

The Concept of Robe of Justification and its significance in Ancient Egyptian Religious

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رداء التبرئة ومفهومه في الفكر الديني المصري القديم

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Abstract

There were various connotations in the life of the Ancient Egyptian that expressed the beliefs of the other world. Therefore, the Robes of justification are among the most important connotations that expressed the Religious and funerary beliefs of the concept of justification among the Ancient Egyptians. They also expressed the justification of the deceased before the gods. Therefore, this study discusses the concept of the Robes of Justification and its significance in ancient Egyptian thoughts and beliefs from New Kingdom period until the Ptolemaic periods. As indicated the development of the Osirian rob. It also deals with the connection of Urdu with the deceased's obtaining the title "*mꜣꜥ-hrw*", meaning justified or pure justify.

Key words: Robe of Justification - The shroud - Textile - justified - Osiris.

الملخص

تنوعت الدلالات في حياة المصري القديم التي تعبر عن معتقدات العالم الآخر، لذا فإن أردية التبرئة تُعد من أهم الدلالات التي عبرت عن المعتقدات الدينية والجنائزية لمفهوم التبرئة لدى المصري القديم. كما عبرت عن تبرئة المتوفى أمام المعبودات. لذلك تناقش هذه الدراسة مفهوم أردية التبرئة وأهميتها في الفكر الديني عند المصري القديم منذ عصر الدولة الحديثة حتى العصور البطلمية والرومانية، كما تشير أيضاً إلى تطور الأردية الأوزيرية، كما تتناولت العلاقة بين الأردية وحصول المتوفى على لقب "*mꜣꜥ-hrw*" ، الذي يعني المبرأ أو صادق الصوت.

الكلمات الدالة: رداء التبرئة – الكفن - قطعة نسيجية - المبرأ- أوزير.

The Ancient Egyptian believed that the justification of the deceased was a natural result of describing a successful end to the trial of his works in the netherworld. Therefore, the term "*mꜣꜥ-hrw*" was associated with the concept of justification, and this term became an expression of justification from the period of the ancient state as an extension through historical times until the end of the Ptolemaic period².

And the term justification linguistically derived from the word innocent, Innocence and acquittal. This term means innocence and self-Righteousness, stay away from hateful things, the announcement of Repentance, getting rid of sins, defects and

❖ The Concept of Robe of Justification and its significance in Ancient Egyptian Religious, Introduction of Master's thesis entitled justification and in ancient Egypt from the beginning of the third age of transition until the end of Ptolemaic period, by Maryhan Yasser Saad, directorship of Dr Salwa Ahmed Kamel, Dr Nelli Saber Boraie

² Kamel, S., " *La Couronne ou la Guirlande de la Justification offerte au défunt ou au dieu pour le justifier* ", Studies in the antiquities of the Arab world, E.D, p.1.

accusations. While in ancient Egyptian language, justification represents the justification of the deeds of man (the deceased) in front of the gods, that he does not commit any sin in order to remain there with the gods, and he walks at a wider pace as he wishes and so it becomes the justified deceased³.

The term justification was linked to the religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, Ancient Egyptian religion is the foundation and axis of life for the ancient Egyptians⁴. Therefore, the king in Egypt was considered a god since the beginning of ancient Egyptian civilization, a symbol of justice on earth⁵.

1. Introduction:

The shroud of Justification is a textile piece also known as the justification robes or innocence robes. It is a textile item made of linen, which commonly represents the god Osiris. Along with texts honoring him and his titles, texts are also put on them for the deceased themselves, seeking for assistance and protection during their journey in the hereafter⁶. This textile could be embellished with colored images or embroidered. This style of textile was found in the tombs of Thutmose IV and Tutankhamun⁷.

Winlock referred to the Robe of justification as Innocence or Protection cover⁸. It wraps around the body after the linen wrappings or wrapped directly around the deceased. Straps weaved for this reason hold it in place. The Robe of Justification appeared in the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty, as garments were found with spells from the Book of the Dead, as well as depictions of the deceased in front of "Osiris" accompanying his titles and Osiris' titles. During the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, the Robe of justification became more decorative⁹.

The quality of the shroud's textiles varies with social standing. The royal family was given new, unused linen with fine threads, but others (people) would place a piece of linen that had been used in life after it had been purified. Sometimes the god "Osiris" was painted directly on the shroud¹⁰.

