



Unpublished Akhmim coffin of Nesmin son Irheru, one of Hurghada museum's collections

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ABSTRACT

The authors present in this paper the first publication of Nesmin's coffin from the collections of the Hurghada museum. This coffin was discovered in Akhmim by the French Egyptologist Gaston Maspero in 1893. It was never sold, so in 1916 it was transported to Cairo and exhibited in the Egyptian Museum under code No (TR 6.9.16.2). After that, it was transferred to be preserved in the Hurghada Museum in 2020 under No (TR 6.9.16.2 SR4/11350). This artifact is an example of a Ptolemaic Period Egyptian coffin that is artistically and technically superb. The inscriptions on Nesmin's coffin were translated and interpreted, and these texts were compared to similar ones on other coffins from the same site (Akhmim). From the inscription's characteristic stylistic and palaeographic qualities, the language and faults found in the text, and the titles and epithets of Nesmin, the authors concluded that this coffin dates back to the Ptolemaic period. More precisely, the likely dating of the Hurghada coffin can be narrowed down to the end of the third or the beginning of the second century B.C.

Introduction

The preservation of the body after death was the most significant concern in ancient Egyptian religion. Their belief in the continuation of life after death led to the development of extensive burial rituals and, eventually, the accomplishment of the mummification of their deceased (Segal 2010: 45-55). Together with the mummification of the body, the manufacturing of the coffins has a fundamental role in ensuring the dead's protection. In addition to providing security, the coffin served various religious and symbolic purposes throughout ancient Egyptian history (Taylor 1996: 65). Due to the great significance of the coffins, large numbers have been discovered dating back

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to all ancient historical periods and in most of the ancient Egyptian territories (Hartwig 2014: 273). The development of coffins provides insight into several social and religious changes because of their long history as components of both royal and private burial ensembles (Fahim, Fayeze 2020: 17-38). These magnificent coffins were richly drawn and adorned with images of gods and goddesses in various shapes, sceneries outlining the afterlife the deceased person desired to achieve, and bodily characteristics to signify his or her profile when they were still alive (Sousa 2019: 12). Although coffins' bodies and decorations have developed over time, depending on which dynasty they belonged to and what beliefs they belonged to, all of them were designed to facilitate the deceased's passage into the afterlife. As for the shape of the coffins, it is known that coffins were typically rectangular until the end of the Middle Kingdom when carved, anthropoid (human-shaped) coffins started to take their place (Mendoza 2017: 93,94).

Coffin provenance

One of the ancient Egyptian sites - where many coffins were discovered- is the city of Akhmim (Liptay 2020: 102). The Akhmim region has been continuously inhabited from the Predynastic period until the present time. However, ceramics evidence found at Akhmim suggests that the area was occupied during the Neolithic period (Klaes 2014: 26). It is located 470 km south of Cairo as one of the centers of the Sohag Governorate. Near this ancient city, the Nile takes a dramatic turn from northeast to southwest; hence, the city is located on the river's eastern bank to the northern side (Hafez 2020: 94). It was an economically prominent city with a significant temple devoted to god Min, the god of male fertility (Bard 1999: 125). From the name of this god apparently derives the pharaonic name of the city Khent-min. In Hellenistic times its god Min² was identified with the greek god Pan, whence its name had been changed to Panopolis, meaning "city of Pan.". This city was considered almost along ancient history as the capital of the Ninth Nome of Upper Egypt (Colavito 2021: 86) (fig 1).

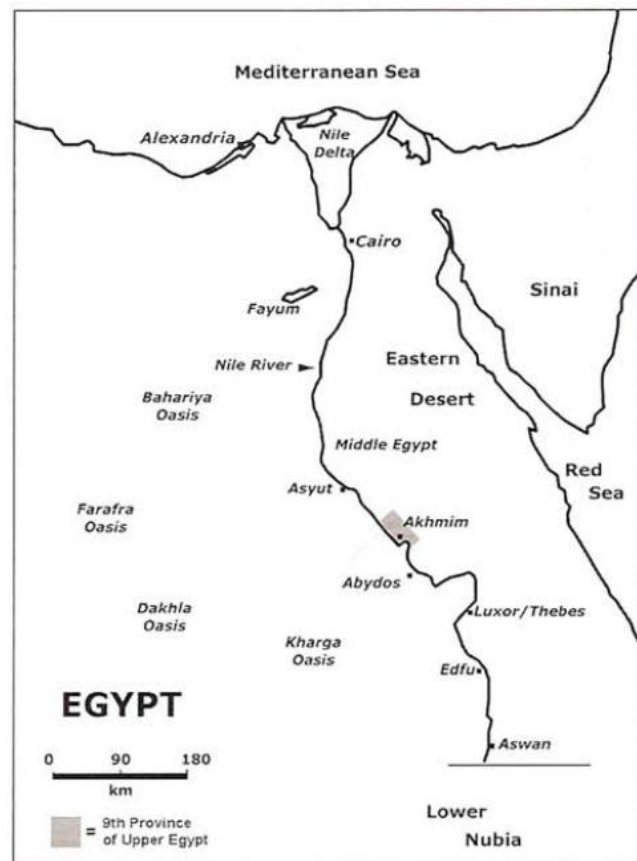


Fig 1. Map of Egypt indicates the capital of the ninth nome of Upper Egypt , city of Akhmim@Steve S. Chan

