

2. Mythes dans le Proche-Orient Ancien

Geography

- mésopotamie: perses, assyriens, babyloniens, sumériens
 - between the rivers Euphrat and Tigris
 - modern day Iran, Iraq
- levant: Israel, Ougarit, Phénicie
 - modern day Israel, Palestine
- Égypte

Texts and Sources

- écrites: textes littéraires, épigraphie (inscriptions)
 - textes juridiques, textes rituels, inscriptions
 - récits et mythes, annales et récits historiques
 - Souvent: mélange des genres
 - lots of things were told by mouth if king was present
- iconographie: illustrations et métaphores
- découvertes archéologiques, culture matérielle

Incantation du ver

- *Anou*: Dieu du ciel et vegetation, père de dieux
- *Ea*: Dieu de l'eau
- *Shamash*: Dieu du soleil
- The text is about the creation of the world but ultimately the creation of caries or something similar, which has been created by the following chain: Anou (sky) => earth => water => canals => ponds => worms (caries)
The worm is revolting against the gods, because he doesn't want the simple food they want to give him. He wants to live of the gums in people's mouths.
- As this is however not foreseen by the gods, they decide that humans have the right to protect themselves against the worm. For this a tincture of beer, malt and oil was used.

Les grands mythes

- Mésopotamie
 - Gilgamesh
 - Atrahasis
 - Enuma Elish
- Ougarit
 - Le cycle de Ba'al

L'épopée de Gilgamesh - A la recherche de la vie (éternelle)

- Traditions dès le III-ième millénaire AEC
- Version ninivite du 7-ième siècle (11+1 tablettes)
- Plusieurs versions, réceptions d'autres traditions connues

Gilgamesh

- King of Uruk (near Babylon), superhuman (two thirds god)
 - Uruk is real, Gilgamesh might be a myth
- Gilgamesh isn't a very good king
 - He only wants pleasure as well as all the women
 - Thus, the women have complaints to the gods, mainly
 - Ishtar: goddess of Uruk and of love
- The gods create Enkidu, his rival, a "primitive savage" who lives in the steppe with a horde of gazelles. The goal is to limit the power of Gilgamesh
- But, Enkidu becomes civilized and an ally / friend of Gilgamesh.
 - To civilize Enkidu, they provide him with sexuality (a prostitute), beer and a barber
 - They became allies / friends after realizing that their powers are on par
- Gilgamesh and Enkidu go on a couple of side-quests:
 - He fought against the giant Humbaba, the guard of the cedar forest
 - He fought against a celestial bull
- Ultimately Enkidu dies of a fever, induced by the gods, as they decide that Gilgamesh and Enkidu are too strong together.
 - He died without having made a name for himself on the battlefield.
- Gilgamesh decides he wants to search for eternal life and wants to meet Utanapishti. He tells him the story of a great flood where a ship was constructed to save everyone.
 - This was translated by some christian guy which led to controversy
 - Very similar to Noah's arch

Note

This shows how interconnected the different religions present in the mediterranean are, however generally, the mésopotamian texts are older than their biblical versions.

- It makes no sense to reason about the name of the person who created the boat.
- Utanapishti was a survivor of a purge by a god and was subsequently made immortal by that god to not have to deal with any survivors.
- Gilgamesh doesn't pass the test of staying awake for 7 days and 7 nights, and thus doesn't receive eternal life.
 - He can only think about death anymore
 - However, he finds a plant which could give him youth, but he puts it aside for a second and it gets eaten by a snake.
 - He accepts that he has to die, but his civilisation and spirits remain.
 - Thus, he makes it his mission to reconstruct all the temples.

Etiology

An etiology is an investigation of the cause or the reason of something, it takes as a starting point the current state of the world and explains how we arrived there. It is often expressed using mythical elements.

Concerning Gilgamesh, if not even he can become immortal, no one should even try.

Conclusion

It is almost impossible to form really distinct genres of myths, as they are extremely interconnected.

3. Mythes en Égypte ancienne

Chronology

Most Important Time Stamps

- Pharaonic Egypt is a time-span from about 3100 BCE to 332 BCE and there were 30 main dynasties.
- From 332 BCE to 30 BCE, Egypt was governed by greco-macedonian kings.
- From 30 BCE to 395 CE, Egypt was a roman province and from 395 CE onwards it belonged to the Byzantine empire of the Orient.

Full Chronology

Repères chronologiques

Division moderne	Datation	Division par Manéthon
Époque thinite	3100-2750	I ^{ère} -II ^{ème} dynasties
Ancien Empire	2750-2250	III ^{ème} -VI ^{ème} dynasties
Première Période intermédiaire	2250-2045	VII ^{ème} -XI ^{ème} dynasties
Moyen Empire	2045-1700	XI ^{ème} -XIII ^{ème} dynasties
Deuxième Période intermédiaire	1700-1539	XIII ^{ème} -XVII ^{ème} dynasties
Nouvel Empire	1539-1069	XVIII ^{ème} -XX ^{ème} dynasties
Troisième Période intermédiaire	1069-664	XXI ^{ème} -XXV ^{ème} dynasties
Basse Époque (ou Époque tardive)	664-332	XXVI ^{ème} -XXX ^{ème} dynasties
Alexandre le Grand	332-30	
Époque ptolémaïque		
Époque romaine	30 av. n. è. 395 de n. è.	

Égypte pharaonique

- 30 dynasties
- Environ 3100-332 av. n.è.

Égypte gouvernée par des rois d'origine gréco-macédonienne
332-30 av. n.è.

Province romaine

395 de n.è.: Empire byzantin d'Orient

Sources for Egyptology

Terminology

- **Sources:** primary documentation; contemporary sources of the period to be studied.
 - Antiquity sources: ca. 3100 BCE - 500 CE
- **Secondary documentation:** modern authors (19th to 21st century) who write about the Antiquity which are thus recent bibliography and **not sources**.

Sources

Religion and History based on Varied Sources

- Written text on different media: hieroglyphs, Hieratic, demotic (ordinary language) or Greek.
- Archaeological sites
- Material culture (ceramics, objects of value, etc.)
- Monuments, statues, etc.

