

## Original article

# STUDYING THREE FRAGMENTS OF THE ANTHROPOID COFFIN OF ANKHPAKHERED

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#### Abstract:

In year 2003, some fragments of a wooden anthropoid coffin were confiscated by the Egyptian police together with some other objects. The absence of any royal name made their dating challenging. The main goal of this paper is to try to date these fragments, define their provenance, understanding the vignettes and texts inscribed on them, making a paleographical study in addition to a trial of the reconstruction of the whole coffin. It was difficult to put these fragments in their precise dating and provenance, but comparing their decorative regime to other coffins made it possible.

## 1. Introduction

The present wooden fragments were once parts of the lid and side wall of a painted anthropoid wooden coffin that were confiscated by the Egyptian police authority under the case number 804, for the year 2003. They are now preserved in Dahshur antiquities magazines, hall 7, accession number 435. Since being kept in the area antiquities magazines, in addition to the absence of any cartouche defining their era or province, it needed big effort to put them in their right dating and to find out their province. After the examination of these fragments, it is clear that they form parts of a coffin for a man named Ankhpakhered who is a son of a man called Hory and a woman named Iah-tayes-nakht-es.

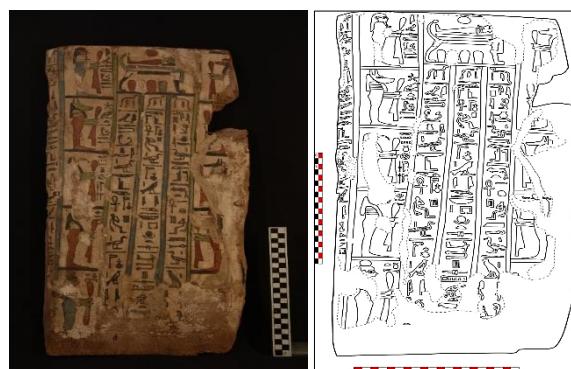
## 2. Methodological Study

### 2.1. Description


The main fragments, which measure 64.5×32 and 34×21 cm, are decorated with polychrome varnished scenes and painted black texts on a yellow background [1,2]. Small figures of protective deities adorn both sides of the lid. Close examination of the fragments shows that gesso was applied to the bare wood to even out the surface and prepare it for painting. The gesso is only visible in very few areas, where there is loss in the paint, exposing the gesso and, often the wood itself. Above the gesso, the entire surface of the coffin was painted light yellow as the general background color. The first fragment occupies section one, fig. (1-a) which is a part of the coffin's

case, is decorated with three vertical tableaux; the middle one is divided into two, fig. (1-b & c).

3	A	1	F
	B		G
	C	2	H
	D		I
	E		J



**Figure (1)** a. distribution of the Scenes and Texts, b. & c. the case board (Drawing: Mona Abady)





These registers are: 1) The upper register contains a mummification bier in the form of a lion . The animal's tail is colored in green, while its body and legs are partly painted in black and white. On the bed, lies the mummified Osiris with the face in green color and a divine beard, large collar and red-painted body. The deity, lying on a blue mattress, is surmounted by a red sun disk. The four visceral jars beneath the bed are painted, from left to right, in red, (chiseled color), red and blue. 2) Below this register are three columns of hieroglyphs separated by thick blue lines:




## 2.2. Textual study

ḏd-mdw in Wsir wdpw-ntr ḥnh-p3-hrd s3 n wdpw-ntr, Hry ir(w) n nb(t) pr iḥ-t3y.s-nht.s psš mwt.k [Nwt hr.k m rn.s] pf n št3 dit.s rn.k m ntr nn hftyw ḏd mdw in Imst ink s3.k Wsir wdpw-ntr ḥnh-p3-hrd s3 n wdpw-ntr Hry ..... nb 3bdw iḥ-t3y.s-nht.s ḏd-mdw in Hpy ink s3.k Wsir hry-h3t ḥnh-p3-hrd m3ḥ-hrw s3 n Hry .... wnn(.i) m s3.k dt ḥh.

