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Scenes of The Goddess Tefnut in the Temple of Dekka in The Lower Nubia

**Mofida Hassan El-Weshahy
Nada Sadek El-Hadad
Sherin Mohamed Hafez**

Faculty of Tourism and Hotels
Suez Canal University

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Abstract

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Tefnut, the prominent deity in Ancient Egypt, was often depicted in the form of a lioness, alongside other lioness deities like *shmt* in Memphis, *b3stt* in Bubasts, and *mnhyt* in Esna. Tefnut was considered the daughter of the god *tm* and the wife and sister of the god *šw*. Her presence can be traced back to the Pyramid Texts in the Old Kingdom and the Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom, where she played significant roles in the religious and funerary beliefs of ancient Egyptians. Ichnographically, she depicted as a complete anthropomorphic lioness or more commonly as a human with a lioness head. The cult centers dedicated to Tefnut were primarily located in Heliopolis, where she held a prominent position among the local deities. Additionally, Tefnut and her husband *šw* were worshipped in the form of a pair of lions in Lentopolis in Delta .

One notable temple showcasing various depictions of the goddess Tefnut is the Temple of Dekka, located on the western bank of the Nile in Lower Nubia. This temple, renowned as the second-largest in the region, boasts numerous representations of Tefnut. One particularly famous depiction within the temple portrays Tefnut alongside the god *dhwtj* on one of the temple walls, further emphasizing her significance and connection to other prominent deities in the Egyptian pantheon.

The study of Ancient Egyptian religion has long been a focal point in the field of Egyptology, with extensive research dedicated to understanding the various gods and goddesses of this ancient civilization. In this research, the emphasis is placed on the goddess Tefnut and her significant role within the religious framework, as depicted in the wall scenes of the Dekka Temple.

Introduction

Tefnut  is a prominent deity in ancient Egypt associated with moisture, fertility, and the sun. She is often depicted as a lioness-headed goddess or as a complete anthropomorphic female lion. These representations revered for its strength, courage, and protective instincts. Tefnut was the daughter of the creator god Atum and her brother and consort is the air god *šw*, their offspring are Geb and Nut and their grandchildren were Osiris, Isis, Set and Nephthys.

She is a member of the Ennead of Heliopolis *psd.t 3.t*. (Wb. I,559;LGG VII,405,406; Wilkinson, 2017,183)

Together, they formed a primordial divine couple representing the forces of moisture (Tefnut) and air (*šw*). As a goddess of moisture, she was associated with the life-giving and nourishing aspects of water, as well as the rejuvenating power of the sun. Tefnut's presence was believed to bring fertility, abundance, and prosperity. In terms of her worship, Tefnut was venerated in various cult centers throughout ancient Egypt. Her name derives from the word *tfn*, which signifies moisture, and she personified the primordial element of humidity or moisture (Wb V,299; De. Wit,1951,302; Hart, 2005, 147,156; Wilkinson, 2017,129 ,183)

On one hand, she is the first female deity born from the creative act of Atum, assuming the role of a generative force that gives rise to subsequent generations of gods. Simultaneously, Tefnut is also considered a consort or wife to Atum -R^c, representing the harmonious union of cosmic principles. Within the self-generating process of creation, Tefnut, serves as the divine hand of Atum -R^c, akin to the role played by the goddesses *nbt-htbt*. This position establishes her close connection with the god's consorts and further solidifies her significance within the divine order. (De.Wit, 1951, 423-425; Redford, 2000, 285, 362; Geraldine,2004,195-196;).

As the daughter of R^c, Tefnut assumes various epithets and attributes that align her with symbolic associations. She is frequently depicted as the daughter, the eye, the diadem, the uraeus, and the lioness, symbolizing her multifaceted nature and diverse manifestations. Additionally, Tefnut assumes the role of the mistress of the flame, wherein she adorns her head with the flame, representing her protective and defensive qualities against adversaries, this imagery underscores her function as a guardian and defender. (De.Wit,1951,302; Lurker ,1980, 88-89)

Cult centers of Tefnut:

Tefnut's main cult centers were located in Lower *mnš.t* (𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏 *mnš.t hr.t*) in Heliopolis where she had a sanctuary as one of the members of that city's great Ennead, during the New Kingdom the worship of Tefnut extended to the Greek city of Leontopolis “the city of lions” in Delta. In this sacred site, Tefnut was venerated in the form of two pairs of lions, symbolizing her fierce and protective nature. The presence of these lion manifestations of Tefnut underscored her role as a powerful and formidable deity (Zibelius,1978, 21; Hart, 2005, 156; Wilkson, 2017,183).

𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏 𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏 𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏
tfnt nbt mnš.t hr.t imt iwnw

Tefnut, lady of lower *mnš.t*, in Heliopolis.

As well as she was worshipped in Upper *mnš.t* 𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏 *mnš.t hr.t*. These regions served as the center for her worship, alongside her brother *šw*. The worship of Tefnut and *šw* in *mnš.t hr.t* and *mnš.t hr.t* (Wb II, 88) exemplified the enduring significance of these deities in ancient Egyptian religious beliefs. Their presence in these cult centers emphasized their roles as crucial components of the Egyptian cosmology, embodying concepts of power, protection, and divine balance (Daressy, 1894, 52; Mercer, 2019, 41)

Additionally, Tefnut was worshipped in the city of 𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏 *pr-mdd*; the 19th nome of Upper Egypt on the west bank of the Nile, where she was represented in artistic depictions as a lioness or as a female figure with the head of a lioness (Gauthier,1925, II, 83), also Tefnut's association with the *šnm.t* region 𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏 (Wb IV, 135), situated at the third cataract in Nubia, can be

traced back to ancient myths and legends. It is believed that Tefnut descended to this region during her mythical journey, and as a result, she was revered as the Lady of *snmt* (Junker, 1911, pp.40-41; Reoder, 1930, Vol.I, pp.32-33.)


dd mdw in tfnt nbt snmt hnw nbt iwrk di in k h3swt nbwt

Recitation by Tefnut, lady of *snmt* , Mistress Lady of Philae, I give you all the foreign countries

As a prominent goddess, she was revered for her protective and nurturing qualities, and her presence in these cult centers provided devotees with a focal point for their religious devotion. The lioness form, representing Tefnut, exemplified her power, strength, and protective qualities. Worshipers in these sacred sites participated in rituals and ceremonies devoted to Tefnut and *šw*, seeking their favor, blessings, protection, prosperity. The worship of Tefnut persisted into the Graeco-Roman period, as evidenced by the discovery of a stela at Tell Muqdam. (De.Wit, 1951, 423-425)

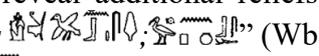
Tefnut in Dekka temple:

The scenes depicting Tefnut within the walls of the Dekka Temple shed light on her significant role in the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient Egyptians. Through detailed analysis of these scenes, valuable insights were gained into the specific attributes, symbolism, and mythological narratives associated with Tefnut. Such research enables a deeper understanding of Tefnut 's influence within the ancient Egyptian religious framework and the intricate interplay between divine entities in shaping their cosmogony and worldview.