All this is supported by:

- Headstones
- Papyrus
- Statues
- Temple and Tomb walls

Hieroglyphs

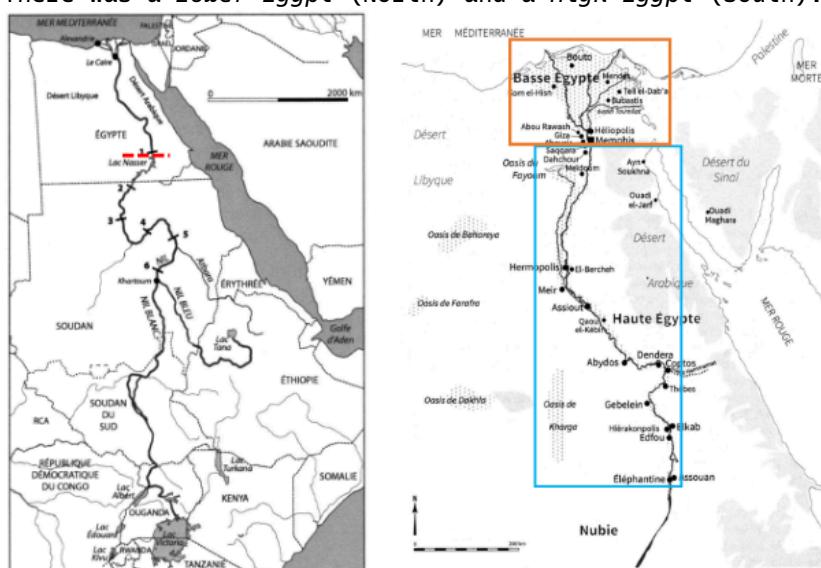
- Reading direction determined by the direction that the birds in the hieroglyphs face.

Alternatives to Hieroglyphs (Hieratic)

- Hieratic was a "simpler" written alternative to hieroglyphs, which could easily be written on other, cheaper media.
- Usually written on *papyrus* or *Ostracon* which were simple pieces of clay-ware or pottery.
 - Papyrus was cheap and abundant at the time.
 - The clay was always "recycled", meaning clay wasn't produced just to write on.
- This was done by scribes, a valuable position.

The Gods of Ancient Egypt

- Ancient Egypt was smaller than it is today
 - Mainly centered around the Nile river
 - There was a *Lower Egypt* (North) and a *High Egypt* (South):



- Gods are put in the focus of myths in the context of a ritual
 - Gods were often associated to a city, for example *Rê-Horakhty*, the god of the sun who was associated to *Héliopolis*, the city of the sun, in Northern (lower) Egypt.
 - Other examples are:
 - *Amon*, associated to the city *Karnak*
 - *Khonsou*, associated to the city *Karnak* as well
 - *Isis*, associated to the city *Philae*
 - *Horus*, associated to the city *Edfou*
- Knowing the real / natural name of a god meant having power about the thing the god represents. Name of the Wind :)

The Names of the Gods and their Titles

1. Name: sometimes of known signification
 - Example: the lion-goddess *Sekhmet* = "The Powerful"
2. Association with two deities: shared function
Examples
 - *Amon-Rê*, the king of gods (Amon) takes on a solar aspect (Rê)
 - *Rê-Horakhty*, the king of the sun Rê takes on an aspect of the falcon god *Horus* (Hor) which stays in the *Double Horizon* (akhty)
 - The Double Horizon seems to symbolize the two worlds, the overworld and the underworld, the land of *Osiris*
3. The name of the god is often followed by a title or other name specifying its function precisely = an epithet.

Ambivalent Functions of the Gods

- Most of the gods of ancient Egypt had ambivalent functions, in the meaning that they can either bring good or bad things depending on how they are treated.
 - For example, *Sekhmet*, the lion-goddess, which brought sickness, but if treated appropriately with the correct rituals would also heal sickness.
 - Or *Bastet*, the cat-goddess, which stands for protection, maternity, family, love, fertility, etc. but who can also be dangerous.

The Day-Night Cycle

- As the sun rises in the Orient in the east and sets in the west (Occident), the ancient Egyptians believed that the sun was transported on a barge or raft transported by the god *Rê*.
- In the west the sun would enter the sub-land of the dead (named *Douat*), the domain of the god of death *Osiris*.
- In the east the sun would be reborn from the land of the dead every morning and continue its journey.



Solar barque

Re in his ram-headed form on the *Mesektet* barque, which he used during the night, while traveling through the underworld.

During the day he travels in his falcon-headed form on the *Mandjet* Barque.

Osiris and Death

- The god Anubis brings the dead to Osiris, where their heart (often a vase) is weighed against a feather.
- Osiris is one of the most important gods, compared to the others, he has the title "grand god". He has many other functions, including:
 - "Master of Abydos" ⇒ cultural center of Osiris
 - "in Memphis" ⇒ cultural center of Ptah, Osiris

Amon

- King of the gods
- Main deity of the city of Thebes which was the capital of the XVIII-th dynasty.

The Variety of Sources and Myths

Myths

- Term used by ancient Greece.
- Stories to combine the gods and a conclusion which explains one or more aspects of the world, often in a fabulous manner.
- In Egypt there were also multiple explanations for the same phenomenon, sometimes seeming contradictory.
 - This is then referred to as *mythmaking ("mythèmes")*
- Myths should not be compared to our understanding and thinking of today.

Some Important Myths

- The Osirian myth (only hints) / the fight between Horus and Seth (followed narrative)
- Stories of the birth of the world (hints) / the book of the cow of the skies (followed narrative)

Myths and Ritual Practices

- Myths were almost always integrated in a ritual practice
- They served as a technique of *transfer*: a difficult situation for a person (for example sickness) was compared to a situation experienced by the gods.
 - This reference to the gods who overcame the difficulty should increase the odds of it (the overcoming) happening again in a similar situation.
 - This transfer technique is pretty unique to ancient Egypt.
- There are often allusions to one or multiple aspects of a myth, making context difficult to figure out for us.

4. Mythes en Grèce

Defining the "Myth"

Some examples of Greek myths:

- Heracles
- Prometheus
- Icarus
- Pandora's Box
- The Odyssey
- ...

Simple Definition

Ultimately, a myth is a form of speech or a story. Important is *the exact way* the story is told.

Myth vs μῦθος ("Mythos")

The Greek word "μῦθος" (mythos) originally meant nothing more than "word" or "speech".

Homer *Iliad* 18, 252

ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἀρ μύθοισιν (*muthoisin*), ὁ δ' ἔγχει πολλὸν ἐνίκα.
"But one prevailed with his words, and the other with his sword."

Charles Olivier Carbonnel (Historian)

"nous appelons mythe toute représentation, tout récit, voir même toute idée – avec le nécessaire cortège d'images – largement répandu et diffusé, transmis de génération en génération, qui donne au groupe à la fois sa cohésion culturelle et sa cohérence morale."

