

THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN COFFIN
IN THE SLOVAK NATIONAL MUSEUM:
THE FRAGMENTS NOS. 4, 5 AND 6 OF THE EXTERIOR
SURFACE OF THE LID*
(FIGURES 1–2; PLATES 1–3)

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In this paper I deal with the analysis of the original decoration incompletely preserved on three fragments of the exterior surface of the lid. All three fragments nos. 4, 5 and 6 are situated in the lower part of the mummiform lid of the coffin below the knees. The identification and interpretation of the preserved rests of the original decorative patterns and motifs are presented and discussed here in more details for the first time. The description of vignettes and inscriptions discussed with the comparative material enables us to outline the decorative programme originally used in this part of the coffin which is important for the typological classification of the coffin as well as its dating.

Key words: coffin, lid, vignettes, iconography, inscriptions

All three fragments of the original surface preserved on the lid of the coffin numbered as 4, 5 and 6 have already been briefly mentioned and described in my previous study.¹ They are situated on the frontal side of the legs of the

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¹ In this paper I am going to use the numbering of fragments of the original surface including the registers and inscriptions as suggested in my previous study. See MAGDOLEN, D. The Ancient Egyptian Coffin in the Slovak National Museum: The distribution of registers and inscriptions on the exterior surface. In *Asian and African Studies*, 2014, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 148–149, 202 and Pl. 7.

mummiform shape of the lid below its knees and isolated from each other. All of them are placed in their original position.²

Fragment No. 4 (Pl. 1)

This fragment is the smallest piece of the three fragments discussed in this paper. It is 8 cm wide and 11 cm high. In relation to the vertical axis of the mummiform shape of the lid, its position is on the left side of the lid below the left knee. The fragment is isolated by modern gypsum painted in dark grey from other fragments to the original surface. Its surface is covered by material coming from a treatment undertaken during the restoration works in the 1970s. This fragment of a roughly rectangular shape is practically without any traces of the original decoration. Only very tiny spots of almost microscopical size of yellow can be identified in several places. Its position on the lid indicates that originally at least its part which is closer to the vertical axis of the lid was covered by the decoration consisting of at least one vertical column with hieroglyphic inscriptions belonging to Central Panel 2.³ However, nothing more can be said considering the original surface and its decoration in this part of the lid.

Fragment No. 5 (Fig. 1, Pl. 2)




Details of the decoration comprising of the vignette and inscriptions preserved on this fragment have not been mentioned or discussed before.⁴ The position of this fragment is on the right side of the mummiform lid and below its right knee. As previously mentioned in Fragment No. 4, this one is also isolated from the other originally preserved surfaces of the lid by the dark grey coloured gypsum. As for its recent position in relation to the other fragments we have to rely on the evidence coming from the archive documents belonging to the

² Personal communication, Mojmír Benža. Dr Benža was responsible for the restoration of the coffin in the 1970s.

³ MAGDOLEN, D. The Ancient Egyptian Coffin in the Slovak National Museum: The Distribution of Registers and Inscriptions on the Exterior Surface. In *Asian and African Studies*, 2014, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 145.

⁴ No information related to this part of the coffin can be found in the CAA publication from the 1980s. Cf. VERNER, M. Altägyptische Särge in den Museen und Sammlungen der Tschechoslowakei. *Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum*. Lieferung 1, pp. 11–36.

restoration works in 1970s⁵ as well as the confirmation provided by Mojmir Benža who was responsible for the modern restoration (see above). The fragment vertical in the shape is 13 cm wide and 25 cm high (considering the curvature of the surface). Despite its damages in the form of abrasions, shaded places, missing parts and tiny cracks, the surface contains evident traces of polychromy from the original decoration. It includes hieroglyphic signs and an iconographic depiction as well as the vertical and horizontal geometrical border bands consisting of coloured square blocks and separating particular inscriptions and vignettes depicted on the surface of the lid. The detailed description of particular parts of the preserved decoration starts from the top and continues to the bottom of this fragment.


In the upper part of the fragment one can identify the rest of the columns filled with the hieroglyphic signs belonging to the vertical inscriptions written within each of them. The columns with yellow or yellow-orange⁶ ground were formed by vertical lines painted in blue. The colour of the hieroglyphic signs is black. It is clearly recognisable that on the left side of the upper part of this fragment one can observe the lowermost parts of at least three columns. Approximately in the middle of the upper tapered part of this fragment one can see a dark vertical band running to the bottom. This dark band is very likely the border band consisting of the coloured squares which, however, have darkened in the course of time. Despite this, blue, yellow, green, red/ochre respectively can be identified in its lower half. On the right side of this vertical border band and closer to the vertical axis of the lid, the rests of the yellow with fragments of hieroglyphic signs indicate that another vertical column can be expected here. It is probable that this one originally belonged to the group of long vertical columns with inscriptions marked as the Central Panel 2 in one of my previous studies.⁷ One of the fragments of hieroglyphic signs in this column on the right side has a shape of two slightly curved and horizontally running lines resembling the incomplete uniliteral sign *r* . Immediately above it there is a part of a larger black spot that cannot be identified more precisely. Near to the bottom in the same column, the fragment of a sign indicating *nb*  or *k*  can be observed. It was preceded by another partly preserved horizontal sign on the yellow ground and followed by a small one below in the form of a large dot on the right side. No detailed identification is possible due to the incompleteness of the mentioned signs.