The Temple of Dekka, also known as the Temple of *dhwtj*, is an ancient Egyptian temple located in Nubia. The temple is situated on the western bank of the Nile River, south of Aswan High Dam (Gauthier, 1921, 55). It was known as *pr slkt* The House of the Scorpion (Weigall, 1907, 147). The Temple of Dekka was built during the Ptolemaic period, specifically in the reign of Ptolemy II, although it underwent later additions and renovations during the Roman period. (Murray, 1931, 212-214). The main deity worshiped in the temple, *dhwtj*, who was associated with wisdom, writing and was believed to be the creator of language, writing, and the sciences. As a lunar deity, he was also associated with timekeeping and astronomy.

The temple features detailed reliefs and inscriptions depicting scenes of religious rituals, offerings, and mythological events. These reliefs provide valuable insights into the religious beliefs, practices, and mythology of ancient Egypt during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. Within the temple, there are numerous depictions and representations of Tefnut, showcasing her importance in the religious context of the site. These depictions often portray Tefnut in her anthropomorphic form as a lioness-headed goddess or as a complete anthropomorphic female lion. (Reoder, 1930, vol. I, 44-47)

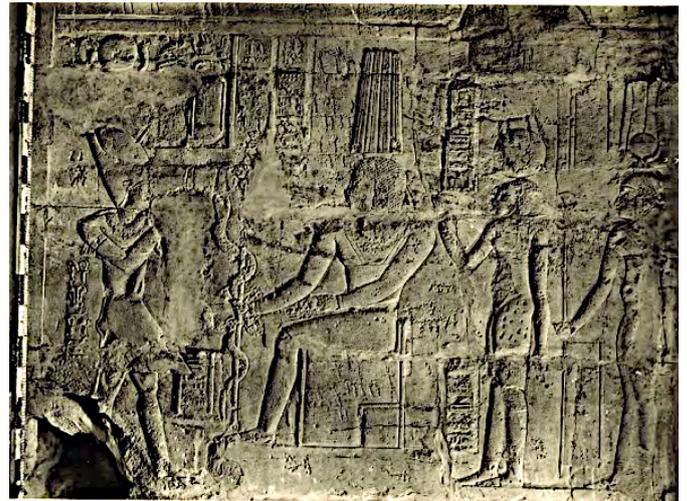
The Scenes of the Goddess Tefnut in Dekka Temple:

The temple of Dekka is renowned for its rich collection of scenes depicting the goddess Tefnut, these reliefs offer insight into the religious rituals and practices conducted within the temple, highlighting the worship and reverence bestowed upon these prominent gods and goddesses. Furthermore, scattered fragments and fallen blocks in the temple reveal additional reliefs showcasing various deities, including *dhwtj* of Pnubs “*dhwtj P3 Nbs* ” (Wb VII, 647), Tefnut, *dhwtj* of Hermopolis “*dhwtj m hmnw* ” (Wb VII, 649), Isis, Khnum, and Horus. These fragments provide glimpses into the diverse pantheon of gods and goddesses worshipped at the temple, and their significance within ancient Egyptian religious beliefs (Reoder, 1930, vol. I, 44-47)

Doc.1: Scene on the east side passage of the Pylon

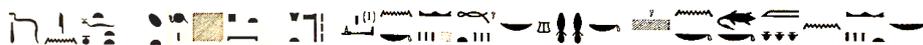
fig.1

Ptolemy VIII extends his both hands in a prayerful gesture before *dhwtj* pnubs, Tefnut and Isis (fig.1). He is adorned with the double crown with uraeus, symbolizing his royal authority and connection with the divine, he has a straight beard and a smooth collar around his neck. Above the king's figure, his *nsw-bty* and *s3 r^c* royal titles are displayed. In front of the king, *dhwtj* Pnubs is depicted as a seated male figure, he is adorned with a crown consists of four smooth feathers with a central rib positioned on a small pedestal and holds *nh* sign in his left hand. In his right hand, he carries *w3s* scepter, which is coiled by a snake and a scorpion, representing power and protection. His hair is neatly cut at the back.



Standing beside *dhwtj* is the goddess Tefnut, represented in the form of a woman with the head of a lioness. Atop her head rests the sun disk, she is depicted wearing a dress without straps, she also adorns a bracelet on her left wrist, although the state of her right wrist and left upper arm is unfortunately damaged and incomplete, hindering further interpretation of her adornments. On the left side of Tefnut, the goddess Isis is depicted as a standing woman, he holds a *w3s* scepter in her right hand, and in her left hand she carries the *nh* sign (Reoder, 1930, vol.I, 93-94 §206; vol.II, tafel.15)

The inscription of Tefnut:



*dd mdw in tfnt s3t r^c nbt hnwt ntrw di n.k h3swt mhwt nb (wt) gr tb ti .k di n.k snd
.k m ibw n h3swt nbwt*

Recitation by Tefnut, daughter of R^c, [lady] of the sky, mistress of the gods, I place for you all the north foreign countries under your soles, I put the fear of you in the hearts of all foreigners.