Marcel Détienne (Banger quote)

"Le mythe est un poisson soluble dans les eaux de la mythologie."

Below is a more rigorous definition of the word "myth".

Complex Definition

Forme	Croyance	Temps	Lieu	Attitude	Personnages
MYTHE	Réalité	Passé reculé	Monde différent	Sacré	Non humain
LEGENDE	Réalité	Passé récent	Monde contemporain	Profane ou sacré	Humain
CONTE / FABLE	Fiction	Indéterminé	Indéterminé	Profane	Humain ou non humain

- A "myth" (not a "μῦθος" = "mythos"!) is believed to have actually happened, however usually in the distant past. It takes place in a different world and is regarded as sacred. The personifications are usually not human.
- Ancient Greeks would usually take distance to these stories. However, they were never described as "myths" but as pieces or stories by their respective writers.

The Function of "myths"

1. The "myth" is a *story* which is told
2. The "myth" is a *story* which refers to *other stories*.
 - The whole of these stories form a *mythology*.
3. The "myth" *explains* the world; It refers also to *rituals*.
4. The "myth" is a sign of *unity* and support; It has a strong *identifying* function
5. The "myth" is *not a dogma* (thus not indisputably true); It knows *variants*.
6. The "myth" allows systematic exploration of the *imaginary social limits*.

The "Myth" of Prometheus

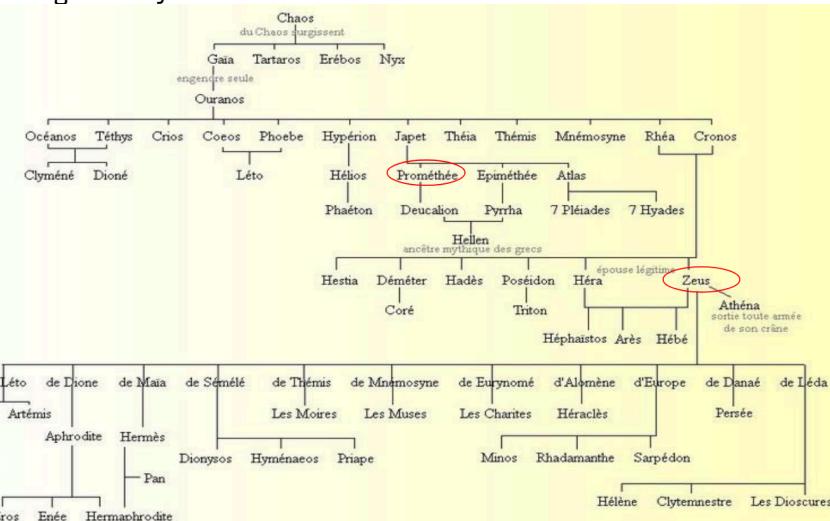
- First of all, there is *not just one single "myth"* of Prometheus, thus saying "the myth" of Prometheus is wrong on all levels.
- Homer is the big boss of Greek mythology. (the professor said so)
- The name Prometheus means "think before".

1. Epic

There is no mention of Prometheus in the *Homeric poems* (8-th century BCE).

2. Fluid

- Hesiod mentioned Prometheus in his *Theogony* (8-th to 7-th century BCE), where the following family tree of relations stems from:



- This is also where Prometheus was described as fluid because he sympathized with the humans. He is also a bit of a *trickster*.
 - He once tried to trick Zeus (successfully) which is why the whole "steal fire, bring it to the humans, get your liver eaten eternally"-story came into being.

3. Creator

- Ancient Greeks didn't really care about how humans were integrated with the rest such as animals and gods.
 - This also means that the thought of humans being created by the gods only came up rarely.
 - One exception: Prometheus and Athena creating the first human (found on a Sarcophagus relief)
- There were however mentions of the (supposed) human superiority over animals.

4. Philanthropist

- As Prometheus was tied to the pole after having been conducted by Zeus for giving fire to the humans, he starts to ponder and becomes quite philosophic.
- Everyone has their own story about Prometheus.

5. Pantheon du Levant et POA

Pantheon := All the gods of a people or religion collectively.
POA = Proche-Orient ancien

Construction of a Pantheon - Ougarit

- Multiple forms of writing:
 - Text in cuneiform script on clay tablets
 - Very small alphabet, not a lot of vowels.
 - Aramaic letters in ink on leather or papyrus.

Ougarit

- Today: *Ras Shamra*, modern day Syria
- City and kingdom
- Period of highest prosperity: 14th century BCE (!)
- Commercial centre

There are:

- Palaces
- Multiple temples
- Houses and graves
- Texts

The Gods and the Mythology

All gods are recognized by their crowns with which they are always depicted.

El

- Traditional god
- Father of the gods and humans
- Creator of creatures
- Epithet: The bull
- Specialty: Wisdom

Ba'al

- Traditional "lord"
- Son of El
- Rider of the clouds
- Important source: The cycle of Ba'al
 - The king of the gods on mount Zaphon
 - King of the weather (lightning) / fertility
 - Explains why fertility comes and goes, as Ba'al is often preoccupied with fighting other gods lol
- Fights against Yamm (Sea) and Mot (Death)
 - Whenever he fights Mot in the underworld, it's winter

Anat

- Daughter of El and sister of Ba'al
- Virgin, young woman which is very strong and aggressive
- Goddess of springs but also of war
- Later, also an important goddess in Egypt

Others

- *Ahtarat / Astarté* (companion of El)
- *Yamm* (Sea)
- *Mot* (Death)
- *Dagan* (ancient god, agriculture)
- *Kothar* (smithing)

List of Gods

- There are multiple official lists
- There isn't one single Ba'al, but a large amount with different attributes. The plural is the *Baalim*
- Some authors count up to 238 different deities

The Pantheon

- The gods are in relations with each other through families and generations
- They have specific capacities and roles

Changes

- The events on earth and in the sky are linked
 - The religious festivities on earth reflect the events told in connection to the sky
 - Political interest and the leader's / king's quest for power manifests itself also in the sky.

Deconstruction of a Pantheon - Ancient Israel

- Ancient Hebrew is hard to translate as the verb "be" can be placed almost everywhere in a sentence
 - This makes it also easy to change the meaning of a sentence, mostly to infer a meaning which was maybe not intended by the original writer.
 - This isn't a grammatical problem however, as it is intended to have multiple meanings. The sentence stays the same, but the meaning differs based on context.