In 1884, the French Egyptologist Gaston Maspero (1846-1916) arrived to this antique city to begin new excavation works. Since his early days in Akhmim, the town began to display its

² Min was worshiped as a deity of the Eastern Desert and protector of trade routes, before becoming the chief deity of Akhmim. That city in which he was worshiped as head of a trinity with his wife Isis and their son Horus.

archaeological remains even before starting any excavations (Depauw 2002: 71). He noticed that the inhabitants of the ancient city, who did not realize the significance of the antiquities in their town (at that time), tied the livestock in front of their homes in many coffins, some of which take a rectangular shape and others take the human form (Institut égyptien 1886: 85). When Maspero tried to inquire about the origins of these coffins, their response was ambiguous, but he noticed that when they needed more stones, they moved toward the eastern hill of the city. Maspero and his team immediately began excavations on that steep hill. In less than two weeks, he discovered approximately 20 tombs containing more than 800 mummies (Cardin 2015: 4). He investigated the area for a distance of at least three kilometers and found everywhere in the site filled with human remains. The carved chambers and all the natural cracks were used to deposit the corpses there. He found the tombs consist of several rooms, some of which have eight or ten small superimposed chambers and a dozen coffins in each chamber. One is tempted to believe at first sight that these are family graves, but this is not the case. The names, titles, and genealogies inscribed on the lids indicate many families and successive generations. When these tombs were opened, they were found full, as if they were a place for storage, not tombs containing arranged funeral foundations. It seems that it was used during successive periods as a shelter to hide the deceased and their belongings. Maspero describes the condition of these tombs at the time of their discovery, saying *"I found the mummies with cardboard and wooden sheaths have been piled up to the ceiling: all the objects that belong to them are thrown at random into the thickness of the layers, stools, bedside tables, shoes, perfume boxes, collyrium vases, and, to lose nothing of the space, the last coffins were forcibly pushed between the ceiling and the accumulated mass, without worrying whether they were damaged or not."*

Maspero sent roughly 12 coffins from the hundreds of mummies he found at this site to be preserved in the Egyptian Museum in Bulaq. Many of these mummies were tragically destined to be utilized as fuel for the Egyptian National Railway or sold to paper mills (Institut égyptien 1886: 86- 90). The rest was stolen and later smuggled to be displayed in many famous museums worldwide in America and Europe. To witness the great history of that city, which lasted for a long time and successive centuries as one of the most important ancient Egyptian regions.

One of those coffins transferred to the Egyptian Museum is the Nesmin's coffin (fig 2). Interestingly, Nesmin and his coffin did not seem to have been found, the sorrowful fate of some of the akhmimic coffins. The coffin of Nesmin was most likely never sold; by 1916, it had been exhibited at Cairo's Egyptian Museum. This coffin was preserved in the Egyptian Museum until 2018, when the Ministry of Antiquities decided to transfer the coffin along with another group of masterpieces for display at the Hurghada Museum in the Red Sea Governorate. The actual location and the number of Nesmin's tomb are unknown, but the texts on his coffin and the technique of his cartonnage features (decorated items that were fixed on the mummy and were composed of linen or papyrus combined with plaster) indicate that he resided in Akhmim around the end of the third or the beginning of the second century B.C.

Artwork Details

Title: Nesmin son of Irheru

Provenance: excavation of Maspero in Akhmim (1893), Sohag

Dating: Ptolemaic period

Material: Cedarwood

Social Status: Higher

Dimensions: length. 180cm, width 42cm, depth 40cm.

Status of preservation: the coffin, mummy, and decoration are in good condition

Materials: wood

Associated material: gesso, gilding, gilded, linen, cartonnage

Parts of the coffin: Three parts; lid, case, and wrapped mummy.

Preserved in: Hurgada Museum

Accession Number: TR 6.9.16.2 SR4/11350

Inscriptions: there are three lines of hieroglyphs on the lower part of the lid and two long lines of hieroglyphs on the two sides of the case.



