Introduction

The Temple of Hathor at Dendera contains a number of small crypts along the eastern, southern, and western sides. These crypts are thought to have served as warehouses or treasuries for ritual furnishings, sacred and ceremonial equipment, and divine images used in celebrating various feasts and holidays. The crypts are small and it is likely that few served as locations for formal rituals. Many have plain, undecorated walls, but some have walls of limestone, rather than the sandstone of the temple itself, that are covered with carefully carved reliefs.

At the southern end of the temple there are five subterranean crypts aligned along a straight hallway. It was in these small rooms that the most valuable of the temple statues and objects were kept, including two gilt statues of Hathor decorated with precious stones. The statues have long since vanished, but they are described in the text: one was "the height of one cubit, three palms and two fingers." François Daumas wrote:

But most prestigious of the statues was that of the ba of Hathor. According to the texts written on the walls, we know that the kiosk consisted of a gold base surmounted by a gold roof supported by four gold posts, covered on all four sides by linen curtains hung from copper rods. Inside was placed the gold statuette representing a bird with a human head capped with
a horned disc. This was Hathor, Lady of Dendara, residing in her house... It was certainly this statuette that was carried in the kiosk on the evening of the New Year. [Dendara et le Temple d'Hathor, 1969, p. 60; my own translation.]

It is in the easternmost of these five crypts that the strange reliefs are found...

Source: http://www.thelivingmoon.com/43ancients/02files/Ancient_Electricity_02.html

The Reliefs

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Complete Text of The South Wall:

Resomtus is alive with gloss in the sky (and) lives at the day of the New Year celebration. He lights up in its house in the night of the child in his nest, by donating the light to the country from the birth bricks. The sky is jubilant, the earth is pleased and the God chapels is glad, when he appears in his chamber in his procession barge at his beautiful celebration of the New Year. The God with his disk has come to see him. Nehebkau gives him reputation, and the goddess with her disk, with godly body, rejuvenates him in his sanctuary.
Tcht tpjt jnr is content because of her majesty. She praises Re because of him with praise for his Ka, with wine from schft and meat bits on the altar before him.

The "land-of-Atum" is prepared with his most distinguished plan, as Hu and Sia are subordinated to him. He may protect the son of Re, forever.

(c) Alain Guilleux, courtesy of "Une promenade en Egypte"
http://alain.guilleux.free.fr/
Relief From Inside of the Temple of Hathor at Dendera
(c) Alain Guilleux, courtesy of "Une promenade en Egypte"
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Detail of above Relief - Temple of Hathor at Dendera
Egyptian Symbology

This [the reliefs at Dendra] is a variant depiction the creation of the world in Egyptian mythology.

The Egyptians believed that before anything else existed there was a vast primordial sea of nothingness.

They believed that the first thing to emerge from this sea was a lotus flower.

This is probably because the lotus closes at night and sinks underwater. In the morning it re-emerges and blooms again.

It was believed that lotus flower then gave birth to the first God who was often associated with the sun. This relief was done after the God Atum was merged with the sun God Ra and thus became Atum-Re.

Atum the God who created everything else after this is actually represented as a snake.

And yes it is a snake in these reliefs not light bulb filaments, you can actually see the eyes and other elements of a snake if you look closely.

This is pretty standard Egyptian mythology, that the lotus flower came forth first then the first God Atum – who was represented as a snake.

Well what about the bubble surrounding it?

I will quote an expert directly on this point

“Despite the variety of deities, the Egyptians conceived the origin of the world as singular. Only one god (Atum) was responsible for the emergence of the universe as a bubble of air in the vast, limitless, inert ocean and everlasting darkness of the undifferentiated primordial waters (Nun) that existed before creation.”

In other words the universe came forth from the lotus in a bubble of air.
There are other elements of this picture that back this interpretation up.

The Universe bubble is here being supported or raised up by the Goddess Nun.[14] Nun is the primordial waters and technically it is she that raises up the lotus, Atum, and everything else.

This pose of outstretched hands is one of the more common motifs for Nun and she raises and supports the universe from nothingness.

In some versions of this story the sun God represented in these scenes is Khepri who was represented as a scarab Beetle. Atum and Kephri sort of traded off being aspects of RA in Egyptian mythology.

So, in essence, you have Nun the primordial waters lifting up the solar barge of Ra for its first journey across the sky.

And this explains why similar poses are seen in the creation account at Dendara. They are also depicting Nun raising up the universe out of her waters.


End

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