

Unpublished Anthropoid Coffin at Beni-Suief Museum No. 1248: Renaissance of the Glory of the 26th Dynasty

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Abstract

During the 26th Dynasty, kings took a clear approach to restoring the Old Kingdom's past glory. This article is dedicated to the publication of an unknown Late Period coffin discovered at Ihnasyia during a Spanish excavation, currently stored at the Beni-Suief Museum. The study intends to compare the style of the decorative scenes and design of this coffin with other Late Period coffins, discussing the major similarities and differences. This article was developed using analytical and comparative approaches based on document and picture analyses. Religious scenes on the coffins were analyzed and major features emerged. These features are compared, and the results are discussed in the article. The authors conclude that this coffin dates back to the 26th Dynasty, its design and drawings imitate the Old Kingdom's style of stone coffins, and it is distinguished by its archaism and renaissance depiction of past glory.

Keywords: Coffin, Beni-Suief, Ihnasyia, Renaissance, 26th Dynasty, Late Period

Introduction

The coffin at the Beni-Suief Museum appears to be like most of the coffins manufactured in the Ihnasyia region during the Late Period (Figs. 1 and 2); they are distinguished by low quality, as well as inaccurate implementation of scenic mastery (Table. 1). It was discovered in the sediment at Ihnasyia's cemetery,¹ which had risen to importance as a religious or political center² by the time of the Third Intermediate Period (1069–747 BCE). There is no doubt that the coffin served as a shelter³ for the ancient Egyptians. According to ancient Egyptian beliefs, the deceased would unite with Osiris and Re, who could then raise him from the dead.⁴ As a result, starting the Old Kingdom and continuing to the end of the Late Period, coffins generally served as an alternative tomb rather than a container. Therefore, they were adorned with paintings and decorative scenes that assured the deceased's safe journey.⁵

The Late Period coffins enclose valuable information about the Egyptian social structure, economic system, religious rituals, fashion, and art. All this information would be insufficient to date the time period of any coffin. Due to the Egyptians' pride

1 The excavation was completed by a Spanish team led by Mara del Carmen Pérez-Die of the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid, Spain. Many significant wooden coffins from the Third Intermediate Period were discovered and stored at the Beni-Suief Museum, for more information see H. Schäfer., *Ein Bruchstück Altägyptischen Annalen*, (Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Anhang: Abhandlungen nicht zur Akademie gehöriger Gelehrter. Philosophische und historische Abhandlungen. (1902), 1. Quartal), Verlag der Königlich Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, (1902), 18–21.

2 Ihnasyia flourished in ancient Egyptian history, but at different times, such as the First Intermediate Period, when Heracleopolis became the principal city of Lower Egypt and exercised control over a large portion of the region. Moreover, Heracleopolis regained prominence during the Third Intermediate Period. More information can be found at: W. E. A. Budge., *An Egyptian hieroglyphic dictionary: with an index of English words, king list and geological list with indexes, list of hieroglyphic characters, Coptic and Semitic alphabets*, II, (1920), 1016; H. Gauthier., (1927). *Dictionnaire des Noms Géographiques Contenus dans les Textes Hiéroglyphiques* 4: 83–4; M. Van De Mieroop, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Chichester, West Sussex, (2011), 97, 99; J. Rodríguez Lázaro., *Some blocks of the funeral Chapel of Neferkhaou and Sat-Bahetep in the Man of Madrid*, BSAO, Year 41, (2005): 107–24; Idem, *The Ritual Journey of Khety (H.1) of Heracleopolis*, Newsletter of AE (BIAE), Year V- Number LI, October 2007.

3 J.H. Patterson, and, C. Andrews., *Mummies: Death and Life in Ancient Egypt*, New-York, (1978), 35; K. M. Cooney, "Gender Transformation in Death: A Case Study Coffins from Ramesside Period Egypt," NEA 73, no. 4, ASOR, (2010): 230.

4 S. Ikram, and A. Dodson., *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt: Equipping Dead for eternity*, London, (1998), 193; J.H. Taylor., *Egyptian Coffins*, London, (1989), 7.