Doc.2: Façade of the forecourt, eastern half, top register.

fig.2 a

In this scene, Ptolemy VII is shown in a prayerful posture before *šw* and Tefnut. Although only fragments of the king's figure remain, it is evident that he is engaged in an act of reverence and devotion (fig.2 a, b). The gods *šw* and Tefnut, unfortunately, have been mostly destroyed, making it challenging to discern their specific appearances or attributes. However, their presence in the scene suggests their importance and the significance of their worship in ancient Egyptian religious practices. Despite the incomplete state of the depiction, the scene conveys the solemnity and religious devotion of the king in the presence of these revered deities. The king is depicted standing in the scene, with his two arms hanging freely and outstretched behind him. Only the crown and legs of the king are preserved in the depiction, while the apron with a tail has been damaged or destroyed. The king is adorned with a crown featuring horizontal

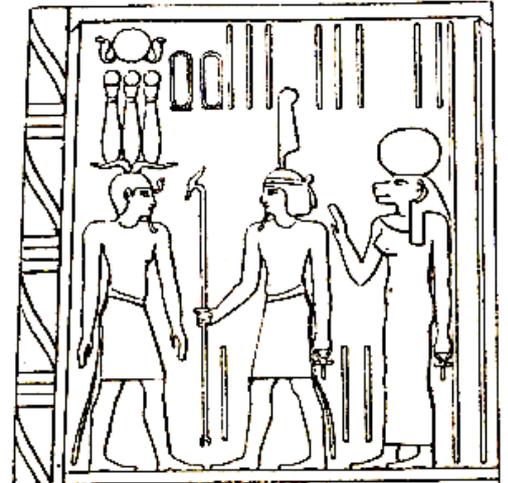


ram's horns, above the king's head, the sun is depicted hovering with two serpents (Reoder,1930, vol. I,105§235; vol.II, tafel.46 c; PM VII, 43 [10])

fig.2 b

šw is portrayed in a striding pose, holding w3s scepter in his right hand and ḥnh sign in his left one, tight knee apron with tail, half-length hair, covering the ear; he was generally depicted as a man wearing an ostrich feather headdress.

Tefnut is depicted in the scene as a female figure with a lioness head. She wears the solar disk on her head, her right hand is outstretched on the shoulder of šw and in her left hand she holds the ḥnh sign. Tefnut is depicted wearing a tight-fitting dress, accentuating her feminine form. This portrayal highlights her dual nature as both a fierce lioness and a nurturing deity associated with life and vitality (Reoder, ,1930 ,vol. I,105§235, Abb.16).



The text of Tefnut:



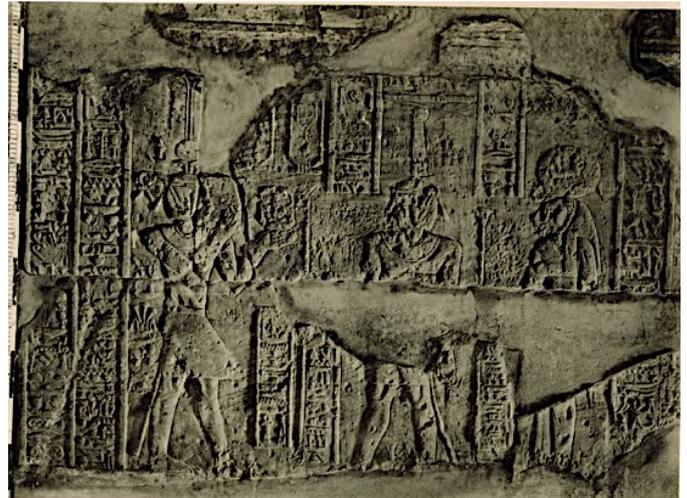
tfnt s3t rᶜ wpst nbt nbit m snmt m3i mhyt

Tefnut the daughter of Rᶜ , *wpst* lady of the flame in Bigga, the Lower Egyptian lioness

Doc.3: Forecourt, lower row of the east wall

fig.3

The depiction showcases Ptolemy VIII in a walking posture, he is depicted holding a figure of a kneeling man who clutches two palm ribs ḥh , symbolizing infinity, giving the heavenly bearer of both šw and Tefnut (fig.3). The king's hairstyle is of medium length, with a horizontal cut at the lower edge. His headband prominently features an uraeus at the front and is tied elegantly into a bow at the back. The crown adorning his head is adorned with horizontal ram's horns, topped by a sun disk and two gracefully arranged ostrich feathers. The king's regal appearance is further enhanced by his well-groomed straight beard, adding to his majestic and commanding presence.



As for šw , he is depicted stepping forward and wearing a crown adorned with tall ostrich feathers resting on his headband. In his right hand, he holds w3s scepter, while his left hand carries the ḥnh sign. The goddess Tefnut is depicted as a standing woman with a lioness head, crowned with a sun disk adorned with a snake. She wears a neck collar that is hemmed at the top and bottom, with the left shoulder remaining undamaged. Tefnut grasps a Papyrus Scepter in her right hand, while the hanging element of her left hand has been destroyed. (Reoder, 1930, vol.I, 132 §292 ; vol.II, tafel.50 ; PM.,VII,p.44 [22-23])

The text of Tefnut:



dd mdw in tfnt s3t rᶜ hrit ib i3t wᶜbt di (i) n .k ih .t nb(t) nfr(t) hnᶜ pri (t) m 3 .t

I give you all beautiful things together with what comes out of the field, Recitation by Tefnut, daughter of Rᶜ, she resides in Abaton.

Doc.4: The forecourt, the east wall, middle register

fig.4

The depiction presents the king in an act of offering, holding the scribal palette in both hands as a gesture of reverence before the deities *dhwtj hnum*, *dhwtj pnubs* and *tfnt*. (fig.4)

On the left side of the scene, goddess Tefnut is portrayed as a seated woman with a lion's head. She possesses long, flowing hair, and atop her head rests the sun disk adorned with an uraeus at its front. In her right hand, she holds *w3d* scepter while her left hand carries *nh* sign . She is adorned with a board neck collar, meticulously hemmed at the top. Additionally, smooth bands can be observed on each of her upper arms and wrists. Seated gracefully on a throne, she rests her feet on a pedestal, further emphasizing her regal presence .



Preceding Tefnut, the god *dhwtj pnubs* is depicted seated on a throne, in his right hand, he holds the *w3s* scepter, a symbol of authority, while his left hand carries the *nh* sign, his hair is of medium length, cut horizontally at the bottom, and an uraeus adorns the front of his head, signifying his divine nature. The headband, intricately tied at the back, supports four tall, smooth feathers placed on a small base, adding to the grandeur of his appearance. He wears a neck collar, carefully hemmed at the top, adorning his upper body is a fitted dress, highlighting his regal attire. (Reoder, 1930, vol.I,136-138 §305; vol.II, tafel 54; PM VII, 44 [22-23])

The god *dhwtj* is depicted as a seated figure on a throne, with the Ibis head, symbolizing his association with wisdom and knowledge. In his right hand, he holds the *w3s* scepter , while his left hand carries the *nh* sign. His hair is depicted in three parallel bands or strips at the bottom, adding intricacy to his appearance. On his head, he wears a crown consisting of horizontal ram's horns, above them there is a bundle crown, and on each side of it, an ostrich feather is placed. Atop each ostrich feather, a snake is depicted rearing itself with the sun.