⁵ MAGDOLEN, D. Identification of the restored parts on the exterior surface of the ancient Egyptian coffin in the Slovak National Museum (forthcoming).


⁶ TAYLOR, J. H. Patterns of colouring on ancient Egyptian coffins from the New Kingdom to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty: an overview. In DAVIES, Vivian W. (ed.). *Colour and Painting in Ancient Egypt*, 2001, p. 166.

⁷ See note 3 above.

The lower endings of the three vertical columns with the hieroglyphic signs on the left side of this fragment mentioned above very probably represent the rest of the inscriptions accompanying the vignette originally placed on the right side of the mummiform lid.⁸ Although a few hieroglyphic signs are preserved more or less completely in each of the three mentioned columns, it is very hard to reconstruct particular words of the original text. The remains of at least three hieroglyphic signs on the very top of the first and the longest of the mentioned group of three columns are preserved. The shape of the uppermost of them

would indicate that it could represent the lower ending of the sign . Approximately 3 cm below a tiny vertical line can be seen in the left part of the same column. Its upper ending is broader and oriented to the right side in what

makes the impression probably the sign  as ideogram or determinative may occur there. The shape of the dark lines preserved on the yellow-orange ground in the lowermost part of the first column indicates that they can be identified as

the sign  (A 40) probably being a part of the name of a deity who could have been mentioned here. The sign oriented to the vertical axis of the lid could be at the same time further evidence that the original text was written from right to left. Unfortunately, microscopic fragments of other signs occurring in the middle part of the first column cannot be recognised more accurately. Some pieces of hardly visible signs can be observed at the bottom of the second column. One of them was probably a horizontal sign preceded by a small one placed approximately in the middle of the column. A group of more legible signs are preserved in the third column at its bottom. The signs transcribed as






were a part of an inscription written again from the right to the left. The first two signs the uppermost parts of which are missing are biliteral signs for *sn* and *nw* and the rest represents three uniliteral signs *t*, *n* and *r* respectively. Writing of the first three signs indicates that they belong to one word. The incompleteness of the inscription, however, does not allow the determination of the meaning of this group of signs. Interpretation of the other following signs is uncertain. One of the explanations could be that the first three signs forming a feminine noun may have been followed by an indirect genitive *n* (instead of *nt*) and the beginning of another word starting with *r*. The surface next to the

⁸ For example, see GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1. Pls. XV, XVII, XXIII.


third column and closer to the left edge of this fragment covered by pieces of yellow/orange, white and black is hard to be decoded. One interpretation of the mix of these colours could be that the pieces of small dark and bright colours belong to the squares of the vertical border band dividing the vignette and the inscription. However, a more detailed view using a magnifying lense reveals a short vertical line of dark colour at the very bottom behind the left vertical line of the third column. It seems that this short dark line might be interpreted as a stroke produced by ink and as a sign belonging to an inscription. In that case the short black horizontal line situated above would not be a part of the border band but the right side of another hieroglyphic sign preserved incompletely. If such an interpretation is correct, the number of incompletely preserved columns in this part of the Fragment No. 5 would be not three, but four.⁹

Below the lower parts of the columns the remains of hieroglyphic signs with a border band running horizontally can be seen with blue, red/ochre, green and yellow coloured squares. It seems that its edge on the right side touched the vertical border band described above (see also figure 1 below) as can be deduced from the presence of a vertically oriented green square belonging to the mentioned vertical border band (see Pl. 2).

Immediately below the horizontal border band a yellow row filled with the inscription consisting of at least six legible hieroglyphic signs painted in black ink is preserved. The orientation of asymmetrical signs attests that the inscription was written from right to left. The row with text started directly in front of the green square belonging to the vertical border band mentioned above. The beginning of the inscription is not preserved, but the space between the edge of the mentioned green square and the first hieroglyphic signs written one above the other despite their incompleteness indicates that a few of the hieroglyphs could fit into this damaged place. The spacing between the legible signs and their size allows us to consider some of the horizontal or large signs perhaps in combination with other smaller or vertical ones (see below). The

preserved and legible signs can be transcribed as  and transliterated as ... *n Wsir mb...* . The distance measured from the left edge of the vertical border band to the edges of the incomplete signs  and  is


⁹ The vignettes usually depicted vertically along the axis of the coffins on both sides are accompanied by a various number of columns with hieroglyphic inscriptions. The number of columns can be the same for the vignettes depicted in all rows on both sides of the coffin or it can vary (more columns depicted in the upper row of the lid and less in the lower ones. Cf. BIETAK, M. Theben-West (Luqsor). Vorberichtung über die ersten vier Grabungskampagnen (1969 – 1971), Taf. XX and GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1, Pl. XVII.

