The Gateways of King Nectanebo I at Karnak Temples’ Precinct

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Abstract

Through the thirtieth dynasty, a wave of significant building activity throughout the country had been started frequently by Nectanebo I and finished by Nectanebo II as well as king Nectanebo I has some additions in Karnak temples among of which there are the so called monumental gateways at cardinal points in Karnak temples. This study entailed the technique of building gateways during the late period and it has full explanation of all of them to spot light on this type of architecture that appeared clearly during the reign of king Nectanebo I. Furthermore these monumental gateways represent an innovation of building gateways’ technique during the late period. Indeed this study highlighted the architectural and technical features of these gateways as well as illustration of the scenes and inscriptions on all gateways.

Keywords: Thebes, Karnak Temples, Gateways, Late Period, Thirtieth Dynasty, Nectanebo I.

Introduction

Nectanebo I was the founder of the Thirtieth dynasty (Cléré, 1951), he was the son of General Djedhor a military commander from tb-nfr (Samanud- El-Gharbya Governorate- Egypt) (Arnold, 1999; Rosalie and David, 1992). His birth name is (nht nb.f) which means strong in his lord, furthermore his throne name is (hpr k3 R5) which means the existence of the soul of god Re. Then he crowned as a king at temple of Neith at Sais (Sedeek, 1997). As well as Nectanebo I considered one of the greatest temple builders during the late period of Egypt."Great constructions were established by Nectanebo I both at Lower (Ebied , 2006), and Upper Egypt (Kienitz, 1953).

King Nectanebo I built a huge enclosure wall that surrounding the complex of god Amun-Re at Karnak temples which extends north to the temple of god Ptah, east including temple of Imn-R5-lr-ihty and chapel of Osiris of Coptos. South around the traces of the tenth pylon, and west to include the temples of Apet and Khonsu (Golvin and Hegazy, 1993; Azim, 199; Arnold, 1991; Carlotti, 2001). When king Nectanebo I planned this enclosure wall, he added twelve entrance gateways of which three were completed. Gateway of M3t temple in the northern section at Karnak. Gateway of Apet temple in the western side of Karnak’s enclosure. The third one is the monumental eastern gate which named (Bab El-Malakha). So this study discussed consequently the location, dating as well as the description of the scene and hieroglyphic inscription of the mentioned gateways. Actually the term of "gateway" means "An entrance or passage that may be closed by a gate". Also the word "m3ht" means hieroglyphs "gateway between two pylon towers, doorway" (Wilson, 1977).

Gateway of the $M^{3\text{rd}}$ t Temple at Karnak (the gate Nectanebo I and Nectanebo II)

The gateway of $M^{3\text{rd}}$ t (Lepsius, 1849; Varille, 1943; Mekhitarian, 1949) is located inside the temple of $m^{3\text{rd}}$ t, and opens on the southern court from the buildings that located on the north side of Karnak (Figs. 1-2). Furthermore leading to the chapel of $M^{3\text{rd}}$ t, so it named "the great gate of Ma'et" (Varrile, 1913). Now, the gateway smashed into two parts, the upper part completely disappeared, but after the examination of the remaining texts, show the following:

From the southern section (plan. 1, no. 1-2) specially On the Western outer jamb of the southern face (plan. 1, no. 1) (Figs. 3-4) there are two hieroglyphic lines under the depiction of Nectanebo offering the image of $m^{3\text{rd}}$ t to the gods reading from right to left on the outer western jamb of the southern face (Varille, 1943).

1 About the The Temple of Ma'et, see: Erman and Grapow, Worterbuch, Belegstellen, Bd (2): 33.

While on the Eastern outer jamb of the southern face (plan. 1, no. 2) (Figs. 5-6) there are two hieroglyphic lines under the depiction of Nectanebo I offering the image of $m^{3\text{rd}}$ t to the gods reading from left to right on the outer jamb of the southern face (Mekhitarian, 1949).

