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LATE PERIOD PRIVATE TOMBS IN THEBES
(21ST TO 25TH DYNASTIES)
Extract of Master Thesis

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— Late Period Private Tombs in Thebes(21st to 25th Dynasties) —

LATE PERIOD PRIVATE TOMBS IN THEBES (21ST TO 25TH DYNASTIES)

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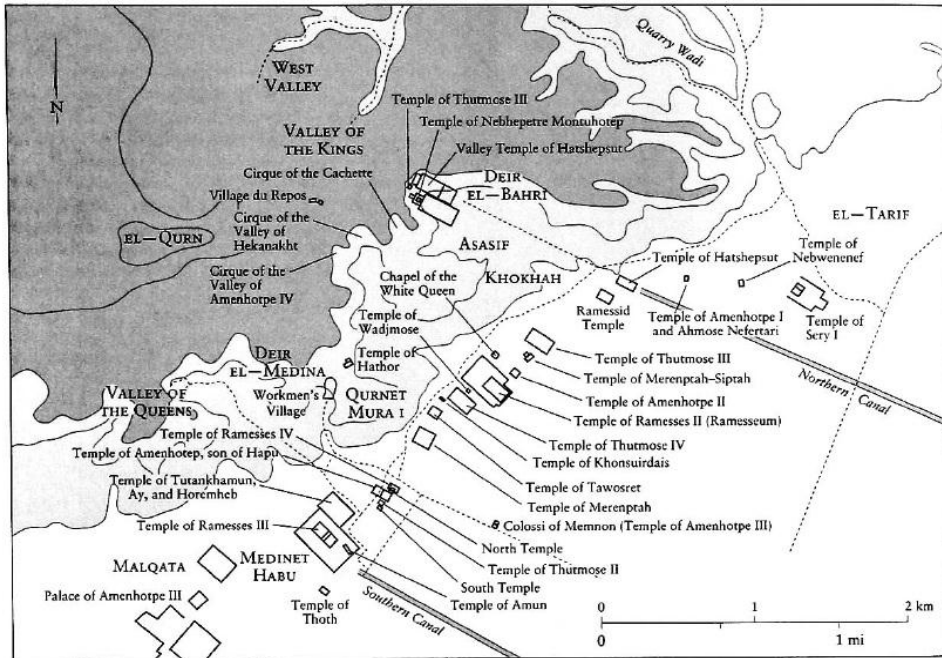
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Introduction

Of all the ancient cities, no other city had reached the glory of Thebes in supremacy. Thebes is the largest and wealthiest archaeological site in the world. It lies approximately seven hundred kilometres south of Cairo, where modern Luxor mainly occupies the East Bank.⁴ Although modern Luxor has overtaken a large amount of the ancient remains of Thebes, the ancient city still shines through its tombs and treasures of Eastern and Western Thebes. On The West Bank, the Theban Necropolis is a rich archaeological site with hundreds of excavated and unexcavated tombs.⁵ Thebes had, and always will, capture a great amount of attention, especially with the colourful artistic styles, scenes, and designs of its tombs. The reliefs and paintings on the walls of the tombs contain important data concerning this great ancient civilization. The UNESCO has listed Thebes in 1979 as a World Heritage Site.

WAsT, Thebes or Luxor are different names given to this same marvellous city at The Ancient Egyptian, Greco-Roman, and Arabic era respectively.⁶

Late Period Private Tombs in Thebes(21st to 25th Dynasties)



General plan of Theban Necropolis

After R. Kent Weeks, Theban Necropolis in: Oxford Encyclopaedia, VIII, 2001.p.382.

Abstract

The paper deals with the late Period cemeteries in Thebes (21st to 25th dynasties). This period is considered a witness of the revival of the most important part of the necropolis. Burials dated to Dynasties 22 and 25 were located in Taref, Dra Abu el-Nga, Deir el-Bahri, el-Asasif, Ramesseum area, the lower enclosure of Sheikh abd el-Gurna, Gurnet Murei, and Medinet Habu. The two most important Necropoleis, el-Asasif and Ramesseum area, are situated in the central part of Thebes-west. These areas are not only distinguished by the high status of persons buried there and the large number of the burials but also by the presence of newly constructed tombs. Tomb construction in the 21st and early 22nd dynasties was actually limited to the transformation of the earlier monuments of multiple burials by adding new shafts, corridors and chambers to the original monuments.

