

Context Analysis of Reusing the Royal Mummies' Funeral Equipment

تحليل سياق إعادة استخدام الأثاث الجنائزي الخاص بالموميوات الملكية

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Abstract

This paper deals with one of the consequences of the tomb robberies that took place at the end of the 20th Dynasty for the New Kingdom pharaohs, namely reusing the coffins, sarcophagi, and other funerary equipment to face the high cost of (re)burial. Where the high priests of Amun assigned inspection teams to the tombs to restore the violated mummies and rewrap them with new linen and finally move them to the caches to prevent the recurrence of thefts. They gave their orders to repair their coffins, which were roughly damaged, and then reuse them. Explaining the reasons for the robberies in the first place and then the reasons for the reusing and how the temple dealt with it.

Keywords: royal mummies, reuse, coffins, sarcophagi, tomb robberies, Valley of the Kings, Tanis.

المخلص

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية واحدة من تبعات سرقات مقابر ملوك الدولة الحديثة في نهاية الأسرة العشرين، وهي إعادة استخدام التوابيت الخشبية والحجرية والأثاث الجنائزي لمواجهة التكلفة العالية للدفن أو لإعادة الدفن. حيث قام الكهنة بتكليف فرق للتفتيش على المقابر لترميم الموميوات المنتهكة وإعادة لفها بالكتان ونقلها إلى خبايا منعًا لتكرار السرقات، وأصدروا أوامرههم بإصلاح توابيتها والتي تعرضت للتلف الشديد ومن ثم إعادة استخدامها. وسأتعرض لأسباب السرقات في المقام الأول ثم لأسباب إعادة استخدام الأثاث الجنائزي ودور المعبد في ذلك.

الكلمات الدالة: الموميوات الملكية، إعادة الاستخدام، التوابيت الخشبية، التوابيت الحجرية، سرقات المقابر، وادي الملوك، تانيس.

1. Introduction

The deficit began to appear in the state economy in the last years of the reign of Ramesses III, which is evident in Deir el-Medina, where the workers went on strike in year 29 recorded in the Turin strike papyrus for the delay in distributing the grain rations.¹ O. 16991 in oriental institute museum is a letter to the vizier To about the failure of the government to provide sufficient rations for the Deir el-Medina workers, they complained that: “*we are exceedingly impoverished, all supplies for us that are (from) the treasury, that are from the granary, and that are (from) the storehouse have been allowed to be exhausted*”.² The strikes were repeated throughout the 20th Dynasty as a result of the

¹ Janssen, Jac, “The year of the strikes”, *BSEG* 16, 1992, 41-49.

² Wente, Edward, “A Letter of Complaint to the Vizier To”, *JNES* 20 No. 4, 1961, 252, 255.

frequent delays³, until poverty found its way into the workmen community, who were responsible for cutting the tombs of the New Kingdom monarchs. This situation continued until the reign of Ramesses IX, in whose reign the tomb robberies occurred and were recorded in papyri with long lists with the names of the thieves and their confessions, the majority were crew members of Deir el-Medina.

We have several documentations from the reigns of Rameses IX and XI that dealt with the tomb robberies in their time, providing us with details of unignorable events that occurred at the end of the Ramesside period. The wealth of kings, precious among the folds of linen of their mummies, their gilded coffins and funerary furniture were an irresistible incentive to desecrate their tombs by thieves at a time when the government's decadence reached its peak, it was completely unable to protect the necropolis. One of the most notable robberies accounts is Abbott papyrus, which reviews what the thieves did in the tombs saying "*the thieves had violated them all, dragging their owners from their inner coffins and their outer coffins so that they were left in the desert. They stole their funeral equipment that had been given to them along with the gold and the silver and furnishings which had been in their inner coffins*", and that the inspectors' committee found the tombs of the citizens in the west of Thebes were all violated.⁴

2. The high priest and the necropolis

The high priests took the consequences of these thefts, they took care of restoring and rewrapping the mummies with new linen, changing the damaged coffins then reburying. These activities gave them more piety and piousness but does not preclude the existence of doubts about their leadership of these events. The high priest Piankh launched a military campaign on Nubia and the scribe of the necropolis Djehutymes joined him, then Butehamun son of Djehutymes took over his father's role at western Thebes carrying out Piankhi's orders. A great number of graffiti belonging to Butehamun were found pervasively in the necropolis of the Thebaid even inside the royal tombs in the valley of the kings⁵, and several times in the reburial docket. His name is also associated with the late Ramesside letters dated back to the sixth to the tenth year of the *whm-mswt*.⁶

³ Discussed in Antoine, Jean-Christophe, "The Delay of the Grain Ration and its Social Consequences at Deir el-Medina in the Twentieth Dynasty: A Statistical Analysis", *JEA* 95, 2009, 223-234.

⁴ Peet, Eric, *The Great Tomb-Robberies of The Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty*, vol. I, Oxford: The clarendon press, 1930, 39; vol. II, pl. II, 4, 1-4; *KRI* VI, 472, 16-473, 5.

⁵ Häggman, Sofia, *Directing Deir el-Medina*, Uppsala: Akademityck AB Edsbruk, 2002, 228.