1 [sbA] aA nswt bity (xpr kA Ra) mAA nfr.w…
2 …sA Ra nb xaw (nxt Hr Hbt mry In-Hr) mry Imn Ra

- The great star king of Upper and Lower Egypt ($hpr k3 R^5$) (the existence of the ka of god Re) who see beauty.
- Son of Re, lord of the crowns (Nakht-hr-hb-beloved of Anoris), beloved of Amun-Re.
On the interior thickness (plan. 1, no. 3) (Fig. 7), the king offering $hb\; sd$ and under the scene there are the cartouches of Ptolemy VI on the entire wall of the southern section (Varille, 1943). While on the middle thicknesses (plan.1, no. 4-5) (Figs. 8-9) we can trace king Nectanebo II before god and goddesses, with Asiatic captives below (plan. 1, no. 4), and $hh$ decoration with royal titles (plan. 1, no. 5) (Ibid, 1943).

Moreover on the inner thicknesses of the northern section (plan. 1, no. 6-7) (Figs. 10-11), the King Nectanebo II here appeared receiving life from a god, furthermore we can find the cartouche of king Nectanebo II ($nht\; hr\; hbt$) appeared clearly under the scenes (Ibid, 1943). While the inner jambs of the northern section (plan. 1, no. 8-9) (Figs. 12-13) There are three columns of texts on each, with renewal texts of Nectanebo II ($nht\; hr\; hbt$) below.

Because of the remains that had been discovered, there is an opinion thought that $nht\; hr\; hbt$ was the owner of the gate according to the inscriptions of the north face but later after along study it turns out that the gate constructed during the reign of king $nht\; nb.f$ (Nectanebo I), and later renewed by $nht\; hr\; hbt$ (Nectanebo II), so the name of $nht\; nb.f$ was found on the cornice (Mekhitarian, 1949). Also $nht\; nb.f$ reused some blocks dated to the new kingdom in the foundations of the gate. Finally the gate finished by $nht\; hr\; hb^l$ who inscribed the dedication text of the gate on the inner surface and the northern surface but he leave the cartouches of his predecessor $nht\; nb.f$ on the cornice as well as named this gate as "The Gate of $hpr\; ki\; R^c$ and The Gate of $sn\; m\; ib\; R^c$" or "The Gate of Two Nectanebo" (Mekhitarian, 1949).

1. **Monumental Eastern gateway of the great temple of $Imn\; R^c$ at Karnak**: (Fig. 14)

This monumental gateway (Gauthier, 1915; Chevrier, 1932; Barguet, 1962; Kienitz, 1953; Porter and Moss, 1929; Golvin and Hegazy, 1993) is located in the eastern part of the Karnak temples complex (Fig. 15) in front of temple of Imn-Rc-hr-3hty and chapel of Osiris of Coptos (Porter and Moss, 1929). Probably the current Gate was constructed by king nht nb.f, and also occupied the place of another gate dated to 19th dynasty, so the foundations and lower basis of the obelisks of Ramses II had been covered by wall from the reign of king nht nb.f (Chevrier, 1932).

The gateway is 19th m high. Moreover it shows a significant innovation in the decoration especially on the eastern face as well as the two jambs of the door especially on the eastern side were decorated on the upper part with two scenes but unfortunately the scenes missing great parts. Because of the mismatches between the scenes on the upper lintel and the base of the gate's foundations, there is an opinion emerged into light declare that this gate was only as innovation of a small gate dated to the reign of king Ramses II probably (mousa, 1996).

The slot of the door decorated with various scenes, on the northern slot (plan. 2, no. 4-5-6), the King nht nb.f appeared wearing the hprs crown and offering sphinx ointment jar to Imn-Rc and hnsrw, then offering the image of M35t to Imn-Rc and Mwt also there is a hieroglyphic line read as follow:

\[
\text{Nswt bity nb t3wy (hpr k3 Rc) nb h5w (nht nb.f) tit Rc 3ht t3wy stp n tm di 'nh mi Rc}
\]

- King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the two lands (hpr k3 Rc) (existence of the ka of god Re), son of Re, Lord of crown (Nectanebo) the cult image of Re who illuminate the two lands (Faulkner, 1972), chosen by Atum, give life like Re.

While on the southern slot (plan. 2, no. 1-2-3), the scene is completely destroyed but it seems like the scene on the northern slot. The epithet of God Imn-Rc here in this gate is Amun-Re who hears the prayers furthermore this epithet belongs to the eastern temple in Karnak as well as this epithet marked the gate (Barguet, 1962). Finally after a long time of searching, became clear that the lower parts of the gate’s sides were constructed upon foundations which completely independent from each other during the Reign of king Nectanebo I (Robichon and Leclant, 1951).

