secret self", in which Re is rejuvenated during the night and through which the sun is born in the east place, which embraces Re in the night and give him birth in the morning.²⁶

h3t ʿ3t imyt 3ht h3t ntr št3t

"The great corpse, which is in the Netherworld, the mysterious corpse of the deity."²⁷

This mysterious lady is represented in the Book of the Earth, standing with her hands held palms up, looking backward. In her left hand, she holds a ram-headed bird. In her right hand, she holds a disc (Fig.7). The text identifies these two images as the two bas of the sun god. Here the sun travels over the hands of this goddess as he travels between the mountains of the horizon. This goddess identified with the corpse of Osiris, when he united with Re. This identification is emphasized by the describing of the both as one

²⁵ J.A. Roberson, *The Book of the Earth*, 274; Guilman, *Le tombeau de Ramses IX*, MIFAO 15, (Cairo, 1907) PL.89.

²⁶ Darnell, *Solar-Osirian Unity*, 566, Fn.50.

²⁷ E. Hornung, *Zwei ramessidische Königsgräber: Ramses IV. und Ramses VII, Theben 11* (Mainz am Rhein, 1990) pp64-5, pl.117.

whose head "in the upper Duat, her feet being in the lower Duat" here the upper Duat is equivalent to the height of the daylight world, and the lower Duat is synonymous with *Htmyt*, the "place of Annihilation" in the eastern horizon, where the Damned are punished."

tp št3t m d3t hrjt rdwj.sy m d3t hrjt

"The head of the mysterious one is in the Upper Netherworld; her feet are in the Lower Netherworld."²⁸

Thus, the Egyptian believes that the corpse of Osiris represents the womb, which contains the sun god to give him birth in the morning. If we compare this perception with the former perception, which makes the relationship between Re and Osiris a sexual relationship, where Re vaccinates Osiris, we can understand why Re is described as *kamutef* "the bull of his mother" who pollinates her every night and is born from her every morning. The mother here is not Nut but she is Osiris himself.

4.3. Osiris as a creator God:

Another interpretation of the unification of Re and Osiris considers Osiris as a creator god, and equivalent of the Primeval water Nun where the sun god appears for the first time. The Egyptians believed that the Netherworld is primeval water, where the solar-ship sails. They also believed that Osiris embodies the Duat, as the last scene of Book of Caverns shows, where Osiris surrounded the Netherworld by his curved body²⁹ (fig 8), and as Osiris represents the Duat, he is thus equal to this primeval water.

The texts also express the identification of Osiris with this primeval water as he is described in the litany of Re as the water from which the sun rises, as in the following text, which describes the rising of the sun god:

²⁸ A. Piankoff, *La creation du disque solaire* (*BdE* 19; Cairo: Institut Francais d Archeologie Orientale, 1953) pl.25, p.45.

²⁹ E. Hornung, *Das Buch von den Pforten des Jenseits nach den Versionen des Neuen Reiches* II; 290f; *Idem*, Zu den Schlußszenen der Unterweltbücher, *MDAIK* 57, 218, Abb.1; A. Piankoff, The sky-goddess Nut and the Night journey of the sun, *JEA* 20 (Jun, 1934) 60.

"He is raised between the hands of his father Osiris in Ta-weret . He is beautiful in the hands of his father Osiris in the west, because he is in the west, this is the water from which Re rises"

Some scenes show Osiris as the source of the primeval water, they represented him ithyphallic, throwing copious semen, and from this semen the primeval water Nun flows, from which the sun rises.

In one of these scenes (Fig.9) Osiris appears as a half-upright, androgynous deity³⁰, and the sun rises upon his chest, it greets and rejuvenates him, then the water flows from his mouth and from his phallus, and from this water which comes from his body, the newborn sun rises once as a child and once as a scarab Kheperi. This scene shows that Re and Osiris both gives life to the other.