5 P. Wallin., "Celestial cycles Astronomical Concepts of Regeneration in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts," Uppsala, (2002); J. Belmonte., and M. Shaltout., eds., *In Search of Cosmic Order: Selected Essays on Egyptian Archaeo Astronomy*, Cairo (2009); Alford, A., *The Midnight Sun, the Death & Rebirth of God in Ancient Egypt*, London, (2004); H. Fischer., "Fingers, Stars, and the 'Opening of the Mouth': The Nature and Function of the nTrwj-Blades," JEA, 79, (1993); J. Elias., *Coffin Inscriptions in Egypt after the New Kingdom*, III, Chicago, (1993), 599; K.M. Cooney., *Coffins, Cartonnages and Sarcophagi*, A companion to Ancient Egyptian Art, 1st edition, (2015), 270–92; idem, *cost of death*, (2007); H. Fischer., op.cit, JEA, 79, (1993).

regarding their coffins, they developed religious or artistic features over time.⁶ Archaism in ancient Egyptian art had appeared during Late Period for the sake of restoring past glories via artistic depiction. The scholars have variously referred to this as "Archaism⁷," "Renaissance," or "Restoring"; all these conceptions aim to clarify and interpret the art of the Late Period⁸, which adapted ancient traditional designs and then added some innovative aspects to the same designs to create a hybrid style that combines tradition and novelty. There is no doubt that archaism in art was found in the Late Period anthropoid coffins, specifically the 26th Dynasty, which preferred to adapt all the traditions of earlier glorious Old Kingdom art while also developing these forms of art to suit the time.⁹



Figure 1: The coffin (No. 1248) at the Beni-Suief Museum, frontal view of the anthropoid coffin and the mummy. (Photo credited to the authors)

6 Coffins created during eras of collapse and weakness were distinguished by a local tendency and religious rituals that were not widely practiced and were not shared with the rest of the areas due to inadequate contact between them. By the end of the Middle Kingdom, coffins of elites became anthropoid to hold the mummy and this innovation was accompanied by new styles of art and rituals; Cooney had argued that elites who owned coffins through history dating to prosperous time include Dynasties 4–5 of the Old Kingdom, Dynasties 11–12 of the Middle Kingdom, Dynasties 18–19 of the New Kingdom, Dynasties 25–26 of the Late Period. For the first time during the New Kingdom, the anthropoid coffin had been designed based on gender; the male coffin was designed with tripartite head-cloth and beards, while the female coffin was distinguished with wigs and modeled breasts; for more information see; K.M. Cooney., *Coffins, Cartonnages and Sarcophagi*, A companion to Ancient Egyptian Art, 1st edition, (2015), 270–92.

7 Archaism is sometimes seen as a feature of the Late Period. Morkot pointed that the origin of the archaism dated back to the Libyan Period, particularly the 22nd Dynasty then continued into the Kushite and Saite period, for more information see; R. Morkot., "Tradition, Innovation, and Researching the Past in Libyan, Kushite, and Saite Egypt." In: Crawford, Harriet E. W., Ed., *Regime Change in Ancient Near East and Egypt*, Proceedings of the British Academy 136 (2007): 141–64. Fr. Tiradritti, *Pharaonic renaissance. Archaism and the sense of history*, Ljubljana: Cankarjev dom, kulturni in kongresni center, (2008), 49–50, see also; J. Josephson., "Archaism," in D. Redford, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, 1, Oxford, (2001), 109–13.

8 A. Kitchen., *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt, 1100–650 B.C.*, (1986), 390, 394–5, 397–80, 399–400, 404–5; J. Taylor., "The Third Intermediate Period (1069–664 BQ)." In: Ian Shaw ed., *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* Oxford, (2000), 330–68.

9 S.B. Shubert., "Realistic Current in Portrait Sculpture of the Saite and Persian periods in Egypt," in: *Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*, Toronto 19, (1993), 27–47; E.R. Russmann., *The representation of the King in the XXVth Dynasty*. Bruxelles, (1974).