Kuntillet 'Ajrud

- In modern day Israel
- Lots of *pithos* (large clay container with inscriptions) found, with mythological messages

Different Theologies

- Monoyahvism:
Specific form of monotheism in (ancient) Israel, characterized by the exclusive worship of *Yahweh*, considered to be the unique and supreme God
- Monolatry: There are multiple gods, but we only focus on one
- Monotheism: There is only one single god
- Combat does not create issues in theology, a god can however punish its own people by *controlling other groups*. By doing stuff like that, any god was actually **the** god acting for his people.
- This also attributes any harm on earth to the same god.
- There is *Yhwh* which is God in the sky and on earth; There isn't another.
 - Strict monotheism!
- But: The sky isn't empty. In the frame of the familiar religion, it's clear that multiple deities are worshiped. Sources:
 - Theophoric names (onomastics = study of history and origin of proper names)
 - Archaeological finds in homes
 - Traces in texts

Summary

Ougarit - a Typical Pantheon

- Clearly described by texts, images and icons and lists of gods and goddesses.
- Each god(dess) has their own sphere of influence, which is related to the world

Changes

- A pantheon *isn't stable*, there are always changes which reflect particularities of a certain region or other cultures, gods or political changes
- Fight for power of the gods on earth which are evoked by political events on earth.

6. Pantheon de la Grèce

What is a Pantheon in Greece?

- A god, temple or place consecrated to the gods which is common to all
- The general consensus was, that there are 12 gods, maybe 14
 - 12 stems from the Agora in Athens, a place dedicated to 12 different gods
 - Also, there are 12 zodiac signs
- The pantheon with twelve gods is a system that keeps powers distributed fairly
- Influenced by the wars of the 5th century which started with the Greco-Persian wars. It was the prime time of the Greek empire.
- There were *multiple relations between the gods*, which all had their own meanings:
 - Zeus - Hera ⇒ God parents
 - They were often in dispute, Zeus would punish Hera (see quote below)
 - Athena - Hephaistos ⇒ ?
 - Poseidon - Apollon ⇒ old vs young
 - Artemis - Aphrodite ⇒ wise, smart vs love, emotion
 - Hermes - Dionysos ⇒ both not born in the traditional way
 - Demeter - Ares ⇒ creation vs destruction

Iliad 15, 14-20

Ainsi donc, intraitable Héra, c'est ta ruse funeste
qui a mis Hector hors combat et dispersé ses troupes ?
Mais si tu étais la première à recueillir le fruit
De ta fourbe cruelle, et si je te rouais de coups ?
Tu te souviens du jour où je te laissai pendre en l'air
Avec deux enclumes aux pieds et les mains ligotées
Par une épaisse chaîne d'or ? Tu pendais en plein ciel.

Gods and/or Powers?

Jean-Pierre Vernant

Un dieu est une puissance qui traduit
une forme d'action, un type de pouvoir.
[...]
La loi de cette société de l'au-delà,
c'est la définition stricte des pouvoirs,
leur équilibre hiérarchisé – ce qui
exclut les catégories de la toute-puissance,
de l'omniscience, du pouvoir infini.

Domains and action modes

Sea

- Athena ⇒ Navigation
- Poseidon ⇒ Violence of the seas, tides, earthquakes

War

- Athena ⇒ Strategy, tactics
- Ares ⇒ Violence, destruction
- Aphrodite ⇒ Mixing of bodies ?

M. Detienne, *Comment être autochtone*

Le polythéisme, on peut se le
représenter [...] comme une toile sans

cesse tissée et animée qu'une Pénélope
ferait et déferait, en inventant
nuit et jour des figures nouvelles et
des compositions bariolées pour
d'invisibles panthéons.

Example: Olympia

- The "altis"
 - Temples, training areas and biggest statue of Zeus (one of the wonders of the ancient world)
 - Many deities had *epithets* (highlighted in pink above), describing further their realm of influence, e.g. Zeus Areios ⇒ Zeus doing war

Names of the Gods

- Each god is a mini-pantheon, according to their epithets:

- Zeus:
 - *Olympios* → olympian,
 - *Katharsios* → purifier,
 - *Khtonios* → underworldly

- Athena:
 - *Nike* → victorious,
 - *Parthenos* → the virgin on the acropolis,
 - *Polias* → protector of the city
 - *Promachos* → Warrior

The Forms of Zeus

- Creating a complete biography has the risk of psychologically defining the concept

W. Burkert *Greek Religion*

Zeus is the only name of a Greek god which is entirely transparent etymologically [...].

Jean-Pierre Vernant

Cela ne veut pas dire que [le·a Grec·que]
croit que le ciel est Zeus, mais que
certains caractères de ce ciel, le
pouvoir qu'il exerce sur la vie humaine,
constituent comme des voies à travers
lesquelles la puissance de Zeus est
rendue présente aux hommes.

[...] Zeus est manifesté par le ciel,
mais il est en même temps caché par lui.

- Zeus' power is his power
- The *Theogony* by Hesiod describes how Zeus became the king of the gods after the war against the titans.
 - This form of Zeus is *Zeus Basileus*

Millions of Epithets

Dion Chrysostome, *Discours XII*

Zeus, seul des dieux, est
appelé Père et Basileus,
Polieus et Philios et
Hetaireios, et aussi Hikesios
et Xenios et Epikarpios et il a
des milliers d'autres épithètes
en rapport avec ses
bienfaits.

7. Pantheon d'Égypte

Reminder: Myths in Ancient Egypt

- Term utilised by ancient Greece
- Story which combines the gods and a conclusion explaining one or multiple aspects of the world, often in a fabulous manner.
- In Ancient Egypt, multiple explications of the same phenomenon were possible even if they seemed contradictory.
 - This stems from varied and multiple sources, allusions, followed texts ⇒ **myth-making ("mythèmes")**
- Be careful not to make comparisons to our modern, western thinking.