This same idea is found frequently in many scenes of the Book of the Earth. In one of these scenes (Fig.10), we see Osiris standing as a large, ithyphallic deity, at the midpoint of the serpent's body, which coils to take the form of two great mounds with a central depression between them, recalling the form of the horizon. The accompanied annotation named Osiris as *imn wnwt* "He who hides the hours". Surrounding his upper body are a number of stars and two solar discs. Beneath the phallus of Osiris sits a small figure in the shape of the child hieroglyph, atop the sign for flame and beneath the flame hieroglyph stands a man with upraised arms, identified as the bloody one snfy, who receives a tendril of flame, which issues from the phallus of the central deity. Tendrils or rays" *stwt*" of this flame, represented as a series of dotted lines, connect the various figures in the center of the tableau. Along either side around Osiris appear twelve goddesses, arranged in two groups of six and corresponding most probably to the hours of the night. Each of these goddesses holds a small disc, to which the dotted lines of flame extend. Here Osiris stands in the midpoint of the journey of the sun, in the place where Re shines upon his corpse to revive him,

³⁰ E. Hornung, *The ancient Egyptian books of the afterlife*, 111(62).

and through this new life, Re was also given a new life, because Osiris beget him as a child to come out into the life in this new form. Through the repetition of this course every night the life renewed and continue upon the earth.

The role of Osiris as a creator god is emphasized also through the scene in the tomb of the king Ramesses IX³¹ (Fig.11), which represents Osiris ithyphallic and reclining in the slope, his arm raised above his head as the god Min and the other hand is invisible and probably grasping the phallus. This invisible hand replaces *nbt htpyt* the hand of Atum, which represents his feminine counterpart in the creation.

Darnell suggests that the raised hand of the Osiride figure represents the waters through which the sun will be reborn. The iconography of the solar disk rising on the breast of the Osiride figure, and the scarab and disk entering into his raised hand shows him to be Re and Osiris at the time of their mystic union. This union makes him universal deity as the accompanying text explains: *Nti pn m shr pn ʿf m hryt rd.wy.fy m htmyt* "This god is in this fashion, his arm in the upper region, and his feet in the place of destruction."³²

Darnell sees that the head here represents Re who rises in the sky and the feet represent Osiris who descends into Underworld. Thus, the head and feet of the united one link the highest and deepest areas of creation.

5. *db3-dmd* the united Ba

In all the former scenes and texts Re appears as a solar disk or as a ram-headed bird, and Osiris appears as mummy or as ithyphallic deity, recalling the returning of life to him through the sun rays which fall over his corpse when Re shines over his body. Namely, we can easily recognize the two gods in spite of the talk about their unification. In the Book of the Dead, we find the first depiction of

³¹ F. Guilmant, *Le tombeau de Ramses IX*, pl.63.

³² Darnell, *Solar-Osirian Unity*, 552.

these two gods, not in two forms but in one form, in one body, speak with one tongue. This form is commonly called the united Ba, which represents the union of the Ba of Re and the Ba of Osiris, who meet together in Mendes as recalls the Coffin Texts, and united together in one-body represents a ram –headed mummy, which called the ram of Mendes.

Wsir pw m ꞗ.f r ddt gm.n.f b3im n Rꞗ ꞗ.n hpt.n ky ky ꞗ.n hpr m b3.wy m ddt

"Osiris, when he entered Mendes, where he found the ba of Re. Then the one embraced the other. Then (they) became the one with two bas in Mendes.³³"

This Ba named in hieroglyphic as *ddt*, which probably expresses the continuation and eternity of this union.

This united ba is represented in the several New Kingdom tombs, royal and private, as well as in the texts of the Litany of Re and Book of the Dead.³⁴ This ba appears also frequently in the papyri of the twenty-first dynasty. One of the most important and famous of these scenes is the scene in the tomb of Nofretari, which represents the united ba as if he rises between the hands of Isis and Nephthys, who represent the two mountain of the Horizon. The accompanied annotation explains clearly that this form embodied the united Ba

Rꞗ pw htp m Wsir

Wsir htp m Rꞗ

"It is Re who rests in Osiris; it is Osiris who rests in Re"

The Egyptians entitled this united ba with many titles, all express greatness and mystery such as:

*št3, dsr, imn, ꞗ.*³⁵

³³ CT IV 276/7c-280/1a.

³⁴ G. Lapp, *The Papyrus of Nebseni (BM EA9900) The Texts of Chapter 180 with New Kingdom Parallels* (London, 2002).

³⁵ F. Friedman, *On the Meaning of Akh*, 625f.