1) Words (to be) recited by Osiris, the butler of the god, Ankhpakhered, son of, the butler of the god, Hory, born of lady of the house, Iah-tayes-nakht-es; your mother, (Nut spreads over you in her name) the mysterious one, she allows your name (to exist) as a god without enemies (2) Words (to be) recited by Imsety; I am your son, Osiris, the butler of the god, Ankhpakhered, son of the butler of the god, Hory //... Lord of Abydos, Iah-tayes-nakht-es, (3) Words (to be) recited by Hapi; I am your son Osiris, who is upon (responsible for) the body (chief of corpse), Ankhpakhered, justified, son of Hory [3], .... I will exist in your company forever and ever.



The decoration of the main fragment provides basic details, containing single figures with inscriptions acting as labels. Each side of the central part of the lid is divided into five compartments respectively, containing one of the protective deities. The five compartments on the left side represent, from top to bottom, the gods: **a)** a human-headed bearded Imsety  'Imsty m3ḥ hrw "Imsty, justified" with red face, green hands and a light blue body; **b)** a jackal-headed Duamutef  Dw3-mwt.f m3ḥ hrw, Duamutef, justified" shown in red body, green face and hands; **c)** an ibis-headed, Thoth in a damaged body and green hands  nb Hmnw ntr 3 (Sic)<sup>(a)</sup> [4], Lord of Hermopolis, the great god twice; **d)** a ram-headed  Heryshef with a missing face, red body

and green hands; and **e)** goddess Nut  with red face surmounted by red sun disk, light blue body and green hands. The first two compartments on the right side contain: **f)** an ape-headed Hapi with red face, and **g)** the missing figure should be Qebehsenuef (in view of the presence of the other Sons of Horus). Then, in the third compartment **h)** there is a black jackal-headed deity (could be Anubis), and the next one **i)** contains a ram-headed deity whose face is painted in red, but the name is lost. Based on similar instances, listed below, this god could be Ba-neb-djedet [5,6]. The last compartment **j)** is completely lost but may have contained an image of Geb [7]. All of the aforementioned divinities are represented in mummy form with the painted green hands free and holding a piece of cloth. The linen wrappings of Duamutef, Heryshef and the ram-headed god (**b)**, **d)** and **i)**], are colored in red. As for the gods in the compartments **a)** and **e)**, they have their enveloped bodies colored in blue, while the deity in compartment **f)** is represented in a white body. A column of hieroglyphic text is written in black behind the left-side compartments A, B, C, D and E (†):



ḏd-mdw in dw3-mwt.f ink s3.k mrr(w) Wsir hry-h3t ḥnh-p3-hrd s3 n Hry ir(w) n nb(t) pr .....

Words (to be) recited by Duamutef; I am your son, beloved of Osiris, who is upon (responsible for) the body (the chief of the corpse), Ankhpakhered, son of Hory, born of the lady of the house .....

The second fragment, fig. (3) is 34×21 cm, and represents the foot board. It bears a hieroglyphic text flanked by two figures of black colored Anubis-jackals lying on a shrine , both of which are surmounted by the Wdjat-eye . The hieroglyphic text is written in three columns in black ink, upside-down relative to the two jackal-deities, so the deceased would have been able to read the text when looking down at his feet.

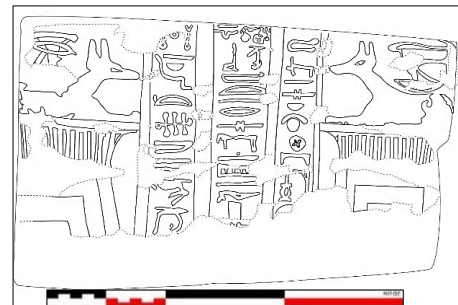
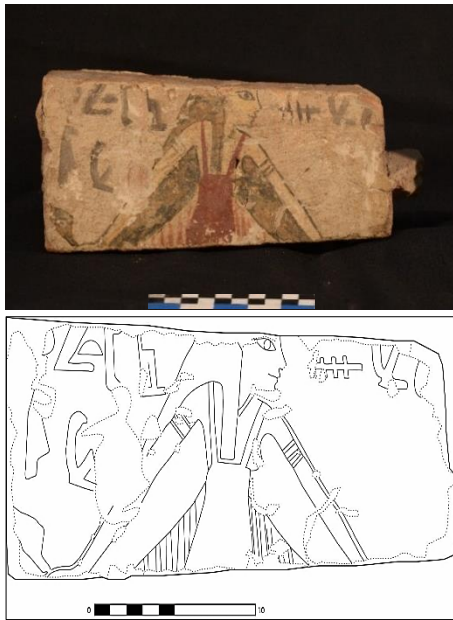


