

DOGON CREATION

The god Amma was the first being in creation. He began working in clay and created a large, round pot. This he heated to a white-hot temperature and sent it spinning off into the darkness. The heat and light spread deep into the darkness. This became the sun.

Next he created another round pot. This he heated one quarter at a time and sent it off to be the companion to the sun. While the sun shines brightly as long as it is day, the moon shines according to its four phases.

Amma took a third lump of clay and flung it as far as he could. The clay broke off into thousands of pieces and formed a multitude of stars.

He grabbed another large lump of clay and squeezed it into a long and flat object. This he threw as far as he could. It settled to form the earth.

Amma walked down to see his newest creation. He realized that the earth was a beautiful woman.

Amma was lonely and immediately tried to rape her. The earth was protected by a termite hill. Amma cut it down with one stroke and the earth was no longer safe from him.

This violent attack upset the balance of the universe, and it would change the course of things forever. Instead of a set of lucky twins that Amma wanted, the earth gave birth to a single, pale fox. The pale fox became a symbol of God's cruelty and difficulty. He scurried off to the dark corners of the earth to live alone.

The earth became pregnant with more children; this time two sets of twins. Each twin had both male and female elements.

One of the twins broke out of the earth early; he became the male god Yoruga. Since Yoruga was born too early, he and his sister were imperfect. All of mankind is descended from these two beings; and after all the years and many generations of humans, they never became perfect.

The other set of twins were the water spirits, the Nummo.

The Nummo were neither male nor female. They were half human and half fish and had bright red eyes with long green bodies which glistened like water. Their tongues were forked like reptiles and their arms had no joints, so they could move them in any direction.

The Nummo were perfect beings and went straight to heaven. They journeyed to the far away star called Sigi Tolo (Sirius) and settled on its moon, the Po Tolo, or "deep beginning" (Sirius B). Their moon was pure white and heavier than all the lead in the world.

Eventually, the Nummo returned to earth in a vessel and came crashing down with fire and lightning. They created a lake and dove into the water.

The Nummo taught man the sacred revelations that give order to the world. The first revelation is Nature, which speaks through the rustling of grasses that cover the earth.

The second revelation is Order, symbolized by the weavings. Man is meant to live in communities and not live alone like the pale fox.

The third revelation is that of the Granary and the Drum. The drum is to communicate and the granary is what binds man to the earth.

If all of these things are kept alive in man's thought, Order is preserved and man would flourish.

