



Conference Report

INTERCULTURAL CONTACTS IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

OCTOBER 26–29, 2008

CAIRO, EGYPT

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On the occasion of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, the Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo took the initiative to organize an international conference, Intercultural Contacts in the Ancient Mediterranean, October 26–29, 2008. For the inaugural issue of *JAIEI*, we briefly report on the conference, focusing on those contributions dealing with Egypt's contacts with the Mediterranean (see table on page 45). However, the conference was not limited to Egypt but included a variety of papers discussing intercultural contacts between all regions of the Mediterranean before the times of Alexander the Great.

One of the specific aims of the conference was to include Egypt (both the scholars and the location) in the discourse on intercultural contacts in archeology in general and the Mediterranean in particular. At the same time, the conference fostered intercultural contacts between archaeologists from all around the Mediterranean. Although modern borders are artificial with regard to the long cultural and political history of the region, national research agendas, political issues, academic traditions, and practical obstacles often hinder joint research and cooperation in our field. In Cairo, we offered a number of younger scholars from non-European Mediterranean countries the chance to present their work and to meet with each other and with European archaeologists. In their feedback to us, many participants stressed how much they had benefited from meeting colleagues working on similar issues and projects in other regions than their own. Scholars and students from more than twenty countries participated.

About half of the roughly fifty papers dealt in some way with material from Egypt, either discussing Egypt's contacts with other Mediterranean regions or discussing Egyptian or Egyptianizing finds and their interpretations at sites outside Egypt. The complete program and abstracts can be downloaded from the conference website, www.nvic-eg.org. The aim is to publish the proceedings of the conference as soon as possible.

The conference was accompanied by a panel exhibition, "Ancient Egypt in the Mediterranean," which ran through December in the garden of the Egyptian Museum. The sixteen panels were written by young archaeologists from all over the



A gathering of conference attendees. Photo: Stefan Geens.

Mediterranean, including Egypt, and dealt with Egypt's varied contacts with the region. Topics included warfare, diplomatic marriages, seafaring and shipbuilding, the Mycenaean contacts, and the depiction of foreigners in Egyptian iconography.

For information on other activities of the Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo, see www.nvic.leidenuniv.nl.

The following papers (in order of presentation) focused on Egypt's relationship with Mediterranean cultures:

M. Bietak	Synchronizing the civilizations in the eastern Mediterranean in the second millennium BC (opening lecture)
B. Bader	Traces of foreign settlers in the archaeological record of Tell el-Dab'a
A. Hassler	Mycenaeans at Tell Abu Gurob?
A. Schütze	Foreign military settlers in Persian Period Egypt
N. Lazaridis	Writing stories by the Nile and the Mediterranean: Narrative literature in ancient Egypt and Greece
E. Angliker	Herodotus and the cultural milieu between Egypt and Greece in the Archaic Period
N. Hansen	From Egypt to Greece to Spain and back: Written and oral communication in the continuity and transmission of a fertility-related medical practice
S. Harder	Haddu in Egypt
M. Abd el-Maksoud	A new discovery at the Ways of Horus—Tell Heboua (Tharw), north Sinai
G. J. van Wijngaarden	Tokens of a special relationship? Myceneans and Egypt
J. Kelder	The Egyptian interest in Mycenaean Greece
S. Snape	Soldiers, sailors, and stirrup-jars at Zawiyet Umm el-Rakham
I. Forstner-Müller and D. Raue	1400 km to go: Levantine wine in Aswan in the third millennium BC
M. Ownby	The impact of changing political situations on trade between Egypt and the Near East: A technical study of Canaanite jars from Memphis, Egypt
L. Hulin	Looking for Libyans in the Bronze Age
W. Cooney	Egypt's encounter with the West: Race, culture, and identity on Egypt's western frontier
H. el-Saady	The Keftiu in the New Kingdom Theban tombs: A reassessment
C. Booth	Contact between the New Kingdom Egypt and Minoan Crete
A. el-Shahawy	The influence of the interaction between Egypt and the Mediterranean world on the iconography of the Theban tombs of the New Kingdom
R. Müller-Wollermann	The impact of the Greco-Persian conflict on the Egyptian economy
L. Jirásková	The relations of Egypt and Syria-Palestine in the latter part of the Old Kingdom
F. Höflmayer	Egyptian imitations of Cypriote base ring ware in the eastern Mediterranean
A. de Trafford	Interpreting the "Egyptianizing" artifacts from Phoenician sites in Malta
M. Wasmuth	Egyptians at Ugarit: Reassessing the sources
B. Burns	Context and distance: Associations of Egyptian objects and style at Mycenae