⁶ Niwiński, Andrzej, "Butehamon - Schreiber der Nekropolis", *SAK* 11, 1984, 143.

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Butehamun sent a letter to Piankh⁷ it's dated back to the tenth year of *wḥm-mswt*. The letter opens with the customary greetings to Piankh while he was in Nubia to stop Pinehesy who rebelled against the king. Later, Butehamun informed him that the workers carried out his order which was unprecedented to uncover an ancient tomb and preserve it intact till his arrival. The text stated the following:⁸



hr ptr h3b.k r dd wn w^c(t) st m n3 swt ḥ3tyw mtw.tn s3w t3y.s ḥtm(t) i.irt(.i) iy

Now see you have written saying: “*Uncover a tomb among the foremost tombs and preserve its seal until (I) return*”

Reeves used this text as evidence to prove that locating the royal tombs was intentional to use their valuables to supply Piankh's campaign in the south. Indeed, this process has continued for several decades.⁹ Niwiński didn't agree with this interpretation, and he believed that it is far from being proved. Saying that every tomb was a tomb of ancestors, probably the topographical meaning a tomb among the nearest ones—of the entry to the Valley —perhaps KV4 should be understood here. Anyway, the purpose of Piankh's order is absolutely unknown.¹⁰ Niwiński's suggestion about Piankh's ambiguous order may be correct, but KV4 of Ramesses XI is out of consideration whereas mentioned above the letter is back to the tenth year of *wḥm-mswt* parallel to year 28 of Ramesses XI the alive ruling pharaoh, how could his tomb be one of the tombs of the ancestors? Moreover, the text saying that they have to save the tomb's seal, I doubt that KV4 has been ever sealed since it was found unfinished and never used by its owner who is probably buried somewhere in the North, possibly Memphis. Anyway, it is difficult to interpret the content and context of this text.

⁷ *i.e.* n° 28 among the late Ramesside letters, EA10375 in the British Museum.

⁸ Černý, Jaroslav, *Late Ramesside Letters*, Bruxelles: Foundation égyptologique, 1939, 47, 12-13; Went, Edward, *Late Ramesside Letters*, Chicago: Oriental institute, 1967, 61.

⁹ Reeves, Carl Nicholas, “The Coffin of Ramesses II”, in Amenta, Alessia and Guichard, Hélène (eds.), *Proceedings first Vatican Coffin Conference 19-22 June 2013 II*, Vatican: Tipografia Vaticana, 2017, 433-434.

¹⁰ Niwiński, Andrzej, “The Necropolis Scribe Butehamun in Light of Some New Material”, *BSAK* 9, 2003, 300, footnote 31.

3. Reuse to face the cost

Egypt fell into a major economic crisis at the end of the 20th Dynasty, the Nubian gold mines were lost at the end of the New Kingdom Thus, the possibility of purchasing high-quality wood from the Levant has become less frequent if it was available at all. While conscious of their responsibilities, the new governors must have understood the importance of using the Valley of the Kings.¹¹ Necessity forced the high priests to secure the funeral equipment and valuables that remained in the looted tombs to prevent their falling into the hands of the various gangs of thieves, and reuse them to be able to bear the cost of reburying the mummies due to the high prices and the scarcity of materials. In this context, we can easily determine the violent action of the robbers who stripped the coffins of their valuables. For instance, the richly gilded coffin of Thutmose III was roughly handled by the thieves, it has traces of using an adze or something similar to remove all gold sheets. While all the original decorations of the coffin of Ramses II have been carefully removed, a layer of yellow paint has replaced it, resulting in an excellent new looking surface¹², this is clearly the work of the inspection teams sent by the state. Remarkably, the reuse policy wasn't only for royal funeral furniture, but also for individuals', and wasn't limited in Thebes but in Tanis the political capital as well, as I'll review later.

As for the thieves, gold was indeed their first purpose to bear the cost of living. It was explicitly stated in Papyrus EA10054 that the thieves burned the coffins that they stole from the tomb of *T3-nfr* a third prophet of Amun, and then each of them took his share of gold.¹³ A very efficient way to get the coffins' gilding and the precious amulets from the mummies' wrappings –if they were in the coffins– in one step from the ashes.¹⁴ In this context, Graefe made a study on the quantities of stolen gold from the Theban royal tomb.¹⁵ In another context we realize that they stole to bear the cost of death as well, in

¹¹ Hornung, Erik, *The Valley of the Kings: Horizon of Eternity*, New York: Timken publisher, 1990, 47.

¹² Reeves, "Coffin of Ramesses II", 444.

¹³ Peet, *Tomb-Robberies*, vol. I, 60-61; vol. II, pl. VI, 1; KRI VI, 491.

¹⁴ Cooney, Kathlyn, "Objectifying the Body: The Increased Value of the Ancient Egyptian Mummy during the Socioeconomic Crisis of Dynasty 21", in Papadopoulos, John and Urton, Gary (eds.), *The Construction of Value in the Ancient World*, UCLA: Cotsen institute press, 2012, 147.

¹⁵ Graefe, Erhart, "Über die Goldmenge des Alten Ägypten und die Beraubung der Thebanischen Königsgräber", ZÄS 126, 1999, 19 ff.

