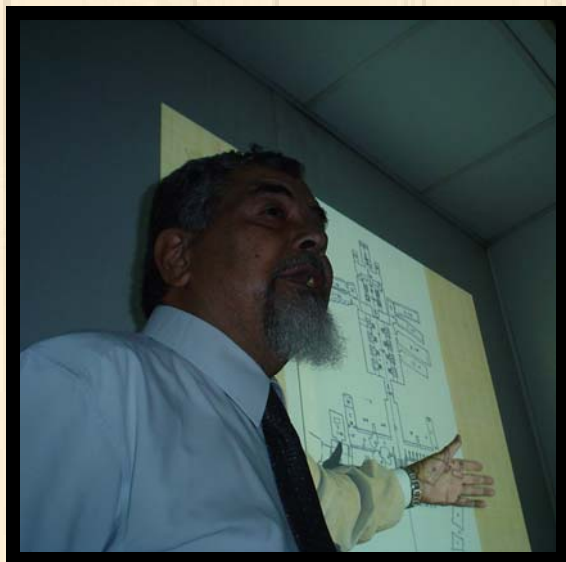


ENVIRONMENT & RELIGION IN ANCIENT & COPTIC EGYPT: SENSING THE COSMOS THROUGH THE EYES OF THE DIVINE



PROF. DR MOSALAM SHALTOUT (1946-2015)

In Memoriam



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ENVIRONMENT & RELIGION IN ANCIENT & COPTIC EGYPT: SENSING THE COSMOS THROUGH THE EYES OF THE DIVINE



1ST EGYPTOLOGICAL CONFERENCE OF THE PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS,
ORGANIZED BY THE HELLENIC INSTITUTE OF EGYPTOLOGY, UNDER THE HIGH
AUSPICES OF HIS EMINENCE M^{GR} DAMIANOS, ARCHBISHOP OF SINAI

ATHENS: BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY 2017



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The omni–presence of the Divine was manifest in every ancient Egyptian activity, the Egyptians being characterized by Hērodotos as «particularly pious» and Egypt as the «gift of River Nile» [see *II*, 5: «[...] ἐπίκτητός τε γῆ καὶ δῶρον τοῦ ποταμοῦ, ... »]. The piety of the Egyptians (who were the most ancient conceivers of Monotheism) was also both a direct and an indirect consequence of their unique environmental conditions, their living space being the theatre of a continuous battle between the river and the desert, between light and darkness, between life and death, the animals and the plants being also part of this very macro–sphere of existence, as well as the minerals and the stones. Interestingly, the heavenly bodies and their irresistible epiphanies and periodicities had also enraptured the minds of ancient Egyptian priests–philosophers, who saw in them the seal of Divine Wisdom and an allegoric model for their highly expected resurrection and life after death in a celestial Paradise of elation, the latter being conceived as a mega–sphere of cosmic dimensions. Finally, the lives of the Egyptians of Antiquity were also determined and influenced (in their personal and social micro–spheres) by religion and by the Environment *per se*.

In this Conference we shall endeavour to study the **Inter–Relations of Religion, Humans and Environment**, based on inter–disciplinary approaches from several domains of the Archaeological Science, Egyptology, Theology, History and Sciences (e.g.: Archæoastronomy, Geography, Archæogeology, Palynology, Archæoanthropology). Nowadays, living in the era of extreme scientific achievements and the evolution of even our Archæological Science into the paths of inter–disciplinary methods, we are blessed with the discoveries (mainly at CERN and other scientific laboratories) of notions and particles that not only glorify the human rationalist mind, but under the right perspective possibly prove the existence of the One God–Creator of the Cosmos. The famous *Higgs boson* (a.k.a.: *God’s particle*) discovered in 2012, as well as the hidden harmony of Mathematics and Physics (that could be considered, respectively, as the language and the thought of God imprinted in Nature), together with the numerous proofs that the Big Bang Theory is possibly correct, hence the Universe had a beginning (*mundus non ex nihilo, sed cum tempore et cum materia, factus erat*), are perhaps the best proofs towards this direction.