2. Names of the Robe of justification in Ancient Egypt.

³Anthes, R., *"The Original Meaning of mAa-xrw"*, *JNES* 13, Chicago, (1954), p.21.

⁴Cosmacini, P., and Piacentini, P., *"Notes on the History Of The Radiological Study Of Egyptology Mummies"*, *Medica* 113, (2008), pp. 615-626.

⁵Brunner, H., *"Maaa-cheru"*, *LÄ* III, Wiesbaden, 1980, p.1107.

⁶Dunand, F., *"Gaëlle Tallet, Fleur Letellier-Willemin Un linceul peint de la nécropole d'El-Deir. Oasis de Kharga"*, *BIFAO* 105, (2005), p. 91.

⁷Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1934-1935), *FIFAO* 16, (1939), p. 227.




⁸Winlock, H. E., *The Egyptian Expedition*, *BMMA* 21, (1926), pp. 26- 27.





⁹Dunand, F., *Op. cit*, pp. 91- 92.

¹⁰Winlock, H. E., *Op. cit*, p.27.

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1)  *mnht*

It refers to linen garments, robes, or fabrics¹¹. It was written in many written forms and its uses varied throughout the ages until the end of the Ptolemaic period. It was mentioned in the Middle Kingdom in this form , and in the New Kingdom in this form  it means clothing or a piece of textile, The word  was a general term expressing for the Robe of justification until the end of the New kingdom¹².

During the late period, it began to adopt another form in the texts, and written as follows  meaning of the Robe of justification¹³. In the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, it appeared in temple texts in this form ¹⁴, Gardiner refers to the word (*mnht*) write an abbreviation with this sign ¹⁵ or this sign ¹⁶. The term (*mnht*) was mentioned in the texts to mean cloth, a piece of textile, or a cloak. It was mentioned that it was a linen cloth that is part of the shroud, as well as the robe of justification.

It appears in spell 110 of the Book of the Dead from the Papyrus of “Nb-sny that we find the word (*mnht*). It expresses the robe of justification as a kind of honor and preference for the deceased.



“*Ms mnht n sš Nb-sny*”

An offering of textiles (Robe of justification) to the scribe Nb- Sny.

It was also referenced on Osiris’s justification robe for the priestess “*M3ʿt k3 Rʿ*”, which dates to the 21st Dynasty as follows:



¹¹FCD, p.110; Wb II, p.87; WPL, p.435; Hwb, p.361; Lesko, I, p.189.

¹²Gardiner, A., Egyptian Grammar, Oxford -London,1950, p.507; Wb II, p.87(13) - III,64(3); Hannig, R., Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II, Vol. I, p. 1080.

¹³Wb II, p.87(13-16).

¹⁴WPL, p.635; Wb II, p.87 (13-16).

¹⁵Gardiner, A., *Op. cit*, p.507, FCD, p.110, Hwb, p. 361.

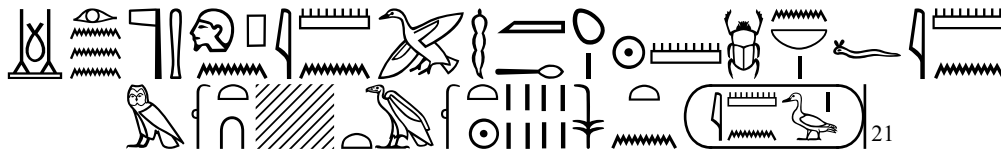
¹⁶FCD, p.110; Hwb, p. 361.

¹⁷Tb, CXXIII.p110; Carrier, C., “*Le papyrus de Nebseny*”, p.567

¹⁸Daressy, G., *Op. cit*, p.34.

“*shd mnht šps Wsir tit špst mʿzt-kz-Rʿ ms hmt ntr tpy n Imn-Rʿ nswt ntr Pzy-ndm mʿ- hrw m hr Psdt-ʿz*”.


Brighten textiles noble, the noble image of Osiris, *Mʿt-kz-Rʿ*, daughter of the High Priest of *imn-Rʿ*, King of the gods, *Pzy-ndm*, The justified before the great Ennead.” The word "*mnht*" was mentioned in the context of the Robe of justification in the next on the robe of the high priest "*PAy-nDm*"¹⁹ which dates to the reign of King "Smendes" of the 21st Dynasty, according to Daressy, this robe was reused in the late period, implying that it had belonged to a New Kingdom ruler.²⁰

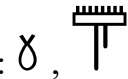


“*mnht ir.n.n hm ntr tpy n Imn Pzy-ndm mʿ-hrw s3 Mn-hpr-Rʿ n nb.f Imn m rnpt 10 /// mwt rnpt 8 nsw (s3 Imn)*”

“Robe made for the high priest of Amun "*Pzy-ndm*" the justified one, son of "*Mn-hpr-Rʿ* To his Lord Amon, In the tenth year of /// his mother, the eighth year of the king's reign (*s3-Imn*)”²².

