



1st SYMPOSIUM ON EGYPTIAN ROYAL IDEOLOGY

ФИЛОЗОФСКИ
ФАКУЛТЕТ



1838



24-26
SEPTEMBER
BELGRADE



Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade
Kapetan Mišino zdanje, 2nd Floor (Ancient History Seminar)
Studentski trg 1, Beograd

DAY I (September 24)

13:00 – 15:00 REGISTRATION

15:00 – 16:00 OPENING

Opening Speeches and Greetings:

Representatives of the Faculty of Philosophy
Aneta Đermanović, President of the Serbian-Egyptian Friendship Association
Andreas H. Pries (Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg)

SESSION I (16:00 – 17:30)

Chairperson: Andreas H. Pries (Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg)

1. **Massimiliano Nuzzolo** (*University of Turin*) – Gateways to the afterlife or glimpses to the daily-life? How the valley temples of the Old Kingdom royal complexes shaped the image of ancient Egyptian kingship
2. **Irena Kalfas Benešová** (*Charles University, Prague*) – Seeing the Queen: Iconography, Titulary, and Funerary Architecture of Queens in the Old Kingdom
3. **Danijela Stefanović** (*University of Belgrade*) – Geography and Royal Identity: The Concept of “the South” in the Prophecy of Neferti

WELCOME RECEPTION

DAY II (September 25)

SESSION II (10:00 – 11:30)

Chairperson: Nemanja Vujčić (University of Belgrade)

1. **Trent Hugler** (*University of Oxford*) – Two kings on one throne: re-assessing the Hatshepsut/Thutmose III co-rule and the politics of memory
2. **Uroš Matić** (*Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and Barnard College, Columbia University, New York City*) – Pharaohs and Spoils of War between Realpolitik and Ideology: The New Kingdom Evidence
3. **Kristopher Molčan** (*Charles University, Prague*) – Exotic Power: Rhinoceroses as Symbols of Royal Affluence

11:30 – 12:00 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION III (12:00 – 13:30)

Chairperson: Sara Radović (University of Belgrade)

1. **Carola Koch** (*Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg*) – All kings are equal – or is one king more equal than the others? The nature of the “Gottesstaat”
2. **Angelika Lohwasser** (*University of Münster*) – Taharqo, coming from the South
3. **Shih-Wei Hsu** (*Spanish National Research Council, Madrid*) – Love and Kingship under Taharqa

13.30-15.00 LUNCH BREAK

SESSION IV (15:00 – 16:00)

Chairperson: Julia Budka (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

1. **Nenad Marković** (*Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*) – Accessing the Kingship: Udjahorresnet, Cambyses II, and the Royal Ceremonies of the Saitic Monarchy
2. **Filip Coppens** (*Charles University, Prague*) – “Presenting the Harpoon” (xnk abb). The interaction between the divine master of the harpoon and the foreign ruler in temples of the Ptolemaic and Roman era

CLOSING REMARKS AND FINAL DISCUSIO (16:00-17:00)

Moderator: Julia Budka (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

CONFERENCE DINNER (18:30)

DAY III (September 26)

National Museum visit 12:00 – 14:00

“PRESENTING THE HARPOON” (xnk abb)
THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE DIVINE MASTER OF THE HARPOON AND
THE FOREIGN RULER IN TEMPLES OF THE
PTOLEMAIC AND ROMAN ERA

Filip Coppens
Czech Institute of Egyptology, Charles University, Prague

Throughout the history of the ancient Egyptian state, the office of kingship, embodied in the person of the living king, was its pivotal, defining feature. Its exact role and function, as well as its presentation and perception, was neither fixed nor static, but constantly developed and transformed itself, in accordance with social and political changes. Throughout the first millennium BC, the recurring foreign appropriation of the indigenous central authority continuously needed to be reconciled with the long-established traditional concept of Egyptian kingship and its relation to the divine. Under the auspices of local priesthoods, the foreign ruler assumed, at least outwardly, the traditional role expected of a pharaoh in act and portrayal. The latter is most visible upon the walls of numerous traditional temples erected during the Ptolemaic and Roman era, where these sovereigns continue to be depicted in the guise of pharaoh with typical royal regalia and titulary, uttering the expected phrases, while performing a wide variety of ritual acts before the gods of Egypt.