Based on the previous scopes and vision, the specific topics and the thematology of this Conference, that is held *in memoriam* of our unforgettable colleague and friend **Prof. Dr Mosalam SHALTOUT (1946-2015)**, will be the following:

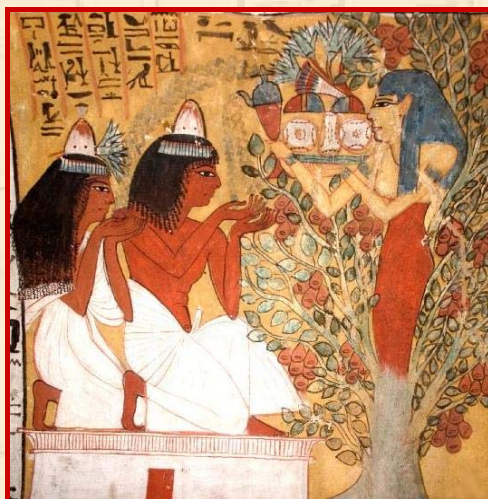
1. The surrounding Cosmos and the Space (Mega–Environment) as the manifestation of the Divine: Earth (as a planet), Moon, Sun, Planets and the Stars (Decans and other Constellations), their periodicities and their meta–physical semantics.
2. Earth/Egypt (*t3 mry*) as the abode of humans/Egyptians (Macro–Environment): Sacred and Profane Landscapes. The River Nile and its impacts on religion and culture. The «sacred» Geography of Egypt: space–time orientations, horizon (*3ht*), sky (*pt/hryt/pdt/bi3yt/kbhꜥw*), Netherworld (*Dw3t*), Nile (*Hꜥpy*) and the Nile–Valley, the Delta (*T3-mꜥw*), the Desert (*Dšrt*).
3. Humans in their physical Environment and in the world of gods (Micro–Environment): terrestrial and heavenly, human–centred, inner– or outer–landscapes. Divine/Decanal Zoomorphism versus Anthropomorphism (Anubis/Saint Christopher, Horus, Seth, Thūēris, Rēꜥ, Nūt, Serqet, Hathor, Osiris, Isis, Soped, winged deities/Angels, syncretic deities, & c.).
4. Primary animals (mammals) as co–habitants of sacred and profane landscapes and as symbols (or *avatars*) of divine manifestations (*b3w*). Love–bonds between humans and their pets.

5. Birds and secondary animals (insects, amphibians & reptiles) as co-dwellers of sacred and profane landscapes, sometimes as enemies of humans, and as symbols (or *avatars*) of the divine (omni)presence, providence and power.
6. Minerals as the «crystallized» or «petrified» manifestation of the divine upon Earth, as meta-physical symbols of certain colours and as substances for the making of amulets, statues, jewels, architectural members of temples and tombs and of religious «ornaments» or «jewels». Meteoritic iron (*bi3 n pt*) and its use for the opening of the mouth (*wp-r3*) ceremony.
7. Aromatic [incense (*sntr*), myrrh (*ntyw*), kyphi (*k3pt*), cinnamon (*tišps*), & c.], medicinal (herbs and medicines) and other substances (e.g.: natron/*hsmn*), as parts of the creation offered to appease/adore gods and/or to deliver human suffering. Plants, trees, flowers, gardens and oases in ancient Egypt and their relation to both gods and humans.
8. Inscriptions, texts and every epigraphic source related to all the above, especially to astronomical and cosmographic notions and to the Environment, plants and animals.

The submitted papers (after peer-review and possible amendments) will be published by an International Publishing House and one volume will be offered *gratis* to each author. Please, kindly send a title and a short abstract of your proposed paper (**latest by the end of March 2016**) and we shall answer you very soon about its acceptance. All participants are expected to follow strictly the editorial rules (which will be communicated later to them) and send their final papers respecting the deadlines. All participants will have the opportunity to check one draft of their edited paper for corrections.

sity of Athens, under the majestic Acropolis hill). Participants who would like to help the Institute will be more than welcome to offer a small donation (of at least 50 Euros, this being the amount of the annual subscription fee) or any other kind donation in species (e.g.: egyptological books, offprints and copies of antiquities, are highly welcome, to enrich our Library).