2)  *hbs*

The word "*hbs*" means clothes or robes²³ It appeared in the following written forms:  , These forms were mentioned in texts from the beginning of the New Kingdom period until the end of the Ptolemaic and Roman period, the following

determinative have been taken:  ²⁴.

The word "*hbs*" was used during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods to refer to the term for the Robe of justification of each person, with sandals next to each deceased, this

¹⁹Bay-Najm I ;" Assumed the office of High Priest of Amun starting from the sixth year of King Smendes (21st Dynasty), due to the presence of the text of the first year on the manuscripts of Queen Nedemt, and it may be from the reign of Amenmensu, King Psusennes; he remained in office until the third month of the summer of the sixteenth year, and soon referred to himself as king starting from the fourth month of the same year, and appointed his son Micherta to the office of High Priest of Amun, as mentioned in the texts of the sixteenth and eighteenth years of Smendes", for more see:

Winkeln, J., (eds.), *Handbook of Ancient Egyptian Chronology*, IFAO, pp.225, 226.

²⁰Daressy, G., *Op. cit*, p.33.

²¹Daressy, G., *Op. cit*, p.33

²²*Ibid.*, p.35.

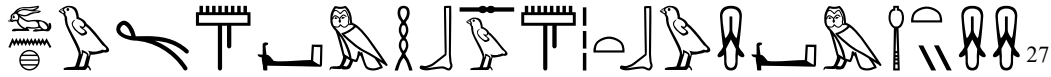
²³*Hwb*, p. 558. (20217).

²⁴*Wb* III., p.65(18-19) ; Janssen, J., *Daily dress at Deir el-Medina: Words for Clothing*, London: Golden House Publications, 2008, p.62; Hannig, R., *Op. cit*, p.1648; Gardiner, A., *Egyptian Grammar*, Sign -List, S.28, p.507.

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has a Religious and funeral significance, which is that the deities bestow their gifts (Robes of justification) on the deceased.²⁵

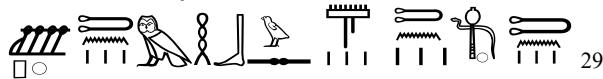
Spell 125 of the Book of the Dead mentions the deceased wearing the Robes of justification, which he expressed with the word and “*ḥbsw*” white sandals²⁶.



“*wnḥ m ḥbsw tbw m ḥḏty*”²⁸

Cloth or wear clothes (Robes of justification), and wear white sandals

And in the seventh hour of the Book of Gates, where the god calls upon them to receive their garments because they will shine with it.



“*šsp. tn m ḥbsw. tn ḥḏ. tn.*”

it is an order from the god” Receive the clothes, and you will shin

The texts of the 26st Dynasty also state the following:



“*Tw ḏḏ //// im //// ḏḏ ḥbsw n.t ḥbsw*”

And says [...] in it [...] one who gives clothes or robes³⁰

The word “*ḥbs*” appears on a linen Robe of Justification (of an unknown person) dating from the Roman period.



“*Ink ḥb\|\| (s) tpy nty rḥty m iri ‘wy tzyt*”

I am the first (one who wear) the robe (Robe of justification) of the two ladies, made by the hands of the goddess Tayt³².

Development of the Robe of justification from the New Kingdom to the Ptolemaic and Roman period.

3. Piece of textile:

²⁵*Ibid.*, p.65 (18-19).

²⁶*Wb* III., P.65 (18-19).

²⁷P. Le Page Renouf, *Knt. Book of the DEAD*, Vol.1, I-XV, London, 1904, pp.260-261.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p 260-261.

²⁹Piankoff.A., *Le Livre des Portes II*, p.162.


³⁰ <https://thesaurus-linguae-aegyptiae.de/sentence/IBcCmf04GgeurU9YvusRjQ1vKAs> in: *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (accessed: 10/13/2024).

