

The Iconography of Tefnut with Other Gods in the Temple of Isis

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Abstract:

The research introduces an artistically analytical study to the iconography of the goddess Tefnut with other gods in the Isis temple that King Ptolemy II built it to the goddess Isis on the island, in addition to repairs to the buildings erected on the island, Ptolemy V also erected a compartment for the worship of Imhotep, the minister of King Djoser, who worshiped as God for medicine and hospitalization , Ptolemy VIII also recorded his name on one of the obelisks that was in the western corner of the island, and construction and construction continued in the Ptolemaic period ,where Ptolemy XII decorated the first edifice of the temple of Isis, which was erected on the island of Philae.

The temple was primarily dedicated to Isis but her husband (Osiris) and her son (Horus) were also worshipped there. Both (Isis) and (Osiris) are seen as deified rulers and so their names appear within a cartouche. The current Temple of Isis is a notably Ptolemaic structure. The main body of the building was built by (Ptolemy II).

Ascending the stairs from the forecourt one passes through the great doorway.

On the two jambs are reliefs showing the king offering to (Šw), (Ptah), (Dḥwtj), and (Horus) of (Behdet), and Philae. On the east side is an inscription of Bishop Theodor us. On the main inner wall of the doorway is a Coptic painting of Christ, with adoring angels. On the west side (Ptolemy IX) offers before (Isis), and (Howrus).

Keywords: Tefnut- Isis- Philae- Temple- Ptolemy II.

الدلالة الرمزية للمعبودة تفتوت مع المعبودات الأخرى في معبد ايزيس

ملخص البحث :

يقدم البحث دراسة تحليلية فنية لدلالة الإلهة تفتوت مع آلهة أخرى في معبد ايزيس الذي بناه الملك بطليموس الثاني للإلهة ايزيس في الجزيرة ، بالإضافة إلى إصلاحات المباني التي أقيمت في الجزيرة ، كما أقام بطليموس الخامس مقصورة لعبادة إيمحتب ، وزير الملك زوسر ، الذي كان يعبد إلهها للطب والاستشفاء ، كما


سجل بطليموس الثامن وكان اسمه على إحدى المسلات في الركن الغربي من الجزيرة واستمر البناء والتشييد فيه في العصر البطلمي .

وقد قام بطليموس الثاني عشر بتزيين الصرح الأول لمعبد إيزيس ، الذي أقيم في جزيرة فيلة. خصص المعبد لعبادة إيزيس ولكن عبد كلاً من زوجها اوزوريس وابنها حورس، بينما كان ينظر إلى كلاً إيزيس وازوريس على إنهما حكام مؤلهين وهكذا ظهرت أسمائهم داخل خراطيش مثل الملوك والحكام.

معبد إيزيس الحالي هو هيكل بناه بطليموس الثاني، صعوداً إلى الدرج من الفناء الأمامي يمر المرء عبر المدخل الكبير على اثنين من الرافعات منقوشه بنقوش تظهر الملك يقدم القرابين إلى كلاً من شو وبتاح وجحوتي وحورس وعلى الجانب الشرقي يوجد نقش على السقف لتيودوروس، أما الجدار الداخلي الرئيسي للمدخل توجد به لوحة قبطية للمسيح، وفي الجانب الغربي نجد الملك بطليموس التاسع يقدم القرابين أمام إيزيس وحورس.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تفتوت- إيزيس- فيلة- معبد- بطليموس الثاني.

Introduction

Tefnut “*tfnt* ”, the venerable goddess, was appeared in diverse forms throughout the Greco-Roman period. Predominantly, she assumed the likeness of a regal woman adorned with an elongated wig, a prominent solar disc, and the uraeus symbol. Alternately, her presence graced the temples in the formidable form of a lioness-headed woman or as a majestic lioness. Further variations featured Tefnut with a serpent crowning her divine countenance, exhibiting the fluidity and adaptability of her representations across various temples during this historical time. (Junker,1911,50; Wb V, 299/4,5,6; De.Wit,1951, 127-129).