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papyrus EA10053 for example which contains the thieves' confessions that they stole coffins to reuse them, or wood from the temple to make coffins.¹⁶

4. Formulas, terms and idioms.

When the high priests of Amun carried out the reburial operations for the royal mummies and transferred them to the caches, it was customary to record the reburial docket¹⁷ on the linen wrappings, on the coffins, or even as graffiti in the tombs. The docket was in semi-repeated formulas that begin in most cases with the date¹⁸ without mentioning the name of the king¹⁹, and the name of the high priest who gave the order (*wḏ n ḥm-ntr tpy*) to renew or rebury. The priests in charge were:

- High priest Herihor, contemporary to the *wḥm-mswt* (?) of Ramesses XI (7 docket).
- High priest Pinedjem I, contemporary to Smendes (10 docket).
- High priest Masaharta, contemporary to King Pinedjem I and Smendes (3 docket).
- High priest Menkheperre, contemporary to King Pinedjem I and Psusennes I (6 docket).
- High priest Pinedjem II, contemporary to King Siamun (6 docket).

Those responsible for the reburial and restoration of mummies used exclusive words and expressions—except *ḳrs*—in the docket indicating the nature of the event they oversaw, whether related to providing the burial with suitable reused items starting from the coffin to amulets for the mummies or dealing with the mummy itself by restoring it or rewrapping it with new linen²⁰, as follows:

¹⁶ Cooney, “Coffin reuse: Ritual Materialism in the Context of Scarcity”, in Amenta, Alessia and Guichard, H  l  ne (eds.), *Proceedings first Vatican Coffin Conference 19-22 June 2013 II*, Vatican: Tipografia Vaticana, 2017, 110.

¹⁷ All were listed in Reeves, Carl Nicholas, *Valley of the Kings: The Decline of a Royal Necropolis*, London: Kegan Paul international, 1990, table 10; Thomas, Elizabeth, *The Royal Necropoleis of Thebes*, Princeton, 1966, 249 ff.

¹⁸ It is certain that these dates were of the kings of Tanis, and that the high priests did not take an independent date to their own rule. For evidence and discussions see: Jansen-Winkel, Karl, “Relative Chronology of Dyn. 21”, in Hornung, Erik, Krauss, Rolf and Warburton, David (eds.), *Handbook of Ancient Egyptian Chronology* (Lieden: Brill, 2006), 226-227.

¹⁹ Except for the docket of Masaharta and Menkheperre, the name of their father the so-called King Pinedjem I was mentioned, and the docket dated to the reign of King Siamun were launched by the high priest Pinedjem II.

²⁰ cf. Reeves, *Valley of the Kings*, 228-230; Reeves, “Coffin of Ramesses II”, 435; Gardiner, Alan, “The Benefit Conferred by Reburial”, *JEA* 37, 1951, 112.

Table 1: terms and idioms of reburying

Term	Meaning	Orthography	Source and royal figure	References
<i>ḳrs</i>	To bury		Graffito in KV57 Horemheb	Černý, MSS, C77-5; Gardiner, MSS, Notebook 70, 69.
			Linen docket Seti I	Maspero 1889, 554-555
<i>whm ḳrs</i>	To rebury, to restore, re-coffining		Graffito in KV43 Thutmose IV	<i>Urk</i> IV, 2170, 15-2171, 4.
			Coffin docket Seti I	Maspero 1889, 553.
			Coffin docket Amenhotep I	Maspero 1889, 536-537.
			Coffin docket Amenhotep I	Maspero 1889, 536-537.
<i>whm sm3</i>	To rebury		Linen docket Thutmose II	Maspero 1889, 545-546.
<i>rdit wsir</i>	To Osirify		Linen docket Ramesses III	Maspero 1889, 563-564.
			Linen docket Ahmose I	Maspero 1889, 534.
			Linen docket prince Siamun	Maspero 1889, 538.
			Linen docket Sitkamose	Maspero 1889, 541.
<i>whm.f r ḳ3s.f</i>	renew him to bury him		Linen docket Ramesses II	Maspero 1889, 560.

5.1. The musical coffins

It thus appears that the workmen community of Deir el-Medina was responsible for the removal of precious material and gilded sheets then replace them with yellow paint. Reusing the coffins was a very common policy in the 21st Dynasty probably a result of the scarcity of wood and the increased value of burying because of the economic crisis as mentioned above, the restorers erased the names and titles of the owners –in most cases– and replaced them with new ones with some minor modification in shape or style.²¹ In this process of restoration, they separate the coffin from its real owner then they stripped the mummy of its valuables between the folds of linen bandages and then rewrapped it with new ones. This operation was not only used for the royal figures but also for middle-class mummies as shown below.

“*Game of musical coffins*” is an idiom adopted by Reeves to express how common the coffins reuse was. In most cases, the original owner of the coffin could not be identified due to the preparing process for new owner and removing the original inscriptions and decoration. The name of the coffin’s owner was erased and the name of the king whose mummy was placed in it was written.