³¹Kurth. D., *Materialien zum Totenglauben im römerzeitlichen Ägypten*, Backe-verlag, 2010, p.53.

³²*Ibid.*, p.53.

It is a piece of linen textiles placed over the deceased over the linen wrappings. Most sources refer to it as a robe or woven fabric. It is a different part from the shroud. Sometimes it is wrapped with linen scrolls and inscribed with spells, as well as depictions of the god Osiris³³. This textile first appeared in the middle of the 18th Dynasty. The Robe of Acquittal differs from the Shroud in that it is distinct from the wrappings and fastened on four sides; it is not joined to the Shroud with some exceptions ³⁴(PL.1).

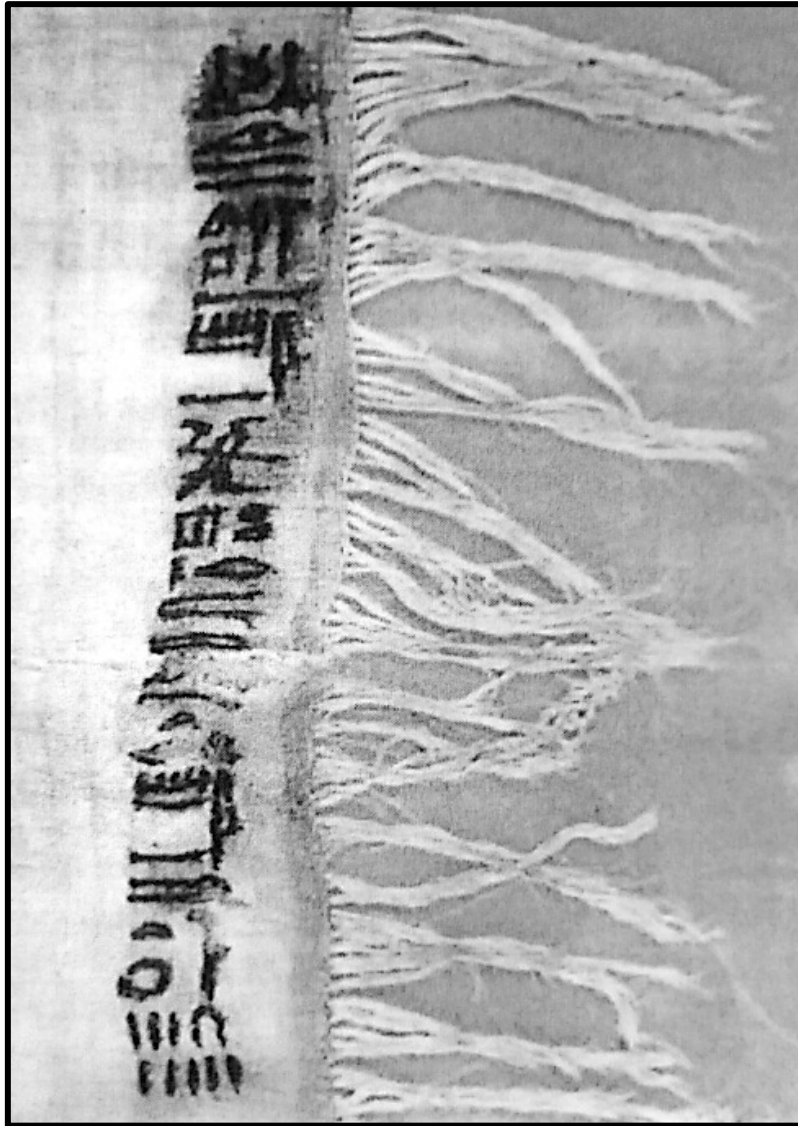
An Example of Piece of textile as follows:

PL. (1)	Robe of justification
Date	New Kingdom period and reused in the 21 st Dynasty
Location	Tomb of queen Meryet Amun-Deir el-Bahari - Luxor
Description	A robe of justification in the form of a piece of linen textiles with white tassels hanging from it.
Reference	Winlock, H.E., <i>The Tomb of Queen MeryetAmun at Thebes</i> , New York, 1932, p.57.
Accompanying text	 <p>“mnht ir.n hm ntr tpy n 'Imn M3-shr-t3 m3c-hrw n it.f 'Imn m rnpt-sp” 18</p> <p>The robe was made to the High Priest of Amun, <i>M3-shr-t3</i>, justified of his father Amun in the year 18.</p>
Comment	There is a text on the robe of justification made to the priest <i>P3y-ndm</i> , who served as High Priest of Amun beginning in the sixth year of King Smendes' reign in the 21st Dynasty, for his first daughter, <i>Niywny</i> . This tomb, TT 358, was previously used during the New Kingdom and was belong to the queen Ahmose- <i>Meryt 'Imun</i> . Winlock implies that the tomb has been restored for the new owner. The mummy of the queen buried there was also restored, and the restorers retrieved 82 metres of linen from the storehouses of the priestly administration in Thebes " <i>Pr - 'Imn</i> ". On the robe was inscribed a formula delivered by " <i>MA-shr-tA</i> " to his father Amun in the year 18.