The veneration of the goddess Tefnut traces its origins to ancient Egypt and endured, flourishing notably during the Greco-Roman period. As a prominent figure among the pantheon of mythical deities, Tefnut's cult is distinguished by its mythological narratives, which delineate the defining characteristics of her worship. Within the tapestry of her cultic practices, certain rituals exhibit occasional orgiastic elements. Notably, during a festival marked by libations of wine and spirited song, a priest of Tefnut inadvertently transgressed strict regulations, finding himself in conflict with the stringent guidelines governing the sacred Abaton. Tefnut's presence, often intertwined with other deities, graced diverse temples in Lower Nubia, contributing to the rich mosaic of religious observance during this epoch. (Junker,1911,38; Säve-Söderbergh,1987,138).

The article elucidates scenes from the Isis Temple by translating inscriptions found on its walls. Tefnut, alongside the gods is depicted in various contexts. Key titles attributed to Tefnut in Philae Island include her identity as the daughter of the god Ra and the Lady of Abaton. The narrative unfolds her connection with the great god Thoth, who plays a pacifying role in their relationship. Tefnut emerges as a mythic goddess, standing alongside other deities like Arsnuphis.. (Junker,1911,38-39 ; Säve-Söderbergh,1987,138).

The temples as they are seen at present must now be described. The Isis temple, or vestibule as it is sometimes called, of (Nechtanebo II) stands immediately over the water, and from its south side the quay wall drops sheer down to the river these are six pillars on the west side, and seven on the east, between which are low screen walls. The pillars are destroyed on the east side but are nearly perfect on the west, and are seen to have lotus capitals, above which are (Hathor) heads supporting the architrave. The vestibule was entered by a main door on the north side and by side doors on the east and west sides. At the south end there was probably. Only a window, as there are no traces of steps leading up the quay, by which the temple could be reached. (Weigall,A.E.P.B,1907,p.41).

Two sandstone obelisks stood at the south end of the temple, one of which is now lost, on the other are Greek and Arabic inscription. On the east side of the temple there is an open court, forming the top of the quay, and from it down to the water run two flights of steps one being subterranean. Inside the temple the reliefs on the screen walls show (Nechtanebo) before various gods, on the pillars he is said to be beloved of Isis and (Hathor), and to have built this monument for the latter goddess.

On the west side he is seen before (Osiris-Unnefer), (Isis), and (Harsis); before (Nkhh) and Buto; he is led by (Khnum) and (Horus) of Edfu towards Isis; and he is purified by (Horus) of Edfu and Takens, and by (Thoth) of Hermopolis and (Horus)



on the pillars he is said to be beloved of (Isis), and to have built this monument for his mother (Isis). At the east end of the north wall he is seen wearing the crown of

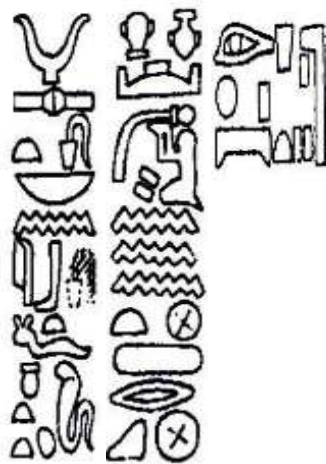
upper Egypt, leaving his place, while before him go the standards of the look and jackal, and a seem-priest burns incense.(Weigall,A.E.P.B,1907,p.41).