A restoration docket inscribed on the back of mummy-board preserved in the British museum n° EA15659 (**Fig: 1**) which belongs to *T3-mniwt* a chantress of Amun during the 18th or 19th Dynasty²², but the text dated back to the 21st Dynasty. This text indicates that this board was reused for another mummy, but it is seemed that someone could recognize its real owner and as a result, the board backed to her.²³ The text stated the following:²⁴



1. *ḥ3t-sp 3 3bd 4 3ḥt sw 15 hrw n wḥm ḳrs Wsir T3-mnit m-ḥt gm.tw.s iw iṯi n3 msw-ḥr n3 wtw ḥtw iw ft*
2. *rnw iw.tw swrd m wḥm*

²¹ Häggman, *Directing Deir el-Medina*, 371; Cooney, “Coffin reuse”, 110 ff.

²² PM I², 827.

²³ Reeves, “Coffin of Ramesses II”, 435; Cooney, “Objectifying the Body”, 146.

²⁴ Birch, Samuel, “Varia”, *ZÄS* 7, 1869, 26.

“Year 3, fourth moth of 3 $\dot{h}t$, the day of re-burying/re-coffining (*wḥm-ḳrs*) Osiris T3-mniwt after it was found that the workers of the necropolis had taken the coffins and erased their names, then they flourish (them) again.”

This text in addition to the royal mummies’ reburial docket all explains a lot to understand the reusing strategy. We can start with the earliest dockets of the reburial activities in the late 20th Dynasty which were launched by Herihor during the *wḥm-mswt* as follows:

Table 2: the earliest reburial activities by Herihor

Mummy of	Date				Source type	Reference
	year	season	month	day		
Seti I	6	3 $\dot{h}t$	2	7	Coffin docket CG61019	Maspero 1889, 553.
Horemheb	6	3 $\dot{h}t$	2	12	Graffito in his tomb KV57	Černý, <i>MSS</i> , C77-5; Gardiner, <i>MSS</i> , Notebook 70, 69.
Ramesses II	6	<i>pṛt</i>	3	15	Coffin docket CG61020	Maspero 1889, 557.




we can see that the mummy of Seti I has been placed in its new reformatted reused 17th(?) Dynasty private coffin, Herihor gave his order to transfer the burial of Horemheb five days later. Five months and three days later a reburial docket for the mummy of Ramesses II was written on his prepared coffin, which originally belonged to Horemheb.

Again, the existence of a restoration workshop to separate the mummy from the coffin should be brought up here, after the separation the redistribution of the coffins may have been based on the mummies Sequence scenario. In the case of Ramesses II his mummy was restored then it was placed in another previously prepared polished and painted with yellow varnish coffin, which is of Horemheb. It is possible that the mummy of Horemheb has gone through all these stages and placed finally in a previously prepared coffin according to the dates of the dockets, it could be the coffin of Seti I.²⁵

It is interesting to note that all royal mummies weren’t in their original coffins except for both Seqenenre in his coffin n° CG61001 and Thutmose III in his coffin n° CG61014,

²⁵ Reeves, “Coffin of Ramesses II”, 436-437

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and there is controversy over King Ahmose's ownership of coffin n° CG61002.²⁶ A very interesting case of study is the mummy of Amenhotep III, it was found in KV35 in a composed coffin made of two different parts. The coffin-box belonged to Ramesses III while the coffin-lid looks like a 20th Dynasty private coffin, but it has a vertical line on it written in cursive hieroglyphs with the names of Seti II as , there is also a hashed horizontal hieratic line  which can be read as .²⁷ We can assume that the owner of the lid was robbed and reburied in another prepared coffin to him, then the restorers fixed his lid to use it for a second time for Seti II, it was soon reused for the third time but for Amenhotep III. As for the mummy of Ramesses III the owner of the coffin-box, it was placed in a cartonnage coffin then both were transferred inside the gigantic coffin of queen Ahmose Nefertari to be a coffin-mate with her.

Pinedjem I came after Harihor and he continued the reburial activities for the royal mummies. We found some of his docketts on the wrappings of King Ahmose²⁸, of prince Siamun²⁹ and of Amenhotep I³⁰ whose graves were in Dra' Abu el-Naga. Other docketts on the wrappings of Queen Ahmose-Meritamun³¹ whose tomb is located in Deir el-Bahari TT358. These documentations prove that the reburying project wasn't in the Valley of the Kings but for the entire necropolis of Thebes.

The reburial activities resulted in reusing the coffins whether it was royal or private, which explains the presence of individuals' mummies in the royal caches³², it similarly explains the presence of the royal mummies in the individuals' coffins. The following table has an inventory of the royal mummies and the reused coffins in which they were placed:

²⁶ Dodson, Aidan, "The Burials of Ahmose I", *CASAE* 41, 2010, 25, footnote 1.

²⁷ cf. Daressy, Georges, *Cercueils des Cachettes Royales*, Cairo: IFAO, 1909, 218.

²⁸ Maspero, Gaston, "Les Momies Royales de Déir el-Bahari", *MMAF* 1 (4), 1889, 534.

²⁹ Maspero, *MMAF* 1 (4), 538.





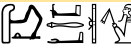

³⁰ Maspero, *MMAF* 1 (4), 536-537.

³¹ Winlock, Herbert Eustis, *The Tomb of Queen Meryet-Amūn at Thebes*, New York: Metropolitan Museum, 1932, 87, pl. XL.


³² Reeves, "Coffin of Ramesses II", 435.