In a specific set of scenes engraved upon the temple walls during this era, the foreign ruler, whether Ptolemaic basileus or Roman emperor, is depicted presenting Horus with his abb-harpoon. This is the ultimate weapon wielded by the deity, who, above all others, embodied aspects of kingship, to annihilate his archenemy Seth in a variety of guises, such as a hippopotamus or crocodile. This ritual act is depicted in almost two dozen of scenes, for the most part found upon the temple walls of the Horus precinct at Edfu (12 attestations, Ptolemy IV – Ptolemy XII), but occurring likewise frequently upon the walls of various sacred structures in Dendara (7 attestations; Ptolemy X – Antoninus Pius) and once in the temple of Biga (Augustus).

The paper aims to present an analysis of these reliefs and accompanying texts, an overview of the relation between and possible transmission of parts of the inscription(s) within a single temple and between temples, as well as the larger context in which these scenes occur, to gain a better understanding of the ongoing interaction between a foreign ruler in the guise of pharaoh and a god closely intertwined with the concept of ancient Egyptian kingship.

LOVE AND KINGSHIP UNDER TAHARQA

Shih-Wei Hsu

Spanish National Research Council, Madrid

This paper examines the political and ideological functions of “love” (mrj) and “devotion” in the royal inscriptions of King Taharqa of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty. In ancient Egyptian royal discourse, “love” does not primarily denote personal emotion but expresses divine favor, hierarchical selection, and the king’s legitimacy as chosen by the gods. Taharqa’s inscriptions provide an exceptionally rich corpus for investigating this concept, as they repeatedly emphasize his status as “beloved of the gods,” particularly Amun. These expressions highlight the reciprocal bond between the king and the deity: the gods grant Taharqa life, power, joy, and protection, while Taharqa offers devotion, piety, and loyalty. This relationship functioned as a political strategy, reinforcing his authority during a period marked by internal instability and external threats, especially the Assyrian invasions.

Furthermore, the inscriptions reveal Taharqa’s emotional devotion toward his predecessor Shebitku, framed through traditional idioms of royal affection that underscore genealogical continuity and divine approval. The rhetoric of “love” thus operates on multiple levels, divine, royal, and familial; each contributing to the construction of legitimate kingship. By analyzing textual evidence from temple walls and stelae, this paper demonstrates that “love” in Taharqa’s reign served as a key ideological tool that articulated divine election, moral authority, and political sovereignty. Ultimately, the discourse of “love” in Taharqa’s kingship illustrates how emotional language, though formulaic, played a crucial role in shaping royal power and sacred kingship in ancient Egypt.

TWO KINGS ON ONE THRONE: RE-ASSESSING THE HATSHEPSUT/THUTMOSE III CO-RULE AND THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

Trent Hugler
University of Oxford

The co-rule of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III represents an unparalleled experiment in ancient Egyptian kingship. It remains the only certain attestation of two monarchs – one male, one female – ruling simultaneously in an institution ideologically constructed for a single ruler. This paper explores how Thutmose III negotiated this unprecedented political, and indeed dynastic, reality after Hatshepsut's death. I argue that the constantly adapting perspective on Hatshepsut's memory throughout the sole rule reveals both the absence of an ideological framework supporting the notion of "co-regency" in such circumstances, and the manifold political, administrative, and iconographic developments required to resolve the tensions within this anomaly.

Adopting a diachronic perspective, I explore the shifting political and administrative structures, building programme, and royal imagery throughout Thutmose III's sole reign, focusing on three discernible phases. First, in the immediate aftermath of Hatshepsut's death (Years 20/21-22/23), Thutmose III appears to have been grappling with how to reference her earlier presence. He inherited officials appointed by Hatshepsut who largely remained in office. Aspects of Hatshepsut's building programme, especially in the Amun precinct at Karnak, were initially continued or completed.