He is adorned with a fitted dress on his upper body, wearing a tight knee while no tail is depicted on the back. Smooth bands adorn both his upper arms and wrists, adding decorative detail to his appearance. The pedestal of the throne follows a similar design found under the thrones of *dhwtj pnubs* and Tefnut, further highlighting the unity of their divine presence within the scene. (Reoder, 1930, vol.I, 136-138 §305; vol.II, tafel 54; PM VII, 44 [22-23])

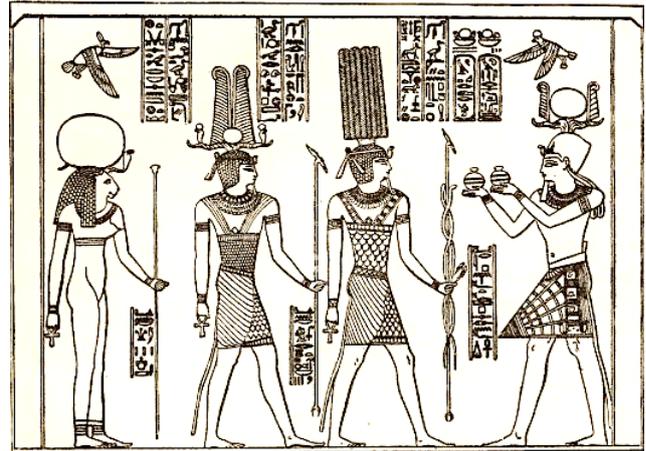
Text of Tefnut : 
dd mdw in tfnt s3t-r^c hryt-ib iw- w^cbt wpst // // // wrt nbt snmt irt r^c hnwt ntrw nbw

Words spoken by Tefnut, daughter of R^c, who resides in Abaton, *wpst* /// the great, lady of Bigga, eye of R^c mistress of all gods .

Doc.5: Destroyed scene in the forecourt, the eastern side of the south wall

The depiction portrays Augustus, offering two *nw* jars filled with wine as an offering to the gods *dhwtj pnbus*, Arsenuphis *šw* and Tefnut (fig.5). He is depicted wearing a wide knee apron with interior drawings, bands adorn his upper arms and wrists, adding a decorative element to his attire.

The king is characterized by his broad straight beard, he wears the *hprš* war helmet adorned with an uraeus, representing divine protection, and two ribbons hanging down on his back, adding a touch of elegance to his appearance. On top of the helmet, there is a free-standing horizontal ram's horns, between them a sun disk is positioned, representing the sun god's divine presence. Two ostrich feathers flank the sun disk, adding a regal and majestic touch to the helmet. (Reoder, 1930, vol.I,148-150 §340 ,Abb.21; PM VII, 45)



The scene showcases *dhwtj pnbw* as a striding man. He holds the *w3s* scepter in his left hand, which is coiled by two serpents and a scorpion, symbolizing his authority and protection and in his right hand he holds the *ḥn* sign. *dhwtj pnbw* is characterized by his distinctive beard, which is bent at the end, adding a touch of elegance to his appearance. He wears a tight knee apron with a tail at the back, bands adorn his upper arms and wrists, serving as decorative elements. His medium-length braided wig covers his ears, a headband is tied at the back, with hanging ends adding a decorative touch. Positioned in front of the headband is an uraeus, symbolizing his divine protection. On top of the headband, there is a base adorned with four tall ostrich feathers (Reoder, 1930, vol.I, 149)

Arsenuphis *šw* much like *dhwtj pnbw*, is depicted as a striding man with similar attributes. On his head, he wears a distinctive crown adorned with the sun disk, which rests on two horns. These horns are decorated with two snakes, additionally, two ostrich feathers are positioned around the crown. As for the goddess Tefnut, she is portrayed as a woman with a lion's head, embodying her fierce and protective qualities. In her right hand, she holds the *ḥn* sign and in her left hand, she wields a *w3d* scepter, she is attired in a tight-fitting dress, which is customary for women in ancient Egyptian depictions. Her hair is styled in an intricate and beautiful manner, reflecting the artistry and attention to detail of the time. She wears a wide collar on her breast, on top of her head, she bears the sun disk, accentuated by a snake positioned in its front side. Above her, a vulture hovers with outstretched wings, serving as a symbol of protection and divine presence. (Reoder, 1930, vol.I,150)

The text of Tefnut: 

dī (i) n k rwd ḥr s3 t3 dd mdw in tfnt s3t r ḥri(t) ib iw wḥbt wbst wrt nbit m snmt

Word spoken by Tefnut, daughter of R^c, who resides in Abaton, *wpst* the great lady of Bigga, I give you plants that grow on the earth.

Doc.6: Entrance to inner court, east side

King Ptolemy IV is depicted in a walking position, with distinct reddish-brown paint on his face, left shoulder, and both arms. He is shown offering *m3t*, the concept of divine harmony and balance, to the gods *dhwtj Pnbw* and Tefnut (fig.6). In his left hand, the king holds a figurine with a feather , symbolizing the presence of the goddess *m3t*. His right hand is

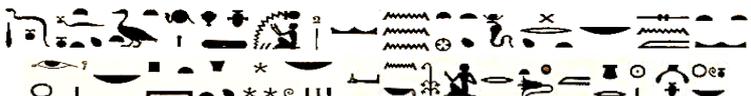
extended forward with the palm facing outward. The king is adorned with a broken double crown or the lower Egyptian crown.

fig.6

The goddess Tefnut is depicted with a lioness head atop a female body, she wears a tight-fitting dress, accentuated by a beautiful collar adorning her neck. On her right upper arm (the left one destroyed) and her wrists, there are smooth bands. She proudly displays the complete sun disk fronted by the cobra, surmounts her head. In her right hand, she holds the *w3d* scepter and in her left one she carries the *nh* sign. (Reoder,1930, vol.I , 169-171 § 399; vol.II, tafel.66; PM., VII, 45 [30]; Champollion, 1835, 118)



The text of Tefnut:


dd mdw in tfnt s3t r c hrit ib iw w3b hnwt hrw wrt nbt snmt
irt r c nbt pt hnwt ntrw nbw di i nks m c r c thm hrt hrw wt ib r c nb

Recitation by Tefnut, daughter of R^c, she resides in Abaton, large forehead snake the lady of Bigga, Eye of R^c, lady of heaven, princess of all gods, I give you dancing and drunkenness daily.