Figure (3) a, the foot board (Drawing: Mona Abady)

The third fragment, fig. (4) which is 27x11cm is likely a part of the case foot board shows goddess Isis spreading her wings and the accompanying text says *3st mwt ntr* "Isis the divine mother" as she is usually represented on the foot opposite to Nephtys who is usually shown near the head as the two mourners of the deceased.



**Figure (4)** the Goddess Isis (*Drawing: Mona Abady*)







### 2.3. Commentary

The central scene, mummified Osiris surmounted by the sun disk, represents the Solar-Osirian unity [8]. It shows a vignette of spell 154 of the Book of the Dead (“Spell for not letting NN’s corpse pass away in the god’s domain”). In most of the scenes, the sun sends its rays over the chest or the whole body of the deceased, but here the rays are missing. This spell is the one that stresses most explicitly the sun’s impact on the deceased and the union between Re and Osiris (deceased) [9]. The standard vignette of spell 154 of the Book of the Dead includes the sky-sign with the sun-disk emanating rays of light depicted above lion-bier upon which the mummy of the deceased is stretched [10]. What is different here is that the sunrays are missing in addition to the sky-sign which could have been chiseled or even not depicted, as sometimes the sky-sign is missing [11]. - Some of the hieroglyphic ideograms are reversed in writing, running opposite to the general direction of the text. This can be seen with the signs  $\curvearrowright$  (in *ink*, *rn.k* and *s3.k*) and  $\rightleftharpoons$  (in *ʿmst* and *iʿht(3)y.s nht.s*). - The sign  $\equiv$  stands for  $\text{𓂏}(n)$  in the whole axial text of the lid.

## 2.4. Names and titles on the coffin

- \*) ***ʕnh-p3-hrd*** [3]: Several anthroponyms, both male and female, associate the noun *hrd*, “child”, and the verb *ʕnh*, “to live”: *hrd-ʕnh* (.w) [3]; *hrdw-ʕnh* [3]: and *hrd-n-ʕnh* [3].
- \*) ***ʔʕh-t(3)y.s nht.s***: The name of the coffin owner's mother ***ʔʕh-t(3)y.s nht.s***, has been mentioned in Ranke, *PN*, only as masculine (*ʔʕh-t3.f nh.t*) [3]. *Iahtesnakht* is common during the Late period and is just the female form of *Iahtefnakht*

and even evidenced on a coffin from Abusir el-Meleq [12]. However, for the name *iꜥḥ-ḥy.s nḥt* [12–14], Verhoeven stated 26 variations. Another instance known to us is found in Pap. Cologne Aeg. and a set of two coffins, now in a private collection in Brussels [12]. The lady is the daughter of *p3-šri-n-ʿ3(t)* and *t3-diw*, 25<sup>th</sup>–26<sup>th</sup> dyn.; whose possible origin may be Herakleopolis Magna [13].