The second phase – "the post-Megiddo change in perspective" (Years 22/23-41) – marks Thutmose III's decisive reformulation of his kingship independent of Hatshepsut's influence. This is evidenced through Thutmose III's adopted image as a warrior king who acted on behalf of Amun, a theological shift from Hatshepsut's cautious piety-seeking legitimacy. Thutmose III's building programme introduces clear departures from the co-rule vision. In his so-called "youth text" at Karnak, Thutmose III claims ownership of monuments commissioned by Hatshepsut, an act untenable during her lifetime. Hatshepsut disappears from new royal monuments, while non-royal monuments were redecorated or incorporated a greater emphasis on Thutmose III through the removal of existing references to Hatshepsut, like Puiemre (TT39), and some officials whose tombs were constructed entirely within the sole rule omit Hatshepsut entirely, such as Useramun (TT61 and TT131).

Only in the third stage, the "turning point" from Year 42, as Thutmose III's military campaigning largely ceased and power was recentralised in the vizierate away from Hatshepsut's favoured Amun precinct and personnel, did an ideological solution to the issue of Hatshepsut's memory emerge. Thutmose III adopted an archaising early Thutmosid style portraiture, heightened emphasis on his paternal lineage, and installed major architectural changes such as Dsr-Ax.t at Deir el-Bahari functionally replacing Hatshepsut's Dsr-Dsr.w. I posit that only within this transformed context could the full scale *damnatio memoriae* of Hatshepsut be enacted, suggesting that political redefinition of kingship and concerns about succession were fundamental forces at play and effectively mobilised.

By situating these changes at the intersection between ideological self-definition and political necessity, it becomes clear that the Hatshepsut/Thutmose III era should not be understood as a normative "co-regency", but as a unique co-rule. The decades-long process required to resolve the unprecedented co-rule's consequences reveals the political reality behind the ideology of kingship and exposes the practical limits of the king's power.

SEEING THE QUEEN: ICONOGRAPHY, TITULARY, AND FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE OF QUEENS IN THE OLD KINGDOM

Irena Kalfas Benešová
Charles University, Prague

Rather than approaching queenship as a fixed or uniform institution, this paper explores how the status and agency of queens were articulated through visual representation and funerary architecture within the ideological framework of kingship and the social environments of Old Kingdom society. It examines the ways in which queens are embedded within their funerary spaces, focusing on the form, scale, and spatial organization of their monuments, and on how these features relate both to royal ideology and to patterns observable in the tombs of non-royal elites. Iconography and titulary are considered as complementary systems through which queens' roles were expressed. At the same time, many aspects of queens' depiction, including costume, posture, and compositional placement, closely follow conventions attested for non-royal elite women, suggesting deliberate limits to visual differentiation. This coexistence of distinction and similarity is examined as an analytical perspective for assessing queens' social position. In this context, the presence of Hathoric elements in royal and non-royal tombs reveals a clear distinction. While non-royal women are connected to Hathor primarily through priestly titles and cultic roles, occasional associations between queens and the goddess Hathor may be understood as symbolic rather than as indications of living deification. Queens are depicted as reflections of divine qualities rather than as goddesses themselves, thereby reinforcing a distinction between the king as a living god and the queen as a ritually elevated figure within royal regeneration, continuity, and afterlife ideology.

This paper forms part of an ongoing PhD project entitled *Iconography of Royal and Non-Royal Women in the Old Kingdom Tombs*, which investigates female representation across royal and private funerary contexts. The broader research examines how iconographic choices, titulary, spatial placement, and monumentality reflect women's roles within family structures, mortuary cults, and wider socio-religious frameworks. By situating queens alongside non-royal elite women, I seek to identify shared visual conventions and meaningful divergences, as a means of exploring how queenship functioned within funerary practice and elite social structures of the Old Kingdom.