Organisation and Hierarchy of the Gods

- There is always a **creating god** which is the first one to be born and who creates the other gods.
- The kings who ruled Ancient Egypt were almost always accompanied by gods, thus the gods have reigned on Earth together with the kings.
- Deities were linked to a territory which were called nomes:**

Le découpage en nomes de l'Égypte

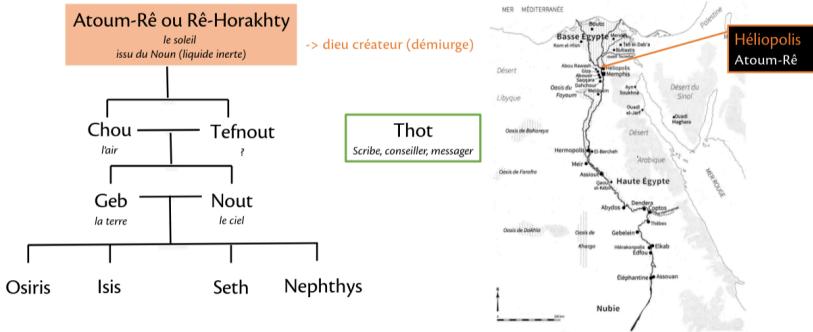


- In addition to the creating god, there are two independent hierarchies, called **Meeks**:
 1. Natural hierarchy: by order of creation
 2. Hierarchy following the function of the gods and their forces
- Further, there are **big gods** and **small gods**, the former were known nationally, the latter were regional.

- Deities are organised in triads: a family composed of three gods
 - Three is the plural in Egypt
- There is always one god, one goddess and one male child god
 - Example: Amon (god), Mout (goddess), Khonsou (child, god of the moon)
 - Example: Osiris (god), Isis (goddess), Horus (child)
 - Example: Horus (god), Hathor (goddess of family, fertility)
 - In the temple of Dendera, Hathor is the main goddess
 - In the temple of Edfou, Horus is the main god

Earth's Creation in Ancient Egypt

- There were multiple versions of Earth's creation story, attested in different cities.
- The most notable are:
 - Heliopolis, with the sun god Atoum(-Re)



- Memphis, with the artisanal god Ptah
- Hermopolis, with the Ogdoad (the original eight deities)
- Esna, with the pottery god Khnoum
- Multiple traditions which coexisted and influenced each other
- The god Thot had the role of taking care of hieroglyphs and scripture. He is not represented in the hierarchy as he is so important that he is kind of hierarchy agnostic.

The god Amon

- "King of the Gods"
- Main deity of Thebes which was the capital of Egypt in the 17th dynasty.
- Thus, Amon becomes very important.
- He is also represented in the temples of Karnak, one of if not the largest temples of Egypt.

The Osirian Myth

See also: [Osiris myth - Wikipedia](#)

Funerary Texts:

- Texts in pyramids
 - Sayings and Formulations designed to help the deceased on his journey to the dead
 - Often in green as it represents the ever-regrowing vegetation
 - First attested occurrences: 2410 BCE
- Texts in sarcophages / coffins
 - Sayings and Formulations designed to help the deceased on his journey to the dead
 - Formulas painted on the inside walls of elite coffins
 - Mainly used during the middle empire: 2100 - 1800 BCE
- Book of the dead, which was regularly updated in the new year
 - Mainly on papyrus

Chronology:

Division moderne	Datation	Principaux textes funéraires
Époque thinité	3000-2686	Tradition orale?
Ancien Empire	2686-2181	Tradition orale Textes des Pyramides (V ^e dynastie)
Première Période Intermédiaire	2181-2055	Textes des Pyramides Textes des Sarcophages
Moyen Empire	2055-1773	Textes des Sarcophages
Deuxième Période Intermédiaire	1773-1550	Textes des Sarcophages Livre des Morts
Nouvel Empire	1550-1069	Livre des Morts Livres du monde souterrain (Amdouat, Livre des Portes, Livre de la Terre, Livre des Cavernes, etc.)
Troisième Période Intermédiaire	1069-664	
Basse Epoque	664-332	
Alexandre le Grand	332-30	
Époque ptolémaïque		Livre des Respirations
Époque romaine	30 av. n.è. - 395	Livre des Morts (extraits) Livre des Respirations Autres textes funéraires



Osiris

- God of the dead
- No complete biography, only allusions
- In charge of the occidental world (the land of the dead)

Plutarch's Osirian Myth

- Plutarch (~ 45 - 125 CE) wrote about Isis and Osiris when he visited Egypt towards the end of his life, it is the only known fully-written story about them.
- It is regarded as trustworthy, as Plutarch back then, just as we now, did not know much about Egyptian culture.
- There are actually two distinct myths to consider:
 1. The archaic conflict between Horus and Seth in the first dynasties:
 - Horus: King of lower Egypt
 - Seth: King of high Egypt
 2. The Osirian myth at the end of the fourth / beginning of the fifth dynasty:
 - Osiris and Seth: Sons of Geb
 - Osiris: King of all of Egypt
 - Osiris is assassinated by his brother Seth
 - This assassination is never explicitly acknowledged by the Egyptians, it was just assumed or generally known.
 - The body of Osiris was cut up into 14 pieces (according to Plutarch) and spread throughout the country.
 - Then, the pieces were gathered and the body was mummified by Anubis, allowing Osiris to be reborn.
 - Conflict between Horus (son of Osiris) and Seth about who obtains the rights to reign.

The Conflict between Horus and Seth

- The eye of the falcon (eye of Horus), allows control over the territory:



Often worn as a protecting amulet.

- Horus and Seth were regarded as equal in power. They were even described as "the two companions".
- In the end, Horus becomes the great god and protector of the royalty.

Summary

- Ra: master of the gods, in heaven, presides over the council of the gods
- Thoth: adviser to Ra and the gods
- Osiris: reigns over the western land = the dead
 - but Osiris remains linked to vegetation (rebirth of vegetation every year)
- Seth: god of storms, relegated to the desert, but remains the protector of Ra's boat
- Isis and Nephthys: the mourners, protectors of the dead + maternal function for Isis
- Anubis: in charge of embalming
- Organisation of the gods into families of three (triads)
- Enthronement of Horus → Pharaoh = Horus on earth

09. Cosmo-Anthropogony in Ancient Greece

TLDR

Cosmo → order, ornament, firmament
Anthro → humans

Cosmogony: Creation of the World

- Stories ("myths") of the origins
 - Definitely not a dogma, there are many different variants by renowned authors / poets from the time (e.g. Homer, Hesiod)

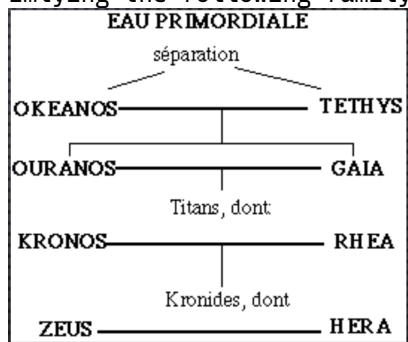
I. Homer

- During a scene where Hera asks Aphrodite about love and desire, the following is stated by Hera:

Homer

I am going to visit the farthest reaches of the fertile earth, Okeanos, the origin of the gods, and Tethys our mother, who nurtured me, then brought me up in their own home, receiving me from Rhea on the day when Zeus, the immense voice, put Cronos under the earth and under the fruitless sea. I'm going to visit them, to put an end to their confused quarrels.