6- The benefit from the union of Re and Osiris in the interpretation of many mysterious concepts in the Egyptian religion

The Egyptologists have tried to benefit from this dualism in order to interpret many concepts. They see in Osiris the darkness and in Re the light, they believed that Osiris is the stability and Re is the transformation, that Osiris is yesterday³⁶ and Re is the morning. Perhaps the most important terms, those were interpreted in the light of this bilateral relationship, are the terms *dt* and *Nhh* which express the eternity. They believed that Osiris is *dt* which represents the place, where Re who has embodied the time *nhh* is born.³⁷ This idea appears very clear in a scene of the Book of the Earth, which represents Osiris standing ithyphallic, the solar discs that represent the hours, emerges from his body, he is labeled in the accompanied annotation as "he who hides Hours" to explain that the body of Osiris is indeed the place where the time arises. The scene on the second shrine of Tutankhamun confirms the view of the Egyptian that *dt* is a female and *nhh* is a male, it represents *dt* as a woman and *nhh* as a man carrying the sky together.³⁸

6.1. The benefit from the unification of Re and Osiris in the interpretation of the end of the world

The Egyptologists benefit from the description of Osiris as the place where the time is born and rejuvenated in order to interpret the end of the world. They believed that as long as Re unites with Osiris every night and leaves him in the morning, it means the continuity of renewal time, and when the end of the world comes, Atum the nocturnal form of Re will unite with Osiris, and will never separated from him.³⁹ Thereby the wheel of the universe stops, and

³⁶ J. Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder*, 111 n.97.

³⁷ I. Hegenbarth-Reichardt, *Der Raum der Zeit*, 5; J. Assmann, *Zeit und Ewigkeit im alten Ägypten* (Heidelberg, 1975) 29.

³⁸ A. Piankoff and N. Rambova, *The shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon (Ancient Egyptian Religious Texts and Representations 2*; New York: Bollingen Press, 1955) Fig. 47

³⁹ W. Westendorf, *Die Geburt der Zeit aus dem Raum*, *GM* 63(1983) 74.

the life ends. The chapter 175 of the Book of the Dead expresses this end clearly, when everything returns to its beginning:

"I will destroy what I have created, this land will sink in primeval ocean, (and) it will be primal water as it was in the beginning"

Another text explains that the end of the life does not mean only destroying of what has been created, but it means also the return of the creator God to his beginning.

"It is I who will stay with Osiris, after I turn into a snake, whom the people don't know, and the gods don't see"

In the former text, the form of the serpent symbolizes the beginning and the end of the world, it represents the first unit, which is divided into many creatures, and at the end of the world comes back to the unit again.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ J. Assmann, *Zeit und Ewigkeit*, 24f.



Fig. 1. Osiris as a horizon from the Book of the Earth.

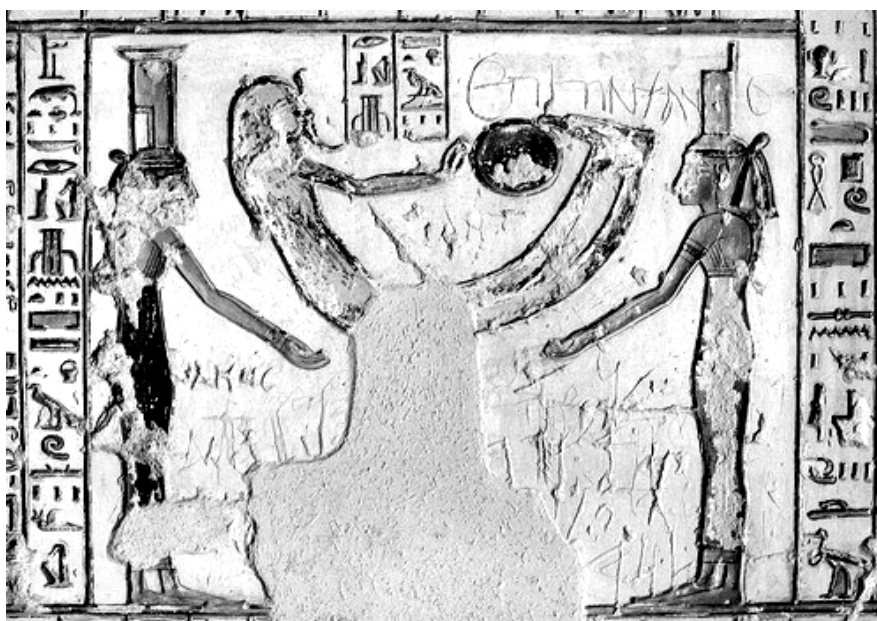


Fig.2. Osiris as the horizon gives birth to the sun.