- \*) **Hry** [3]: Hory is the name of the owner's father.
- \*) **hry h3t** <sup>(b)</sup> does not appear in *LGG* (Leitz, Lexikon der Ägyptischen Götter), and it is suggested that instead of being a divine epithet, **hry h3t** may be a title of Ankhpakhered: **hry h3t** presumably “chief of the corpse”. This title may be a designation for a captain of a team of mummification workers. As a point of conjecture, the “chief of the corpse” would be a funerary operative who is distinct from the better attested workers in this field, for example: *wt* or **hry wt** [15,16] (coverer/wrapper) or **rh3ty** [16,17] embalmer specializing in bandaging the body (lit. washerman)<sup>(c)</sup>. The title is also found on the coffin of Usirnakht from Abusir El-Meleq which could be a title associated with this region [18,19].
- \*) **wdpw-ntr**: This is a title of Ankhpakhered and his father Hory, “attendant of the god” (= Attendant/steward/butler of the god) [15,20]. This title already has earlier attestations since the Old Kingdom, 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty [21,22]. According to Wilson [23,24], this title denotes a man of the household who is responsible for the preparation of food and serving it with wine and beer. This title was also attested on different monuments even if the group of signs was misread as *it ntr* <sup>(d)</sup> [25,26]. Although the title was attested in Helio-  
polis for a certain priest of Re with different variants, *wdp.w n R<sup>c</sup>* “butler of Re” and *wdp.w ntr n R<sup>c</sup>* “divine butler of Re” and also in Memphis for the priest of Neith [25], it was also connected with the region of Herakleopolis and Fayum in many attestations. The title was attached to different figures in the Herakleopolitan region. A priest of Heryshef held the title of  *wdp.w ntr Nn-nswt* “divine butler of Herakleopolis” [27], while another priest held the title  *wdp.w ntr* “divine butler” [25]. From the same region, the same title was adopted by two priests: the first was Ankh-Hor from the Saïtic period , while Pen-Amon held the title  *wdp.w ntr m T3-s* “the divine butler in Fayum” [25]. -A second plausible reading for this group of signs  is *w3 ntr* (butler, servant). In view of the determinative  [28,29] for which reading *w3* “butler/servant” from the root meaning “to drill” [15] is given. A butler is literally: “one who opens”; and the expression *w3 jb* means “open the heart to” [16]. There is another example in which the group occurs with the funerary epithet *im3hy* following. It establishes the group *w3 ntr* as a funerary epithet. I suggest that it means “open to god” or perhaps “one whom god opens”. With *im3hy* following, the epithet cluster becomes “open to god and honored”. The example in question is the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty coffin trough of Herishefankhes, fig. (5-a & b) [30]. The name Herishefankhes is in itself associated with the Ihnasva-region, but



more than just that his name is sometimes preceded by *jm3hy m Nṣr.t* “one honored in *Nṣr.t* (which could be interpreted as a site identical to, or at least in the Upper *Nṣr.t*-tree district, i.e., Nome XX or the Herakleopolitan nome) [31,32]. This helps to localize coffins with the expression *wb3 ntr* to Herakleopolis and its cemeteries, e.g., Abusir el-Meleq<sup>(e)</sup>. Both possible readings *wb3* or *wdp.w* are complementary and connected in their work as *wdp.w* is the man who does the work under the guidance of the *wb3* [23] and according to the above-mentioned examples, they are strongly connected to the Herakleopolitan region.



**Figure (5)** a. & b. coffin trough of Herishefankhes, (After: [https://www.liveauctioneers.com/item/7046478\\_79-egyptian-wood-sarcophagus-base](https://www.liveauctioneers.com/item/7046478_79-egyptian-wood-sarcophagus-base))

\*) *psš mwt-k* → *m ntr nn hft.jw*: This is a variant or a shortened version of the well-known Nut Text (Pyr. §§ 638a–b [PT 368]; and Pyr. §§ 1607a–b [PT 588])<sup>(f)</sup>.