Doc.7: Facade of Arkamani chapel.Northern outer wall, left side of the door of sanctuary

Arkamany consecrates offerings before Osiris , Isis, *dhwt*y Pnubs, and before Tefnut (fig.7)

Osiris is depicted in his traditional position, holding the *w3s* scepter in his right hand and the *nh* sign in his left one. He is adorned with the *3tf* crown, has a curved beard and wears a wide neck collar. There is a smooth band on each upper arm and wrist. His upper body is adorned with a fitted robe, and he wears a tight knee apron with a round flap and parallel fold lines. The apron's tail is enclosed by a belt. Isis is portrayed as a standing goddess, grasping a papyrus scepter in her right hand and the *nh* sign in her left one. Her flowing hair is arranged in loose curls. She wears a tight fitted dress adorned with a four-parted vulture wing, featuring long flight feathers on the outermost segments. The dress is intricately patterned with parallel vertical battens, interspersed with small transverse battens. A prominent feature of her attire is the crown, which consists of the sun disk positioned between two cow horns atop a pedestal adorned with uraeus. Completing her ensemble, she wears a neck collar, and smooth bands adorn her upper arms, wrists, and ankles. (Reoder,1930, vol.I,177- 178; vol II, tafel 73)



*dhwt*y punbs is depicted in his customary pose, holding the *w3s* scepter in his right hand and the *nh* sign in his left one. He is portrayed with half-length hair, neatly cut horizontally at the

bottom. His headband is tied in a bow at the back, with two loose ends hanging down. An uraeus is prominently adorns his forehead. Adorning his head are four tall and smooth feathers, positioned freely on a small base. *dhwtj* punbs sports a gracefully curved beard, complemented by a neck collar. He is attired in a fitted dress that covers his upper body, as well as a tight knee apron with a round flap featuring parallel pleat lines. The pleats on the front of the apron are horizontally arranged, while those on the flap are vertically aligned. His attire is completed by a belt that encloses the tail. Additionally, smooth bands adorn each of his upper arms and wrists.

Tefnut, the goddess, shares a striking resemblance to Isis in terms of her overall appearance. Like Isis, she is depicted as a standing female deity, adorned in a tight dress. Her hair is styled in loose curls, similar to Isis. However, she can be distinguished by her headdress and crown. Atop her head, she wears the sun disk with the uraeus, additionally, she is adorned with smooth bands on each of her upper arms and wrists, adding a touch of elegance to her depiction. Despite the similarities in their appearance, the distinctive headdress and crown help to differentiate Tefnut from Isis. Completing her ensemble, she wears a neck collar, and smooth bands adorn her upper arms, wrists and ankles. (Reoder,1930, vol.I,177- 178; vol II, tafel 73)

The text of Tefnut:



dd mdw in di .n in k ḥbw sd ʿš .w (t) tftnt s3t (n) r^c ḥr.i (t) ib i3t w^cbt irt nb(t) pt ḥnwt ntrw nbw(t)

Recitation: I give you many Sed-Fests, Tefnut daughter of R^c, who resides in the Abaton, lady of the sky, mistress of all the gods.

Doc.8: Arkamany chapel, west half of the facade (fig.8 a,b)

fig.8 a

Arkamany consecrates offerings before Osiris, Isis, *dhwtj* and Tefnut. He is depicted in a dynamic stride, holding a partially damaged scepter in his right hand and a long staff along with the *nh* sign in his left hand. A small decorative band adorns his right wrist, adding an ornamental element to his attire.



Unfortunately, significant portions of the upper and lower parts of the figure have been lost or damaged, limiting our ability to discern specific details. However, the remaining portion of the wide knee apron suggests its former magnificence. Below the apron, a narrower skirt with meticulously rendered parallel pleats gracefully drapes over the king's left knee. fig.8 b

Before the king, a collection of offerings is presented, although the lower section on the right side has suffered considerable damage. Positioned on the left side are two jugs, standing atop a pedestal, reflecting intricate decorative motifs that have unfortunately been marred or lost over time (Reoder, 1930, vol. I,186-189 § 429; vol. II., tafel 76 a). Adjacent to the jugs, three sacrificial animals are depicted, their severed heads placed nearby and their legs bound



together. While the lower two animals have sustained significant damage, the uppermost animal appears to represent a cow, while the middle one is likely an oryx antelope, although some specific details may be obscured due to the condition of the artwork, she wears a neck collar, and smooth bands adorn her upper arms, wrists, and ankles .

The representation of Osiris, the god of the afterlife, displays a dynamic posture with his striding stance, is shown holding the *w3s* scepter in his right hand and the *ḥnḥ* sign in his left hand. Unfortunately, the head and upper part of the Egyptian crown are missing or damaged. Osiris is characterized by his curved beard, and a notable element of his attire is the neck collar. The close-fitting cloth that drapes his upper body is secured by two carrying straps, adding a touch of elegance to his appearance (Reoder,1930,186-189 § 429; Abb.23 ; Champollion, 1835, pl.LIII [2]). The narrow knee apron worn by Osiris showcases intricate designs, with oblique lines on the front and vertical lines of folds on the flap. The belt, which encloses the tail, serves both as a decorative element and a functional accessory. The remains of a band on the left upper arm indicate further embellishment, while the broken right upper arm detracts from the overall symmetry. The wrists are adorned with bands that are hemmed on both sides, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the deity's ensemble.

The depiction of the goddess Isis portrays her as a striding figure, with only her feet remaining intact. Despite the partial preservation, certain elements of her appearance can still be discerned. Isis is characterized by her distinctive hairstyle, featuring beautifully two-part curly locks that frame her face. Resting on the headdress is her customary crown, which consists of the sun disk positioned between two cow horns. Additionally, a snake adorns her forehead. Her attire consists of a patterned women's dress, with flapped wings visible, while some details may be obscured due to damage or deterioration, the overall pattern and design of the dress are still discernible. Similar to her arms, bands can be observed on each upper arm and wrist, further enhancing her adornment .

The depiction of the god *ḏḥwtj* portrays him as a striding figure, wearing a tight kilt with a tail at the back. In his right hand, he holds the *w3s* scepter, while his left hand carries the *ḥnḥ* sign. His hairstyle consists of half-length curly hair, partially covering his ears. Atop his head, he wears a headband adorned with an uraeus, with its ends hanging down at his back. Two high smooth feathers are detached twice, adding an ornate touch to his headdress. The goddess Tefnut is depicted as a striding woman with the head of a lioness. In his right hand, he holds the *w3d* scepter, a symbol of his authority, while his left hand carries the *ḥnḥ* sign. She is adorned with beautiful collars, enhancing her regal appearance. Atop her head, a sun disk is adorned with a snake in its front side, representing her connection to divine wisdom and protection. A hovering vulture with outstretched and flapping wings envelops her body, further emphasizing her divine status. Smooth bands are observed at each ankle, adding a touch of elegance to her portrayal.