Imlying the following family tree:



II. Hesiod

- More deductive than Homer, talks about why things really are the way they are.
- Muse of the epics: *Calliope*
- Relations between the gods: See slide 15
- There was only *chaos* for a long time and then suddenly earth - no one was responsible for the first few moments of the creation.
- 1st generation:
 - Fight between *Uranus* and his son *Chronos*, for details see slides 24 - 26
 - Creation of Aphrodite
 - Creation of the night
- 2nd generation:
 - Fight between Chronos and Zeus
 - Chronos eats all his children, Zeus revolts and is spared
 - Zeus saves his siblings from Chronos and becomes king of the gods
 - He gives every god(dess) their own distinct function
 - Zeus is very very big brain and births Athena from his head (what)

Anthropogony

- Myth of the "races"
- Humans and Gods come from the same place
 - There are two "races", the first (the golden one), those who lived happily and in peace, and the second (the silver one), those who fought each other and protected those who killed others.
- Zeus creates women I guess
- Ancient Greeks were more concerned with *where* they are in the cosmos, and less with *why* they are in the cosmos.
- Chain of power:

Gods > Humans (Men > Women) > Animals

But:

 - (labour) animals depended on humans, and
 - humans depended on the animals.
 - women depended on men (for survival), and
 - men depended on women (for reproduction).
 - humans depended on the gods for safety, and
 - the gods depended on humans for sacrifices.

Deucalion & Teeth of a Snake

See slides 48 - 49 and 50 - 52 for two other creation myths

10. Cosmo-Anthropogony in the ANE

Cosmogony

- Recall the [incantation of the worm](#), which provides the following chain of creations:

Anou => Sky => Earth => Waters => Canals => Ponds => Worm

implying, that the worm was the first creature.
However, this *wasn't a dogma* back in the day.

Creation: Fight against Chaos

Hermann Gunkel

Chaoskampf

- Forces of chaos are for example monsters, which threaten the order of the world.
This required strong leaders who kept them in check.
 - These divine monsters were often associated with *water*, as water was thought of as a very strong force.
 - There is always a connection between chaos and elements of *daily life*.
- Source: *Addad Zimri-Lim*, king of Mari **Translation**:
I brought you back to your father's throne and I gave you the weapons with which I fought against the Sea (Têmtum).
I anointed you with the oil of my triumph and no one has stood before you.
Listen to this one word from me: when someone who has a lawsuit appeals to you, saying: 'I have been wronged', stand up and judge him; answer him correctly. This is what I want from you.
When you go out into the field, do not leave without taking an oracle. When I have given you a favourable oracle, you shall go out into the field. If it is not so, do not go through the gate!
This is what the respondent [of Addu] said to me.
- Source: *Ba'al and Death*, see slide 10.
Lotan is a 7-headed monster
- Source: *Psalms 74 and 89*, see slides 12 - 13.
Psalm 74:
 - shows relation between chaos and injustice on earth
 - imminent war
 - reminding the gods of their action to try and motivate them to intervene
- Psalm 89:
 - once again, link between (in-)justice and chaos

Representations of Chaos

- *Crocodiles, Hippos*
 - Both "monsters" of the waters
 - As mentioned above, water was seen as a very destructive force
 - Many stories involved problems caused by them
 - They were often illustrated as being controlled by the gods

Creation in General

- Very well known and important: *Enuma Elish*
 - Gods didn't have names yet, their destinies weren't fixed yet
 - Creator: *Tiamat* who gave birth to everything
 - She made the clouds from her saliva, the mountains with her head and the *Tiger of Euphrat* from her eyes.
 - With her breasts she created the largest mountains, which had sources providing water.
 - Finally, *Marduk* created the ground, named *Babylone*, meaning "the house of the great gods".
 - By the end, *Marduk* was exalted by the gods, in gratitude he promised to create humans from his blood, which will worship the gods.
 - Creation of the sky, the earth and the human, the latter made from divine material.
 - *Marduk* becomes king of the gods
 - Creation of the *Esangila* temple in *Babylone*
 - Intersection of creation and culture
- Also very important: The *Hebraic bible / the old testament*
 - Creation of the world
 - 'Ex Nihilo' - from nothing (minecraft reference ?!)
 - Classic creation story of the 7 days:
First 3 days were about *creation*
 - Day 1: Creation of light
 - Day 2: Creation of the sky and the earth
 - Day 3: Distinction between the earth and the water, plants
 - The next 3 days were about *inhabiting* these spaces
 - Day 4: Lights
 - Day 5: Fish and birds
 - Day 6: Land animals and humans
 - The last day is reserved for *resting*:
 - Day 7: *Shabbat*
 - Creation of the human being
 - *Adam* ~ Human, which were made to be after the gods likeness, and which should subdue the fish, the birds, the beasts and every living thing that moves on earth.
 - The human being as the peak of creation, *imago Dei* (image of the gods)
 - In the *garden of Eden*, the human (man) was created, only then the woman was created as well.
 - They eat fruit (not apples, that's a myth) from a tree and become divine like God, thus they have to quit the garden lest they become immortal.
 - From then on they had to live in the outside of the garden, with all its difficulties, but also with sexuality.

11. Cosmo-Anthropogony in Ancient Egypt

Creation of the World in Ancient Egypt

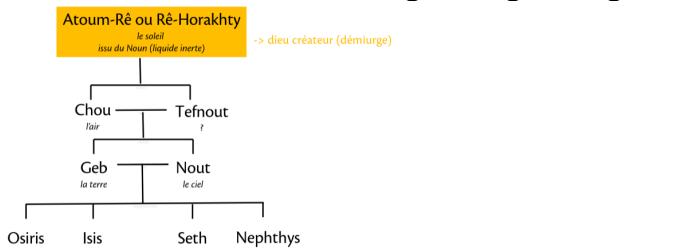
- Important myths:
 - Osirian myth
- Also important: [The day-night cycle](#)
 - Creation kind of *repeats itself every day*, as the sun rises every morning when it returns from the land of the dead every morning.
 - This is also mentioned in [funerary texts](#).
- Once again, there are *multiple traditions* which coexist and influence each other.