The Scenes of the Goddess Tefnut in Isis Temple:

Doc.1: The birth-house, outer vestibule, outer doorway, west jamb, first scene from the top. fig.1

The (Ptolemy VI) is offers two jars of wine to goddess (Tefnut-Wepst) who is depicted as a lady,with a cobra above the head.She is holding the (wAD) and (anx) symbols. (Junker.H&Winter.E.(1965),pp.158-159).

fig.1



Wpst nbt nbit

tfnt hri(t) ib i3t w^cbt iw rk(t)

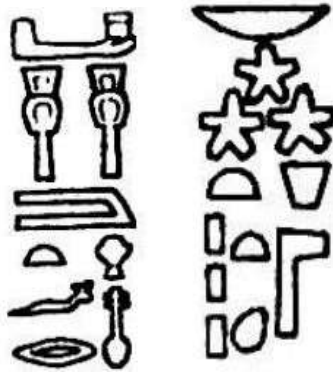
irt r^c nbt pt hnwt ntrw

(Wepst) the lady of the flame, (Tefnut) who resides in Abaton and Philae eye of (R^c), lady of the heaven, mistress of gods.

Doc.2: The temple of (Isis), the birth-house, inner vestibule, north wall, western section, second register from the top.

Scene Description: The king Ptolemy VIII is shown offering two sistra to the seated goddess (Tefnut) who depicted as a lioness-headed woman with the sun disk .

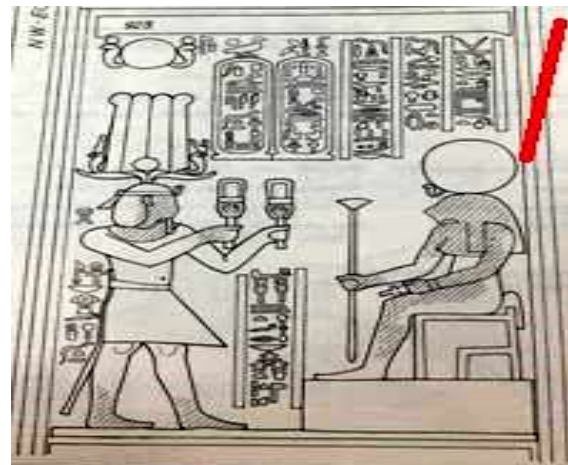
(P.M.(1991),p.224 (180).



ḥnk s ššty m ḥrt nfr nbt ntrw ḥnwt ntrwt

Offering the two sistra to your beautiful face, the lady of gods, the mistress of goddesses.

fig.2



dd mdw in tfnt s3t rḥ ḥryt ib i3t wḥbt

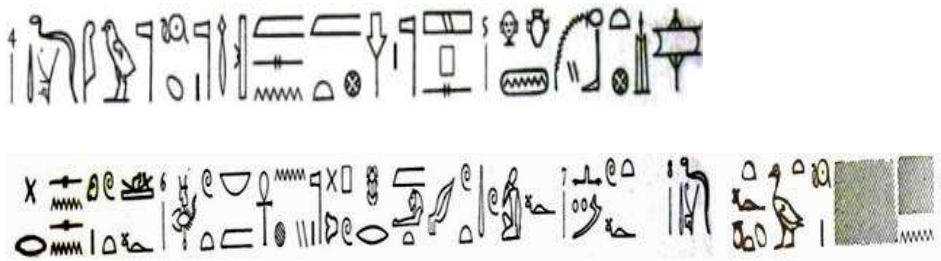
Words spoken by (Tefnut), daughter of (Rḥ), who resides in Abaton. and the cobra above the head. (Tefnut) is holding the (*wḥd*) scepter.

(Junker.H&Winter.E.(1965),pp.90-91).

Doc.3: The temple of (Isis), exterior west wall of the naos, , right series of scenes, third register, tab.VII.

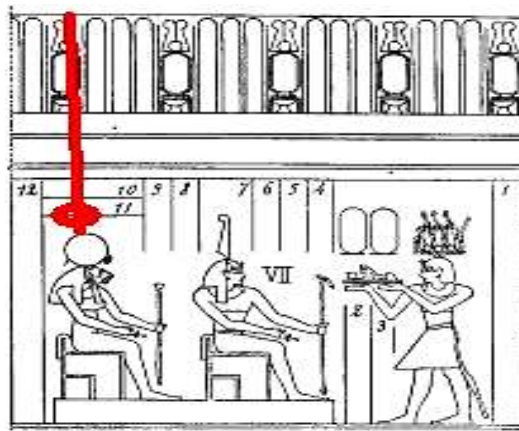
Scene Description: Augustus is shown offering myrrh to the two seated figures of (Shw) and (Tefnut). (Shw) is depicted in human form with the characteristic feather above his head, and (Tefnut) is depicted as a lioness-headed woman with the sun disk and the cobra above the head.(P.M.(1991),p.245.(375-377).