Figure 2: The coffin (No. 1248) at the Beni-Suief Museum, side view of the anthropoid coffin and the mummy. (Photo credited to the authors)

Table 1: General Description

Owner	Unknown
Title	PT 638 a, b, c, d–639 a and chapter 178 BD
Family	His father is called DA Hr and his mother Isetweret
Dimensions	Height: 178 cm, Width: 33 cm, Depth: 29 cm, Width of face: 30 cm, Width of foot: 31 cm, length of foot: 32 cm
Provenance	Excavated at Sediment El Gabal-Ihnasyia-Beni-Suief
Current location	Museum of Beni-Suief
Registration number	No. 1248
Material	Sycamore wood
Status of preservation	Good, except some parts of lid and inscriptions
Dating	Late Period, 26th Dynasty
Parts of coffin	It consists of two main parts: lid and floorboard
Headdress	Tripartite black hair wig
Jewelry	wsx n bik broad collar extends approximately 6 cm along the chest
Inscriptions	Four columns from PT 638 a, b, c, d–639 a and chapter 178 BD
Description	Anthropoid coffin decorated in polychrome
Notes	PT: Pyramids Texts BD: Book of the Dead

Description of the anthropoid coffin (No. 1248)

It was made of a poor quality of wood,¹⁰ evident due to the number of cracks on the lid and the floorboard¹¹ (Fig. 1). The artist, in an attempt to avoid these flaws, used other materials such as gypsum and resin to fill the gaps and cracks that had formed over time.¹² The coffin was strengthened and supported by a coating of white stucco, after which the artist produced a polychrome surface and facial features. Besides, the artist painted with the hues of yellow, blue, and green (Table. 1).

The coffin (No. 1248) was designed as an anthropoid coffin with broad and straight shoulders (Fig. 1). The design of anthropoid coffins had a religious purpose during the Middle Kingdom; they took human form. That is, the anthropoid coffin was designed typically to resemble a human body. Also, the anthropoid coffin appears as a person wrapped in a shroud, reminiscent of Osiris (Figs. 1 and 2). The shape of the human coffin changed during the Late Period, especially during the 25th and 26th Dynasties, to become broad and straight at the shoulder, and this is due to a lack of experience and the cheap material of the coffin. As a result, it became easy to date these types of coffins because they took on a distinct shape and design, as mentioned previously.

The head of the deceased is covered with a tripartite hair wig with frontal thick locks. The ears were left exposed between the two locks. The facial features had been carved inaccurately; the eyebrows and the eyes are black, referring to wdjat eyes of Horus¹³. The face is stylized, with an expression of infinite calm. The false beard is fixed on the chin by a brown material that resembles glue (Fig. 3 [A]).

On the chest of the lid, there is a broad massive collar which was known as *wsx n bik*. It is composed of rows of plant petals that end with water drop motifs. It ends on both sides while on each shoulder a falcon's head wearing a sun disk above (Fig. 3 [B]). In the frontal part of the coffin, the goddess Nut appears kneeling with her outstretched wings. She was depicted as a full lady with a tight dress covering her entire body except for the upper body and breasts, which are naked. She is represented holding a feather in her hands, while her head is topped by a sun disk with the Maat feather of justice (Fig. 3 [C]).

Four hieroglyphic columns are quoted from Pyramids Texts 638a, b, c, d–639a, and chapter 178 in the Book of the Dead. The coffin was discovered in a good condition, although the scenes were inaccurately depicted. The artists had colored the hieroglyphic signs of human organs in red, while other ideograms are in blue. The hieroglyphic signs had been drawn facing right (Fig. 3 [D]). In front of the feet, there are two recumbent jackals depicted on a rectangular-shaped pedestal, which represents two of the temple's pylons. They were depicted as guardians of the deceased's mummy (Fig. 3 [E]).

¹⁰ The ancient Egyptians used cedar wood, which had been exported from the Syrian region. It has been used in making high-quality coffins for elites. On the contrary, Sycamore trees are of lower quality, and they are cultivated in Egypt due to their great economic importance. It was used in house roofing and wooden skis to transport goods. It was used in the manufacture of coffins for less expensive and lower-class individuals in non-major regions. More information can be found at: A. Moret., "Sarcophages de l'époque Bubastite à l'époque saïte," CG 41001–41044, Tome I, Le Caire (1913), 92, 99, 135, 139, 150, 153; H. Gauthier., "Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres de Montou," CG 41042–41072, Tome I, Le Caire (1902), 31; R. Germer., "Flora," The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol. I, Oxford (2001), p. 537; R. Wilkinson., The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt, London (2003), 90.

¹¹ As a result of the economic situation, the Egyptians utilized linen and papyrus to sustain the inferior quality of the coffin wood, which had an impact on the coffin's design and materials; for more information, see K. Theodor., "Kartonage," LÄ III, col. 353; B. Leach; and J. Tait., "Papyrus," in: Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology, I. Shaw and P. T. Nicholson (Ed.), Cambridge (2000), 243; R. Newman; and M. Serpico., "Adhesives and binders," in: Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology, I. Shaw and P. T. Nicholson ed., Cambridge (2000), 488.