Common Elements to all Cosmogonies

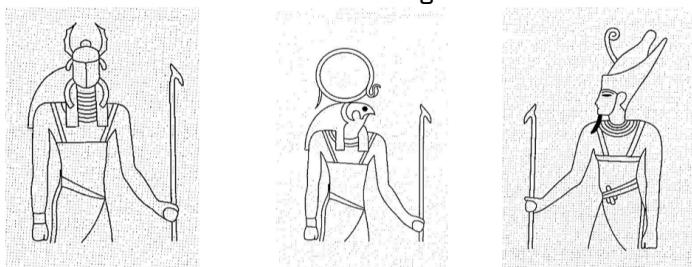
- The *Nouou*
 - described as a liquid substance or an obscure mass
 - older than the sky, the earth, the humans and death itself
 - probably influential to the geography of Egypt
 - rarely directly represented
- The *demiurge*: often the sun, but not exclusively
 - Issued from the Nouou by its own will
 - Autogenic (= self-generating) god
 - Heliopolis / Hermopolis: the sun
 - Memphis: *Ptah*
 - Esna: *Khnum*
 - rests on a mound

Cosmogony of Heliopolis

- The *ennead*: the first 9 (original) gods / goddesses according to Heliopolis:



- Very important: The sun god, which has multiple forms, *Khepri* in the morning, *Ra* at lunch and *Atoum* in the evening:

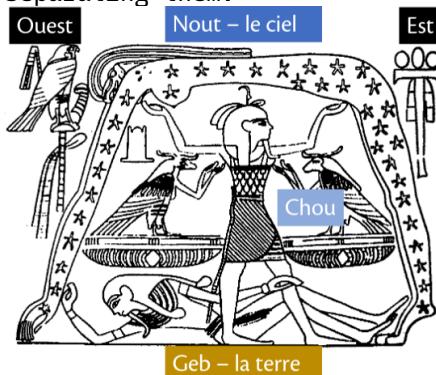


From left to right: Khepri, Ra, Atoum

Khepri is represented with the head of a *scarab* as they would create little balls of dung, which they would roll around, which is analogous to Khepri and the sun

- Slides 35 - 48 go into more detail about the other gods / goddesses in the ennead.
Most importantly:

- Geb, the earth and Nut the sky, often represented together with Shu, the air.
 - Geb and Nut are inseparable, Shu interjects by holding Nut above his head while standing next to Geb, keeping him on the floor, thus separating them:



- The whole Osirian myth thingy once again

Humans

Funerary text CT 1130 VII 464g-465a:

I brought the gods of my sweat into existence. Human beings (*rmt*) are the tears (*rmwt*) of my eye

Source: The Book of the Heavenly Cow

- Slides 51 to 63 go into detail about a specific source, called the *Book of the Heavenly Cow*, a text probably originating from the Amarna period.

Mainly talks about:

- Explanation of the *separation* between men and gods
- Ra, the first of the gods, who created the other gods and humans
- Mention of *Nouou*: father of Ra
- Explanation of the *birth of the sky*, Nut, in the form of a *cow*, who raises the sun into the sky
- Association of the goddess Hathor with Sekhmet, a dangerous form
- Role of the messenger god and scribe Thoth as the right hand of Ra. His role is to bring order and sense to the people they created, and to repel those following the evil ways.

Gods / Goddesses and Animals

- All animals created by the principal god Atoum.
- Many god(desse)s are connected to some animal:
 - Sekhmet ⇒ lion
 - Bastet ⇒ cat
 - Hathor ⇒ cow
 - Isis ⇒ cow or bird (falcon)
 - Thoth ⇒ ibis or baboon
- Also very important: the ram *Mendes* and the bull *Apis*
- There were also hybrid entities, gods / goddesses with human heads and animal bodies, the most famous of them being the *Sphinx*.

12. Politics in Ancient Greece

What is a Greek King?

- lots of differences, depending on location

Hesiod, Theogony

And then they [the Muses] set out for Olympus, proudly making their beautiful voices resound in a divine melody; and around them, at their hymns, the black earth resounded; And a lovely sound rose beneath their feet as they made their way to their father [Zeus], he who reigns in Olympus, holding the thunder and the flaming lightning in his hands, since by his power he triumphed over Kronos, his father, and then to the Immortals, who also distributed all things and fixed their honours.

- The divine *sociomorphism* is very different from the human sociomorphism i.e. Gods were able to change their personality, behavior and similar attributes at will to integrate socially.

Agamemnon

- Agamemnon is the king of kings, guiding the Achaeans through the Trojan war

Homer, Illiad II

About Agamemnon:

He awoke, enveloped by this divine voice.
Rising from his bed, he put on a fine tunic, very beautiful and brand new, and covered himself with a great cloak.
On his shiny feet he fastened beautiful sandals and threw his silver-studded sword over his shoulders;
Then, seizing the unalterable sceptre (*σκῆπτρον*) of his fathers, He marched towards the nefs of the bronze-clad Achaeans.
At the hour when the divine Aurora ascended Olympus To announce the day to Zeus as well as to the other gods, The Atrid commanded the heralds with their sonorous voices To call the long-haired Achaeans to assemble (at the *ἀγόρα*). At this call they assembled without delay. First sat in council (*βουλή*) the old men with big hearts, Near the ship of Nestor, the king (*βασιλεύς*) born in Pylos.