³³Winlock, H.E., *Op. cit*, pp.26-27.

³⁴Gardiner, A, H., *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, London, 1947, p.151; Cooney., K , M., *Coffins, Cartonnages and Sarcophagi, A companion to Ancient Egyptian Art*, 1st edition, 2015, pp. 24-25.

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PL.1

Robe in the form of a piece of textiles.

Winlock,H, E., p.87, PL. XL (B).

II) Osirian Robe:

The Robe of justification, also known as the Osirian robe, is a type of Robe of justification and the most important of them. It is a long, rectangular linen cover that is placed on the mummy and wrapped around the body on top of the linen wraps to cover the body tightly from head to toe, it is held in place by ties woven specifically for this purpose³⁵. The Osirian robe is usually decorated with a drawing of Osiris and next to or below it is a text written in red or black ink, which is why it is called the

³⁵Anthes, R., *Op. cit*, pp. 21-51; Beatrice.L., Goff., *Symbols of Ancient Egypt in the late period. the Twenty- First Dynasty*,Great Britain, 1979, p.102.

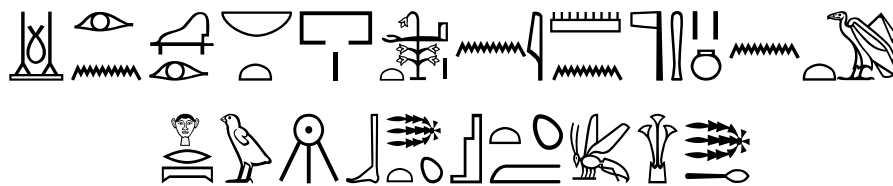
Osirian robe³⁶, This robe appeared in the late New Kingdom and was reused in the Late Period, beginning with the reign of King Smendes (21st Dynasty)³⁷.

This robe guarantees the deceased protection and justification in the netherworld after the god "Thoth", the god of wisdom and scribe of the gods, declares that the deceased is "mꜣꜥ-ḥrw", meaning honest in voice and innocent of sins, it is balanced with the feather of Maat, and then the deceased joins Osiris in "Imntyw"³⁸.

In rare cases, starting from the Late Period, the robe is decorated with images of gods such as Rꜥ-ḥr-ꜣhty, or human figures depicted in front of the Osirian form, representing the deceased in a worship position or offering a sacrifice. Sometimes the god appears standing in front of the offering table, and in some cases the god Osiris is replaced by God Horus³⁹.

In the late period, the shape of the Osirian robe (Robe of justification) developed and was a rectangular piece of thick, coarse linen, Spells from the Book of the Dead were written on it to protect the deceased and justify him in the afterlife, while in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods the deceased appeared in the Osirian form and spells were numerous on the robe⁴⁰.

A text was mentioned on the Robe of justification of the priestess Mꜣꜥt-kꜣ-Rꜥ⁴¹ from the 21st Dynasty (Late Period) which mentioned the words "Osirian robe":



*mnḥt ir.n Wsir nbt-pr šmꜥyt n Imn ḥm ntr nw n mwt ḥry pt wbn sꜣt ꜣst-m-ḥb mꜣꜥ-ḥrw*⁴².

“A robe made to the late the lady of house, The Chanters of Amun, the Second Priestess of Mut, the lady of heaven, shine daughter of ꜣst-m-ḥb, voice justify”.

The Osirian robe developed in the Ptolemaic and Roman period, and its decorations increased. The Robe of justification became a complete garment with many

³⁶Heckl, W., "Leichentuch", *LÄ*, Wiesbaden, 1980, p.130.

³⁷Beatrice, L. Goff., *Op. cit*, pp.102-103.