ALL KINGS ARE EQUAL – OR IS ONE KING MORE EQUAL THAN THE OTHERS? THE NATURE OF THE “GOTTESSTAAT”

Carola Koch
Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg

The political structure of Egypt in the 21st Dynasty has been and continues to be the subject of academic controversy. Following the last Ramesside king, different individuals simultaneously bore the title of king, and it is disputed whether they ruled their respective spheres of influence on an equal footing or whether one of them was *primus inter pares*, more equal than the others. The study of the titles handed down from the Third Intermediate Period allows us to take a fresh look at the question of the nature and form of the so-called Gottesstaat, as well as the degree of separation between Upper and Lower Egypt in the 21st Dynasty.

TAHARQO, COMING FROM THE SOUTH

Angelika Lohwasser
University of Münster

The myth of the Sun's Eye played an important role in Kushite royal ideology. This is evident from the fact that the sun's eye travels south and returns from there in a calm state. The natural phenomenon underlying the myth is probably the rising of Sothis, when Sirius reappears in the morning sky after being invisible for around 70 days.

This also signifies that the Nile flood will soon begin, which, as is well known, also originates from the south. Taharqo is depicted several times as Onuris. He is the god who calms the Sun's Eye and brings it back to Egypt.

He had specific temples at Jebel Barkal built for Hathor-Tefnut (B 200) and Mut jr.t ra (B 300). He also undertook construction work on the temple of Mut of Ischeru in Karnak, this Mut being associated with the Sun's Eye. By repeatedly referencing this myth, Taharqo sees himself as the one who connects Nubia and Egypt by bringing the Sun's Eye from the south, thereby legitimising himself as pharaoh.

However, this contrasts with realpolitik: the steles of Kawa describe how Taharqo was summoned to Egypt by his brother Shebitqo and deployed as a military commander. His legitimacy here is therefore based on his selection by the ruling king and his military abilities.

However, in both cases, what is consistent is that they involve a move northwards, from Nubia to Egypt. This makes it plausible that Taharqo's journey from the south were part of the chain of legitimacy.

ACCESSING THE KINGSHIP: UDJAHORRESNET, CAMBYSES II, AND THE ROYAL CEREMONIES OF THE SAITIC MONARCHY

Nenad Marković
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

From the inception of ancient Egyptian state, an indigenous ruler was both a symbolic and political guarantor of order. However, the nature of Egyptian kingship in the first millennium BCE underwent significant adaptations, despite maintaining an outward consistency with earlier models. The continuous incorporation of non-Egyptian leaders into traditional royal ideology represented a significant shift, though there were notable differences between various historical periods. Before their ascension, Libyan and Kushite rulers, for instance, had already been substantially influenced by Egyptian governance structures. Therefore, the conquest of Egypt by the Persian Great King Cambyses II in c. 526 BCE marks the first occasion of a ruler from outside the Nile Valley ascending the Egyptian throne. Although Egypt was a province of the Persian state for a period exceeding a century, there is a lack of surviving royal inscriptions from the Persian rulers in that region, and little is known about their integration mechanisms. Luckily, a long hieroglyphic inscription on a naophorous temple statue, dedicated to Udjahorresnet (now Museo Gregoriano Egizio 22690, better known as the Naoforo Vaticano), serves as the main source of information for the inclusion of Cambyses II into the Egyptian kingship. Udjahorresnet, an official of the Saitic kings Amasis and Psammetichus III in service of Cambyses II and Darius I, the first two Persian kings of Egypt, is a well-discussed individual in modern scholarship on the early Achaemenid rule of Egypt. More specifically, the inscription located beneath the right arm of the Naoforo Vaticano in nine columns next to the naos details the previous career of Udjahorresnet and his association with Cambyses II. Accordingly, the king bestowed various important offices on Udjahorresnet, who subsequently developed the royal titulary for the latter, prior to outlining his personal contributions in familiarising Cambyses II with the religious landscape of Sais.