The text read as follows:



(4) *dd mdw in šw s3 r^c ntr 3 m snmt šhm šps* (5) *hry-ib i3t-w^cbt iwn wr snsⁿ .tw im .f* (6) *srk htyt nb m nhy ntr wr pw hpr sdm .tw mdw .f* (7) *n m33 .tw .f* (8) *dd mdw in tfnt s3t r^c //*. (Bénédite.G.(1893),p.105,(4-11).

fig.3



(4) words spoken by (Šw), son of (R^c), the great god in Bigga, the Augustus image (5) who resides in Abaton, the great blast (wind) by which we breathe (6) and causes all throats to breath by the living, he is the great god who came to the existence before, we hear his

words (7) but we do not see him (8) words spoken by (Tefnut) the daughter of (R^c)
 ///.(Bénédite.G.(1893),p.105)

Doc.4: E.North Wall of Chamber III.

Scene Description: On the left third a speech of the (Dḥwty) (Photo.947).

fig.4



The text read as follows:

dd in dḥwty

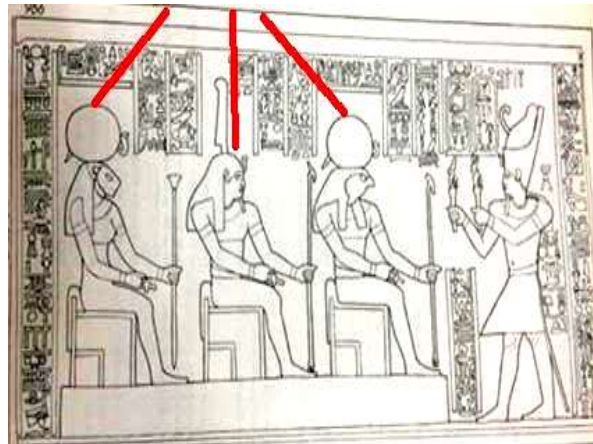
N ii.t m33 s3t s tfnt

Recitation by (Dḥwty) and (Net) comes to see her daughter (Tefnut).
 (Junker.H.(1965),pp.10-11)

Doc.5: Top row, first scene from the north wall (Photo 966).

Scene Description: The King is offer (*ḥkꜣ*) scepter which he surmounts by the crown of the North and south to Egypt, Which indicates the strength of both (*Šw* and Tefnut). (Junker.H.(1965),pp.38-39)

fig.5



The text read as follows:

ḏd mdw in tfnt sꜣt rꜥ ḥri t ib iꜣt wꜥbt

Recitation by Tefnut is sitting behind *šw*

Tefnut is the daughter of *Rꜥ*, who is on the Abaton. (Junker.H.(1965),pp.38-39)

The conclusion:

1-The Temple of Isis stands as a testament to the reverence bestowed upon Tefnut, through meticulous examination of the temple's wall scenes, one discerns the profound significance of Tefnut in the religious framework of ancient Egypt. Noteworthy among these depictions is the portrayal of Tefnut alongside the esteemed god Thoth underscoring her pivotal role and intricate associations with other prominent deities.

2-Through this intricate depiction, Tefnut emerges as a divine embodiment of strength, protection, and nurturing, an ethereal presence seamlessly blending the attributes of a lioness and a guardian goddess.

3- Tefnut has an importance not only as an individual deity but also as a key player in the divine relationships and the scenes that represented in the temple.

4- Temporal Attribution of Artistic Representations: The artistic renderings depicting Tefnut in the temple predominantly belong to the Ptolemaic period. Conversely, the concluding depiction, wherein Tefnut assumes a full lion form, is ascribed to the subsequent Roman era.

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