Fig 2. The lid of Nesmin's coffin behind the mummy of the cartonnage layers © A, El-Srougy.

The coffin's Description³

Although there are significant coating losses in crucial parts of the coffin, color preservation is pretty acceptable. As mentioned previously, the decorated anthropoid wooden coffin of Nesmin consists of three main parts, in the following paper will describe each piece:

³ The authors present their sincere thanks, gratitude, and appreciation to Professor Abd al-Rahman El-Srougy, Professor of Restoration at the Faculty of Archeology, Fayoum University, for giving them the opportunity to publish this coffin and for providing us with a lot of assistance, especially the pictures.

A- The lid of the coffin

On the head of the coffin is a giant scarab with red wings pushing a solar disc as a sign of rebirth (Mckoy2009: 105). It is *Kheper*, the solar deity, is pushing the sun disc toward the front of the hair-wig of the coffin. The wings of the deity are easily recognizable due to the red-edged feathers set against a white background; in contrast, the body of the scarab itself is colored black (fig 3).



Fig 3. The kheper pushing the solar disc upon the head of coffin. © A, El-Srougy.

The face of the coffin is gilded, but the layer of gold has fallen off extensively. The most distinctive feature of the face is the comprehensive eye, which distinguished the Akhmim coffins (Elias 2016: 4), which date back to the Ptolemaic period. The long eyelids, eyebrows, flat nose, and small mouth are also distinctive features of the Nesmin coffin. The artist usually left the ear exposed outside the black hair wig.



Fig 4. The face of the coffin © A, El-Srougy.

The coffin depicts the deceased wearing a black hair wig, and it is separated into two sections by horizontal lappets on the chest and shoulders (fig 4). The wig has lengthy lappets that end in a red color band. The chest is adorned with a big, broad collar known as a wesekh collar⁴. The collar is decorated with many rows of a multicolored floral, circle, and geometric motifs. The endpoints of the collar (which are positioned on the shoulders) bear the figure of a falcon head topped with a sun disc with a red background. This pattern appears quite frequently on coffins of ancient Egypt. Below the collar is a large representation of a goddess who is shown with outstretched wings (fig 6). Most of the coffins during the late period to the middle of the Ptolemaic period represented the goddess Nut with outstretched wings. However, goddess Maat was shown on many coffins instead of the goddess Nut, almost in the same shape as a complete lady in a kneeling pose with her outstretching wings and stretching arms, with a sun disk on her head. This goddess, who was a symbol of justice in ancient Egypt, played an essential role in the trial of the deceased in the next world. In most cases, we used to find the name of the goddess above the figure (like fig 5), but here in that coffin, there is no name, so we can't be sure whether this goddess is Nut or maat. It should be noted that a dress in the "feather" style and the tricolor wing area for the whole goddess are both considered as characteristics tended during the middle to end of the third century B.C (Elias 2016: 9).

⁴ - Wesekh collars were widely popular items of jewellery throughout ancient Egyptian history. They were frequently made of glass, semi-precious gemstones, or gold beads. It was usually worn by both men and women.



Fig 6 Winged goddess Nut on the coffin at Leiden museum with her name upon the head, © T,Fahim.



Fig 5. The winged goddess under the collar of the coffin of Nesmin © A, El-Srougy.

The winged goddess is accompanied from the upper part by anthropoid divinities in seated mummy poses, most likely representations of funerary companions. They may be considered "vigilantes," conveying the idea that the mummy is always guarded. They maintain the hour-long vigil (the wake), So they were often called "protective figures" or "guardians." (Elias 2016: 13). It is important to note that the number of shapes on the left side is six, while the right has seven figures. Thus the artist who decorated this coffin abandoned the consistency that was known to be an essential feature of art schools in ancient Egyptian history, or perhaps it was an unintended mistake of the artist at a time when the level of art declined. Under both sides of the figure of the winged goddess, two recumbent jackals representing the god Anubis are painted back to back. They appeared in white upon a red background; this god was always drawn upon the Egyptian coffins as he was the god of mummification and protector of the dead in ancient Egypt (fig 6).

In the lower part of the coffin, the artist divided the space using geometrical vertical and horizontal lines in different colors. There are three rows of characters below the figure of the goddess. The upper row has the scene of the embalming's funerary bed, which took the shape of a lion. The body of the deceased, wrapped in linen, in the usual Osiris shape with a false beard, is lying on the bed. At the foot and head end of the funeral bed, the two mourners, Isis and Nephthys, kneel with one hand raised to hold a jar over their heads. They are followed by anthropoid figures in mummy poses, standing behind each other, which are most likely funerary guardians. Again, it should be noted that the number of guards in that row is not the same on both sides. On the right side are eight figures, while on the left, there are only 7. The second row depicts the djed pillar in the center, representing stability as it refers to the backbone of the afterworld's god (Osiris) (Remler 2010: 51,52). On both sides of the *djed* sign, there are a representation of seven anthropoid figures in a seated position. Further down, in the third register, a frieze of alternating *djed* pillars and Isis knot. The two symbols were used to refer to Osiris and Isis and the dualistic nature of life in general (fig 7).