¹² Some new restorations have been carried out on this coffin by the Spanish excavation team, see R. Gale and P. Gasson; N. Herper and G. Killen., "Wood," in: Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology, I. Shaw and P. T. Nicholson Ed., Cambridge, (2000), 349.

¹³ The Eye of Horus, also known as the *wedjat* eye or *udjat* eye, is a religious concept and symbol from ancient Egypt that represents well-being, recovery, and protection. It arises from the mythical conflict between Horus and his direct competitor Set, in which Set demolished one or both of Horus' eyes, and the eye was later returned to Horus with the help of another deity, such as Thoth. Horus later gave his deceased father Osiris the eye, and its revivifying power kept Osiris alive in the afterlife. As a result, the Eye of Horus was associated with funerary offerings as well as all deity offerings made in temple ritual. Horus' Eye has three fundamental symbolisms: first, mathematical and astronomical notions; second, psychological, alluding to right and left hemisphere brain activities; and third, there's spiritual, which refers to a divine conception of Unity as a synthesis of the two eyes. For further details about the eye of Horus, see K. Rolf., "The Eye of Horus and the Planet Venus: Astronomical and Mythological References". In Steele, John M.; Imhausen, Annette (eds.). Under One Sky: Astronomy and Mathematics in the Ancient Near East. Ugarit-Verlag (2002), 193–208; K. Olaf., "Myths: Lunar Myths". In Redford, Donald B. (ed.). The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt. Vol. 2. Oxford University Press (2001), 480–482.



Figure 3: The decorations and hieroglyphic text of the frontal side of the anthropoid coffin (No. 1248). (Photo credited to the authors)



Figure 4: The right view of the anthropoid coffin. (Photo credited to the authors)



Figure 5: The left view of the anthropoid coffin. (Photo credited to the authors)

In order to protect the mummy within the coffin, the four sons of Horus¹⁴ are represented on both sides of this anthropoid coffin. On the left side of the anthropoid coffin, there are two representations of Hapi as a baboon (Fig. 4 [F]) and Qebehsenuf with a falcon head (Fig. 4 [G]), while on the right side, there are two representations of Imseti with a human head (Fig. 5 [I]) and Duamutef with a jackal head (Fig. 5 [H]).

Decoration Analysis

The whole coffin was colored in yellow (polychrome) in addition to layers of linen and plaster to produce the white color; it had been called *snf*, and also *dSr* symbolizing both sunlight and gold. The yellow color is usually used to color the face of the deceased to symbolize his union with the sun god.¹⁵ The method of attaching the lid to the coffin's floorboard evolved in the New Kingdom; it depended on rectangular recesses offset by wooden pegs. This technique had become modest and imprecise by the Late Period.¹⁶

The artist has tried to clarify the facial features of the coffin and other details such as the wig, eyebrows, and cosmetic lines around the eyes. The eyes are painted in dark blue, while the face and ears are polychrome, and the pupils are painted in black. The gold and dark blue colors recall chapter 172 of the Book of the Dead, which refers to the deified form of the deceased. Goddess Maat is represented spreading her wings in order to embrace the mummy. She is portrayed on the coffin's chest to protect the deceased during his journey to the afterlife and during his judgment. The artist colored the figure of the goddess in green, which was mentioned in the ancient Egyptian language as *wAD*, referring to agriculture and green crops. Besides, the green color had a symbolic meaning of regeneration, renewal and growth, which is why god Wsir was often represented in green. Therefore, the green color was used to decorate the sides of the coffins as an indication of the deceased's union with god Osiris.¹⁷

The left side of the coffin includes two representations of Hapi and Qebehsenuf. Hapi is represented with a baboon head in a standing stance without any ornamentation, while Qebehsenuf is depicted with a falcon head below Hapi (Fig. 4). The right side

14 In ancient Egyptian religion, the "Four Sons of Horus" were a group of four gods. They were basically personifications of the four canopic jars that came with mummified bodies. The stomach (and small intestines), liver, large intestines, and lungs were all removed, embalmed, and stored separately, for more information see M.

15 K.M. Cooney., *op.cit.*, 232–3; A. Piankoff., "The Sky Goddess Nut and the Night Journey of the Sun," *JEA.* 20, (1934), 57–8.