³⁸ Patterson., J. H., and Andrews, C., *Mummies: Death and Life in Ancient Egypt*, New York, 1978, p.12.

³⁹ Beatrice, L. Goff., *Op. cit*, pp. 102-103.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p.102.

⁴¹Daressy, G., *Op. cit*, p.35.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p.35.

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decorations and inscriptions, it has a mesh cover on which spells are written and the deceased is depicted in the Osirian form⁴³.

An offering form was mentioned on the Robe of justification in the Deir cemetery in the Kharga Oasis for an unknown person dating back to the Ptolemaic period. (PL.2).



ḥtp dī nsw n Wsīr ḥnty Imntt ntr-ꜣ nb ʒbdw dī.f prt-ḥrw m t ḥnkt kʒw ʒpdw šs mnḥt irp irtt mw ḥtpw kṛst nfrt //// wꜥb //// ʕnh ntr im n kʒ n Wsīr Ns-mnw //// mswt nbt-pr.

An offering given by the King to Osiris, western lord. the great god, lord of Abydos, he gives offerings of bread, beer, bulls, birds, flax, alabaster, wine, milk, water, offerings and a beautiful burial //// pure one //// O living god, for the consort of the deceased "Ns-Mnw" //// born of a mistress of the house ////⁴⁴.

PL. (2)	Robe of justification
Date	Ptolemaic Period
Location	the Deir cemetery in the Kharga Oasis for an unknown person
Description	A complete Robe with many decorations, and a mesh cover on which are written spells and depicting the deceased in the form of Osiris
Reference	Dunand, F., and Tallet, G., and Letellier, F., <i>Op. cit, BIFAO 105</i> , p.99.
Accompanying text	 <i>ḥtp dī nsw n Wsīr ḥnty Imntt ntr-ꜣ nb ʒbdw dī.f prt-ḥrw m t ḥnkt kʒw ʒpdw šs mnḥt irp irtt mw ḥtpw kṛst nfrt //// wꜥb //// ʕnh ntr im n kʒ n Wsīr Ns-mnw //// mswt nbt-pr.</i> An offering given by the King to Osiris The lord of western, the great god, lord of Abydos, he gives offerings of bread, beer, bulls, birds, flax, alabaster, wine, milk, water, offerings and a beautiful burial //// pure one //// O living god, for the consort of the deceased "Ns-Mnw" //// born of a mistress of the house ////.

⁴³Dunand, F., and Tallet, G., and Letellier, F., "Un Linceul peint de la nécropole d'El-Deir. Oasis de Kharga", *BIFAO 105*, 2005, pp. 98-99.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 98- 99.



PL.2

Complete Ptolemaic Robe of justification.
Dunand, F., *BIFAO* 105, p.99-2005.

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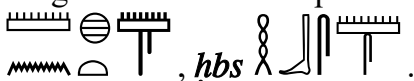
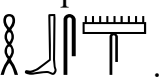
4. Conclusion:

The study indicates that the Robe of justification was not a complete Robe as was customary in the Ptolemaic and Roman period, while at the beginning of the 18st Dynasty it was a piece of textile made of linen placed on the deceased over the linen wrappings, It is a separate part from the shroud, sometimes it was wrapped with linen wrappings and spells were written on it and it often depicted the god Osiris, sometimes short white tassels hang from it.

The difference between the Robe of justification and the shroud is that the Robe of justification is usually separate from the linen wrappings and tied on the four sides and is not attached to the shroud except in rare cases.

Main results:

We can draw several conclusions from this study, including:

- The Robe of justification appeared in the middle of the 18st Dynasty and developed throughout the historical ages.
- The Robe of justification is a piece of textiles placed over the shroud from which white tassels hang.
- Archaeological excavations in the cemetery of the monastery in the Kharga Oasis indicate that the Osirian robe was developed in the Ptolemaic period, it became a complete Robe with many decorations and writings, and a mesh cover on which spells were written and the deceased was depicted in the Osirian form.
- Linguistic sources express the Robe of justification with two words: *mnht*
 , *hbs* .
- Most of Robes of justification that have been found in the Late Period were reused and date back to the New Kingdom.
- This study indicates that the Robe of justification is of two types:
The first type is a piece of textiles made of linen placed over the shroud, The second type is the Osirian robe that developed and became a complete robe with decorations on it.
- The Robe of justification is a sign of the deceased's innocence in the netherworld, so that he may be given the title "*m3^c-hrw*", meaning honest or justified.

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