\*) **Heryshef and the possible "Ba-neb-djedet"**: Both deities are associated with Herakleopolis Magna as Heryshef is the main god of the region depicted as a ram-headed god<sup>(g)</sup>. Ba-neb-djedet has the same iconography as a ram-headed deity and is very often represented on coffins coming from the region [5,6]. - The decorative regime of the first two compartments on the two sides of the main fragment follows the principles on coffins of the Late period onwards. These compartments are occupied by the four Sons of Horus. During the New Kingdom, as depicted on *qrs* coffins, the four figures were depicted on the four corners of the coffin, highlighting their relationship to the four corners of the sky [7]. Imsety and Hapi were located at the northern end of the coffin or the head, and Duamutef and Qebehsenuef were at the southern end or the feet. After the New Kingdom, and on mummiform specimens, the figures were usually concentrated on the abdominal area with Imsety and Duamutef being on the proper right side (the west) and Hapi and Qebehsenuef on the proper left (the east) [7]. - The assumed location of Geb in the lowest section of the left part of the coffin fragment aligns with the usual principles of symmetry and balance of ancient Egyptian art [33]. In most depictions of Geb, even on coffins, he is not represented in a mummiform. Since all other figures on the main fragment are mummiform, the symmetrical nature of coffin decoration, necessitated his depiction as a mummified human [33]. In addition, the assumed presence of Nut stretching her wings in the uppermost part over the chest of the coffin, which ended with the two jackals, most regularly identified as Anubis or

Wepwawet [34] is to complete the cosmic cycle. The gods', Anubis or Wepwawet, association with the underworld fitted with the organization of the coffin's decoration. In the Egyptian beliefs regarding the world's orientation, the underworld was located directly underneath the earth. The jackals' location directly beneath the god Geb (according to this assumption) completed this orientation, making the coffin decoration a representation of the world itself, a microcosm.




## 2.5. Province

A key question is whether it is possible to determine the district in which the coffin was manufactured, when all provenance information is lacking. It seems that these pieces may have originated from Abu Sir el-Meleq, which lies in the strip of cultivation between the Nile and the Bahr Yusuf, a branch of the river that feeds into the Fayum basin [35,36]. Like many sites, Abu Sir el-Meleq has been inadequately recorded and was subject to plundering [37]. It has a strong association with Abydos, as it was called “Abydos of the North” in which Osiris service played a special role which could be traced from a large number of inscriptions on coffins in which Osiris is addressed as lord of the Northern Abydos [27]. Excavations at Abu Sir el-Meleq revealed several shafts and chambers containing burials dating back to the Late and Ptolemaic period [38]. The largest tomb found so far was the so-called “mass grave of the Heryshef priests”. Heryshef cult center is at Ihnasya, which is not far from Abu Sir el-Meleq. It is closely connected to Abu Sir el-Meleq as many coffins bearing his name must have originated from there [39], figs. (5, 6-a: d).



**Figure (6)** a. coffin and mummy of Somtus, Cairo Egyptian Museum, (JE 36806), b. coffin of Tadiusir, Leipzig, ÄMUL 1496 (After: Meffre, 2019), c. coffin of Udja-sema-taui, Cairo Egyptian Museum, (After: <https://www.e-coffins.ch/index.php/saerge/51-pri-vatsammlungen/saerge/329-udja-sema-taui>), d. coffin of Irethoru, Egyptian Museum, (After: <https://3d-coffins.berkeley.edu/ar/coffins/20010630001>)