جبانات عصر الانتقال الثالث بجبانة طيبة

ملخص البحث

تناول هذا البحث دراسة جبانات العصر المتأخر فى طيبة الاسرات (٢١ الى ٢٥)، ويعتبر هذا العصر شاهدا على إحياء جزء هام من الجبانة. وانتشرت أماكن الدفن فى الاسرات ٢٢ - ٢٥ فى عدة جبانات مثل: جبانة الطارف، ذراع ابوالنجا، الدير البحرى، العساسيف، منطقة الرامسيوم، والمحيط السفلى من جبانة شيخ عبد القرنة، قرنة مرعى ومدينة هابو.

وتعتبر جبانة العساسيف ومنطقة الرامسيوم من اهم جبانات العصر المتأخر. وما يميز هذه المنطقة ليس فقط الاشخاص اصحاب المناصب العليا ولا عدد المقابر الموجوده من هذا العصر بل أيضا وجود مقابر ذات طراز جديد مختلف.

كما كانت مقابر الاسرات ٢١ و٢٢ عبارة عن إستخدام مقابر ترجع لفترات سابقة وتطويرها بإضافة أبار دفن جديدة وممرات وغرف إضافية. وقد تم العثور على الكثير من الأثاث الجنائزى بهذه الجبانات ومن بينها الأواني الكانوبية التى هى المحور الأساسى للرسالة .

Aim of the study

Giving more light for the burials during the late Period (21th to 25th) in Thebes .It is in the context of the tombs they contain that the canopic jars were found, the corpus of which has been established for this study.

Distribution of the Late Period Cemeteries in Thebes.

After 500 years of glory, the New Kingdom collapsed and Egypt was divided once again during a time referred to as the Third Intermediate Period.⁷ During the Twenty-first Dynasty, the priesthood of Amun reigned at Thebes, although their power was much less than that of the New Kingdom pharaohs. Foreign invasion followed, with the Libyans (Twenty-second Dynasty) and later the Nubians (Twenty-fifth Dynasty) ruling Egypt.⁸

When considering the Theban necropolis during the Third Intermediate Period, one quickly comes to the same realisation as Porter and Moss that ‘the record of excavation at Thebes is one of the most confused pages in the history of Egyptological research.’⁹ During this period, large scale tomb construction had been abandoned in favour of reuse of tombs, including the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings, or even temple spaces.¹⁰ Instead, more emphasis was placed on the decoration of the coffins. Funerary goods often increased, with ushabtis, canopic jars, amulets, papyri and coffin sets.¹¹

Nubian rule in the Twenty-fifth Dynasty saw the emergence of large “temple-tomb” construction, particularly in the areas of the Assasif and South Assasif. This included some of the largest tombs ever built in Egypt, such as those of Padiamenopet (TT 33) and Montuemhat (TT 34).¹² These tombs were elaborately decorated, including with religious texts, such as the *Book of the Dead* and the *Pyramid Texts*. Tomb construction on this scale continued until the end of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, when the influence of Thebes began to fade. From the Twenty-seventh Dynasty onwards, very few new tombs were

constructed at Thebes. Instead, the practice of tomb reuse was rife.¹³

I. THE QUEEN'S VALLEY

This royal and princely necropolis, located south of the west bank, was originally reserved for members of the royal family. It was here that a number of queens and royal children were buried during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth dynasties. Known as *Ta Set Neferou* in antiquity.¹⁴