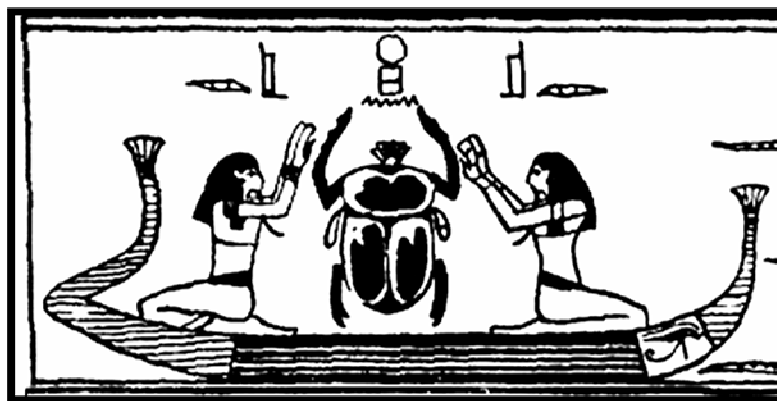


Fig. 3. The scene of the First Hour of Imy Duat.

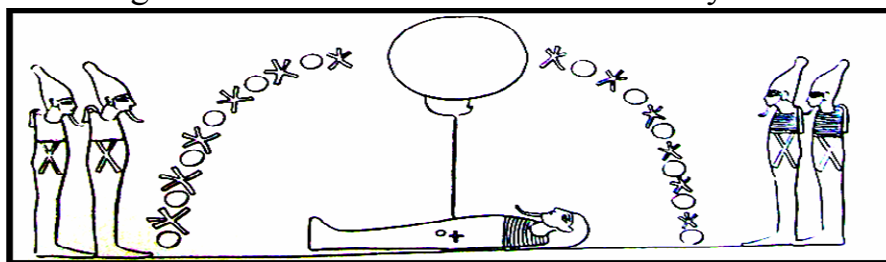


Fig.4. Osiris at the time of his union with the sun god in the Book of the Earth.

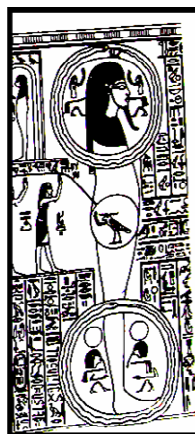


Fig.5. The scene of the union of Re and Osiris upon the second shrine of Tutankhamun.



Fig.6. Nut and Osiris on the left and right door-jambs of the sarcophagus hall in the Tomb of Ramesses IX.



Fig.7. The sun travels upon the hands of *št3t*.

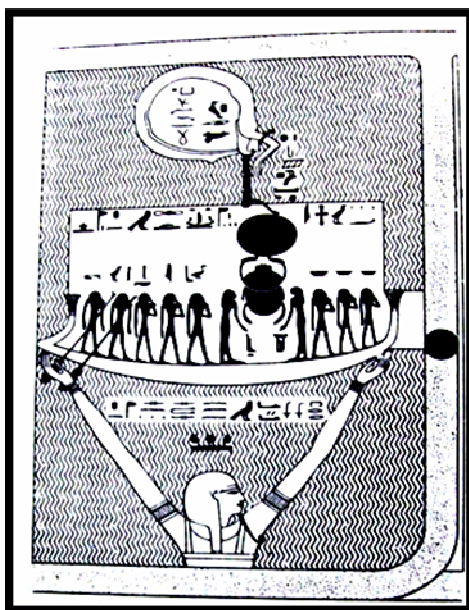


Fig.8. The last scene in the Book of the Cavern.