This study examines a commonly ignored dimension of the undertakings previously outlined: the characteristics and function of two court titles, “Friend (smḥr)” and “Director of Palace (ḥrp ‘h)”, which he asserts were bestowed upon him by Cambyses II. The practical application of these titles during the Saitic Monarchy remains uncertain, and they are generally considered honorific, frequently appearing among the ranking titles at the start of more extensive titularies of the most important court and state officials. However, the wider implications of these titles can be understood by examining the restricted access of non-royals to particular royal ceremonies within the royal palace. The hypothesis is reinforced by their presence as captions accompanying the figures who are positioned behind the figure of a king as participants in various royal rituals, namely the Sed-Festival and the Festival of the Shining Hippopotamus, on limestone fragments from the gateway of the so-called Palace of Apries in Memphis.

PHARAOHS AND SPOILS OF WAR BETWEEN REALPOLITIK AND IDEOLOGY: THE NEW KINGDOM EVIDENCE

Uroš Matić

Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and Barnard College
Columbia University, New York City

Plundering of foreign lands by ancient Egyptian forces is attested from the Early Dynastic Period onward and appears in texts on royal stelae, temple walls, and so-called autobiographical inscriptions in private tombs, as well as in visual representations on temple walls and in private tombs (e.g., tribute scenes). Not surprisingly, these attestations are most numerous during the New Kingdom, when Egypt conquered large parts of the Levant and Nubia. Accordingly, they constitute the core body of material for this paper. Previous studies have focused primarily on the precise meanings of the ancient Egyptian terms translated as “to plunder” or “booty,” or on the numerical data recorded in various lists of spoils of war, often with the aim of determining whether these reflect “Realpolitik” or ideology. However, in this process—perhaps unintentionally—many scholars have created a false dichotomy between reality and representation, understanding ideology in the classical Marxist sense as a system of ideas, beliefs, and representations that mask or distort real social relations.

This paper instead focuses on a comparison of how plundering is represented in different contexts (private vs. royal; royal stelae vs. temple walls). For example, in so-called autobiographical inscriptions, private individuals boast of taking adult men and women as booty and of receiving rewards in the form of people, land, and valuable objects from the spoils of war and directly from the pharaoh. By contrast, the lists of spoils of war in texts on royal stelae and temple walls record people (men, women, and children), body parts (hands and phalli), animals (male and female of different species), and objects of varying value. At the same time, the elderly or disabled are neither mentioned among the spoils nor represented among the imprisoned people taken as booty. Moreover, women and children are never depicted among prisoners of war on temple walls, although other contexts indicate that they were taken as spoils. The same applies to animals, which are regularly mentioned in lists of booty but are neither depicted on temple walls nor claimed as spoils in private autobiographies. Body parts are never shown among deliveries to the deities and the temple, although they are mentioned as booty in both autobiographical texts and tallied in the lists of spoils of war. With regard to objects, some items listed as spoils in autobiographical texts and royal lists are never depicted as temple deliveries (such as weapons and jewellery), whereas others are almost never omitted (such as luxurious vessels and bags of gold dust).

I argue that these differences do not primarily reflect a contrast between the “real” and the “ideological,” but instead point to what was considered important or appropriate for different agents in different representational contexts, shaped by distinct audiences and communicative aims.

EXOTIC POWER: RHINOCEROSES AS SYMBOLS OF ROYAL AFFLUENCE

Kristopher Molčan
Charles University, Prague

Rhinoceroses disappeared from the landscape of Egypt by the Early-Dynastic period (3000–2686 BCE). Despite the animal's absence in the physical space, its sporadic attestations in the material, pictorial and textual evidence seem to frequently link it with the royal sphere. Beyond the rarity of encountering the animal, the rhinoceros functioned as a medium of political propaganda, projecting the king's reach into distant territories and his capacity to summon and command the exotic. Especially during the Ptolemaic times, the inclusion of rhinoceroses in the dynastic animal collection and public processions seems to have had a considerable impact on Hellenistic society. Based on the extant evidence it appears that during the Graeco-Roman period (332 BCE–395 CE), Egypt acted as the transmitter of rhinoceroses between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean area; from Alexandria all the way to the Roman arena. Regardless of whether obtained as a diplomatic gift, tribute or a spoil of war, the rhinoceros became a significant piece of royal presentation.