ca 2,5 cm and it is enough for the occurrence of one large sign or vertical and small signs or a group of signs of this kind combined together. It seems that this suggestion could also be supported by the study of analogies reflecting the layout of vignettes and inscriptions and their distribution on the surface of the inner coffins of this type. The decoration occurring on this kind of coffin reveals that horizontal inscriptions in this part of the lid can be introduced by the phrase *dd mdw in*.¹⁰ If so, it would mean that from this phrase only the sign  has been preserved incompletely in this line. In that case, the three signs






in the phrase *dd mdw in* would be illegible,¹¹ however, all of them fit perfectly into the dark place.¹² If this interpretation of the damaged part of the inscription is correct, the beginning of the text can be reconstructed as





[dd mdw i]n Wsir Mb... Its translation would be as follows “The words spoken by Osiris N ...”. The signs following the name of the god Osiris determined by the sign ¹³ might belong to the beginning of a


¹⁰ For example, see TAYLOR, J. H. Patterns of colouring on ancient Egyptian coffins from the New Kingdom to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty: an overview. In DAVIES, Vivian W. (ed.). *Colour and Painting in Ancient Egypt*, 2001, Pl. 55/1.


¹¹ For this way of writing of the words *dd mdw in Wsir* in which the sign  is written

separately and the sign  is written above the sign  in the name of Osiris, see GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 2, pp. 339, 396, 398; MORET, M. A. Sarcophages de l’époque bubastite à l’époque saïte. *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*, Nos. 41001–41041. Tome 1, p. 133 and 137; *Ibid.*, p. 171 and 176; JANSEN-WINKELN, K. Inschriften der Spätzeit. Teil 3 (Die 25. Dynastie), p. 520; BETTUM, A. Dismutenibtes and Aaiu. Two 25th Dynasty Coffins in Oslo, In *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur*, 2010, Band 39, p. 55, Taf. 9a; TAYLOR, J. H. *Ancient Egyptian Book of Dead: Journey through the Afterlife*, p. 176.

¹² Using a magnifying lense it is possible to identify one darker short line running horizontally in the upper part of the row and another short one oriented vertically on the right side close to the vertical border band where the beginning of this inscription can be


expected. The shapes of these short lines correspond to the signs  and  forming the beginning of the mentioned introducing formula.

¹³ To the orthography of the name of Osiris and the importance of the sign  occurring in his name for the dating of written records of the Third Intermediate Period, see

personal name. Personal names starting with the sign  occur in the inscriptions written on the interior surface of the lid and trough as well as on the exterior surface of the latter.¹⁴

Below the line with the foregoing inscription discussed above another horizontal border band is depicted. Its characteristics can be compared with those describing the border band mentioned above.

In the central part of Fragment No. 5 one small vignette is depicted. It is framed by the border bands depicted on all four sides. It seems that the lower horizontal border band stretches through the whole width of the fragment from one edge to the other. The background of the vignette which is square in shape was painted in yellow. Despite the damages occurring to the surface the original motif can be identified. It has a form of the *wḏ3t* eye and is mentioned as Register L briefly presented in one of the first papers.¹⁵ The shape and

orientation of this asymmetric hieroglyphic sign () reflects its position on the right side of the central axis of the lid. It seems that no other decorative pattern is possible to identify within this vignette except the mentioned depiction.¹⁶ The size of the square in which the *wḏ3t* eye is depicted is 6 x 5 cm (length x height). All the parts of the *wḏ3t* eye are painted in black, but the surface between the eyebrow and the eye lid is filled with red/ochre. On the left side of Fragment No. 5 one can see a short column with the damaged hieroglyphic inscription painted in black on the yellow background behind the

LEATHY, A. The name of Osiris written . In *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur*, Band 7, 1979, pp. 141–149.

¹⁴ VERNER, M. Altägyptische Särge in den Museen und Sammlungen der Tschechoslowakei. *Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum*. Lieferung 1, pp. 13, 20–23, 25–27.

¹⁵ MAGDOLEN, D. The Ancient Egyptian Coffin in the Slovak National Museum: The distribution of registers and inscriptions on the exterior surface. In *Asian and African Studies*, 2014, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 149, Pl. 8.

¹⁶ For example, the analogous evidence can be observed on the inner coffins of Amenhotepiyin and Ptahirdis. See MANLEY, B., DODSON, A. *Life Everlasting*. National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins, pp. 85, 88. However, the vignette with the *wḏ3t* eye can include some other motifs. For example, on the inner coffin of Kheriru the *wḏ3t* eye is depicted above the *nb* basket. See BIETAK, M. *Theben-West (Luqsor). Vorberichtung über die ersten vier Grabungskampagnen (1969 – 1971)*, Taf. XX; See also *The Coffins of Iyhat and Tairy: a tale of two cities*. In *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 2008, Vol. 94, 2008, pp. 128–129, figs. 11–12.