the Valley of the Queens was explored between 1903 and 1906 by an Italian mission of the Turin Museum, then by a Franco-Egyptian mission from 1983 to 1994 (CNRS/CEDAE). It has not been counted less than 98 tombs, including unordered vaulted shafts and decorated tombs, the latter dating back only to the Ramesside period. It is known that after the looting at the end of the twentieth dynasty, the necropolis was reused during the Third Intermediate Period to the Saito-Persian Period. The graves were reoccupied by members of the Theban clergy, including florists, surveyors, priests, whose remains, sometimes over several generations, occupied the tombs. Canopic jars belonging to these characters were found in the context of the excavations. Some are in the Turin museum.¹⁵ others are kept in the reserves of the Service des Antiquités, in Luxor (Carter Storehouse). As is the case at this time, these containers are pseudo-canopic, that is, they did not contain viscera. This is particularly the case of those limestone found in QV.11 still in place in their wooden box. The character who bore the name of Païryiah seems to have lived around the XXVth Dynasty.¹⁶

In another area of this necropolis, inside the tomb of Queen Tyti (QV.52), a shaft had been dug in the Third Intermediate Period. The vault which still contained some vestiges, in particular delivered two monobloc canopic-vases, anonymous, very frequent also at this time. In QV.53, two polychrome limestone plugs also came from canopic jars, but the

— Late Period Private Tombs in Thebes(21st to 25th Dynasties) —

vases were not found. One represented Hapy with a baboon's head and the other Douamoutef with a jackal's head.



Valley of the Queens. Tomb QV.11. Canopic-jars in limestone of Païryiah. (± XXVth dynasty).

II. THE RAMESSEUM

After the desecration of the temple of Ramesses II, we know that its entire perimeter was reused in a vast priestly necropolis during the Third Intermediate Period. The temple itself, that of Touy-Nefertari, like all the outbuildings in raw earth were colonized by funeral chapels and tombs that were attributed to the clergy of Karnak but also to certain members of the royal families of the time . In the tomb of the divine adorer Karomama of the XXIInd Dynasty, found in the north sanctuary of the small temple of Tuy-Nefertari, come from the canopic jars, bought formerly by R. Lepsius, and today at the Berlin museum. The search of nearly 200 funerary wells by Fl. Petrie, J.-E. Quibell had also found many remains of funerary furniture of that time. When new prospectations were conducted from 1991 by

a Franco-Egyptian team (CNRS-ASR/CEDAE), many tombs were cleared, particularly on the north and west processional routes. Here again, among the remains, there were canopic vases, oushebtis and remains of wooden coffins. Some canopic-jars have reached a perfect state of conservation, others only in a fragmentary state and are

included in the Ramesseum study material at the Carter Storehouse. In a tomb of the northeast economic complex, two limestone canopic jars curiously included polychrome wood stoppers. In another burial, cleared in the southern sector, between the kitchens of the temple, four limestone canopic jars have been discovered, still bearing inscriptions painted in black. They revealed the owner of this tomb: a certain Harsièsis, priest of Amon and unknown son of the first prophet of the "king of the gods", Iouwelot, in office during the XXIInd Dynasty in Karnak.¹⁷



Two canopic-jars in limestone with covers in painted wood discovered in a tomb. XXIIth dynasty. Ramesseum. Sector STH (Northern

annexes)



The discovery of the canopic-jars of Harsiesis, son of the first prophet of Amun Iouwelot. XXIIth dynasty. Ramesseum. Sector STC
(southern annexes).