The text of Tefnut :



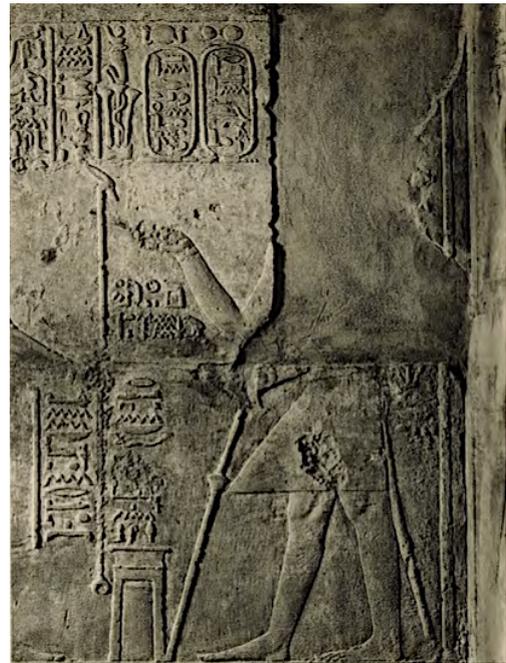
*di n k snd .k mibw n w3swt nb (wt) di n .k w3swt mhwt nb (wt) gr tb ti .k dd mdw in tfnt
s3t r ḥ nbt ḥnwt ntrw*

I place for you the terror that you inspire in the hearts of all countries, I place for you all the countries of the north under your feet. Recitation by Tefnut, daughter of R^c, lady of the sky, mistress of the gods.

Doc.9: Arcamany chapel, bottom row of the west wall

fig.9 a

Arkamany is depicted in a commanding pose, he strides purposefully while holding a mace in his left hand, the lower end of which has been preserved, symbolizing his readiness to wield force if necessary. Additionally, he grasps a long staff adorned with a papyrus umbel at its midpoint, the king's right hand is raised in a gesture of affirmation, with his thumb pointed upward, perhaps indicating his approval or endorsement. Unfortunately, the upper part of his body is damaged or missing, but the remaining lower section showcases a vibrant red hue, which could have held significance in representing his royal status or vitality (fig.9 a). Though the sculpture has suffered some damage, there are traces of a band that once adorned his right upper arm and left wrist, indicating a possible ornamentation or insignia of rank. Furthermore, the king is adorned with a knee apron, complemented by a tail. (Reoder, 1930,218;vol.II. tafel. 84 b)



In front of the king, there is a meticulously crafted model of a temple, this model likely holds significant meaning, showcasing the king's patronage of religious or monumental construction projects, highlighting his role as a builder and protector of sacred places. Despite the loss and damage to the sculpture, it remains a valuable artifact that provides a glimpse into the artistic and cultural heritage of the time, offering insights into the beliefs, customs, and political power of the ancient civilization it represents.

fig.9 b

The sculpture portrays *dhwtj* as a striding anthropomorphic figure with a green colored body, indicative of rejuvenation, growth, and possibly representing his connection to nature and fertility, his head takes the form of Ibis (Reoder,1930, vol.I,219; vol. II. tafel. 85).

In his left hand, *dhwtj* holds the *w3s* scepter, his right hand showcases the *nh* sign. Adorning his head is the *3tef* crown, which combines the symbol of Osiris' authority with ostrich feathers on the sides. He wears a distinguished neck collar, the presence of a knee apron with a flap indicates his connection to ancient ceremonial attire or ritual significance. The belt, with a blue interior, elegantly encloses the tail, possibly symbolizing his connection to the animal realm, can also be associated with aspects of divine protection or fertility. Notably, each of *dhwtj*'s upper arms and wrists is adorned with ornate bands. The sculpture of Thoth showcases a rich array of symbolism that encompasses his multifaceted attributes as a deity. Through the depiction of various regal elements, symbolic accessories, and sacred objects, the artwork communicates *dhwtj*'s role as a divine scribe, mediator between gods and humans, and keeper of knowledge and wisdom in ancient Egyptian mythology. (Reoder,1930, vol.I,219; vol. II. tafel. 85).



After *dhwtj* is *šw*-Arsnuphis , depicted as a striding anthropomorphic figure. In his right hand, he holds the *w3s* scepter, the left hand displays the *ʿnh* sign.

His medium-length hair elegantly covers his ears, accentuating his divine and enigmatic appearance. On his forehead, an uraeus is prominently displayed, adorning his head, *šw* - Arsnuphis wears a distinctive red headband, an emblem of his divine status or possibly signifying his affiliation with particular cults or regions. The crown he wears consists of four smooth feathers, situated on a small base. Each feather exhibits a midrib, side veins, and edging, although some of the coloration has been affected by decay over time, lending a sense of antiquity to the artifact. The deity's facial features include a gracefully curved beard, which is a common aspect of many ancient Egyptian divine representations, further reinforcing his divine identity and maturity. Similar to the revered deity *dhwtj*, *šw* - Arsnuphis is adorned with a neck collar, he is dressed in an apron and ribbons, akin to the attire associated with other significant deities. (Reoder,1930, vol.I ,219 , 220)

Tefnut is depicted as a striding woman with the head of a lioness, exuding a commanding and regal presence. In her right hand, she holds the sign of *ʿnh*, in her left hand, she grasps the *w3d* scepter, the symbol of power and dominion, further underscoring her divine authority. Her attire is characteristic of ancient Egyptian women's dress, accentuating her femininity while retaining a sense of divine elegance. Her hair is beautifully braided, and remnants of blue coloration remain. Adorning her head is the iconic red sun disk, symbolic of her divine nature and connection to the solar aspect of Egyptian religion and atop the sun disk, uraeus is prominently displayed (Reoder,1930, vol.I ,219, 220 § 491).

She wears exquisite wide collars, a common ornament in ancient Egyptian iconography. The four-part wings, folded crosswise around her body, add to her majestic appearance. The innermost part of the wings is smooth blue, while the second part features red flight feathers, the third part displays green feathers, and the outermost part exhibits blue flight feathers, creating a visually stunning and harmonious combination of colors. Notably, on each upper arm and hand, as well as on her ankles, she wears ornate band (Reoder,1930, vol.I ,219 ,220 § 491).