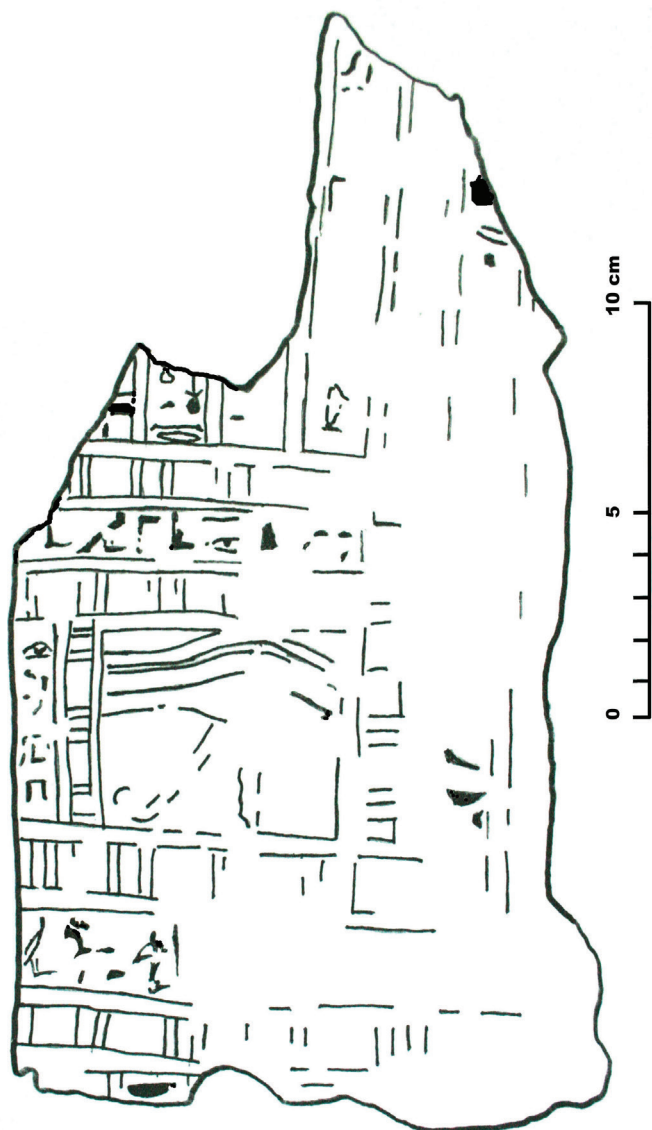










Figure 1: The vignette with the wedjat eye and the fragments of hieroglyphic inscriptions written in columns and lines preserved on the Fragment No. 5 (Drawing by D. Magdolen).





vertical border band of the vignette. The inscription is not clear and its particular signs are hard to be recognised here, however, the first sign on the top


and the last one at the bottom resemble  *ir* and  *pr* respectively. Both signs occur in the texts accompanying the scene with the *wd3t* eyes depicted in the lower parts of this type of coffins.¹⁷ One further column or more could follow in direction closer to the right edge of the mummiform lid.

Below the vignette with the *wd3t* eye another horizontal line with hieroglyphic inscription is recognised. From the upper and lower sides it is framed by the horizontal border bands. The line originally painted in yellow stretches from one edge of the fragment to the other as can be deduced from traces of yellow occurring in this row. The presence of asymmetrical hieroglyphic signs oriented to the right in this line reveals that the inscription described as Horizontal Inscription 3 in the previous study¹⁸ was written from right to left. The last sign


preserved in this line can be identified as a bird, probably *m*  (or *w*  ?). Immediately in front of it one can see a group of several signs painted one

above the other. The upper sign can be transcribed very likely as  (F 4). Despite the damage to the surface below the further smaller signs could be identified as  (Z 1) or  (Z 4), and  (X 1). This group of signs forms one

word which could be reconstructed as   *h3t* or   *h3ty*.¹⁹ Further to the right side of the fragment, traces of a large sign can be seen. Its shape indicates

that it could be a human figure  (A 1). A tiny vertical line clearly visible in front of the mentioned sign further to the right was probably a part of another large sign. Due to the damage of this part of the fragment no other details can be provided concerning this inscription.

Below the line with the hieroglyphic signs mentioned above the horizontal border band running from one edge of the fragment to the other is depicted.

The lowmost part of Fragment No. 5 contains the remains of the blue vertical lines with one hieroglyphic sign preserved and painted in black on the yellow background. The sign could probably represent the hieroglyph  *nb*. These remains are certainly the upper part of columns with inscriptions continuing down and related to the columns with text occurring in the upper part of Fragment No. 6 (see below).

Numerous coffins of this type used as a comparative material in the study of the coffin in Bratislava attest that some vignettes including those with the *wd3t*

¹⁷ Cf. ELIAS, J. Coffin Inscription in Egypt after the New Kingdom: A Study of Text Production and Use in Elite Mortuary Preparation. PhD. thesis, pp. 589–590.

¹⁸ See note 15 above.

¹⁹ To the meaning and use of both words see HANNIG, R. Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch, pp. 537–541.

eye with accompanying inscriptions depicted on the exterior surface of the lid were distributed symmetrically along the vertical axis of the coffin. This fact enables us to conclude that the motif of the *wḏbt* eye also originally occurred on the opposite side of the lid, where, however, no piece of original surface was preserved.

Fragment No. 6 (Fig. 2, Pl. 3)

This fragment of the original exterior surface with polychrome decoration is the lowermost one on the mummiform lid of the coffin. Its horizontal dimension (41 cm) considering the curvature of the surface is bigger than its height (14 cm), however, it does not reach the very edges of the lid on its lateral sides. In fact, only the frontal side of the original surface covering the foot part of the lid was preserved. We can observe a long deep crack running horizontally across the central part of this fragment. The damaged surface itself comprises of polychrome, however, abraded, scratchy and smudgy decoration. The dominant motif depicted here consists of the large figure of an anthropoid deity (9 cm high) and the accompanying hieroglyphic inscriptions, both damaged and incompletely preserved.