This Conference will take place to honour the memory of **Prof. Dr Mosalam SHALTOUT**, renowned Solar Astronomer and Archæoastronomer, who fruitfully studied the Astronomy of ancient Egyptians. He was an unforgettable colleague, a good friend, an efficient collaborator and a very nice person. By participating in this Conference, you pay an ethic debt to his memory! In a period of turbulence and violence against innocent victims all over the globe, with this multi-ethnic and inter-disciplinary Conference, uniting humans from all over the world, we want to point out that the human race can proceed and evolve in peace, unity, tolerance and collaboration, independent of nationalities, religious or other cultural differences. Many thanks and many kind regards from Athens by both the LOC and the SOC.

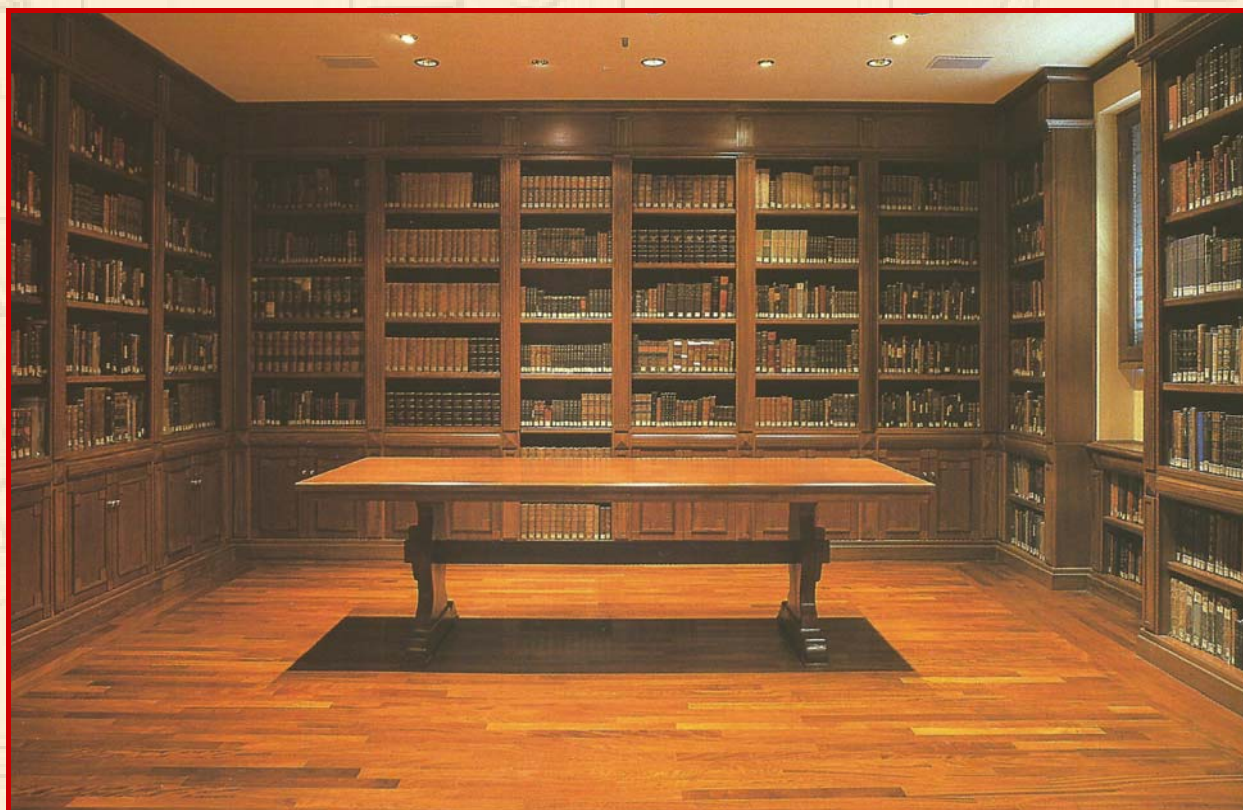


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