16 H. Gauthier., "Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres de Montou," *CG* 41042–41072, Tome I, Le Caire (1902), 82. fig. 35.

17 A. Lucas., *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, London (1948), 125–6; J. Assmann., *Death and Initiation in the Funerary Religion of Ancient Egypt*, in: *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, W. K. Simpson ed., Yale Egyptological Seminar–New Haven (1989), 139–41.

of the coffin includes two depictions of Imseti with a human head and Duamutef with a jackal head¹⁸ (Fig. 5). It is worth noting that the artists painted both gods, Qebehsenuf and Duamutef, in red, while Hapi and Imseti were painted in green. The coffins of elites after the end of the New Kingdom have the four sons of Horus represented on both sides of the lid, in addition to the two protective goddesses, Isis and Nephthys.¹⁹ Unfortunately, the inscriptions which surround the shape of the four sons of Horus are unclear, but the authors depend on previously dated coffins; they confirming that the typical decorations of coffins of elites during the Late Period depict both goddesses Nut just once while goddess Maat in several poses on coffins because they played an important role in helping the deceased in the afterlife.²⁰

God Anubis is depicted in human form with the head of a jackal, and his body is covered in black, dressed in a short robe, while in his right he holds the wAs scepter of power. God Osiris²¹ appears in his mummy form, wearing the Atf crown. His name is in front of his head, while the sycamore tree appears at his feet, with goddess Nbt-Ht standing behind him. She extends her right arm toward her brother Osiris. On her left arm are the signs of power, wAs and life, ANKH. Behind her is the embalming god Anubis in the form of a mummy with a jackal head, with his name appearing in front of his head. Goddess Nut spreads her wings on the chest area of Coffin Beni-Suief No. 1248. This is one of the most spectacular scenes pictured on human wooden coffins, showing goddess Nut depicted kneeling on her right foot, spreading out her feathered wings. She is depicted on the chest of the deceased for the purpose of protection, and holds in both hands the Maat feather, sign of justice, for the purpose of guaranteeing justice and freeing of the deceased's voice in the afterlife. Besides, goddess Nut was crowned with the sun disk, which had a feather of Maat inside it.²²

For this, the figure of the goddess Nut²³ depicted on the lids of late-age sarcophagi was regarded as tantamount to the fixed icon that ancient Egyptians patronized, with its arms hanging even over the body of the coffin. The viewer imagines that she is embracing the deceased, believing in the ability of that universal idol to grant him rebirth. In the afterlife, the sun comes out of its womb in the form of a scarab khepri, marking the birth of a new day. The authors believe that the ancient Egyptians resorted to portraying cosmic deities, such as the deities Re²⁴ and Nut, on the chest area of human coffins which protect the deceased during the afterlife, but this is based on a partial breakdown of fixed religious concepts and values during the Late Period, as cosmic deities became surrogates for the guardian deities, who were responsible for protecting the deceased in the afterlife.²⁵

The inscriptions on the coffin (No. 1248):

There are four vertical columns of Hieroglyphs that are quoted from Pyramid Texts §638§a, §638§b, §638§c, §638§d, §639§a; the spells were incorporated later into the last part of chapter 178 of the Book of the Dead (BD).

18 During the 21st Dynasty embalmers of the elites began to preserve all viscera of the corps, while the canopic jars became empty, J. Assmann, *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, (2005), 357; Germer, R., "Mummification." In Regine Schulz; Matthias Seidel eds., *Egypt: The World of the Pharaohs*, Cologne, Könemann, (1998), 460–61.

19 The registrar of the Beni-Suief Museum mentions incorrectly that this is the representation of Goddess Isis, but the authors had pointed out in the paper that this is a representation of goddess Nut with sun disk on her head.

20 Goddess Nut according to the Book of the Dead had both a solar role and an Osirian role in the afterlife; she was the mother of Osiris who bore the sun god Re every day; for more information see; A.M. Roth., "Fingers, Stars and the Opening of the Mouth: the nature and the function of the nTrwi blades," *JEA* 79, (1993): 57–79; A. Piankoff., "The Sky-Goddess Nut and the Night Journey of the Sun," *JEA* 20, (1934): 57–61; A. Kozloff., "Star Gazing in Ancient Egypt," *Hommage a J. Leclant* (Berger, C. et al., eds), IV, Le Caire, IFAO, BIE 1064, (1993): 169–76.