In fact, the picture of the anthropoid deity is preserved incompletely, however, its description is possible. The uppermost part of the head and both edges of the scene on the lateral sides are missing. This figure can be described as a deity seated on its own right leg with the knee depicted downwards while the left one is oriented upwards. This divine figure is depicted above the *nbw*-sign painted in red and blue. In the lower part of this sign one can see 11 beads depicted hanging down. The body of the figure is oriented to the right with the winged hands outstretched on both sides. Just the lower half of the figure's head is shown. The picture is smudgy and the details are not clear. The face together with the rest of the naked parts of the body (neck, hands, breast, leg, foot) are green.²⁰ The black spot on the left side of the head certainly represents the hair of the deity. In the upper part a little red dot can be observed next to the left edge of the black hair what could be the lower ending of the headband originally depicted in the hair of the figure.²¹ Another black spot of the same size as the left one occurring immediately on the right side of the head,

²⁰ According to Verner the colour of the figure's body is red. This colour, however, relates to the clothing of the figure only and not to the naked skin. Cf. VERNER, M. *Altägyptische Särge in den Museen und Sammlungen der Tschechoslowakei. Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum. Lieferung 1*, p. 14.

²¹ Cf. MANLEY, B., DODSON, A. *Life Everlasting National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins*, p. 79.

however, makes the effect that the hair is depicted on this side too, in other words, the hair seems to appear on both sides of the head. If so, the face of the deity would not be oriented to the right, but depicted *en face*. However, it sounds improbable that the head of the deity painted on this part of the coffin would have been depicted in this way.²² According to the author of the restoration works, the original decoration occurring on this part of the lid was neither renewed nor repainted.²³ It seems that some other explanation must exist how to interpret the black spot on the right side of the head. A detailed view on this picture allows us to see damages to the surface in the form of small abrasions and little cracks. Some of these damages occurring on the surface of the coffin can be of modern origin and caused by careless manipulation with the coffin. The black spot on the right side of the head could belong to this category. Moreover, a slightly more transparent tone of the colour of this black spot on the right side of the head compared with that on the left side might indicate its recent date and origin too. It can be explained as an accidental result of the treatment during or after the restoration works. The upper edge of the fragment with the scene touches the modern surface made by gypsum and painted in dark grey. The contact of the fragment with the repaired wet surface could cause little drop(s) to trickle down and penetrate into the upper part of the original decoration on this place causing the darker spot to appear here. The shape of the preserved part of the neck below the head reveals that it is slightly inclined to the right side which is another important detail and confirmation that the whole figure together with the face was oriented to the right.²⁴ The hands of the deity are ended with the fist holding a small single feather in each of both (see below). The right hand of the figure is 9 cm long. Despite some damages in the depiction it seems that the hand at least behind the fist was decorated by a bracelet. The depiction of the outstretched wings is complex and it consists of

²² It should be noted that *en face* depictions of deities really occur in the decoration of the inner coffins, however, mostly on the interior sides of the coffins. See TAYLOR, J. H. *Egyptian Coffins*. *Shire Egyptology* 11, p. 52, fig. 41; IKRAM, S., DODSON, A. *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt. Equipping the dead for eternity*, p. 237, fig. 315; TAYLOR, J. H. *Theban coffins from the Twenty-second to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty: dating and synthesis of development*. In STRUDWICK, Nigel, TAYLOR, John H. (eds.). *The Theban Necropolis. Past, Present and Future*, 2003, Pl. 58.

²³ Personal communication, Mojmir Benža. Some other places of the coffin, however, reveal traces of modifications and changes made to the original decoration. See, MAGDOLEN, D. *Identification of the restored parts on the exterior surface of the ancient Egyptian coffin in the Slovak National Museum* (forthcoming).

²⁴ In some cases the figure of a deity can be depicted with the body oriented to the one side, however, the head is oriented backwards. Cf. MANLEY, B., DODSON, A. *Life Everlasting. National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins*, p. 85.

three or four rows divided by four horizontal lines. Three of them on each side are depicted in red and they are broader. The uppermost dividing line is thin and black. The first row from above has the form of a plumage painted in black and arranged in four lines on a yellow background. The second row is narrower and it depicts short feathers in the form of simple short lines. Their colour is blue (closer to the body) and yellow (from the elbow to the fist). The third and fourth rows consist of longer feathers depicted as lines painted in green (the third row) and blue (the fourth row). The body of the divine figure is dressed in long red clothing²⁵ with two straps clearly depicted on the breast and shoulders in the upper part of the body which is typical for Egyptian women. Immediately on the right side of the right strap one can evidently see a picture of a naked female breast depicted in green. So, the iconography of the depicted deity described above leads to the conclusion that the figure on this fragment certainly represents a female goddess. This conclusion would also be supported by the grammatical analysis of the text written below the picture of this figure (see below).

