



**Donnerstag, den 19. März 2026 um 18:15 Uhr
im Kollegienhaus Hörsaal 114**

**The Pharaonic Necropolis of Dendara:
Rethinking Egypt's Mortuary Landscape**

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Excavation of a Middle Kingdom tomb at Dendara (© Ifao – Yann Tristant)

On the western bank of the Nile, 600 km south of Cairo, the site of Dendara is renowned for its temple dedicated to Hathor, the goddess of love, joy, and beauty, often depicted with cow-like features. Yet beyond this Ptolemaic religious complex, stretching south into the desert, lies a vast pharaonic necropolis covering over 90 hectares. For nearly 3,000 years, this monumental cemetery served as the final resting place for the inhabitants of the ancient city, offering a unique window into their lives and beliefs.

Since 2014, a groundbreaking research project has united the Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Ifao, Egypt) with KU Leuven (Belgium). This collaborative effort aims to study the necropolis in its entirety: mapping its spatial and chronological development, analysing the variety of monuments and funerary practices, and uncovering the social transformations that shaped Dendara's community from the dawn of the pharaonic era through the Graeco-Roman period.

Preliminary findings from this archaeological program are already shedding new light on the origins of Dendara and the socio-cultural evolution of its people. By exploring this monumental funerary landscape, researchers are revealing a lesser-known dimension of the Egyptian provincial town.