Fig 7. The mourning of Osiris by his two sisters Isis and Nephthys in the presence of gardian figures. © A, El-Srougy.

The text:

The inscriptions were placed inside three white columns below the previous three horizontal rows of figures. These white columns alternate with two empty red columns. It is important to note that leaving the red columns in the decoration of coffins empty without writing inside them was one of the most essential features of the Akhmimic art in drawing coffins during the Ptolemaic period. The three lines of text are well-preserved; it is a traditional formula venerating the god Osiris, the god of the other world in ancient Egypt, in addition to giving us some information about the owner of the coffin, Nesmin son Irheru. On both sides of the text columns, there are four lines of anthropoid deities, and each line has four figures, while the lower lines have three figures on each side (fig 8).

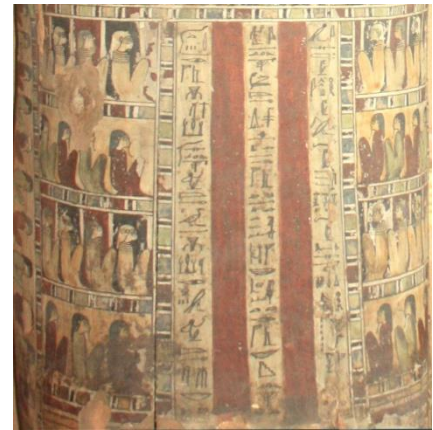


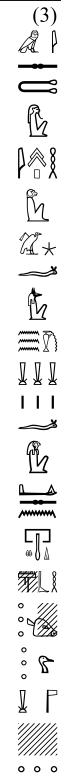


Fig 8. The three lines of text upon the leg of the coffin. © A, El-Srougy.

The three columns of inscriptions (1-3) traced from right to left (↓→)

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">(1) </div> <div style="text-align: center;">(2) </div> <div style="text-align: center;">(3) </div> </div>
<p>⁽¹⁾<i>dd mdw in Wsir</i>[deceased] <i>im3hy m Imntt hm-k3 Ns-Mn(.w)</i>⁵ <i>m3c-hrw s3 n im3hy m Imntt hm k3 ir-hrw (irt-nt-Hr-irw)</i>⁶ <i>m3c hrw mssi nbt</i></p>
<p>Words to be spoken by Osiris [deceased] the venerable in the West, the Ka-servant, <i>Ns-Mn(.w)</i>, True of Voice, son of the venerable in the West, the Ka-servant, <i>ir-hrw (irt-nt-Hr-irw)</i>, True of Voice, who gave birth the lady of ⁽²⁾female</p>

⁵ Ranke, *PN I*, 176, 12.

⁶ Ranke, *PN I*, 42, 11.

(2)*iḥyt n Mnw ḥtp di nsw⁷ n Wsir-ḥnty-Imntt⁸ ntr ʿ3 nb I3bt⁹ Wsir nb Nb ḥtyw¹⁰-Mnw¹¹*

Musicians of Min. An offering was given by the king to Osiris, Foremost of the Westerners, the great god, the lord of the east, Osiris, Master of the terraced mountain ranges of Min Abydos.

(3)*Imsty¹² Hpy¹³ Dw3-mwt=f¹⁴ Kḫ-snw=f¹⁵ di=sn prt-ḥrw t ḥnkt ḥbs k3w 3bdw sntr.*

To Imsety, Hapi, Duamutef, and Qebehsenuf that they may give an invocation offering of bread, beer, clothing, oxen, birds, and incense.

At the bottom of the coffin lid, precisely above the feet, we find a representation of a winged falcon (mostly god Horus) spreading its wings to ensure complete protection for the deceased, holding with its claws the sign of eternity and protection (*shen*). A wide strip of various colors surrounds the shape of the falcon. Around the base of the coffin lid is a traditional decoration representing 'deep niches', which are depicted as red lines inside black borders on an off-white background. To illustrate the shallow niches,' a single red line is drawn between each module. The consistent use of "bright white" throughout each module may have typological significance. This decoration style was exceedingly



Fig 9 The shen sign on the bottom of the coffin's lid, © A, El-Srougy.