The remains of the inscriptions occurring on this fragment can be found above and below the central picture of the goddess. Hieroglyphic text was written on yellow background with black ink. Inscriptions are arranged in columns made

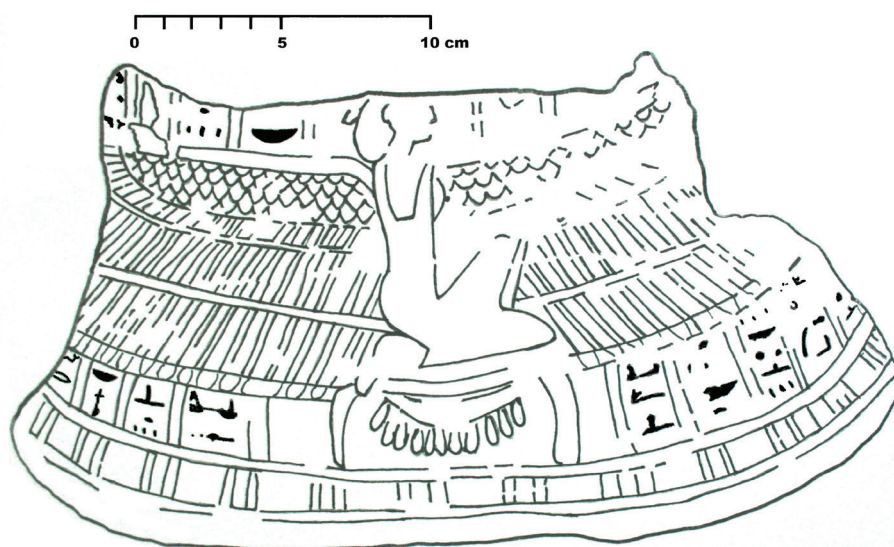




Figure 2: Female deity and accompanying fragments of the inscriptions written in columns on Fragment No. 6 (Drawing by D. Magdolen).

²⁵ See note 20 above.


by short blue vertical lines above the hands and below the wings of the figure on both sides of the fragment.

Above the right hand of the figure one can recognise the lower parts of four columns. The lower parts of these columns with preserved hieroglyphic texts written within can be surely related to the upper parts of the columns with texts described in Fragment No. 5 and depicted in its lowermost part. The distance between the lower horizontal line of the lower border band preserved on Fragment No. 5 and the upper edge of the right hand of the figure depicted on Fragment No. 6 varies between 5–7 cm. In the first column on the right side the *nb*-sign can be seen. Very little spots of black in the second column are abraded. Perhaps the combination of two signs (X1) and (Z2) written one above the other

in the form of  can be suggested. A vertical dark short line depicted in the lower part of the third column very likely does not belong to the inscription originally written in this column. On the basis of analogies this short vertical line visible immediately above the fist of the right hand can be interpreted as the




feather of the goddess Maat  going up from the hand of the figure. For example, the scene with such a depiction can be found on the lid of the coffin of Padiamun,²⁶ Kheriru,²⁷ Nesmutperu,²⁸ Besenmut,²⁹ or Tesmutperu³⁰ and a

²⁶ GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1, Pl. XXI and GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 2, pp. 297–323; RANKE, H. Die ägyptischen Personennamen. Band 1, p. 121; It should be noted that the female deity is not always depicted in this part of the lid

holding the feather of Maat. For example, she can be depicted holding the sign  in both hands (see TAYLOR, J. H. Patterns of colouring on ancient Egyptian coffins from the New Kingdom to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty: an overview. In DAVIES, V. W. (Ed.). *Colour and Painting in Ancient Egypt*, 2001, Pl. 55/1) or without any object (see MANLEY, B., DODSON, A. Life Everlasting National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins, p. 79; VERNER, M. Altägyptische Särge in den Museen und Sammlungen der Tschechoslowakei. Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum. Lieferung 1, p. 315.

²⁷ BIETAK, M. Theben-West (Luqsor). Vorberichtung über die ersten vier Grabungskampagnen (1969 – 1971), Taf. 20.

²⁸ GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1, Pl. XV and GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 2, pp. 220–240; RANKE, H. Die ägyptischen Personennamen. Band 1, p. 121.

number of others. Four small black spots are preserved in a little remain of the fourth column observable on the very edge of the left side of this fragment. Two of them can be seen in the uppermost part of the preserved column, however, the damage does not enable more precise identification. The other two are written immediately in front of the fist of the right hand and they are arranged one behind the other. They are damaged too. The shape of both signs resemble to the heads of a bird (duck) and a mammal (ox) corresponding to the signs  (H1) and  (F63) or  (F1) respectively. Both of these signs as ideograms for *k3* and *3pd* “cattle” and “fowl”³¹ are conventionally included in the offering formula.³² Their occurrence is attested in the inscriptions written in the lower parts of the coffins where the scene with the goddess Isis occurs.³³

Above the left hand of the figure, in fact, no relevant fragments of columns or hieroglyphic signs can be seen.

Below the right wing the remains of four columns are preserved with hieroglyphical inscription written from right to left. The beginning of the text can be transcribed,³⁴ transliterated and translated as follows:



di.s ḥtpt nb(t) nfr(t).....

“She may give all the offerings good.....”.