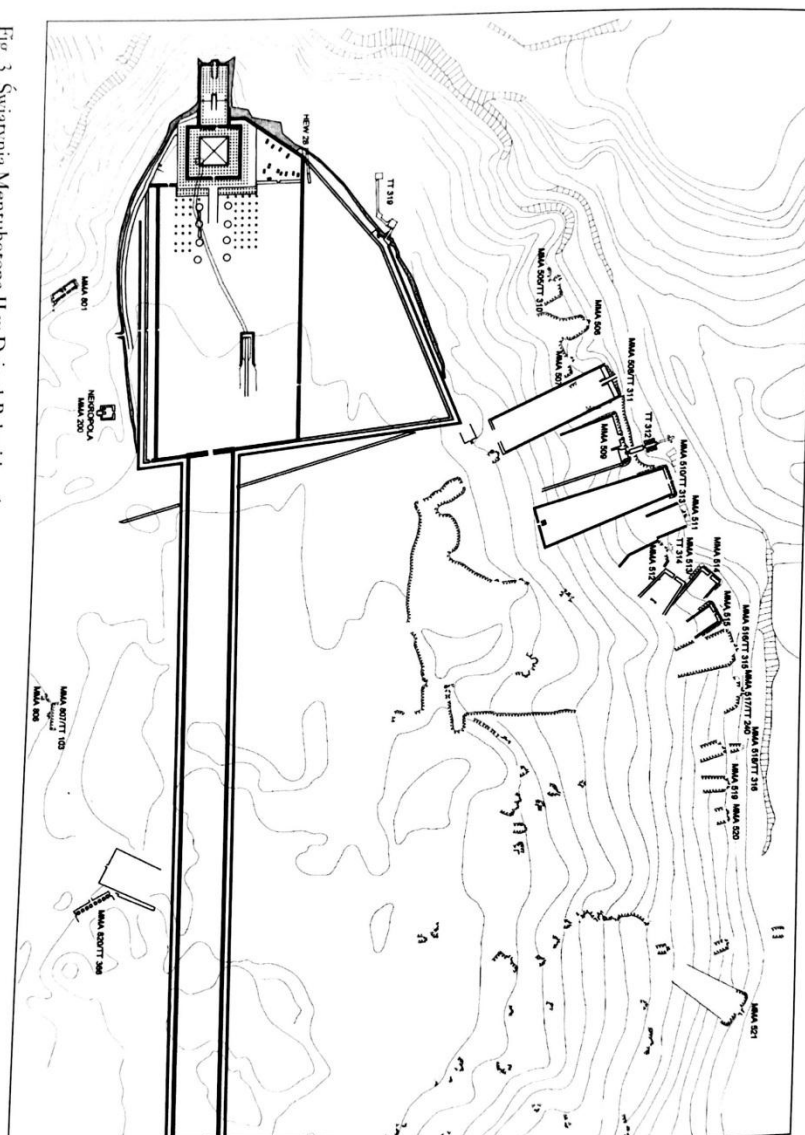
III. THE TEMPLES OF AMENHOTEP II AND THOUTMOSIS III

Recent excavations conducted by the CEFB in the temple of millions of years of Amenhotep II, located north of the Ramesseum, have found 25 tombs dating from the Third Intermediate Period. In some of them, funerary furniture remained, sometimes very partial, but in which were included canopic-jars that were recorded in the corpus of our study¹⁸. These tombs extend the great necropolis that took place at the Ramesseum and constitute an extension of the funerary concessions of that time. On the site of the temple of Thutmosis III, some other tombs were also discovered, one of which still contained a magnificent coffin decorated with mythological scenes.

IV. DEIR EL-BAHARI

The area of Deir el-Bahari has served as a necropolis throughout the history that goes from the Middle Kingdom to the Christian era. It was at the end of the Ramesside period that the looting of the royal necropolises of Western Thebes took place. Following the death of Pinedjem II, the clergy of Amon decided to store many royal mummies in a tomb of Deir el-Bahari, formerly attributed to a princess Inhapi, probably of the XVIIIth dynasty. This "royal cache", located in a valley south of the temple of Hatshepsut, was thus preserved from prying eyes until the end of the nineteenth century, when archaeologists found, in 1881, the mummies of famous pharaohs, such as Amenhotep I, Tuthmosis I, Tuthmosis II, Tuthmosis III, Sethi I, Ramesses II, Ramesses IX, etc... to the high priest Pinedjem II¹⁹. The place of Deir el-Bahari welcomed around the same time the "Second Cache of Deir el-Bahari" (Egyptian *Bab el-Gasous*, the "Door of the Priests"), located north of the lower court of the temple of Queen Hatshepsut. It is an immense collective tomb which sheltered several hundred coffins as well as a multitude of other objects, belonging to the members of the clergy of Amon contemporaries of the XXIth dynasty and their families. This tomb, discovered in 1891, had probably been built around 950 BC. J.-C. in order to gather in a single place, easy to supervise and to protect, the funeral furniture of these priests and priestesses, originally buried in various family tombs of the Theban necropolis.²⁰

Fig. 3. Świątynia Mentuhotepa II w Dair el-Bahari i grobowce na nekropoli Asasif w czasach Średniego Państwa (rys. K. Andraka)
 Fig. 3. The Temple of Mentuhotep II at Dair el-Bahari and tombs at the Asasif necropolis in the Middle Kingdom (drawing K. Andraka)



The temple of Mentuhtep II and the Asasif necropolis in the Middle Kingdom After, P. Chudzik, *Secrets of Egyptian Tombs*, Wrocławski 2016,p17.