⁷ For more information about the “Htp-di-n(y)-sw.t.” formula, cf. D. Franke, « The Middle Kingdom Offering Formulas-A Challenge », *JEA* 89 (2003), pp. 39-57; C.J.C. Bennett, « Growth of the HTP-DI-NSW Formula in the Middle Kingdom », *JEA* 27 (1941), pp. 77-82; P.C. SMITHER, « The Writing of the HTP-DI-NSW Formula in the Middle and New Kingdoms », *JEA* 25 (1939), pp. 34-37; M. Collier, *How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphs. A Step-by-Step Guide to teach Yourself*, London 1998, pp. 35-39; J.P. ALLEN, *Middle Egyptian. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, Cambridge 2000, p. 358

⁸ For more about Wsir-xnty-Imnt, see Leitz, *LGG* II, *OLA* 111, p. 557_C-558_B.

⁹ For more about Wsir nb IAbtt, see Leitz, *LGG* III, *OLA* 112, p. 571_{A-C}.

¹⁰ Originally xtyw denoted the terraced mountain ranges of the Arabian desert, where Min was particularly worshipped. It then became a specially shaped resting station for Min during processions, see H. Gauthier, *Kêmi* 2, 1929, pp. 41-82.

¹¹ About that specific title "Nb xtyw-Mnw" held only by the god Osiris in the greco-Roman Period, see Leitz, *LGG* I, *OLA* 112, p. 720_A.

¹² For more about the god Imsety, see Leitz, *LGG* I, *OLA* 110, p. 367_C-370_B.

¹³ For more about the god Hapi, see Leitz, *LGG* V, *OLA* 114, p. 119_A-121_C.

¹⁴ For more about the god Duamutef, see Leitz, *LGG* VII, *OLA* 116, p. 516_A-519_A.

¹⁵ For more about the god Qebehsenuf, see Leitz, *LGG* VII, *OLA* 116, p. 180_B-183_A.

common among coffins retrieved from Akhmim (fig 9). The footboard of Nesmin's coffin is decorated with the sign of eternity (*shen*) in red color upon a white background, surrounded by black color. Forty-three seated figures are counted on the bottom of the right side of the coffin, while on the left side - in the same form and size - there are 41 seated figures. It seems that all of them represent the number of judges who were attending the trial of the deceased in the afterlife in the court of Osiris, as mentioned in spell 125 of Book of the Dead (Taylor 2010: 206-209) (fig 10).



Fig 10, the side of the coffin's lid indicates the line of judges considered representatives of the ancient Egyptian territories. © A, El-Srougy.

The coffin case

Inside the coffin case, An illustration of the goddess Nut standing on a heavenly platform is drawn in black lines (fig 11). She was often seen stretching protectively over the deceased inside the coffins. It was believed that Nut, the goddess of the sky, gave birth to the sun every day (Meritka 2022: 3). She was also identified as the mother of the mummified god Osiris who was reborn after death. Accordingly, when the deceased be inside the coffin, he will be symbolically within Nut's womb. That means in case of considering the dead as Osiris or Re, both of whom were reborn each day (Sousa 2018: 16; George 2014: 151).

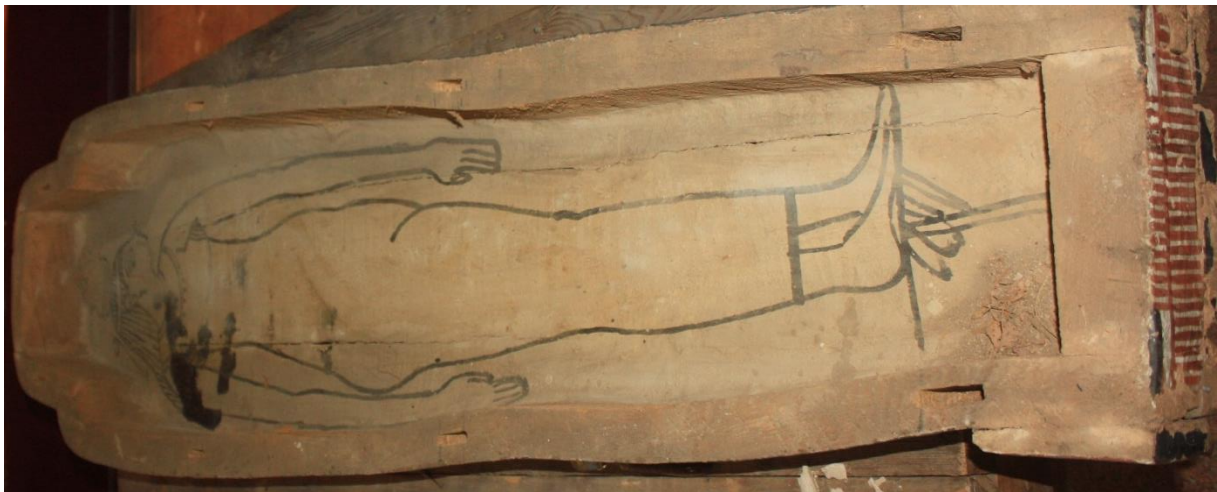


Fig 11 The representation of goddess Nut inside the coffin case of Nesmin © A, El-Srougy.