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Table 3: the coffins of the royal mummies

	Mummy of	N ^o	Cache	Coffin	Original owner
1	Inhapy	CG61053	DB320	CG61004	 <i>R'ci</i>
2	Sitkamose	CG61063	DB320	CG61011	 <i>P3-di-Imn</i> , early 20 th
3	Meritamun	CG61052	DB320	CG61010	 <i>Snw</i> , early 18 th Dyn.
4	Siamun	CG61059	DB320	CG61008	Anonymous, early 18 th Dyn.
5	Sitamun	CG61060	DB320	CG61009	Anonymous, early 18 th Dyn.
6	Amenhotep I	CG61058	DB320	CG61005	 <i>Dhwti-nfr</i> , 18 th Dyn.
7	Thutmose II	CG61066	DB320	CG61013	Anonymous, 18 th Dyn.
8	Thutmose IV	CG61073	KV35	CG61035	Anonymous, 20 th Dyn.
9	Amenhotep III	CG61074	KV35	CG61036	Ramesses III + Anonymous
10	Ramesses I	?	DB320	CG61018	Anonymous, early 20 th Dyn.
11	Seti I	CG61077	DB320	CG61019	Anonymous, 17 th Dyn.
12	Ramesses II	CG61078	DB320	CG61020	Horemheb
13	Merneptah	CG61079	KV35	CG61039	Setnakhte
14	Seti II	CG61081	KV35	CG61037	Anonymous, 20 th Dyn.
15	Siptah	CG61080	KV35	CG61038	Anonymous, 19 th Dyn.
16	Ramesses III	CG61083	DB320	CG61021	Anonymous, 19 th Dyn.
17	Ramesses IV	CG61084	KV35	CG61041	 <i>r'hr-c3</i> , 18 th Dyn.
18	Ramesses VI	CG61086	KV35	CG61043	 <i>R'</i> , 18 th Dyn.

Comments:

Case n^o (1) *R'ci* was the wet nurse of Queen Ahmose Nefertari, her mummy CG61054 was found in a coffin with 20th Dynasty pattern CG61022 which belonged to the so-called  *P3-hry-pdt* who was a *sdm* *c3 m st m3'c't* “workman in Dier El-Medina”.

Case n^o (9) The coffin-lid is of a Ramesside non-royal figure, reused for the first time for Seti II and then for Amenhotep III. The box is of Ramesses III.

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- Case n° (13) Merneptah was placed in the coffin-box of King Setnakhte, while the lid was placed face down to receive the body of its owner.³³ The mummy of Setnakht could be the mummy known as "The Mummy on the Boat" in KV35 which was smashed a few years after the discovery.³⁴
- Case n° (16) This coffin was inserted into Queen Ahmose Nefertari's coffin CG61003.
- Case n° (18) The texts on the coffin indicate that its owner, *i.e.*, R^c was 𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓 𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓 *ḥm-ntr-tpy n Mn-ḥpr-R^c* a high priest in the mortuary temple of Thutmose III as well 𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓 𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓𓅓 *ḥm-ntr tpy n Imn m Ḥnkt-^cnh* the high priest of Amun in *Ḥnkt-^cnh* which is the name of the mortuary temple of the king in Qurna.³⁵

A very interesting case is that of Pinedjem I, he had chosen at least one of Thutmose I's coffins for his own burial, *i.e.*, CG61025.³⁶

5.2. Theban royal Sarcophagi in the Tanite royal necropolis

The pharaohs of the 21st Dynasty followed the reusing policy as well, which is surprising if we considered the obvious prosperity and riches in their tombs. All extant sarcophagi used by the kings down to the middle of the 22nd Dynasty being reused pieces. Thirteen sarcophagi were discovered in the royal necropolis of Tanis eight of them were reused, their original inscriptions and owners' names were erased with exception of two cases, we were able to identify their original owners, *i.e.* King Merneptah and a New Kingdom third prophet of Amun called Amenhotep and both were buried at Thebes.³⁷ As for the granite sarcophagus of the priest Amenhotep it was reused by Wendjebaendjed the

³³ Daressy, *Cercueils des Cachettes Royales*, 219.

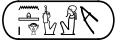
³⁴ Carter, Howard, "Report on the Robbery of the Tomb of Amenothos II, Biban El Moluk", *ASAE* 3, 1902, 117.

³⁵ cf. Weigall, Arthur, "A Report on the Excavation on the Funeral Temple of Thoutmosis III at Gurneh", *ASAE* 7, 1907, 122-141; PM II¹, 426-429.

