

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

❧ 2ND CIRCULAR ❧



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, THE CALLIGRAPHY
CENTRE OF THE BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA & THE INSTITUTE OF COPTIC
STUDIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALEXANDRIA, UNDER THE HIGH AUSPICES OF
HIS EMINENCE M^{GR} DAMIANOS, ARCHBISHOP OF SINAI

ATHENS: WED. 01, THU. 02 & FRI. 03 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 perhaps the most ancient conceivers of Henotheism) 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 (which showed distinctly two components: a *solar*, related to Rē^c and a *stellar* related to Osiris) 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 Archæology, Egyptology, Theology, History and the Natural Sciences (e.g.: Archæoastronomy, Geography, Archæogeology, Archæoanthropology, Zoology, Ornithology, Botany including Palynology, & c.).

After receiving approximately 50 abstracts, we would like to thank all of you for your interest and participation that will be an honour for this Conference! With this 2nd Circular (kindly expect the 3rd and final Circular around the end of December 2016) we are taking the opportunity to inform you about the basic details of the Conference and of your venue and stay in Athens. First of all, we would like to let you know that we still need a small number of abstracts on the following two topics: **1.** Minerals and stones and their (religious) symbolism in ancient Egypt; and **2.** Environment and Religion in Coptic and Byzantine Egypt. Most of the contributors covered mainly the Pharaonic Era; however, the Christian and Coptic Period are not fully covered. The deadline for these abstracts (that must be sent saved as **WORD 2003** documents, as well as any other texts) is beginning of August 2016.

As for your stay in Athens, please find also attached the BOOKING FORM for your Hotel. We have an agreement with Hotel TITANIA, one of the best in Athens (5*****), that is located at the centre of the city and less than 1 km on foot from the venue of the Conference. The prices offered are (all in a **B&B** basis, in very comfortable and cozy rooms): **25 €** per person per night for a triple room; **30 €** per person per night for a double room; and **50 €** per person per night for a single room. We kindly ask you to choose Hotel TITANIA and make your reservation latest by the end of September. In this way the more people will book, the more privileges they will get, and if a certain number is exceeded then maybe there will be also even cheaper prices. On the other hand, the quality this Hotel offers, the friendly service and the proximity to the Conference venue, as well as the fact that the area where it is situated is very nice and safe, make of it the best choice. Numerous conferences and colloquia are organized there every year with great success and also the luxurious environment and the friendly and high-quality service of the Hotel makes of it a unique resort.

The Conference will take place at the premises of the PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS, in the Great Hall, that is well-equipped for such a purpose. Depending on some finances, one or more Sessions may be held at Hotel TITANIA, but we are not sure yet. In any case, the Opening Ceremony and most of the Sessions will take place at the PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS. The PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS, the most important Institution of the SOCIETY OF PEOPLE'S FRIENDS (established 152 years ago) through its significant educational offer is a beacon of light and Humanism for a great number of students (many of them originating from socially unprivileged classes) and hosts a library with thousands of volumes and rare old manuscripts, as well as a laboratory for the conservation of paper and of ancient books. It is a low-profile Educational Institution that strives to disseminate knowledge and also hosts some courses on Egyptology, in close collaboration with the HELLENIC INSTITUTE OF EGYPTOLOGY.

Regrettably, due to our current strict budgets, neither the INSTITUTE, nor the PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS can afford even the slightest financial help for the participants. Thus, all of you are kindly expected to pay for your own trip-ticket, accommodation, transport, food and other related expenses in Greece. There will be only a small participation fee for the Conference (50 € for everybody except the Egyptians, who will pay only 25 €), to cover the basic expenses, Conference materials, a reception, & c. There will be also a free-guided tour to the Egyptian Collection of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. A participation attestation will be issued for each participant for free. Participants who would like to help the Institute will be more than welcome to become Members (50 € per year), to offer a kind donation (any small amount you might afford) or any other donation in species (e.g.: egyptological books, offprints, copies of antiquities are highly welcome, to enrich our Library). Publishers in Archaeology and Egyptology are also most welcome to participate and advertise and sell their books, after special arrangement and agreement with the LOC.

In the 3rd Circular you will find information about your arrival and departure to and from Athens, useful maps and timetables, the preliminary programme, editorial guidelines to prepare your papers, as well as other related documents. Around September we shall communicate personally with each and every one of you, for reading the proofs of your abstracts and send us any possible corrections. The submitted papers (after peer-review and possible amendments) will be published by the CALLIGRAPHY CENTRE of the BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA and one volume will be offered *gratis* to each author. All participants are kindly expected to send their full paper latest by August 2017. Please feel free to contact us, should you have any further inquiries and also to advertise this Conference [that is held *in memoriam* of our unforgettable colleague and friend **Prof. Dr Mosalam SHALTOUT (1946-2015)**], to your colleagues and friends worldwide. Looking very much forward to see and accommodate all of you in Athens in February 2017!