The left side of the coffin case is decorated by one column of inscription (5), realized from right to left (↓←)



⁽⁵⁾*dd mdw in Wsir hnty Imnt ntr ʿ3 nb T3bt Ptḥ-Skr-Wsir²⁰ ntr ʿ3 hry-ib Kṛsw²¹ Ist-wrt²² mwt-ntr hryt-ib Ipw ʿnh-šps nb(t) T3-dsr Wsir nb htyw Mnw Imsty Hʿpi Dw3-mwt=f Kbh-snw=f ir s3 Wsir Ns-Mn(.w)*

Words to be spoken by Osiris, Foremost of the Westerners, the great god, the lord of East, Ptah-Sokar-Osiris great god He who resides in of Coffin, Ist-ouret, divine mother, She who resides in, Osiris Master of terraced mountain ranges of Min Imsety, Hapi, Duamutef and Qebhsenuef to protect the deceased *Ns-Mn(.w)*.

The mummy

The third part of the coffin is the mummy of Nesmin, which is in a well-preserved condition with no signs of disintegration. The linen bandaging was used to wrap the whole body, creating a moderately thick cushioning bundle. However, the cartonnage mask had cracks on the left side that ran longitudinally from the top of the face to the bottom. The length of the mummy, from head to toe, is 160 cm, and its width is 34 cm (shoulder to shoulder). It has a depth of 23 cm (chest to back)²³.

²⁰About the goddess "Ist-wrt", see Leitz, *LGG* III, OLA 112, p. 176_C-177_A.

²¹ About that specific title held only by the god Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, see Leitz, *LGG* IV, OLA 113, p. 350_A.

²² About the goddess "Ist-wrt", see Leitz, *LGG* I, OLA 110, p. 69_B-71_B.

²³ These measures according to the reports of Hurgada meusem, since the responsible in the museum did not allow me to measure the dimension of the coffin myself.

Nesmin's mummy C.T. scan

Egyptologists now have a more advanced, non-invasive way of inspecting the interiors of mummified bodies due to computed axial tomography (C.T.). This technique of corpse examining has substantially improved the study of Egyptian mummification. It gives us comprehensive information about the deceased's age, health status, physical condition, and methods of preservation of the corpse itself. In other words, it provides different approaches for accessing the vast amounts of biological and cultural data contained in the mummified remains of the ancient Egyptian populace. As for the study sample for the research, we are fortunate to have an international institution represented in AMSC (The Akhmim mummy Studies Consortium). It was established to improve our understanding of these little-known facets of the embalming procedure as it existed in Akhmim and the surrounding areas.

In 2006, the coffin of Nesmin was examined by C.T. scan in the Egyptian Museum by AMSC as part of the Akhmim mummy examination project around the world, which the AMSC adopted. This examination provided us with a large amount of valuable information about the mummy of this priest. One of the information that the scan provided us is that in contrast to the majority of the Akhmim mummies that were found filled with visceral bundles²⁴, as was the tradition of mummification at that period (the beginning of the Ptolemaic era), Nesmin's mummy was found without any internal visceral packets. It's possible that tampering with the corpse after death rather than the deliberate removal during the embalming process is to blame for the absence of visceral packets in Nesmin's body, as Alexandra Klales thought.

The analysis and study of the body also confirmed that Nisman was an Egyptian man and not a foreigner, unlike many Akhmim mummies, who were confirmed by tests to be of foreign breeds that lived in that city and were buried in its cemetery. Additionally, it was suggested that priests should die between the ages of 45 and 55 (Klales 2014: 43, 161).

The exterior description of Nesmin mummy

The cartonnage mask demonstrates a human face with a black wig surrounding it. The face was completely gilded (fig 12), whereas the eyes and eyebrows were painted black with a white background for the sclera of the eyes. It also noted the representation of the eye with wide form as one of the traditions of akhmimic art. The face is flanked with a black-haired wig and white and red lappets. Between the locks of hair are rows of a traditional collars in different colors.



Fig 12 The gilded mask of Nesmin. © A, El-Srougy.

²⁴ It was common features of mummification process during the late period, specifically from the 25th dynasty until the Ptolemaic period, to find visceral bundles are often placed in place of canopic jars. The visceral bundles have been inserted closer to the lower part of the body, between the legs or between the thighs.