³⁶ Daressy, *Cercueils des Cachettes Royales*, 50; Winlock, Herbert Eustis, "Notes on the Reburial of Tuthmosis I", *JEA* 15, 1929, 59

³⁷ Dunand, Françoise and Lichtenberg, Roger, *Mummies and Death in Egypt*, New York: Cornell University, 2006, 61; Dodson, Aidan, "Sarcophagi", in Wilkinson, Richard. and Weeks, Kent (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Valley of the Kings*, Oxford: Oxford University press, 2016, 257; Montet, Pierre, *Les Constructions et le Tombeau de Psousennès à Tanis*, Paris, 1951, 70.

high official from the reign of Psusennes I who may have functioned as the king's deputy in Amun's cult in Tanis, whose burial was in an outer room of the tomb of his king.³⁸

As for the mummy of King Merneptah and his wooden coffins, four stone Sarcophagi were allocated to them, three of pink granite and the fourth of calcite/alabaster. The third one was reused by Psusennes I to be the outer sarcophagus out of his three sarcophagi assemblages (**Fig: 2**). The sarcophagus-lid of this one is a cartouche shaped with a statue of the osirified King Merneptah.³⁹ This sarcophagus is preserved in the Egyptian Museum n° JE87297. the name of Merneptah appears on the knot of the kilt belt as ⁴⁰, this is the only cartouche that has not been replaced by the cartouches of Psusennes I. The second sarcophagus of Psusennes I—the middle one—is in the osirified form and it was reused as well, it was dedicated to an unknown king of the 19th Dynasty, and is preserved in the Egyptian Museum n° JE85911, inside this sarcophagus the famous silver coffin of the king was found.

It is worth noting that the reuse was not limited to the New Kingdom monuments, since we found that they reused older pieces. An example, King Takelot I⁴¹ who was buried in NRT-I of Osorkon II, in a Middle Kingdom sarcophagus from Fayoum.⁴² This is about reuse only; I'll discuss some repurposed models later.

5.3. Ahmose's golden ewer

Reusing activities were not limited to coffins but also to funeral equipment as well, although the reusing was due to economic reasons, it cannot be overlooked that the royal funeral equipment had a symbolic value for the new owners.⁴³

Montet found a golden ewer (**Fig: 3**) in the tomb of King Psusennes I NRT-III at Tanis and gave it the number 393⁴⁴, it is preserved in the Egyptian Museum n° JE85895. Once more, another reused funeral equipment in the Tanite royal necropolis especially in

³⁸ Kitchen, Kenneth, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt: 1100-650 BC*, Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1996, §222.

³⁹ Montet, *Tombeau de Psousennès*, 111, pl. LXXVI; Sourouzian, Hourig, *Les Monuments du Roi Merneptah*, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1989, 180, 182.

⁴⁰ cf. Von Beckerath, Jürgen, *Handbuch der Ägyptischen Königsnamen*, Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1999, 157-159.

⁴¹ Wrongly identified with Takelot II.

⁴² Montet, Pierre, *Les Constructions et le Tombeau de Chéchanq III à Tanis*, Paris, 1960, 74.

⁴³ Häggman, *Directing Deir el-Medina*, 371.

⁴⁴ Montet, *Tombeau de Psousennès*, 97-98, n°. 393, pl. LXV.

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the tomb of Psusennes I, this object belonged to King Ahmose as we see his name *Nb-bḥty-R*^c incised on it.

Reeves believed that this ewer was a part of the funeral equipment prepared for the original burial of King Ahmose⁴⁵, and that it was reused after the inspection teams in the royal necropolis reburied the king. The reburial docket on his wrappings mentioned that this event was in the eighth year of Psusennes I.⁴⁶

Harvey doubted the validity of this point of view and gave the possibility that this ewer was among Ahmose's gifts at Abydos. It is worth mentioning that Ahmose donated a large and varied number of vessels made of gold and other precious materials to Amun-Re in the Karnak temple⁴⁷, the title engraved on the ewer *mry Wsir nb 3bdw* "Beloved of Osiris lord of Abydos" it may be proof of his hypothesis.

It is hard to believe that this ewer remained in use upon the earth without being altered, reused, buried with a king, or even damaged for such a long period of time between Ahmose and Psusennes I. So it is more likely that it was in one of the early 18th Dynasty tombs, its owner was contemporary to the reign of Ahmose or slightly after, until the inspection teams launched the reburial activities and reused it, or that it was in the tomb of Ahmose himself.⁴⁸ To finally settle in the tomb of Psusennes I at Tanis, where it was found.

6. Repurpose instead

Another kind of reuse is the repurpose, reusing the funeral equipment was not limited to its main function it has also been reused in a different context, meaning that it was reused in a way other than the function for which it was made.

6.1. Quarrying the royal sarcophagi

Back to the reused third sarcophagus of Merneptah mentioned above, the two outermost of Merneptah's four sarcophagi were demolished, the lids being set aside, the massive cases broken up and many of the pieces removed and may have been reused as

⁴⁵ Reeves, *Valley of the Kings*, 282, footnote 103.

⁴⁶ Maspero, *MMAF* 1 (4), 534.

⁴⁷ Harvey, Steve, *The Cult of King Ahmose at Abydos*, PhD. Dissertation: University of Pennsylvania, 1998, 16, footnote 27

⁴⁸ Thijs, Ad, "The Burial of Psusennes I and "The Bad Times" of P. Brooklyn 16.205", *ZÄS* 141, 2014, 213.

raw material for making other monuments as stelae⁴⁹, the smashing process may have been by thieves or by the administration to extract the third sarcophagus for reuse. The role of the administration may be deduced from the lack of any fragments belonging to the floor of the boxes, this part of the sarcophagus was likely of substantial thickness and would have provided large blocks for reuse.