21 J. G. Griffith., "Osiris," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. II, Oxford (2001), 616; G. Hart., *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, New York, (2005), 25; H. Gauthier., "Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres de Montou," *CG* 41042–41072, Tome I, Le Caire (1902), 40.

22 R. H. Wilkinson., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Egypt*, London (2003), 89; A. Piankoff., "The Sky Goddess Nut and the Night Journey of the Sun," *JEA* 20, (1934), 57–58.

23 A. Rusch., "Die Entwicklung der Himmelsgöttin Nut zu einer Totengottheit," *MVÄG*, vol. 27, Leipzig (1922), 37; A. Piankoff., "The sky Goddess Nut and The Night Journey of the Sun," *JEA* 20, (1934): 58.

24 E. Varga., "Un Cercueil Anthropoïde de la Basse Époque," *BMusHongr*, 51, Budapest (1978). Figs. 40–41; J. Elias., "Regional indicia on a Saite Coffin from Qubbet El-Hawa," *JARCE* 33, (1996): 115. Fig. 8.

25 A. Moret., "Sarcophages de l'époque Bubastite à l'époque saïte," *CG* 41001–41041, Tome I, Le Caire (1913). pl. 35

4	3	2	1
. s n smn	s wn. k m	Ast-wrt	Dd mdw
wrt wr imy	nTr n	psS.t s	Wsir----
msw.	xftyw. k m	mwt. knwt	sA DA Hr
<u>ssmn.n.k</u>	rn. kn nTr	Hr. k m rn.	ir n nbt-
<u>Gb mr n.f</u>	xnms tw	sn tA pt	pr
<u>tw rdi. f</u>	ma xt nb	rdit.t	
<u>n.k (...) rdi</u>	Dw m rn		
<u>n.k</u>			

Translation

(1) "Word spoken by Osiris..... Son of your dja-her, (2) he was born from lady of the house Isis weret your mother Nut spreads herself over you in her name of Sheta-pet. (3) She causes you to be a god without enemies against you in your name of god. (4) She defends you from all evil things in her name Khmst-weret. You are the eldest of her children, Geb is satisfied with you, he has loved you, he has (.....) he has (.....)."

Textual analyses

The Pyramid Texts are thought to be sacred originals that were only used by kings during the Old Kingdom before being transferred to coffins and made available to all during the Middle Kingdom. This, in turn, evolved by the New Kingdom into the Book of the Dead,²⁶ which was widely distributed on papyri, as well as coffins of individuals and kings; it was considered the holy book of ancient Egypt. By the New Kingdom, it was widely used on individual coffins and continued to be popular in the Late Period.²⁷

It is worth noting that during the Saite Period, coffins were inscribed with spells and supplications originated from the Pyramid Texts. This led the authors to believe that it has a political connotation that revolves around the kings of this family's interest in restoring the past and returning to its origins in ancient Egyptian civilization, believing that doing so would restore the Egyptian nation's lost glory among nations. The use of the Pyramid Texts alongside the BD is tangible evidence of the ancient Egyptians' interest in returning the Saite Period to its Old Kingdom civilizational roots.

26 G. H. Boker., *The Book of the Dead*, London (1882); E. Naville., *Das Ägyptische Totenbuch, Der XVIII Bis XXI Dynastie*, vol I, Texte und Vignetten, Berlin (1885); R.O. Faulkner., *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, London (1985); W. Budge., *The Book of the Dead: The Chapters of Coming forth by the Day*, London (1898); E. Hornung., *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter*, Zürich (1998); idem., *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the afterlife*, London (1999), 13–23; idem., "Zur Struktur des Ägyptischen Jenseitsglaubens," *ZÄS* 119, (1992), 124–30; R. Dawson., "Rare Vignette from the Book of the Dead," *JEA* 10, (1924): 40; A. De Buck., "The Earliest Version of Book of the Dead," *JEA* 35 (1949), 87–97; J. Lull., "A Scene from the Book of the Dead Belonging to a Private Twenty-First Dynasty Tomb in Tanis of anx. f-n-imnw," *JEA* 87 (2001): 180–6; A. W. Shorter., "A Leather Manuscript of the Book of the Dead in the British Museum," *JEA* 20, (1934): 33–40; T. G. Allen., "A Late Book of the Dead in the Oriental Institute Collections," *AJSL* 49, (1933): 141–9; idem., "Additions to the Egyptian Book of the Dead," *JNES* 11, (1952): 177–86; idem., "Types of Rubrics in the Egyptian Book of the Dead," *JAOS* 56, (1936): 145–54; R. A. Caminos., "Fragments of the Book of the Dead on Linen and Papyrus," *JEA* 56, (1970): 117–31; A. Leahy., "More Fragments of the Book of the Dead of Padinemy," *JEA* 85, (1999): 230–2; T. G. Allen., and; R.O. Faulkner., "The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day," *JEA* 63, (1977): 182–3.