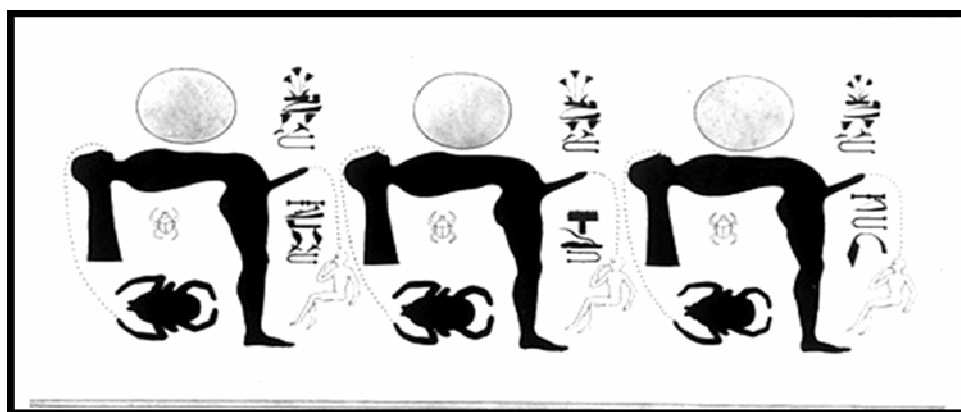


Fig.9. Osiris as a source of the primeval water.



Fig.10. Osiris as a creator god.



Fig.11. Osiris as a creator god in the tomb of Ramsses IX.



Fig.12.The united ba in the tomb of Nofretari.

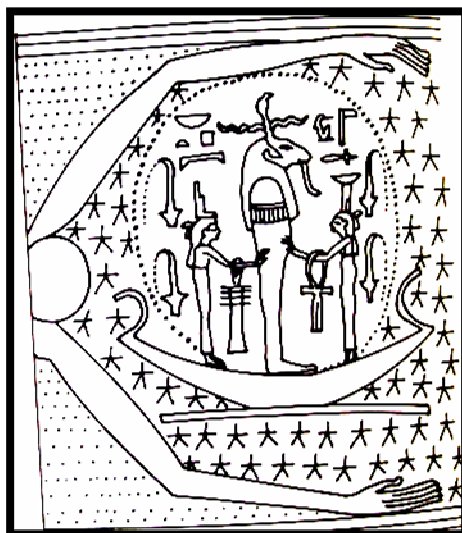


Fig.13.The united ba on papyri of the 21.Dynasty.

اتحاد رع مع أوسير في العلم السفلي

د. نهاد كمال الدين سيد احمد شعبان ♦

اعتقد المصريون القدماء أن الشمس عندما تغيب في المساء ترحل الى عالم الموتى لتضى لهم وتعيد لهم الحياة وفي اعرق نقطة في الليل يتم اتحاد رب الشمس رع مع رب الموتى أوسير، ولقد فسر هذا الاتحاد بأنه اتحاد للبا "الروح" مع الجسد، كما اعتبر توحد للزمان مع المكان.

وكذلك تصور المصريون أن رع في هذه الحالة يمثل التجدد والتكرار وبالتالي اعتبروه nhh بينما رأوا في أوسير البقاء والثبات فاعتبروه dt وبالتالي فإن توحدهما يمثل توحد المصطلحين nhh و dt المعبران عن الأبدية والخلود، ولقد أعتقد البعض أن أوسير في هذه الحالة يمثل الرحم الذي يحتوي الشمس ليلدها الى الحياة من جديد وبالتالي فإن هذا التوحد هو ضمان لإستمرار دورة الحياة فتجدها على الأرض. منذ الدولة الحديثة أصبح اتحاد رع مع أوسير يحتل مكانة رئيسية في مناظر رحلة الشمس الليلية حيث صور بصور مختلفة في كتب العالم الآخر، في هذا البحث سوف أتناول شرح هذه التفسيرات المختلفة لهذا الاتحاد، مع جمع المناظر المختلفة التي تصور هذا الاتحاد وشرحها وتفسيرها، خاصة تلك التي ظهرت في كتب العالم الآخر، وسأحاول أيضاً تتبع أماكن هذه المناظر على جدران مقابر وادي الملوك للتعرف على سبب اختيار هذه الأماكن بالذات ودلالاتها الرمزية.

♦ مدرس بكلية الاداب — جامعة المنصورة — قسم الآثار المصرية.