The name of Herishef is also attested on many mummy wrappings originally from Abu Sir el-Meleq [40]. In order to localize these fragments, the researcher will try to compare them to some other coffins discovered at Abusir el-Meleq that share the same features. The coffin of Somtus in the Egyptian Museum [18], fig. (6-a), the coffin of Tadiusir [18], fig. (6-b), the coffin of Djedhor [18], the coffin of Usirnakh (Adelaide, South Australian Museum, A.40014) [18,19], the coffin of Udjasema-taui [5,6], fig. (6-c), and the coffin of Irethoru, fig. (6-d) – all share some similarities, whether in texts or the decorative program. Our fragments share some similarities with the coffin of Somtus, fig. (6-a), as both have the text in three axial columns and both also share the Nut-text, which derives from spell 368 of the Pyramid texts. Moreover, the jackals facing each other are apparent on the foot part of the coffin. As for the coffin of Tadiusir, fig. (6-b), it is very similar to our fragments in the decorative program of the lid. It has the text in three axial columns and a depiction of the mummy on a funerary bed with four canopic jars beneath, though lacking the sun disk. On both sides of the lid are also five compartments of deities mostly from spell 42 of the Book of the Dead. The two jackals are shown lying on chests in the same way as our fragments. The text of goddess Nut (here is over the wings of the goddess) is a very close parallel, as if they were taken from the same model. The coffin of Usirnakh has the same full text of Nut; the texts address the Four Sons of Horus (Hapi only remains). They show the same way of writing the name of the god Osiris in addition to the title *hry-h3t*, which seems to be associated with the region of Abusir El-Meleq [18,19]. The coffin of Djedhor shares the same Nut formula over her wings and the main text is in three axial columns. While the coffin of Udjasemataui, fig. (6-c) shares some similarities with our fragments, as it has the mummy lying on a lion-shaped bier, the axial texts, the presence of Heryshef and the jackals lying over the shrines, in addition to the yellow color of the background. The closest coffin to our fragments is that of Irethoru, fig. (6-d) which is according to the priestly titles of the owner seems to be originated from Abusir el-Meleq<sup>(h)</sup> [41]. It has the same vignette of the Book of the Dead (spell 154) with the sun disk above the mummy lying on a lion-headed bier. The four sons of Horus appear on both sides of this scene, protecting the deceased. The text is shown in three axial columns with five compartments on each side for different deities, similar to the ones on our fragments. Among them, we see Thot, Heryshef, Geb and Ba-neb-djedet. The colors look very similar as the dominant colors are green and red. The determinative of the names of the Four Sons of Horus is the same as our fragments. Even the same quality of writing assumes that both were manufactured in the same workshop and date back to the same era. The above-mentioned coffins do have some characteristics which are recognizable on coffins from Middle Egypt and the region of Abusir El-Meleq in particular. The first of these features is the use of a simple decorative program on the lids, including, on the face, a winged scarab (missing in our fragments) and a kneeling goddess above an axial text and row of divinities on both sides and mostly connected with spell 42 of the Book of the Dead which is associated to the Herakleopolitan region. Moreover, the

writing quality of the texts of these coffins seems the same as if being manufactured in the same workshop. Some hieroglyphic signs are formed in a very similar manner on these coffins, such as ,  and . The determinative of the names of the Four Sons of Horus is usual in the Ptolemaic period and can be easily seen on the coffins of Somtus, Tadiusir, Djedhor, and Irethoru in addition to the Ptah-Sokar-Osiris statuette found among Somtus's funerary objects [18]. The possibility that the coffin was manufactured in the district of Herakleopolis Magna may be indicated also by the use of Nut in a compartment directly below Heryshef, towards the lower end of the lid. The reason for this position may derive from an arrangement of images originally developed at Herakleopolis for use on coffin lids bearing Book of the Dead spell 42 [18, 42,43]. The inclusion of Thoth among the deities shown on our fragments might indicate an origin in an area where that god had an important presence. Although his principal cult is at Hermopolis, his strong connection with the Fayum region and elsewhere in the north must not be overlooked [39]. The central part of the coffin has some specific colors (light green, blue and deep red mixed with yellow elements) and may have an association with the broader area of Herakleopolis, going back to the seventh century BC onwards [39,44].

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Dating

Due to the lack of information to classify the coffin in a clear archaeological context, dating can only be done through a precise analysis of the coffin's decoration. From the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty to the Ptolemaic period, coffins decoration began to look back to earlier periods and added new features, with larger areas of inscription and fewer scenes with fewer bright colors and more constriction to registers [45]. The fragments follow the decorative regime that was dominant during the Late Period onwards in Theban coffins, but the religious decorative style was most probably the same in Lower Egypt. According to this regime, the lower part of the frontal field is occupied by a central inscription, running to the foot or the ankles. The lateral zones contain symmetrical groupings of deities – principally the sons of Horus and forms of Anubis [45,46]. An image of the deceased on a bier (a vignette of chapter 154 of the Book of the Dead) is generally included at the top of the central panel [46] which shows the mummy of the deceased lying on a funerary lion bed; above which, the sun disk sheds its light onto the body. The vignette for chapter 154 of the Book of the Dead is attested only in Late period and Ptolemaic Book of the Dead documents, unlike the actual text, which is already known since the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty [47,48]. Moreover, an important factor of art during the Late period till the Ptolemaic period was "archaism". This archaizing tendency appears in the revival of features like the figures of the Sons of Horus, Anubis and Thot which appear on the sides of the anthropoid coffins [45]. As occasionally occurred from the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty onwards, the face of the deceased is painted in green to stress his identification with Osiris [45]. By the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty onwards, the inner mummiform coffins were plastered and painted in bright colors on a white or yellow ground (as our coffin) [45]. The coffin also bears different features that mark the early Ptol-