27 K. Sethe., *Die Altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, 3 vols, Hildesheim (1960); idem., *Überzeugung und Kommentar zu den Altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, Hamburg (1935–1939); R. Faulkner., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts: translated into English*, Oxford (1969); S. Mercer., *The Pyramid texts in translation and commentary*, New-York & London (1952); J. Allen., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Atalanta (2005); E. Hornung., *The ancient Egyptian Books of the afterlife*, London (1999), 1–7; J. Allen., "pyramids texts," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, III, Oxford (2001), 9; E. Hornung., *The ancient Egyptian Books of the afterlife*, London (1999), 2–3.

In general, the texts on the coffins of the Late Period’s elites were divided into sections. The first section included Pyramid Texts, the BD, and hymns of Re²⁸, all written on the floorboards that had surrounded the deceased during his journey to the afterlife. The second part consisted of religious books depicting the night journey in the afterlife, such as the Book of Imdwat²⁹, Gates, Caves, and Earth. The formula §145§, which was related to the formula §156§, was written under the coffin lid and translated as

Transliteration

“Dd mdw hA wsir N mAa-Xrw psS.n. s mwt. k Nwt Hr. k m rn. s n StAt pt rdit.n.k. k aw. k m nw. k n sf nn sxn.n. k im n nxt. k Dw r.k.”

Translation

“O Justified deceased, your mother Nut above you in her hidden sky, gives you your arms in your house without searching, and no evil has harmed you.³⁰”

On the feet of the coffin, there is hymn no. 6 of Re which is related by the hour 12 of Imdwat.³¹ It had been written as follows:

Transliteration

“Hknw n.k Ra qA sxm Xnm XAt.f pn nty dwA.f nTrw.f iw. f ap.(w) r qrrt. fStA iw Wsir N mAa-xrw Hknw.f n Ra twt is XAt Wsir N mAa-xrw XAt sxm-Hr’.”

Translation

“Praise be to you, O Ra, O Supreme Being, O strong. He who unites with his body is the one who worships his gods. While He crosses into his hidden cave. You are the justified Osiris invokes Ra. You are the healed, fierce body of Osier.³²”

It is worth mentioning that during the 26th Dynasty the coffin’s lid had occupied the magical formula No. §156§ and §638§a, §638§b, §638§c, §638§d, §639§a. They are the most common formula on the coffins of the Late Period; they incorporate the goddess Nut which often had been depicted on the floorboard. They thought that she was the responsible for the rebirth of the deceased in afterlife.³³

Transliteration

“Dd mdw Wsir N psS.n. s mwt. k nwt Hr. k m rn. s m StA pt di.s wnn. k m nTr nn xftyw. k n bw nb Sm. k im”

28 E. Hornung., *Das Buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen (Sonnenlitanei) nach den Versionen des Neuen Reiches*, 2 vols. Geneva (1975–76); idem., *The ancient Egyptian books of the afterlife*, London (1999), 136–48; E. H. Naville., *La litanie du soleil*, Leipzig (1875); E. Hornung., *The ancient Egyptian books of the afterlife*, London (1999), 137; A. Piankoff., “Les Différent Livres dans les Tombes Royales du Nouvel Empire,” *ASAE*. 40, Le Caire (1940), 287; J. Naydler., *The Future of the Ancient World: Essays on the History of Consciousness*, Vermont (1994), 49–50.

29 E. Hornung, *The ancient Egyptian books of the afterlife*, London (1999), 27–54; P. Jürgens., “Das Stemna des Amduat nach den Text Zeugen des Neuen Reiches,” *SAK*. 27, (1999): 141; N. Hoffmann., “Reading the Amduat,” *ZÄS*. 123, (1996), 26–40; S. Binder., “The Hereafter: Ancient Egyptian Beliefs with special Reference to The Amduat,” *BACE*. 6, (1995): 7–30; W. Barta., “Der weg des Sonnengottes durch die unterwelt in Amduat und Höhlenbuch,” *GM* 100, (1987): 7–14.