2. Gateway of Nectanebo I usurped by the Ptolemies in Apet temple

It is located in front of ipt temple (Figs. 16-17), and it opens into the western part of brick wall which was surrounded the Karnak temple. The gateway is made out of sandstone (mousa, 1996). Furthermore it was constructed during the reign of king nht nb.f from the 30th dynasty to him attributed the pro-pylon in front of ipt temple which constructed during the reign of king Tuthmosis III and Amenhotep II and later renewed during the reign of king Taharqa from the 25th dynasty, from the Ptolemaic era king Ptolemy II and king Ptolemy III renewed the gate but keep the cartouches of king nht nb.f (Nectanebo I).
This monumental gateway of ipt temple shows one of the classical styles of architecture, furthermore its passageway divided into two parts by internal cavity as well as there was a magnificent door jamb in the right side of this gate (Fig. 18). Unfortunately there are not traces from the jambs of the gate as well as there are not ornamentations except some scenes in the lower part which dates back to the reign of nḥt nb.f but later the Ptolemies added many additions in this gateway (Varille, 1956).

The western section of the gateway
On the outer northern door jamb (plan. 3, no. 1) (Fig. 19), The king standing before a pair of gods holding in his left hand long staff and scepter while raising his right arm towards the gods as well as the king wearing stretched kilt with an ox tail, and necklace furthermore there is an offering table towards the gods with two rows of various offering but this offering table from the Ptolemaic additions, concerning the god, he is wearing a short kilt, pictorial and curved beard, holding ẖnḥ sign in his left hand, later during the Ptolemaic era they added nhḥ flail in his left hand and long staff in his right hand as well as the hieroglyphic line before the god behind the god there is standing goddess wearing transparent and tight dress and hair-wig holding ẖnḥ sign in her left hand and long staff in her right hand (Keimer, 1924) Furthermore the inscriptions on the wall reading as follow:

(a) behind the king
di.n.i n.k ḫt nb nfr pr m tḥ pn
(c) gift of the Goddess
di.n.i n.k nḥt r mḥt

(a) All protection of life behind him. (b) Give to you all beautiful things which emerged from this earth. (d) Give to you the power against the northern.

While on the outer southern door jamb (plan. 3, no. 2) (Fig. 20), It seems like the scene that depicted in the outer northern door jamb, the king before a pair of gods who wearing and holding the same clothes and signs, but the king holding the staff in different way as well as the offerings put upon the table in different way. The scene dates back to the reign of king nḥt nb.f but during the Ptolemaic era the relief of the king renewed in perfect way (Varille, 1953) Moreover there are Hieroglyphic inscriptions in the scene that reading as follow.

1These writings from the reign of king nḥt nb.f.
2 This writing dates back to Ptolemaic era.
On the north wall of the passage (plan. 3, no. 3-5) (Fig. 21), The king appeared clearly offering the image of goddess m5t to the gods, now all the upper part of the wall severed reached the chin level of the figures moreover the scene re-inscribed during the Ptolemaic era. Under the scene there is a hieroglyphic horizontal line dates back to the reign of King Ptolemy III. While on the South wall of the passage (plan. 3, no. 3) (Fig. 22), Like the previous scene, but the figures of the deities were completely removed, and the style of the reliefs dates back to the reign of king nht nb.f as follow.

1Signs from the time of nht nb.f.
2Signs from the Ptolemaic era.
3Signs probably date back to the first engraved of the gate.
Eastern section of the gateway
On north wall of the eastern section of the gate (plan. 3, no. 6) (Fig. 23), this wall contains a great scene which divided into five scenes in each one of them king nht nb.f offer offerings to various deities furthermore the king offers offerings to male and female deity sequentially. The upper part of the scene destroyed now moreover the scenes date back to the reign of king nht nb.f, and later renewed during the Ptolemaic era.

On the first scene, the king wearing stretched short kilt, offers the sign $b.t$ (water clock) to goddess, all the royal titles removed but later some inscriptions added during the Ptolemaic era.

