

THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN HELIOPOLEIS CONFERENCE



CAIRO, 12-13 FEBRUARY 2024

IFAO — DAIK — CFEETK - MOTA



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The obelisk of Sensusret I at Heliopolis (© Dietrich Raue, DAIK)

The obelisk of Thutmose III in the Lateran (© Luc Gabolde, CFEETK)

«Amon-Atum-Ra in Thebes», Karnak Hypostyle Hall (© Luc Gabolde, CFEETK)

Geographical procession of Nectanebo at Matariya (© Marion Wenzel, Leipzig University)

Monday 12th February 2024

Day 1 at the IFAO

10:00 – 11:45

INTRODUCTION

Welcome speeches

KEYNOTES

Aiman Ashmawy & Dietrich Raue: *Sites in Heliopolis, recent excavations by Ministry, Joint Egyptian German Mission and with archive material of 60ies*

1. Aiman Ashmawy & Dietrich Raue: ***A summary of Egyptian-German excavations in the temple of Matariya***

The architectural layout and the landscape of Heliopolis are the topic of much debate. Most of these hypotheses are based on decontextualised objects. The Egyptian-German archaeological mission focussed on the reconstruction of the topography of this sanctuary. The results illustrate the transition of the area starting with periods when the mythology might have been formed. The further development of the temple site proved the transformation into an important national sanctuary of the 3rd, 2nd and earlier 1st millennium BCE of Egypt.

2. Aiman Ashmawy: ***Forgotten Heliopolis; excavating the archive of Matariya***

During the sixtieth of the last century, the Matariya inspectorate supervised the activities of house constructions and different projects of infrastructures through carrying out excavations. These excavations produced important results especially about the cemetery of Heliopolis and its chronological and spatial extension. Among the excavations worthy to note is the excavation at Ard el-Smika, the excavation of the drainage system at Ain Shams (Heliopolis), and the excavation of the Higher Polytechnic Institute at Ain Shams, as well as investigations of private properties that were planned for new houses. Most of those works were not published. This paper aims to highlight the most important results of the works at Matariya before the seventieth of the last century.

3. Susanne Bickel: *Heliopolis - prestige and rebounds of a toponym*

Since the earliest sources in the Pyramid Texts down to Graeco-Roman times, a particular ambiguity was attached to the toponym Jwnw. It characterized an actual city with its important temples, its lively quarters, inhabitants, and local necropolises. At the same time, it designated a place in another reality, where gods were born, divine conflicts were fought out, or where the gods convened for judgments. This dual understanding of "Heliopolis" as a reputed real-world cult center and as an otherworldly location of utmost mythical significance conferred a conceptual predominance to the toponym. The word Jwnw always carried a bulk of inherent, meaningful associations. Many cities throughout the country were compared to Jwnw or adopted the toponym as a means of promoting their own cult center, religious significance, and prestige.

11:45-12:00

COFFEE BREAK

12:00-13:00

HELIOPOLITAN IDEAS (MIDDLE AND NEW KINGDOMS)

4. Lilian Postel: *A new Heliopolis in the South: a political and theological achievement of Mentuhotep II?*

The name of Hut-aat applied to the temple of Amun-Re at Karnak when it was refounded by Senwosret I clearly shows that a theological construction made Thebes a replica of Heliopolis in the South, with a mirror effect in the theological system but also in the religious toponymy. The first signs of this theological and political approach can, however, be traced back to the reign of Mentuhotep II. The king introduced this Heliopolitan imprint on Theban topography through the two focal points of the temple of Karnak and his own funerary complex at Deir el-Bahari, which were to remain two key sites in the development of the Theban cultic landscape until the 1st millennium BC. The aim of this communication is to bring together the available data and to question the role of Mentuhotep II in the setting up of such a mirror play between Thebes and Heliopolis.

5. Luc Gabolde: ***The solar aspect of Amun in the Upper Egyptian Heliopolis: the Obelisks and the divine epithets***

It is now well known that the theology of Amun /Amun-Ra at Karnak — the Southern Heliopolis — is for a great part borrowed from that of Ra-Atum at Heliopolis. In that respect, the series Obelisks, so numerous on the site (nineteen), have a specific importance as they constitute the most eminent solar elements of the temple, together with the solar altars. The texts of the shafts and the scenes at the top reflect this fundamental heliopolitan influence and it is the object of this presentation to focus on this peculiar aspect of the solar theology they imported at Karnak.