²⁹See http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=124390&partId=1 [cit. 26. May 2016]; TAYLOR, J. H. *Book of the Dead: Journey through the Afterlife*, p. 74.

³⁰ SCHMIDT, V. *Sarkofager, mumiekister, og mumiehylstre i det gamle Ægypten. Typologisk Atlas*, p. 194 /1089.

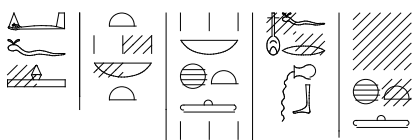
³¹ ALLEN, J. P. *Egyptian Grammar. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, pp. 373–375.

³² The sign F 63 can be used as a variant of F 1 in the offering formula, see ALLEN, J. P. *Egyptian Grammar. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, p. 476.

³³ Cf. GAUTHIER, M. H. *Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1, Pls. XVII, XXII and GAUTHIER, M. H. Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 2, p. 251 and 338.*






³⁴ Cf. VERNER, M. *Altägyptische Särge in den Museen und Sammlungen der Tschechoslowakei. Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum. Lieferung 1*, p. 19.





On the right side of the fragment below the left wing of the figure five columns are depicted. The hieroglyphical text is written from left to right and its beginning can be transcribed,³⁵ transliterated and translated as follows:




di.f [sic] *htpt nbt ht nb(t) nfr(t) w^cb(t)...* *h[t].....*

“He may give all the offerings and every good and pure thing... thing.....”.

The missing part of the text between the signs  and  at the beginning of the fifth column can be filled with at least one further hieroglyphic sign. It could certainly be the sign  (N35a) as the determinative of the word   *w^cb*

“pure”. Theoretically the sign  could have been followed by the *t*-sign. The space is big enough to contain also some other hieroglyphic sign(s), for example  *nb* as demonstrated by the presence of this word occurring in the third column of the same text. The missing part of the text on the right side of the sign  can be filled with the sign  *t* considering its meaning as shown above.

The occurrence of the sign  at the beginning of the inscription on the right side of this fragment in the word *di.f* deserves a little more attention here. The inscription written on the opposite side of the fragment starts with *di.s* and it is clearly related to the picture of the goddess in the described scene. The suffix *.s* is the personal pronoun and as such it indicates the gender, number and person. It is the feminine singular of the 3rd person (3fs). The suffix *.f* in the same phrase below the left wing of the figure on the opposite side, however, indicates the masculine singular of the 3rd person (3ms). Although the inscriptions on both sides of the picture are incomplete, there can be two possible explanations for the occurrence and use of the two different personal pronouns in the mentioned inscriptions. First, the occurrence of the 3ms personal pronoun in the word *di.f* can be interpreted as a mistake made by the ancient scribe and the correct version of the text should have been *di.s*. Second, the version *di.f* is not a mistake. If so, in that case the 3ms of the personal pronoun evidently does not relate to the female figure. While the former explanation would remain without convincing evidence, the latter one can be attested from written records and iconography occurring on this type of coffin. There are examples showing that the lower part of the lid of these coffins were

³⁵ Ibid., p. 19.

decorated by the picture of the goddess Isis with accompanying inscriptions written in columns or lines. Some of these inscriptions with the offering formula are related to the mentioned goddess, but some mention the god Osiris, the god of the dead and the divine consort of Isis. For example, on the coffin of Taditamun³⁶ the scene with the figure of Isis is decorated by the inscription starting with the offering formula *h̄tp-di-nsw Wsir*.³⁷..... “A royal offering of Osiris.....”. The beginning of the other inscription written above the picture of Isis on the lid of the coffin of Nakhtbastetru³⁸ has the form *ḏd mdw in Wsir*... “Words spoken by Osiris.....”. The surface of the lower part of the coffin of Amenhotepiyin³⁹ is decorated by the inscription on its frontal side. The text contains the variant of the offering formula including the list of invocation offerings addressed to the deceased identified with Osiris. The inscription written in four columns starts *ḏd mdw in Wsir h̄nt(j) imnt(jw) n̄tr ʿ3 nb ʿbdw di.f prt-hrw t h̄nkt k3w 3pdw*..... “ Words spoken by Osiris, Foremost of Westerners, the Great God, Lord of Abydos. He gives an invocation offerings of bread and beer, cattle and fowl.....”, The coffin of Wedjarenes⁴⁰ provides evidence of the inscriptions accompanying the goddess Isis in which two texts start in the form of *ḏd mdw in 3st nb(t) pt*..... “Words spoken by Isis, the lady of the sky.....” but they continue in both cases with the words *di.f*..... “He gives.....”. The explanation of the occurrence of the personal pronoun in the form of the 3ms can be that both texts mentioned above refer to the god Osiris. If this explanation is correct, the inscription below the right winged hand of the female figure on Fragment No. 6 would refer to the goddess Isis and the inscription below the left winged hand would refer to the god Osiris. Both of them played

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 124, 118, 140, 151, 157.

³⁷ The name of Osiris can be transliterated in the form of *Wsir*, *3sir* or *Jsjr*, from which the former represents the older version. See GARDINER, A. H. *Egyptian Grammar*, p. 170; COLLIER, M., MANLEY, B. *How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphs*, p. 151; ALLEN, J. P. *Egyptian Grammar. An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, pp. 55, 176, 373–375.