Under the wig's terminal point, the cartonnage panels are still stitched to the shroud (two panels). The painted decoration still looks fresh and vibrant (in blue, red, white, and yellow colors). The first cartonnage panel begins with the representation of a bird with a human head and spread wings (representing the Egyptian soul called as *ba*²⁵). this figure is represented upon a red rectangular background and flanked on both sides with two protruding falcon heads surmounted by solar disk in yellow color as two ends of the collar. The design of the *wsh* collar with several rows of a pattern of abstract floral strands is an essential feature of the Akhmimic school of art (Andjelković and Elias 2021: 783). Below the *wsh* collar is a drawing of the goddess Nut, who is represented sitting and spreading her wings to protect the deceased's body. Above her head is the sun disk. To both sides of Nut's head, there are two representations of the eye of Horus *wdst*²⁶. To fill the gap in the scene under the figure of gods Nut - as usual in the akhmimic art, which is characterized by an obsessive tendency to fill empty space - two figures of the goddess Nekhbet the lady of upper Egypt, have been represented upon a background of red color.

The last scene to the lower of this cartonnage panel is the fetish of Osiris²⁷, which is represented in the form of a pole ended with two feathers of the god Osiris with the solar disk, which refers to



Fig 13 The lower cartonnage panel on the mummy of Nesmin © A, El-Srougy.

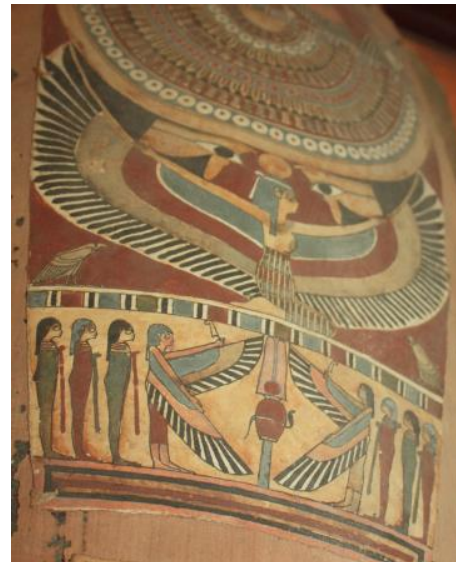


Fig 14 The upper cartonnage panel of Nesmin's mummy © A, El-Srougy.

²⁵ According to the ancient Egyptians thought, the soul "ba" was associated with the afterlife because of their belief that it represented the mediator (Which enables him to pass through the other world, and Chapter No. 89 of the Book of the Dead recommends placing the figure of the "ba" bird beside the mummy's chest, so the ancient Egyptian used to depict the scene Accompanying chapter 89 below the chest of the human wooden coffins, which depicts a bird (Alba hovering over the mummy of the deceased on the funeral bed).

²⁶ The Eye of Protection was known in the ancient Egyptian texts as wDA_t, as it was rooted in ancient Egyptian thought as the eye of the god Horus, which was lost in his struggle with the god Set, where the deity Set uprooted the left eye of Hour, which represents the moon, so the night became dark until god Thoth came and treated it. According to what he said in the text of the Ramesseum Papyrus: 'I brought you your eye, it will not be separated from you again.' Therefore, the wDA_t represented in the minds of the ancient Egyptian a ward off the evils and dangers he faced in his in his journey in the underworld, so the outer sides of the coffin were always decorated by it.

²⁷ Other opinion describe this scene as the resurrection of osiris after his killed on the hand of his brother, the evil's god Seth, (for more information about the fetish of osiris read the paper of Katherine J. Eaton, The Festivals of Osiris and Sokar in the Month of Khoiak: The Evidence from Nineteenth Dynasty Royal Monuments at Abydos)

the association between Osiris and god of the sun Ra. The fetish is protected by the cobra that wraps around the column. The scene is also protected on both sides by the two goddesses, Isis and Nephthys, who spread their wings to safeguard Osiris, in the presence of three guards on each side, who are represented standing behind each other (fig 13).

A typical funerary motif surmounts the second cartonnage panel from Akhmim during the Ptolemaic Period, a vignette of Book of the Dead chapter 151²⁸ depicting the mummy of the deceased on the funerary bed flanked with the goddesses Isis and Nephthys weeping and mourning over him. The winged solar disk which Horus of Behdet floats over the mummy to protect it. The second register in the same cartonnage panel has been decorated with a row of seated protective figures, three to the left and other three to the right side. Between them, the *dd* pillar as a sign of the god Osiris, the god of the otherworld, symbolizing constancy and stability. The lower part of this panel was decorated with hanging rows of a floral collar, very similar to the decoration of the *wsh* collar upon the mummy's chest (fig 14).