13:00-14:00

LUNCH BREAK

14:00-16:00

HELIOPOLITAN IDEAS (LATE PERIOD)

6. Louise Gestermann: ***Ritual texts with heliopolitan allusions in Late Period Tombs***

The Late Period tombs in the north and south of Egypt provide a broad range of texts, as well as linked texts and pictures – most of them already known from earlier periods. These texts are multifaceted in content, and contain allusions to Heliopolis and the world of the gods there, in addition to mythological events associated with this ancient religious centre. The nature of the texts, however, seems to be different, and needs discussing. Some of the texts describe thought worlds, referring to the processes the deceased undergoes on his way to the afterlife and describing his existence in the world beyond. Other texts can be clearly linked to a ritual event that is celebrated in the tombs.

7. Laurent Coulon: ***Heliopolitan Gods at Karnak in the First Millennium B.C.***

Karnak's religious identity was originally based on Heliopolitan models. However, the Heliopolitan influence also manifested itself in the first millennium BC, with the inclusion of Heliopolitan deities in the monuments of Karnak. This paper will analyze the occasional appearance of Heliopolitan divine forms in the decoration of certain monuments from the Kushite or Saite periods, as well as, from the Libyan period, the importation, into Osirian monuments, of the ished-tree motif associated with larger divine groups from Heliopolis.

CULT TOPOGRAPHIES IN THE SOUTH AND NORTH (PART I)

8. Mostafa el-Soghier: ***Kings in The Avenue of Sphinxes***

The avenue of Sphinxes is the sacred road that connected Karnak and Luxor Temples. There are many inscriptions and evidences of royal names and kings that had been discovered along the avenue. Through these names we can follow their activities and contributions on the avenue and also to understand the political, cultural, economic and religious situation during their periods

9. Hourig Sourouzian: ***Amenhotep III at Thebes: A new Heliopolis in the South?***

Within his glorious reign of 38 years, Amenhotep III enlarged and embellished Southern Heliopolis with splendid monuments, the like of which had never existed before. Amenhotep son of Hapu, head of all works of His Majesty reports on the exceptional transportation of quartzite colossal statues of the king from Northern Heliopolis to Southern Heliopolis. These statues, hewn in the quarries of the Red Mountain and transported upstream on specially fabricated barges, were destined to the great temple of Amun-Re in Karnak and the king's 'Temple of millions of years' on the west bank. Almost all other quarries in Egypt and abroad were operating to produce material for these extraordinary constructions. This talk will give a glimpse on the activities of the reign of Amenhotep III in Southern Heliopolis.

16:00-16:15

COFFEE BREAK

16:15-18:15

CULT TOPOGRAPHIES IN THE SOUTH AND NORTH (PART II)

10. Mamduh Eldamaty: ***Tell Hisn/Matariya: the royal residence in North Heliopolis***

Since autumn 2017, the University of Ain Shams has been working in Arab el-Hisn, the northern section of the large temple enclosure of Heliopolis. The excavations were able to document a sequence of administrative and representative buildings from the 2nd - 1st millennium BC. The most important discoveries include a royal reception room from the Ramesside period and an inscription by the site officer Amenemone from the reign of Ramses II.

11. Florence Langermann: ***A sanctuary area of Heliopolis?***

During the past seasons, the Egyptian-German Mission in Matariya / Heliopolis has excavated an area of 1.500 m² located to the west of the obelisk of Senusret I. A large number of fragments of temple inventory have been found in that area. These include for example fragments of monolithic naoi and offering stands as well as offering plates, all dating to different pharaonic periods up until the Late Period. This presentation will give a general overview of the recent research and give first ideas about the significance of the area.