³⁸ GAUTHIER, M. H. *Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1, Pl. XII* and GAUTHIER, M. H. *Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 2, p. 183–184*; RANKE, H. *Die ägyptischen Personennamen. Band 1*, p. 210.

³⁹ MANLEY, B., DODSON, A. *Life Everlasting National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins*, p. 85.

⁴⁰ GAUTHIER, M. H. *Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 1, Pl. XVII* and GAUTHIER, M. H. *Cercueils anthropoïdes des prêtres du Montou. Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 410042–41072. Tome 2, p. 251*; RANKE, H. *Die ägyptischen Personennamen. Band 1*, p. 88.

a key role in the myth of ancient Egyptians describing the death and rebirth and their images, symbols, names and inscriptions richly decorated the inner and outer surfaces of the coffins.

Verner identifies the winged goddess incompletely depicted above the *nw*-sign on Fragment No. 6 with the goddess Nut.⁴¹ However, there are neither identification marks preserved on the female deity's picture⁴² nor in the text of the accompanying inscriptions supporting this view. Both, the picture and the inscriptions are incomplete. The missing data, however, does not exclude an alternative interpretation of the incompletely preserved depiction of the female figure on Fragment No. 6 of the lid. On the basis of the analysis of the preserved data and the study of existing analogies and comparative material including the textual and iconographic evidences mentioned and presented above we can conclude that the female deity depicted in this part of the lid can be identified as the goddess Isis.


The lowermost part of Fragment No. 6 is decorated by the border band running along the whole edge from one side to the other.

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⁴¹ VERNER, M. Altägyptische Särge in den Museen und Sammlungen der Tschechoslowakei. *Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum*. Lieferung 1, p. 12 and 14.

⁴² The deities are usually identifiable by their symbol depicted over the head.

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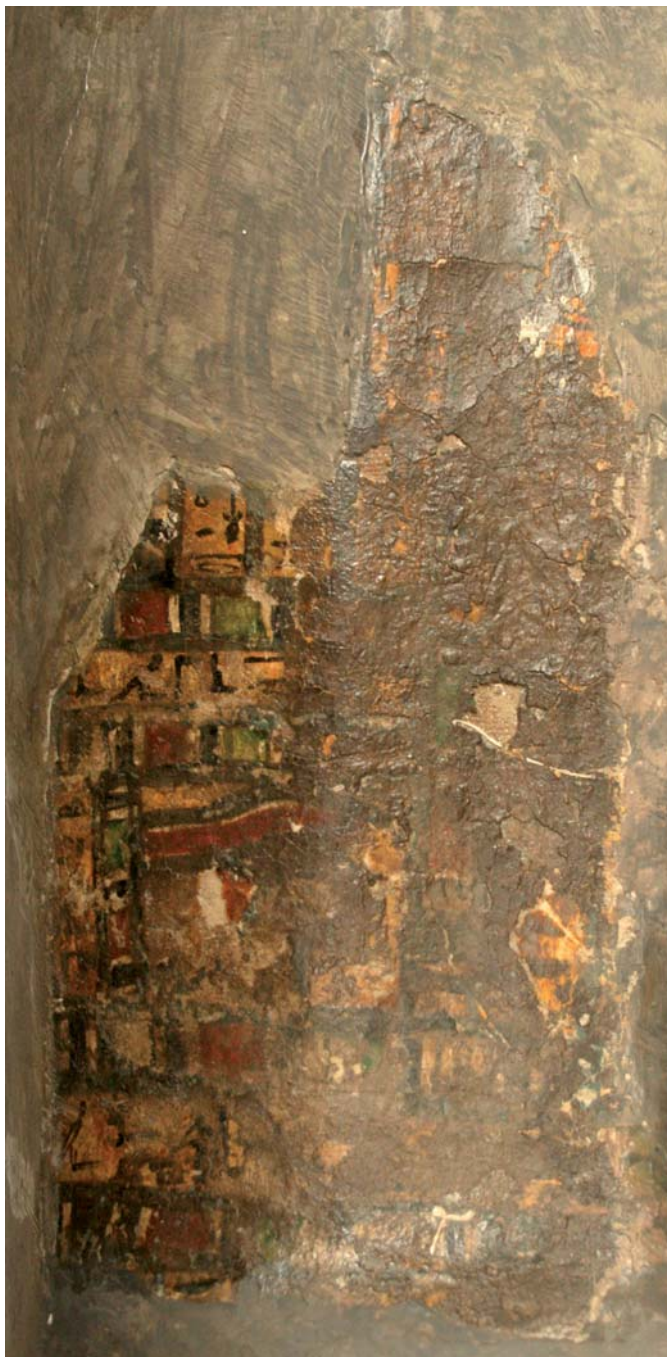
PLATES





MAGDOLEN, Pl. 1. Fragment No. 4. (Photo by D. Magdolen)





MAGDOLEN, Pl. 2. Fragment No. 5. (Photo by D. Magdolen)



MAGDOLEN, Pl. 3. Fragment No. 6. (Photo by D. Magdolen)