The same scenario for other tombs in the Valley of the Kings or even of the Queens to obtain large granite slabs most often from the floors of sarcophagi-boxes.⁵⁰ The fragments of these sarcophagi may have been repurposed as well, especially in Tanis in which many reused granite blocks were found. Most of the sarcophagi in Tanis were reused as mentioned previously, some had been fashioned from architectural fragments or even statues⁵¹, for instance, Osorkon II was buried in NRT-I his sarcophagus-lid was carved from a Ramesside period statue, and most probable from the reign of Ramesses II. Repurpose wasn't also limited either to royal sarcophagi or the monuments of the New Kingdom generally, an older object found in the case of Amonemope in tomb NRT-IV, his sarcophagus-box made of fine sandstone, but its granite lid was cut from an Old Kingdom slab. Another case is of Shoshenq III who was buried in NRT-V in a sarcophagus that was originally a 13th Dynasty lintel.⁵²

The following are the cases of broken or lost royal sarcophagi that may have been reused in another context.⁵³

Table 4: the royal mummies' broken or missing sarcophagi

Owner	Tomb	Status
Nefertari	QV66	Box is missing; broken lid discovered preserved in Turin Museum n° S. 5153. (Fig: 4)
Meritamun	QV68	Box is missing; broken lid discovered, preserved in Berlin Museum n° 15274.

⁴⁹ Taylor, John, "Aspects of the History of the Valley of the Kings in the Third Intermediate Period", in Reeves, Carl Nicholas (ed.) *After Tut'ankhamun: Research and Excavation in the Royal Necropolis at Thebes*, London: Kegan Paul, 1992, 190; Dodson, "Sarcophagi", 254.

⁵⁰ Brock, Edwin, "The Tomb of Merenptah and its Sarcophagi", in Reeves, Carl Nicholas (ed.) *After Tut'ankhamun: Research and Excavation in the Royal Necropolis at Thebes*, London: Kegan Paul, 1992, 133.

⁵¹ Dunand and Lichtenberg, *Mummies and Death in Egypt*, 61.

⁵² Montet, *Tombeau de Chéchanq III*, 73-74.

⁵³ These cases are known to me by prof. Aiden Dodson, and ARCE's Theban Mapping Project <https://thebanmappingproject.com/> (Last access: 11th of August 2022).

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Merenptah	KV8	<p>Four sarcophagi have been dedicated to this king, three of red granite and one of calcite/alabaster:⁵⁴</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- The rectangular lid of the outer sarcophagus was found and is now in chamber H, bottom of box missing completely. 2- The lid was found and is now in the burial chamber J, but the box is fragmented and in chamber FA. 3- The one reused as an outer sarcophagus for Psusennes I mentioned above. 4- The innermost sarcophagus made of calcite/alabaster. Some fragments were left in the tomb, one piece in the British museum n° EA49739 is part of the box's foot end. It is decorated on the exterior with the first section of the Book of Gates and on the interior with a kneeling winged goddess. (Fig: 5)
Seti II	KV15	The head end of lid and the entire box are missing. The remainder of the lid was found broken into several. The face of the goddess Nut from its underside is in the Louvre n° E 6205. It is often incorrectly referred to as the head of Seti II.
Takhat	KV10	Box is missing; broken lid found in the tomb. (Fig: 6)
Setnakhte	KV14	The walls of the box are broken, presumably in preparation for removal of the bottom for reuse, but not done.
Ramesses III	KV11	Box in Louvre Museum n°. D. 1, broken lid discovered now in Fitzwilliam Museum n°. E.1.1823. (Fig: 7)
Ramesses VI	KV9	Outer sarcophagus-box is broken, perhaps with unfulfilled intent to salvage bottom for reuse; the lid was fragmented into 250 pieces and being restored. The face is a replica, the original piece preserved in the British Museum n° EA140 since 1823. (Fig: 8)
Ramesses IX	KV6	A two-tiered pit to hold the missing sarcophagus or coffin was cut into the floor of the burial chamber.

6.2. Shabti of Ramesses II

An Osiris statue preserved in the British museum n° EA69672 was originally a wooden shabti of Ramesses II's funeral equipment **(Fig: 9)**, later it was reused as a statue

⁵⁴ Brock, "The Tomb of Merenptah and its Sarcophagi", 123-130.

of Osiris, probably in the late 21st Dynasty. Its inscriptions were obliterated with plaster and fixed to a wooden base and given a feather crown—now lost—and covered in black varnish which was deliberately scraped off Perhaps to facilitate reading the existing text which is Chapter 6 of the book of the dead⁵⁵, this text accompanies two cartouches of Ramesses II made us realize Ramesses' ownership of this statue.

Such figures of Osiris statues began to appear for individuals in the 19th Dynasty and became quite numerous during the early Third Intermediate Period and were often used as receptacles for a funerary papyrus. Unfortunately, there is no trace left of a person's name for whom the shabti of Ramesses II was modified.⁵⁶

7. conclusion

The consequences of the tomb robberies were not only the transfer of the royal mummies to the caches but also the reuse of their funeral equipment, coffin, and sarcophagus assemblages, this was not limited to the royal burials in the Valley of the Kings but extended to individuals in the whole Theban necropolis. Certainly, economic issues were the most important reasons for the tomb robberies carried out by thieves, and then reuse their contents which carried out by the state itself, according to the high priest's orders and the hands of the inspection teams. The inspectors did not provide what was needed for the kings' Reburials, they did nothing more than adjust and fit a mummy equipment for another mummy instead of providing a new one. Finally, on the political level the reuse policy was not present in Thebes only, but also in Tanis, *i.e.* in the two capitals of Egypt. It is surprising that we found new Kingdome sarcophagi certainly were in the domain of the priests' state in the South and has been reused or recycled in the actual capital in the North. Therefore, it seems that there was already a connection between the two parts of double-king Egypt or the two Egypts, so to speak, economically at least.