30 H. Gauthier., *op.cit*, Tome I, 35; H. Gauthier., *op.cit*, Tome I, 349; J. Allen., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Atalanta (2005), 73.

31 C. Manassa., *Late Egyptian Underworld Sarcophagi and Related Texts from the Nectanebid Period*, part I, Wiesbaden (2007), 176.

32 C. Manassa., *op.cit*, (2007), 165–76.

33 A. Rusch, “Die Entwicklung der Himmelsgöttin Nut zu einer Totengottheit,” *MVÄG* 27, Leipzig (1922): 37.

Translation

“Chanting by the healer or justified, your mother Nut spreads over you in her name in the hidden sky, giving you your survival as a god against your enemies everywhere you go there”

Conclusion

This coffin, No. 1248, is part of a group of individual coffins manufactured in the Ihnasyia cemetery and has been kept at the Beni-Suief Museum. The authors were able to date it clearly because it closely resembles other coffins from the 26th Dynasty in terms of the design of the anthropoid having square shoulders, as opposed to coffins from the New Kingdom or the Third Intermediate Period.

26th Dynasty coffins are notably decorated using the concept of archaism, wherein artists attempted to restore the Old Kingdom’s past glory. It is known that the Saite Dynasty kings were interested in representing art and encouraged the Old Kingdom’s art. The upper parts of 26th Dynasty coffins (shoulder to end of chest) were rectangular in shape. The coffins were influenced by the Old Kingdom’s rectangle-shape design. The coffin was carved without arms or hands, which was a distinctive feature of the coffins during the Late Period. Moreover, during the Saite Period, there was a special copy of the BD used for coffins of individuals. We must keep in mind that many factors, such as social, economic, and regional factors, have influenced the design and decoration of the coffin. For example, coffins made for people in the Theban region differ from those made for people in the Ihnasyia region. As a result, the coffins of individuals discovered at Ihnasyia during the Late Period were notable for their inaccurate and low-quality decoration. The technique of attaching the lid to the coffin’s floorboard, which relied on rectangular recesses offset by wooden pegs, was developed in the New Kingdom. During the Late Period, this technique became modest and imprecise. After studying many coffins dated to the 26th Dynasty, clearly this coffin dates to the 26th Dynasty as well, and more specifically, from the late 26th Dynasty.

The 26th Dynasty coffins were distinguished by the use of materials to strengthen the poor quality of wood; these materials were a mixture of linen and papyrus rolls that include a layer of plaster which was used for drawing on. The layers of linen and papyrus were then adhered with resin gum. Plaster coated linen first appeared in the New Kingdom and continued to spread throughout the Late Period. Since it has inexpensive material value and ability to create mummy forms, the white mortar surface also contributed to the design as an excellent canvas for creating outstanding scenes.

During the Late Period, all coffins had presentations of the four sons of Horus. As a result, they appeared as canopic vessels under the deceased’s funerary bed at times and as full deities on both sides of the coffin at other times. Their role had been known since the Old Kingdom via Pyramid Texts, and each of them was known to protect a part of the human body. The first figure is Imsty, who was entrusted with protecting the liver alongside the deceased’s consort, whereas QbHsnwf was depicted with the head of a falcon protecting the intestines alongside his role in protecting the sA, or the deceased’s body, and his place in the coffins was often on the left side. Hapy appeared on the coffin’s left side with the Kbhsnwf and he was assigned the lungs’ protection. The authors note that the artist of this coffin did not adhere to what was prevalent in individual coffins during the New Kingdom or the Late Period in terms of placing gods on the coffin or coloring them with symbolic religious colors.

Finally, during the Saite Period, coffins were inscribed with spells and supplications from the Pyramid Texts, a matter that led the authors to believe that it has a political implication that crystallizes around the kings of this family’s interest in restoring the past and returning to its origins, that is, the ancient Egyptian civilization, believing that this matter will restore the Egyptian nation’s lost glory among nations. The use of Pyramid Texts alongside the BD was tangible evidence of the ancient Egyptians’ interest in the Saite Period return to its Old Kingdom civilizational roots.

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