emaic period. These features are the mummy on a lion-headed bier and jackals seated on shrines. The inscriptions, too, are standardized and frequently include short extracts from the Pyramid texts (spell 368 in our coffin) in addition to portions from the Book of the Dead (spell 154 in our coffin) [45]. The decoration usually consists of central inscriptions flanked by the figures of Four Sons of Horus [45]. The form of Osiris' name (𓂠) dates these fragments to no earlier than the end of the Third Intermediate Period as this way of writing does not occur on non-royal coffins before the late 8<sup>th</sup> century BC [46,49]. Based on comparing these fragments and other coffins mentioned above, they are more likely to be dated to the end of the Late Period and early Ptolemaic Period.

### 3.2. Reconstruction of the coffin

Through abovementioned methodology to date these fragments based on comparing them to other coffins from different museums, it can be assumed that these fragments would have been located in the center of the exterior part, lid, and the foot board of the anthropoid coffin. Based on this comparison, it is necessary to try reconstructing the coffin by tracing the decorative regime of them and trying to find out the missing parts of the coffin. Being parts of an anthropoid coffin, the upper portion of the lid would have been carved and painted like a head wearing a tripartite wig, most likely blue. Two lappets of the wig would have fallen in front of the shoulders, with the *Wesekh* collar beginning between the lappets and extending below them across the chest. As the coffin was for a man, a black, possibly curved, false beard could have extended from the chin, possibly of the same length as the lappets or a little shorter. Below the *Wesekh* collar, there should have been the winged scarab beneath which Nut often kneels with her extended arms and wings, covering the full width of the lower chest or upper abdomen. As many coffins are generally symmetrical in their designs, the figural representation on the far right of the coffin would have been mirrored on the other side, with different mummiform figures. The text on the proper left is very fragmented, but the uppermost section can be reconstructed from the vertical inscriptions addressing Hapi. The second portion would have been for Qebhsenuf. He most likely would have had a falcon head, as Qebhsenuf is commonly depicted as a falcon-headed deity [34,50,51]. The third part would have been dedicated to a deity with a jackal head (may be Anubis), while Ba-neb-djedet with ram horns and remains of a sun disk between them occupies the fourth section. The last portion seems to be occupied by Geb, balanced by the depiction of Nut in the same portion on the right side. The foot board should bear a hieroglyphic text written in a reversed way so the deceased would read them easily. The text is flanked by two figures of black colored Anubis-jackals lying on a shrine, both of which are surmounted by the *Wdjat*-eye. As for the colors of the coffin and the writing, the yellow color was used for the background while the designs were drawn in red, blue and green [1]. The texts are also written in black color on a yellow background [1].

## 4. Discussion

The study deals with 3 wooden fragments of an incomplete anthropoid coffin lacking any direct data about their dating