8. Acknowledgment:

This paper would not have been possible without the exceptional support of my supervisor prof. Racha Farouk – Alexandria University. I would like to express my gratitude to prof. Carl Nickolas Reeves – Arizona University he has been an inspiration that kept my work on track. Special thanks to prof. Aiden Dodson – Bristol University to

⁵⁵ Aston, David, "Two Osiris Figures of the Third Intermediate Period", *JEA* 77, 1991, 95.

⁵⁶ Taylor, "Aspects of the History of the Valley of the Kings", 198

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send some data about the broken sarcophagi to me which became the starting point of my work in this topic, and to the team of UCLA Coffins Project especially prof. Kathlyn (Kara) Cooney, the Project Director and Nicholas Brown, for sending me clear photos for the coffin-lids, docketts and even notes. Finally, to Catherine Warsi of Griffith Institute Archive for letting me check the unpublished notebooks of Gardiner and Černý.



Fig (1): Mummy-board of *T3-mniwt* EA15659, with detail for the reburial docket.

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https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA15659

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Fig (2): sarcophagus-lid of Merneptah reused by Psusennes I, JE87297.

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Illustration by the author

Fig (3): The golden ewer of Ahmose I found in the tomb of Psusennes I (NRT-III) in Tanis, JE85895.

© The Egyptian Museum





Fig (4): The broken sarcophagus-lid of Queen Nefertari, S. 5153.

© Egyptian Museum of Turin

https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/S_5153

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Fig (5): Fragment of Merenptah innermost calcite/alabaster sarcophagi, EA49739.

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https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA49739 (Last access: 11th of August 2022)



Fig (6): Queen Takhat broken sarcophagi-lid after restoration, KV10.

Photo by: Lotfi Khaled Hassan



Fig (7): The broken sarcophagus-lid of Ramesses III, E.1.1823.

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<https://fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/learning/look-think-do/ramesses-iii>

(Last access: 11th of August 2022)



Fig (8): Ramesses VI's broken sarcophagi-lid after restoration.

Photo by: Matjaz Kacicnik and Francis Dzikowski (from left to right).

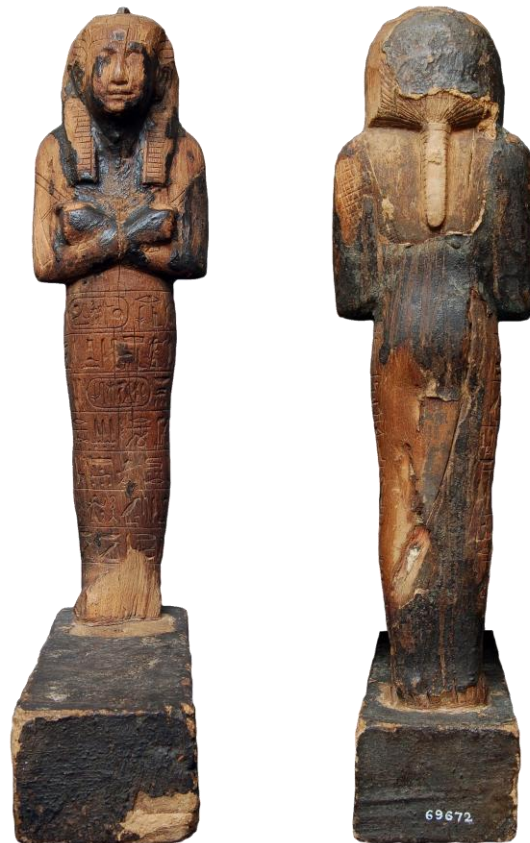


Fig (9): Shabti statue of Ramesses II Repurposed to be a statue of Osiris, EA69672.

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https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA69672 (Last access: 11th of August 2022)

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Abbreviations:

- ASAE* Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Le Caire.
- BSÉG* Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie de Genève, Genève.
- BSAK* Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur Beihefte, Hambourg.
- CASAE* Cahier Supplément aux Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Le Caire.
- JEA* Journal of the Egyptian Archaeology, London.
- JNES* Journal of the Near Eastern Studies, Chicago.
- KRI* Kitchen, Kenneth, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, 6 vols, Oxford: B.H. Blackwell, 1969-1990.
- MMAF* Mémoires Publiés par les Membres de la Mission Archéologique Française, Le Caire.
- MSS* Manuscripts, unpublished notebooks.
- PM* Porter, Bertha and Moss, Rosalind, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings*, 7 vols., Oxford: Griffith institute, 1970-1975
- SAK* Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur, Hambourg.
- Urk IV* Sethe, Kurt, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1906-1907.
- ZÄS* Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, Leipzig – Berlin.

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