(a) royal titular¹ (b) behind the king (wishes) (c) offering of the king² (d) gift of the goddess

(a) $t\ m\ nswt\ bit\ hr\ st\ Hr\ mi\ R\ c\ dt$ (b) $h3.f\ mi\ R\ c$ (c) $sbt\ n\ mwt.f\ ir.s\ di\ 5nh$ (d) $di.n.i\ n.k\ 5h^c\ n\ R\ c\ m\ [pt$]

(a) ... Like king of upper and lower Egypt, upon the throne of Horus like Re forever. (b) ... Behind him like Re. (c) The sign of measuring the time to his mother who give him a life. (d) Give to you age of Re in the heaven.

On the second scene, the king gives "the white bread" to his father god Imn who will give him power.
On the third scene, the king offering titles from clothes to "lady of the sky" while she give him energized spirit as king of the two lands.

On the forth scene, the king gives his father an offering who give him power like god Ra.

The last four signs tuned towards the direction of the God.

The serpent's head was pitted; the end of the legend is turned towards the god.
On the fifth scene, the king offers package of flowers to goddess who holding ‘nh sign in her right hand. Furthermore the Southern wall of the eastern section of the gateway (plan. 3, no. 7) (Fig. 24) is completely intact and contains five scenes that show the king offering to various deities as follow. On the first scene, the king offering incense to his mother, who holding ‘nh sign in her right hand while holding long scepter in left hand.

(a) Royal offering   (b) gift of the goddess

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Tr sntr n mwt f ir f di ‘nh} & \text{ di n.i n.k rnpwt n tm m nfr} \\
\text{Burn incense to his mother, what he made, gives life.} & \text{Give to you years of Atum as a god.}
\end{align*}
\]

While the second scene shows, the king offers three rows of food which consist of six circular loaf of breads and three rectangular to God Imn.

(a) royal titular   (b) behind the king (wishes)   (c) offering of the king   (d) gift of Amun

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{…s3 R n hsw (nht nb.f) hnty k3w ‘nhw nb h ‘t mi R ‘ dt} & \text{ s3 ‘nh h3f mi[Rc].} \\
\text{Son of Re, lord of the crowns (Nectanebo) who is in front of all living spirits, you rise} & \text{ as re forever.} \\
\text{May all life and protection surround him like [Re].} & \text{Made rituals for his father, what he made? Give life.} \\
\text{Give to you years of Atum as a deity.}
\end{align*}
\]

1The last four signs were re-engraved.
3The end of the legend turns in direction towards the God.
4The last four signs were re-engraved.
On the third scene, the king offering bouquet of flowers and buds of papyrus to goddess who gives him peace.

(a) royal titular
(b) behind the king (wishes)
(c) offering of the king
(d) gift of goddess

On the forth scene, the king offering the image of mAat to God Hr.

(a) royal titular
(b) behind the king (wishes)
(c) offering of the king
(d) gift of Horus

1 The end of the text has been hammered.
Furthermore on the fifth scene, the king offering two round pots of wine to his great mother Ipt who depicted wearing headaddress with two wings of eagle.

(a) royal titular (b) behind the king (wishes) (c) offering of the king (d) gift of goddess

Moreover on the inner northern door jamb (plan. 3, no. 9) (Fig. 25), the king appears devoted victims to deities as well as wearing short stretched kilt, holding 'nh sign in his right hand and flail in his left hand. There is an offering that consists of four oxen put over mats. Finally on the inner southern door jamb (plan. 3, no. 8) (Fig. 26), the king here is standing towards a pair of deities making ritual and holding 'nh sign in his left hand.

**Conclusion**

**General design**

Regarding the plan of each gateway, will find that all of them take the same design. two Jambs, inner walls and inner jambs, so we can trace that all of them used for the same reason as entrance to the Temple complex, furthermore these gateways located in various locations in Karnak complex, one at the North in front of Metch temple, the second at the east side and the last one in the west-south corner in front of Apet temple (Fig. 27). Furthermore the gateways constructed from sandstone, although the enclosure wall constructed from mud brick.