The text of Tefnut:



*di n (i) n k t3w nbw m htp dd mdw in tfnt hrit ib iw wʿbt ʿIrt rʿn b(t) pt hnwt ntrw
nbwt di n ink h3swt rsi wt hr tbt k*

I give you all the countries of the North in prostration, I give you all the countries in peace. Recitation by Tefnut, who resides in the Abaton, .Eye of R^c, lady of the sky, mistress of all the gods, I give you all the southern countries under your sandals.

Doc.10: Chapel of Arkamany, east half of the inner south wall

In this scene Arkamany stands tall, with remnants of a red-colored body, in his left hand he presents *m3ʿt*; the symbol of truth to *dhwtj* pnuhs and Tefnut from Abaton, with faint traces of a green face and a blue dress. On his head, he wears the Lower Egyptian crown, prominently featuring an uraeus in the front, also bears ram's horns, elegantly curved downwards, within the Lower Egyptian crown, a second crown is inserted, which boasts horizontal ram's horns, topped by a bundle crown in the center. This *hmhm* (Wb. II, 491) crown highlights the king's dual kingship, asserting his authority over both Upper and Lower Egypt (fig.10).

His attire includes a wide knee apron adorned with two snakes that hang down from the center, a representation of his connection to protective forces or divine guardianship. Encircling his waist is a belt with a blue interior, elegantly enclosing the tail. Below the apron, a skirt with

pleats extends down to the ankles, allowing the red legs to shine through, showcasing the king's divine and human aspects.

dhwtj is depicted seated majestically upon a resplendent throne. The hue of the god's body bears a remarkable blue pigment, accentuating his divine nature. In his right hand, *dhwtj* holds a dignified *w3s* scepter, symbolizing his authority and power. Meanwhile, his left hand grasps the sign of *nh*. Notably, *dhwtj*'s countenance exhibits half-length hair, artfully arranged to cover his ears, with graceful horizontal cuts and tasteful curls. Adorning his forehead is the uraeus, upon his head, the god dons an elegantly tied headband, its two ends gracefully draping down his back. The side part of his apron boasts a captivating blue hue, embellished with parallel fold lines cascading harmoniously to the level of his thighs. Securing the apron is a distinguished belt, adorned with a red inner lining, elegantly encircling his waist and featuring an intricately designed tail.

Adding to the grandeur of *dhwtj*'s appearance, smooth bands adorn his upper arms and wrists, with traces of gold coating adorning his right upper arm, furthermore, he adorns a wide and opulent collar.

The throne on which *dhwtj* sits showcases an exquisite chessboard pattern, meticulously painted in alternating rows of blue, red, blue, and green, symbolizing the harmony and order inherent in the divine realm.

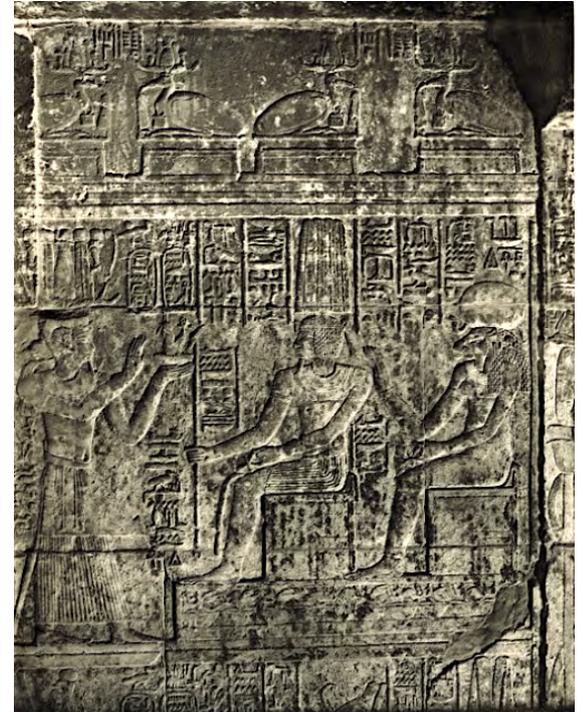


fig.10

The goddess Tefnut is portrayed in an imposing seated position, embodying a powerful fusion of womanly grace and leonine strength. Her regal countenance features a lion's head, symbolizing her association with the majestic and untamed aspects of nature. Positioned beside *dhwtj*, she extends her right hand upon his shoulder, serving as a protective guardian of the deity. Gracing her left hand, Tefnut holds the *nh* sign, her luscious curly hair, adorned in a captivating blue hue, adds an aura of mystique to her divine presence.

Elegantly adorning her neck, Tefnut wears a wide and ornate collar, atop her head rests a sun disk, radiating celestial splendor, with a serpent gracefully poised at its front. Her attire consists of a resplendent woman's dress, enhanced with gracefully folded wings, she wears also a distinctive blue ribbon on each upper arm and wrist. (Reoder, 1930, 253; vol. II, tafel 102)

The text of Tefnut:



di n ink hb-sd ḥ3 wt dd mdw in tfnt s3t r^c hrit ib i3t w^cbt nbt hnwt ntrw nbw

di s nh mi r^c di n ink phti

I give you many feasts-sed , Recitation by Tefnut, daughter of R^c Who resides in the Abaton. The lady of the sky, mistress of all the gods, she gives life like R^c , I give you strength.

fig.11

Doc.11: Arkamany chapel, middle row of the inner east wall

In this depicted scene (fig.11), the king strides purposefully forward, each hand gracefully holding aloft a bouquet of exquisite papyrus flowers. Three distinct layers of these green-hued botanical marvels, their upper edges kissed by a vibrant shade of crimson, are artfully arranged atop one another, creating a striking visual tableau. Seated majestically beside the king is the god of *šw* -Arsenuphis, his right hand firmly grasps the *w3s* scepter, while his left hand bears *ḥh* sign, his hair, fashioned in a half-length style, conceals his ears and cascades gracefully into delicate curls. An anterior uraeus adorns his visage, embodying his divine lineage and power (Reoder, 1930, 265-266; vol. II, tafel 107)



Adjacent to him, the goddess Tefnut who possesses the curious visage of a woman adorned with a lion's head. She extends her right hand, its protective gesture subtly sheltering *dhwtj*, while her left hand carries *ḥh* sign. Her lustrous hair, tinged in shades of celestial blue, flows in a cascade of intricate curls. Atop her head rests a solar disk crowned with a serpent, emblematic of her connection to celestial forces. Both divine figures are draped in garments reminiscent of a woman's attire, distinguished by elegantly folded wings. Each upper arm and wrist are adorned with a resplendent blue ribbon, adding a touch of regal opulence to their divine presence.