GATEWAYS TO THE AFTERLIFE OR GLIMPSES TO THE DAILY-LIFE? HOW THE VALLEY TEMPLES OF THE OLD KINGDOM ROYAL COMPLEXES SHAPED THE IMAGE OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN KINGSHIP

Massimiliano Nuzzolo
University of Turin

Valley temples are basic components of the royal architecture of the Third Millennium BC Egypt. Starting with the Fourth Dynasty, and notably with the complexes of king Snefru at Dahshur,¹ the valley temple becomes a standard part of the royal funerary complexes, which structurally connects the vegetation area, with the Nile or one of its side channels, with the upper temple, i.e. the actual focus of the royal cult. This crucial architectural–topographical part of the royal complexes is also kept during the Fifth Dynasty, with the introduction of the sun temples, which are in fact adapted after the standard pyramid complexes, and continues to be attested up until the very end of the Old Kingdom, with the pyramid complex of king Pepy II.

But what do we really know about the practical function and ideological meaning of the valley temples? Scholars have variously speculated that the temples may have been stages for the funerary procession of the king's body towards the pyramid, locations for the mummification process of the king's body and symbolical gateways to the sacred space of the pyramid (and solar) temples, with no real function but that of (re-)presenting the king's rebirth. This blurred vision of the matter is also due to the bias in the archaeological evidence, when we consider that more than half of the Old Kingdom valley temples are in fact not well known or even totally unexcavated.

The present paper wishes to re-address the issue of the valley temples meaning and function by both reconsidering the available archaeological–textual evidence and investigating how these temples shaped the image of kingship and the perception of the royal ideology on the external society. Being liminal places between the living and the dead or better between the vegetation area – where the wider community of people shaped their lives in the shadow of the central power – and the desert area – where the upper temples were located and the central power celebrated and shaped itself in the shadow of the divine cult – the valley temples represent a privileged view point for the study of the continuities and transformations of Egyptian kingship as an institution.

In doing this, the paper will also benefit from the recent excavations and discoveries carried out by the Italian mission (directed by the present writer) at the valley temple of the solar complex of the Fifth Dynasty king Nyuserra at Abu Ghurab, which seem to provide new evidence and insights to the puzzle.

¹ In fact the valley temple seems to have first appeared in the pyramid complex of Meidum but its precise shape and features are still far from clear and even the attribution of the pyramid itself is highly debated.

GEOGRAPHY AND ROYAL IDENTITY: THE CONCEPT OF “THE SOUTH” IN THE PROPHECY OF NEFERTI

Danijela Stefanović
University of Belgrade

The Prophecy of Neferti belongs to a small corpus of ancient Egyptian texts (five in total, including King Cheops and the Magicians and the so-called “birth myths” of the god-king associated with Hatshepsut, Amenhotep III, and Ramesses II) that contain birth annunciations of a future king. In the broader Near Eastern context, this genre is well known and widely attested. Within ancient Egypt, however, the earliest birth annunciation - at least in terms of its historical setting - appears in the Prophecy of Neferti.

Despite the lack of scholarly consensus on many aspects of the text, including its precise historical context, the occurrence of the name of the savior king “Ameny,” identified by A. H. Gardiner as the historical king Amenemhat I, founder of the Twelfth Dynasty, is generally accepted. This paper focuses on the geographical identity of the announced king. It examines the gradual specification of who he is by articulating, at the same time, from where he comes and, perhaps, from where the legitimization of his kingship derives.

The analysis traces a progression from the general designation *rsj* (“the South”), through the more precise *ṯ-stj* (the First Upper Egyptian nome), to the highly specific notion of *ḥn-nḥn*. This geographical narrowing is interpreted as a deliberate ideological strategy that intertwines royal identity, place of origin, and political legitimacy, revealing how spatial concepts function within the text to articulate both ideology and realpolitik of early Middle Kingdom.