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1 The sign Š was staining.
Decorations and inscriptions
Concerning the scenes of the gateways, we can note clearly the scenes on of gateways in M3i Temple and monumental eastern gate carved in sunken reliefs but the scenes on the Apet temple's gateway represented in high reliefs also we can trace that all of them are offering scenes to various gods like Amun-Re, Mut and Khonsu the main triad of Thebes, moreover regarding all scenes we can note clearly that all gateways constructed firstly during the reign of King Nectanebo I, then renewed by King Nectanebo II as well as usurped by the Ptolemies like the Gate of Apet Temple and M3i Temple's gateway. In addition, the inscriptions tell the dedication texts of the gates from the reign of king Nectanebo I as well as the renewal text of King Nectanebo II (Figs. 12, 13), later the Ptolemies inscribed on these gates like the gate of Apet temple and the gate of M3i Temple.

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Figure 1: Plan showing the location of Gate of King Nectanebo I at the northern group of Karnak.

From (Porter and Moss, 1929)

Figure 2: Plan showing the location of Gate of King Nectanebo I in front of Māt temple at Karnak.

From (Porter and Moss, 1929)

Figure 3: The Western outer jamb

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 4: Western outer jamb of the southern face

From (Mekhitarian, 1949)
Figure 5: The Eastern outer jamb

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 6: Eastern outer jamb of the southern face

From (Mekhitarian, 1949)

Figure 7: The beginning of the eastern side of the passage

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 8: The Western side of the passage

From (Varille, 1943)
Fig 9: The Eastern side of the passage

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 10: Second scene of the western side of the passage

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 11: Second scene from the Eastern side of the passage

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 12: Western interior side

From (Varille, 1943)
Figure 13: Eastern interior side

Figure 14: Monumental Eastern gate of the great temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak

From (Varille, 1943)

Figure 15: Plan of Karnak temples showing the location of the monumental Eastern gate that circled.
Figure 16: Plan showing the location of the gate of Nectanebo in front of Apet Temple at karnak

From (Porter and Moss, 1929)

Figure 17: Plan showing the location of the gate of Nectanebo in front of Apet Temple at karnak

From (Porter and Moss, 1929)

Figure 18: Ramp and façade of the great gate of Apet temple

From (Varille, 1956)
Figure 19: Outer northern door jamb.

Figure 20: Outer southern door jamb

Figure 21: North wall of the passage

Figure 22: South wall of the passage

From (Varille, 1956)

From (Varille, 1956)

From (Varille, 1956)

From (Varille, 1956)
Figure 23: North wall of the eastern section of the gate

From (Varille, 1956)

Figure 24: Southern wall of the eastern section of the gate

From (Varille, 1956)

Figure 25: Inner northern door jamb

From (Varille, 1956)

Figure 26: Inner southern door jamb

From (Varille, 1956)
الملخص العربي

بوابات الملك نختنيبو الأول في منطقة معابد الكرنك

خلال عصر الأسرة الثلاثين، حدثت طفرة كبيرة في نشاط البناء في جميع أنحاء البلاد، بدأ معظمها بواسطة الملك نختنيبو الأول واستمرت بواسطة الملك نختنيبو الثاني، علاوة على ذلك لقد قام الملك نختنيبو الأول بالعديد من الإضافات المعمارية في منطقة معابد الكرنك، وكان من ضمنها تلك التي تسمى بالبوابات الضخمة للملك نختنيبو الأول وقد بلغ عددها حوالي الأثني عشر بابًا، لم يتبق منها الآن سوى ثلاثة بابات كالتالي:

- البابا الكبرى لماضى والتي تقع في الجانب الشرقي من الكرنك.
- بابية معبد الأبيات والتي تقع جانب الغربي من الجدار الخارجي للكرنك.
- البابية الشرقية الكبرى والتي تقع في الجانب الشرقي للكرنك.

ولقد تضمنت الدراسة دراسة تقنية بناء البابيات خلال العصر المتاخر، بالإضافة إلى شرح واقف لهذه البابيات وذلك لتسليط الضوء على هذا النوع من العمائر التي ظهرت جليا خلال الأسرة الثلاثون وخصوصا في فترة حكم الملك نختنيبو الأول، علاوة على تلك البابيات الضخمة تمثال واضح لتطور بناء البابيات خلال العصر المتاخر، وذلك من خلال التصميم المعماري والنقش المختلفات التي ظهرت عليها.

الكلمات الدالة: طنية - معابد الكرنك - بوابات - العصر المتاخر - الأسرة الثلاثون - نختنيبو الأول