12. Stephanie Blaschta: ***Geographical Procession of Nectanebo I in Heliopolis: An approach to cult topography before the Ptolemaic period.***

During the excavations conducted in Heliopolis Area 221, which spanned from spring of 2015 to autumn of 2021, a series of basalt blocks exhibiting a geographical procession were discovered. The blocks were originally placed on the soubassement of the western façade of the temple of Nectanebo I. This did not only encompass texts from the upper and lower Egyptian nomes, but also personifications and texts from the so-called "pehus" (swamp-regions), which were found to the north of the lower Egyptian

nomes. It is one of the best-preserved lists with pehus which seems to be a copy from a much older template. The aim of this lecture is to give an overview of the different regions present and their significance for the ancient Egyptian cult topography before the Ptolemaic period.

13. Jérémy Hourdin: **Northern and Southern Geographical Processions: Kushite Construction of a Monumental Landscape at Thebes**

During the 25th Dynasty, the Kushite kings erected colonnades in front of the main temples in the Theban region. These monuments, which represented a new extension of the divine houses, provided a privileged location for the staging of Kushite kingship. Several geographical processions were depicted on these colonnades, showing Upper and Lower Egypt united around the Theban gods, particularly Amun-Ra, Pharaoh's father.

The aim of the lecture will therefore be to present the different types of Kushite processions on these colonnades, as well as the process of standardisation of an Egyptian landscape during Taharqa reign and its possible influences.

19:30 RECEPTION IN IFAO

Speakers and invited guests only

Tuesday 13th February 2024

Day 2 at DAI

10:00 – 11:00

TROUBLED TIMES (PART I) - 20/21.Dyn:

14. Klara Dietze: ***Tracing Crisis in the Archaeological Record? – A Glimpse into Late New Kingdom Heliopolis.***

A large body of evidence suggests serious political, social and economic upheaval in Late New Kingdom Egypt. However, as the majority of sources come from Upper Egypt, the situation in Lower Egypt is less tangible. While at Heliopolis little was known until recently about the potential turmoil at the transition from the New Kingdom to the Third Intermediate Period, the Egyptian-German Mission identified two areas whose features could be placed in this transitional context: (1) the accumulation of fragmented cult inventory and temple architecture in Area 232 and (2) the cemetery of socially low ranking individuals and cattle in Area 251. But to what extent can potentially disruptive events and social shifts be read from this evidence and complementary written sources? And where are the limits of archaeological interpretation? This lecture seeks to determine the significance of individual archaeological features and to outline an updated overall picture for Heliopolis in this critical episode of temple history.

15. Ute Rummel: ***Crisis and conflict: the archaeological record in the tomb-temples of Ramsesnakht and Amenhotep at Dra' Abu el-Naga***

The large tomb-temple complex of the Theban High Priests Ramsesnakht and Amenhotep (K93.11/K93.12) – a key monument in Dra' Abu el-Naga North – was deliberately destroyed at the close of the 20th Dynasty. The informative archaeological record provides an essential basis to explore the “troubled time” immediately preceding the wHm-mswt-era established in year 19 of Ramses XI. The paper presents the most important results reflecting the political, economic and socio-cultural situation in Thebes under the last Ramessides, and also gives an overview of the religious and ritual significance of the High Priests' monument – situated in the “Great Forecourt of Amun-Ra” opposite the temple of Karnak.

11:15 – 11:30

COFFEE BREAK

11:30 – 12:30

TROUBLED TIMES (PART II)

16. Fathi Yaseen: *Six grouped tombs of the 20th Dyn. in Assasif with one courtyard.*

This paper presents a group of previously unknown four tombs recently discovered by the Egyptian mission headed by Dr. Mustafa Waziri and directed by Dr. Fathi Yaseen. These tombs were dug out in North Assasif, an archaeological sector located in the heart of the Theban Necropolis. Their history dates back to the Ramesside period, more specifically to the Twentieth Dynasty.

The tombs are grouped around one courtyard shared with tomb TT25 and tomb TT28. Thus, the court now comprises six tombs. All their owners bear a priestly title so that we can speak of a “court of the priests”. The potential link with the heliopolitan theology is explored.

17. Ahmed al-Taher: *Divine Images Graffiti in the Theban temples and its proposed solar aspect.*

The practice of graffiti in the Theban temples developed gradually with the evolution of these temples. Here two types of graffiti were found: the first one is that which is left by the individuals, the second one is constituted of divine images graffiti. The last series of graffiti are found in the Temple where they were inscribed in order to create a secondary place for worshipping for those who could just enter the temple enclosure but not the temple proper. What is peculiarly noticeable about the divine images graffiti is the fact that they were made in areas open to the sky, in the daylight reached sectors, so that the sun touches them and thus creates a direct link between the graffiti and the divine sun disk.