Fig 15. The feet cover of the Nesmin mummy, the photo indicates the damage in the left foot as well as the upper part. © A, El-Srougy.

Nesmin's mummy has what's known as a "mummy boot," which is a cartonnage cover for the feet. Its sandaled feet are a mimic of our own. It is painted in red color as the usual of the feet cover of the akhmimic mummy. The small toe cover is badly damage espacialy in the left foot, and the upper part was severely torn. Nonetheless, the artist has shown a lot of ingenuity by decorating the sole of the feet cover to look like an actual sandal (fig 15).

²⁸ The scene of chapter 151 Book of the Dead appears repeatedly on the cartonnage panels upon the mummy which were found in Akhmim, all of which date back to the Ptolemaic period. Such as the coffin of Lininger A06697 at the museum of University of Nebraska and the coffin of Shep-en-min in Berkshire Museum , the representation of this scene became one of the hallmarks of Akhmimic funerary art.

Chronological Conclusions

The coffin's owner's names – which mean the One who belongs to the god Min-and presumed title, as well as that of his parents (the father a priest, ir-hrw, the mother was a musician of Min), all point to the owner's likely status as a member of the priesthood of god Min, the idol of the Akhmim region. By comparing the Nesmin's coffin with other similar akhmimic coffins, in particular the coffin of Nefer-ii-ne in Reading Public Museum²⁹, the coffin of Shep-en-min in Vassar College³⁰, and Tasheriankh's coffin in Manchester Museum³¹. It was discovered that they had many stylistic parallels with the Nesmin coffin, such as; the anthropoid form of the coffin, the rectangular protruding pedestal in the lower part of the coffin, the undecorated hair wig, the wide necklace with multiple rows and colors, the outstretching goddess *Nut* and the obsessive tendency to fill empty space over the surface of the coffins with many details. Since the two coffins have been dated using radiocarbon. We suggest that the Hurghada coffin may has been constructed at a time simultaneous with the aforementioned coffins sometime between the late third century and the first half of the second century B. C. Furthermore, we may date the inscription to the first century of the Ptolemaic era based on its distinctive artistic, its language, the faults it includes, and the titles and epithets it uses. We must bear in mind that this dating is hypothetical since it is partially dependent on similarities dated by other coffins that belong to the same necropolis, akhmim.

Similar scenes	Nesmin's coffin scenes © A, El-Srougy.	Coffins dated by C.T. scan to the beginning of the Ptolemaic period
<p>Compare the hair wig and the <i>wsh</i> collar with Tasheriankh's coffin in Manchester Museum.</p>		 <p data-bbox="1036 1560 1328 1612">Fig 16. Tasheriankh's coffin © Manchester Museum.</p>

²⁹ For more information about the coffine of Nefer-ii-ne read the paper of Jonathan Elias, Overview of Lininger A06697, an Akhmimic Mummy and Coffin at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

³⁰ For more information about the coffin of Shep-en-min read the paper of Jonathan Elias, Shep-en-min: Report of findings from the CT scan of Vassar College CC79.001.

³¹ For more information about Tasheriankh's coffin read the paper of Kozieradzka-Ogunmaki, *Modern technology and the Manchester Mummies*.

Compare the winged Ba with the coffin of Shep-en-min in Vassar College.

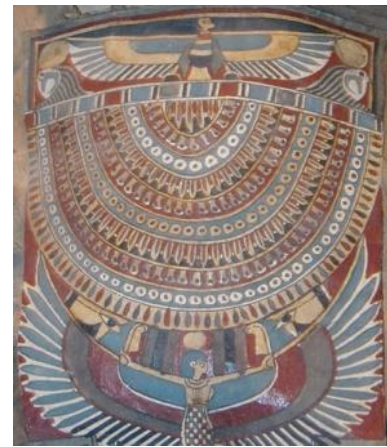


Fig 17 The coffin of Shep-en-min © Jonathan Elias

Compare the representation of the goddess nut with the one of Shep-en-min's coffin in Vassar College.

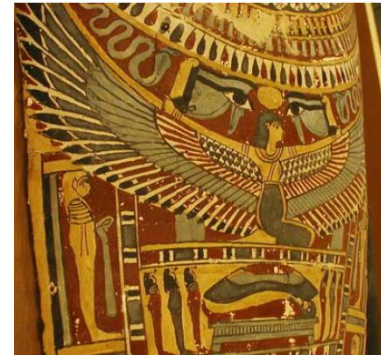


Fig 18 The coffin of Shep-en-min © Jonathan Elias

Compare Osiris's mourning scene with the scene of Tasheriankh's coffin in the Manchester Museum.



Fig 19 Tasheriankh's coffin © Manchester Museum.

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