or province. They are for a man named Ankhpakhered who is the son of Hory and Iah-tayes-nakht-es. The methodology undertaken in this paper through comparing the fragments' decorative regime and script to some other coffins from different collections made the way to find out the precise dating and province. The main fragment which is a part of the coffin's case board is the clue for dating them and defining the province where they were originally manufactured. The fragment bears a group of deities, some of them formed a clue to the province of the coffin which is Abusir el-Meleq. These deities are Imsty, Duamutef, Thoth, Heryshef, Nut, Hapi, Qebhsenuf, Anubis, Ba-neb-djedet and Geb. Based on the titles written on the main fragment, it is clear that the coffin's owner and his father bore the title *wdpw ntr* "Butler of the God" found on many objects originated from Abusir el-Meleq. Moreover, the appearance of Heryshef and the possible Ba-neb-djedet made the way to attribute the fragments to Abusir el-Meleq. Comparing the coffin to other coffins like the coffins of Somtus in the Egyptian Museum [18], the coffin of Tadiusir [18], the coffin of Djedhor [18], the coffin of Usimakht (Adelaide, South Australian Museum, A.40014) [18,19], the coffin of Udja-sema-tai [5,6], and the coffin of Irethoru, showed similarities between the fragments and these coffins which helped to reach out the province as Abusir el-Meleq and the dating which is most likely end of the Late period and beginning of Ptolemaic period. These similarities are the writing quality of the texts, the determinative of the names of the Four Sons of Horus, the mummy on a lion-headed bier and jackals seated on shrines, the inscriptions that include short extracts from the Pyramid Texts (spell 368 in our coffin) in addition to portions from the Book of the Dead (spell 154 in our coffin), the way the name of Osiris is written (𓂠) is also a clue to date them no earlier than the end of the Third Intermediate Period.

## 5. Conclusion

*The coffin of Ankhpakhered, though fragmented, is a fine specimen of the coffins at the end of the Late period and beginning of the Ptolemaic era. Studying these fragments, dating and localizing them was a challenge to the researcher, since the decoration and most of the inscriptions are fragmented. However, the researcher was able to examine these fragments to reach a better understanding of coffin manufacture and decoration. Undoubtedly, the epigraphical features, the decorative regime, and the titles investigated in this paper favor a Late period or beginning of Ptolemaic period date. The texts inscribed on the coffin fragments are also quite illuminating as they prove to be the key to determining the most likely date for the coffin, using the writing of the name of Osiris and some different titles as Hry XAt and *wdpw ntr* or *wb3 ntr* which are also connected to the site of Abusir el-Meleq. This is also proved by the artistic comparison between these fragments and other coffins listed in the paper.*

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## Endnotes

- (a) There is a mistake in the title of God Thot as the sign 𓂠 is doubled, see [4].

- (b) For the word XA.t, Cf. Martin, A. (2013). *Le Corps en Égypte ancienne. Enquête lexicale et anthropologique. Archéologie et Préhistoire*. Université Paul Valéry-Montpellier III, France. (After: [https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01089023/file/2013\\_martin\\_diff.pdf](https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01089023/file/2013_martin_diff.pdf)).
- (c) I owe this tip to Prof. Jonathan Elias
- (d) In his paper [25], Meffre listed some references that misread this group of signs, while others read them as it *ntr* "divine father". He even mentioned that according to some stelae, the two group of signs ( $\overline{\text{w}}\overline{\text{p}}\overline{\text{w}}$  and  $\overline{\text{w}}\overline{\text{p}}\overline{\text{w}}\overline{\text{n}}\overline{\text{r}}$ ) both were read as *wdp.w ntr* [26] Malinine, M., Posener, G., and Vercoutter, J. (1968). *Catalogue des stèles du Sérapéum de Memphis: tome premier*, Musées Nationaux I, Paris.
- (e) I owe this tip to Prof. Jonathan Elias
- (f) For more information about these spells and the role of Nut in the pyramid texts and the related spells, Cf. Antonio J. Morales. (2016). The Transmission of the Pyramid Texts of Nut, Analysis of their distribution and role in the Old and Middle Kingdoms, *BSAK*, Vol 19, pp. 806 and 895-896
- (g) Altermüller, H. (1977). in: Helck, W. & Otto, E. (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, Band II, Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, Cols. 1016-1018.
- (h) The title *s3 mr.f* "his loving son or the son whom he loves" is one of the priestly titles associated Osiris festivals, especially in Abydos and then was frequently mentioned on monuments from Herakleopolis (Northern Abydos) for the priests of the local god Heryshef. For more details about the title, Cf. [41].

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