This presentation is trying to investigate the hypothesis that making divine images graffiti in open-to-the-sky places represents a kind of solar cult practice, especially with the gods that have solar aspects.

13:00 – 14:00

LUNCH BREAK

18. Khaled Abu al-Ela: ***Recent finds from the central temple in Matariya.***

In the context of the urban development projects of Northeast Cairo, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, under the direction of the local inspectorate of Matariya, carried out a series of investigations in the main temple of Heliopolis. This provided important new insights into the building history of the Middle Kingdom temple. The focus here is on architectural elements from the 12th Dynasty and a royal inscription from the 13th Dynasty.

19. Marc Gabolde: ***Exporting the dead gods from Heliopolis to Edfu, Tôd, Esna***

The divine necropolis of Heliopolis is alluded in the « Papyrus du Delta » (papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.84) published by D. Meeks in 2006. The local dead gods were assimilated to the fingers of both Re-Atum's hands. They were called the « Children of impotence » who rebelled against their creator. They were turned into snakes, killed, and buried by their father. Significantly, the nine recumbent gods of Edfu and Tôd also share a Heliopolitan origin and seem to have been exported from the city of the sun, perhaps passing through Hermopolis. It is their strange tale that is presented here.

20. Paolo Gallo: ***Heliopolis on-sea : the spoliae from Alexandria***

The name of Alexandria of Egypt evokes some of the most impressive monuments of the Greek culture: the royal palaces of the Ptolemies, the Mouseion, the famous Library, the Pharos lighthouse, the tomb of Alexander the Great and the great Serapeum. Nonetheless, the largest capital of the Greek culture in the Mediterranean provides a greater and greater number of monuments from the pharaonic period: sphinxes, obelisks, blocks of holy buildings, columns, shrines, but also stelae, sarcophagi, statues of Egyptian gods and even private statues, clepsydrae and so on. These monuments, which display a great variety, are the so-called "pharaonica" of Alexandria. Their inscriptions prove that these stones were brought to Alexandria from other Egyptian towns: a large part of them comes from Heliopolis, while other pieces come from Sais, Memphis, the Fayum, Saft el Henna, Heracleopolis, etc. The presence of these pharaonic elements at

Alexandria has been explained in very different ways. At the beginning of the Christian era, some scholars even thought that these stones were the material evidence of a pre-existing pharaonic town, the old name of which of was... Heliopolis... A Heliopolis-on-sea... Who brought these Egyptian monuments in the Capital of the Ptolemies, when and why ? All these questions remain difficult to answer, without examining properly the whole of the documentation

15:30– 15:45

COFFEE BREAK

15:45-16:45

MATERIALITY OF THE HELIOPOLIS OF LOWER AND UPPER EGYPT (PART II)

21. Simon Connor: ***What about the statues that were on display in Heliopolis and Karnak?***

This presentation provides an overview of the statuary types found in the material from Heliopolis.

While the temple of Karnak was designated as the “Heliopolis of the South”, it is clear that the two “Heliopoleis” evolved differently. This is apparent not only from the architectural point of view, but also from the corpus of statuary that inhabited both sanctuaries.

Although Karnak is better known and preserved than Heliopolis, the insights that can be gleaned from the latest excavations on the site, as well as from the material of Heliopolitan origin discovered in a secondary context in Alexandria and Islamic Cairo, point to the presence of a very specific corpus at Heliopolis, a corpus that finds some parallels in Karnak and Memphis, but that seems to have stood out from Egyptian production through its unusual forms.

22. Vincent Rondot : ***The Luxor Obelisks named according to the two Heliopoleis***

Not written on the monuments themselves but on their quartzite basis, the names according to which the two Luxor temple obelisks are designated have been apparently overlooked till now. Their symmetrical composition clearly indicates that they are meant to designate Heliopolis for the Western one, now in Paris, and Thebes for the Eastern one.

16:45

FINAL DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Followed by

18:00 RECEPTION IN DAIK

Speakers and invited guests only

Departure of guests