Unfortunately, this "hiding place" was emptied in just a few days by the French Egyptologists Georges Daressy, Eugène Grébaut and Urbain Bouriant, without any survey being carried out, nor any precise list of the contents of the corridors. The only contemporary illustrated documents of the discovery are rare engravings published in the press of the time, not very useful for our understanding of the interior arrangement of the "hiding place". If we could count many sarcophagi, nothing is said or recorded on the other hand on other objects of funerary furniture that accompanied the deceased.

In another tomb, that of a certain Tchaouenhuy of the XXIth Dynasty, was found a beautiful receptacle with wooden canopies surmounted by the image of the god Anubis. This element of funerary furniture is now preserved in the Louvre Museum.



Receptacle in painted wood for the canopic-jars of Tchaouenhuy (XXIth dynasty). Louvre Museum.

V. MEDINET HABU

Some tombs of the Third Intermediate Period were also found in the great temple of Ramesses III in Medinet Habu. The most important is that of the high priest of Amon Harsiesis, son of Sheshonq II. He was buried in a granite sarcophagus, whose the cave was that of a former wife of Ramesses II (queen Henoutmirê) who had been buried in the Valley of the Queens (QV.75).²¹

The lid, on the other hand, had a falcon head. This monument is preserved in the garden of Cairo Museum, but we do not know the other elements from his funerary furniture, or even if his tomb included canopic-jars of Harsiesis.

Conclusion

The standard tombs type of this period represented a two-storey construction consisting of a massive typically brickwork, superstructure built on the surface and underground rooms hewn out from the bedrock.

Canopic jars which studied in current thesis were discovered in different sites in the Theban Necropolis. Late period burials were concentrated in a smaller cemeteries, what can be observed on the basis of the origin of individual objects. The most of the jars currently known, were revealed in the Ramesseum 19 jars , Temple of Amenhotep 32 jars, the Valley of the Queens 13 canopic jars were discovered, the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari 12 objects , the Royal Cache TT 320, area of the Medinet Habu complex 12 jars were discovered, Besides 6 jars were found in the the tombs of Asasif, and the area of el-Khokha.

Canopic jars from the Ramesseum area are mostly dated to the Twenty-second Dynasty 15 canopic jars, and few objects 4 canopic jars to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, while in the Temple of Amenhotep II 7 canopic jars are dated to the period from

Twenty-first to Twenty-fifth Dynasty, and up 25 objects to the period from Twenty-second to Twenty-fifth Dynasty.

All the Canopic jars which discovered in the Temple of Amenhotep II are studied for the first time in this thesis.

In the tombs on the area of the Valley of the Queens 6 jars were connected with the Twenty-first Dynasty burials, 2 objects with Twenty-second Dynasty, 4 objects with the Twenty-fifth Dynasty burials, and 1 jar is dated from the Twenty-first to Twenty-second Dynasty.

Most of the group – 8 objects – from the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari area are dated to the Twenty-second Dynasty.

Canopic jars were made from a variety of materials: limestone, Alabaster, terracotta, wood, sandstone and faience.

Mostly of the Canopic jars were discovered in the Theban Necropolis were made of limestone (90 examples).

Many of the canopics discovered in the Theban Necropolis were inscribed. The texts, written in columns, contain the name and title of the owner. In some cases *Htp-di-nsw* formula was written, as well as recitation by Nephthys.

The emergence of a new type of Canopic jars for the first time and it is known by symbolic jars or by dummies, pseudo-canopic jars from the Twenty-first Dynasty.

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