The text of Tefnut:

ḏi n ink šfit m3i.t ḥs3.t ḏd mdw in šhmt ʿ3t nbt nsrt tḥnt m snmt šhnt ḥn^c sn s sw3d di (t)

ḥh nits di n ink *ḥh* w3s nbwt

I give you the prestige of the furious lion, Recitation by *shmt*, the great, lady of the flame. Tefnut in Bigaa, hugging her brother *šw*, which is endowed with life, I give you all life and health.

Doc.12: Southeast wall of the Roman chapel, second register

In this remarkable depiction (fig.12), we observe a profound and symbolic scene wherein *dhwtj*, represented as a baboon, assumes a posture of devout prayer before the formidable figure of Tefnut, embodied as a majestic lioness. *dhwtj*, depicted in the form of a striding baboon, engages in a gesture of supplication by raising both hands in prayer, with thumbs distinctly emphasized on each wrist. Notably, a delicate and sleek ribbon adorns the right upper arm, an emblem of his divine status. Intriguingly, three lines delineate the attachment points for his neck hair, gracefully curving to form a distinctive mane. Conversely, Tefnut appearing as a resolute and striding lioness, stands firmly on all four legs, with a meticulous rendering of her front legs and prominent ribs.

Her tail elegantly arcs backward, adorned with a raised central rib and six to seven sloping transverse ribs, contributing to the rich texture of this artistic portrayal. Atop her regal head rests a representation of the sun, accompanied by a serpent, (Reoder, 1930, vol.I, 312 § 673, vol.II, tafel 115).

fig.12

Above this awe-inspiring lioness, the presence of a hovering vulture adds a layer of profound symbolism. With its wings outstretched in a four-part configuration, the innermost section maintains a smooth surface, while the second tier boasts elongated feathers. The third segment returns to a smooth texture, while the fourth features long feathers once more.



Text of Tefnut:

ḏd mdw in ḏḥwtj n pnubs ntr ʿ3 wry m t3-sti ḏd mdw in tfnt s3t R^c ḥryt-ib iw w⁶bt

ḏd mdw in ḏḥwtj n pnubs ntr ʿ3 wry m t3-sti ḏd mdw in tfnt s3t R^c ḥryt-ib iw w⁶bt

Recitation by *ḏḥwtj* Pnubs, great mighty god who came from Nubia, Recitation by Tefnut, daughter of R^c, who resides in Abaton.

The conclusion:

-The Temple of Dekka 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 *ḏḥwtj* underscoring her pivotal role and intricate associations with other prominent deities.

-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.

-The examination of Tefnut within the context of the Dekka Temple provides valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of belief systems and the interconnectedness of deities in this venerable civilization.

-The sculpture of this lion-headed woman embodies a rich array of symbolic elements, epitomizing her role as a significant deity in ancient Egyptian mythology. Through the portrayal of regal attributes, celestial symbols, and the incorporation of divine motifs, this artwork offers a profound glimpse into the religious beliefs and cultural significance of this revered figure.

- 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

-Variability in Tefnut's Iconography: Tefnut is predominantly portrayed as a leonine-headed female deity in the majority of temple scenes. Notably, a departure from this convention occurs in the final depiction within the temple, where Tefnut assumes a complete lion form.

-Affiliation with *ḏḥwtj*: Tefnut is discernibly featured in conjunction with *ḏḥwtj* more frequently than with other gods.

-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.

-These nuances in Tefnut's portrayal, coupled with her consistent association with *dhwty*, offer insights into the nuanced evolution of artistic and religious expression during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. The stylistic transition from a leonine-headed female to a complete lioness form likely bears symbolic implications, indicative of broader cultural and religious shifts during these historical periods.

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مناظر المعبودة تغنوت في معبد الدكة في النوبة السفلى

مفيدة حسن الوشاحي

ندى صادق الحداد

شيرين محمد حافظ

كلية السياحة والفنادق – جامعة قناة السويس

الملخص

تغنوت هي إحدى المعبودات اللاتني صُورن على هيئة اللبوة في هليوبوليس مصر القديمة مثل سخمت في منف وباستت في بوباسطة ومحيت في هيراكنبوليس، عبتت تغنوت منذ الدولة القديمة واستمرت عبادتها حتى العصرين اليوناني الروماني، وكانت ذات أهمية بالغة من قبل سكان النيل حيث جسدت إحدى العناصر الكونية التي طورها الكهنوت (بداية الخلق) في هليوبوليس من أجل تقديم نموذج حيوي في الكون، وفقاً لعلم اللاهوت (الكوني) كانت تغنوت ابنة للإله آتوم وزوجة وشقيقة الإله شو، اللذان مثلا عين حورس حيث كانت اليسرى عيناً للشمس واليمين اليمنى للقمر. ظهرت تغنوت في نصوص الأهرام في الدولة القديمة، وف نصوص التوابيت في الدولة الوسطى، ويمكن أيضاً أن تصور في شكل مجسم كامل لأنثى الأسد (لبوة) ولكنها صورت في معظم الأحيان في صورة آدمية ورأس أنثى الأسد (لبوة) وكانت مراكز عبادة تغنوت الرئيسية في هليوبوليس حيص كان ملاذها كواحدة من الآلهات المحليات في تلك المدينة العظيمة، وفي لينتوبوليس (تل المقدام) حديثاً في الدلتا حيث كانت تعبد مع زوجها شو على هيئة زوج من الأسود، مثلت على تماثم ولوحات في الفترة المتأخرة ويمكن أن تكون الإلهة المحلية الأكثر شهرة حول مراكز عبادتها. ويعتبر معبد الدكة من ثاني أضخم المعابد في النوبة السفلى، يقع على الضفة الغربية للنيل، يضم العديد من المناظر للإلهة تغنوت، ومن أشهر المناظر التي ضمها المعبد منظر للإلهة تغنوت مع الإله جحوتي على إحدى جدران المعبد.

ويهدف البحث إلى : ١- إلقاء الضوء على دور المعبودة تغنوت في الديانة المصرية القديمة.

٢- عمل دراسة تحليلية مناظر المعبودة تغنوت في معبد الدكة.

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