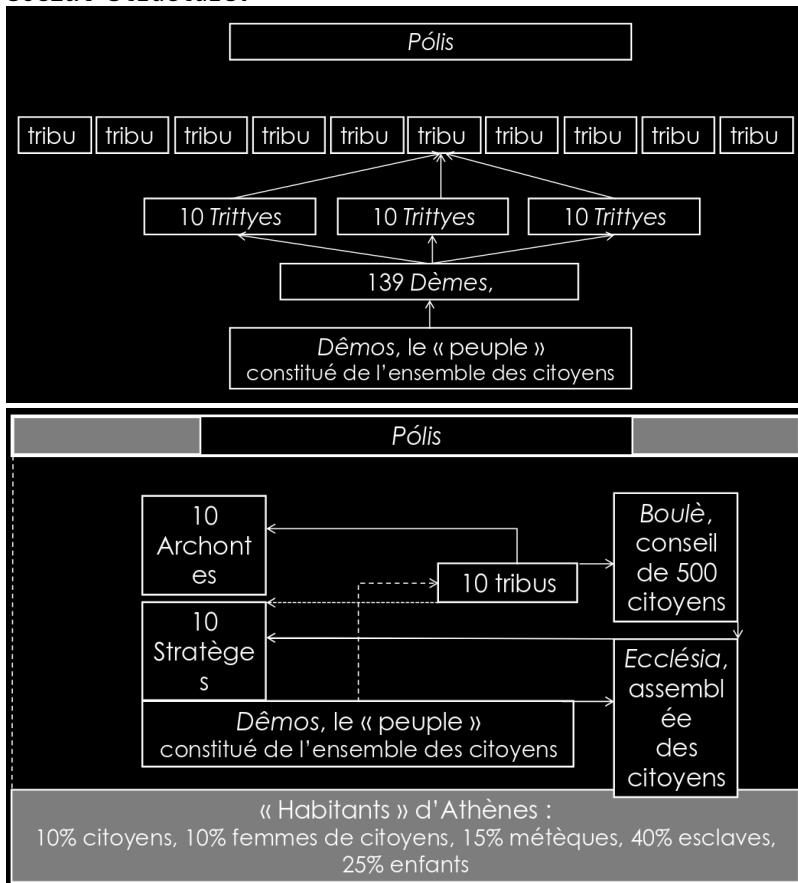
- To Agamemnon, the rule about divine and human sociomorphism does not apply.
- There isn't really an *empire* in the traditional sense of a pyramidal power structure.

Other Kings

- Theseus: "ultra-athenic", seen by many as the God of Athens.
 - Son of king Aegean, unknown paternal ancestry
 - Mother-in-law Medea is murdered
 - Father commits suicide, so that Theseus can take the royal position
 - There are political reforms (*synoecism-democracy*)
 - Theseus is ostracised (excluded) and dies
 - EPIC FAIL
 - But: now a hero

The classical Greek City: Athens

- Social structure:



Conclusion

- Several political systems in Greece (kingships, democracies)
- Royalty → power sharing in spite of everything
- Democracy → fair but not egalitarian
- Democracy → memory of royalty

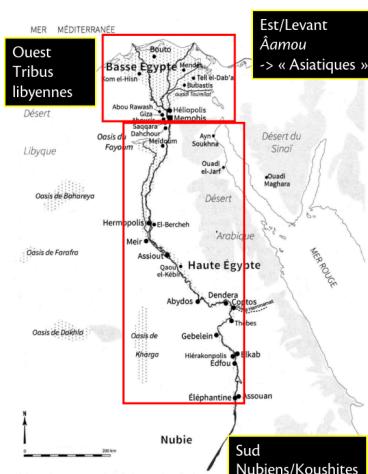
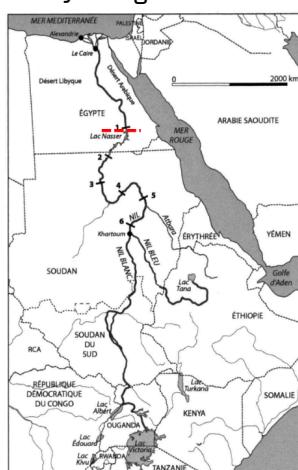
13. Politics in Ancient Egypt

Reminder: Horus vs Seth

- *Ra*, master of the gods, in heaven, presides over the council of the gods
- *Thoth*: advisor to Ra and the gods
- *Osiris*, reigns over the Westerners = the dead; but Osiris remains linked to vegetation (rebirth of vegetation every year)
- *Seth*, god of storms, relegated to the desert, but remains the protector of Ra's bark
- *Isis* and *Nephthys*, the mourners, protectors of the dead + maternal function for Isis
- Gods organized into families of three (*triads*)
- *Anubis*, in charge of embalming
- *Enthronement of Horus* → Pharaoh = Horus on earth

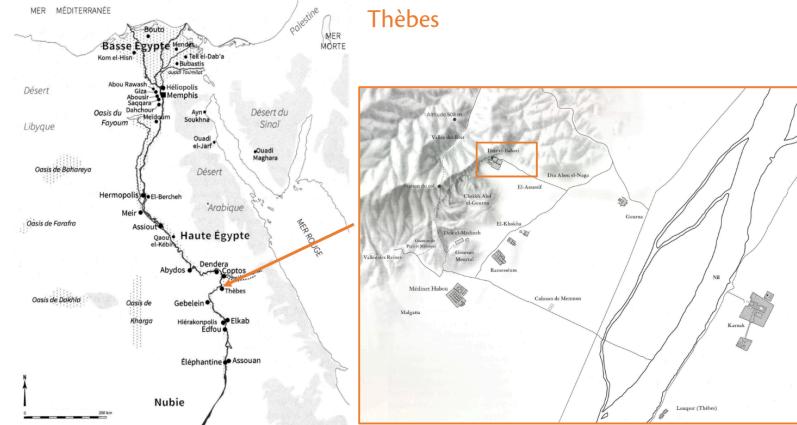
Texts from the Middle Empire

- 2045 - 1700 BCE
- XIIth dynasty: 1974 - 1781 BCE
- Geography
 - Everything to the east was just called "Asian"



- Trade / War was necessary as ancient Egypt missed crucial resources like wood and leather.
- Thebes:
 - weakening of royal power and importance of local elites
 - fall of the Old Kingdom around 2250 BCE
 - Egypt divided into several kingdoms
 - reunification of the country by Montouhotep II, ruler of Thebes, around 2015 BCE

- marks the beginning of the Middle Kingdom



- first usage of literature as a *propaganda* tool
- massive increase in statue construction
- commercial contacts with the Levant

Texts

- **Neferty's Prophecy:** slides 29 - 33
- **The Teachings of Amenemhat I:** slides 34 - 37
- **The story of Sinuhé:** slides 38 - 41
- **The eloquent peasant:** slide 45 - 50
- Reasons for the usage of these texts: mainly political
 - legitimize the royalty to a dynasty without royal ancestry, which has taken power through troubled circumstances.
 - establish rules of behavior, especially for the new elite, which must be loyal to the pharaoh.

Legacy of Pharaohs of the Middle Empire

- Middle Empire: classical ages for ancient Egyptians
- Language of the Middle Empire: conserved in the official written language of the royalty.
- Multiple pharaohs were made divine based on their actions, e.g. Montouhotep, Sesostris
- Protagonists of "recent" legends in the first millennium

Conclusions

- The Pharaohs of the Middle Kingdom: an example of text-based propaganda with a lasting impact
- Texts of various kinds (teachings, tales, also other official royal texts) that exalt royal power and spread rules of behavior in society
- Acts of these pharaohs that are particularly important for the country's history: also contribute to the development of legendary figures