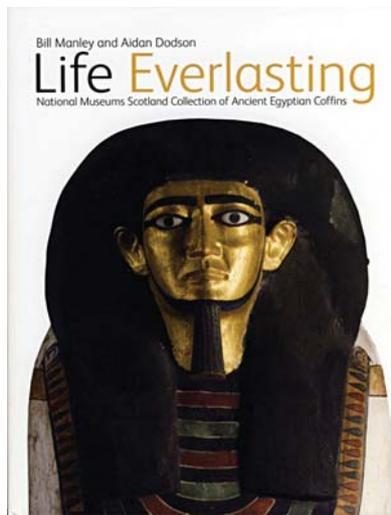




BOOK REVIEWS

Manley, B. & A. Dodson. 2010. Life Everlasting. National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins. – Edinburgh, National Museums Scotland

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After an overview (without title, pp. 1-10) of the history of the conglomerate of the National Museums Scotland – with special attention to the Egyptian collections and the individuals who were most closely related to their development, among whom Rhind was the most prominent – the Egyptian coffin collection is divided into seven ‘parts’.

The introduction sketches the archaeological and culture historical context. Part 1 (Cat. 1-2, pp. 12-19) describes two Middle Kingdom coffins of two men, both of whom were called Khnumhotep (no family relation), with the coffins respectively rectangular and anthropoid in shape. The main text is followed by notes, a pattern repeated for the remaining six parts.

Part 2 (Cat. 3-7, pp. 20-33) covers the famous ‘Qurna burial’ (probably of a Second Intermediate Period Theban queen and her child [Cat. 3-4]) consisting of a heavily gilded *rishi*-coffin. The most interesting other items are a limestone female head of a stone sarcophagus, late 18th or early 19th Dynasty (Cat. 6) and the polychrome coffin of a girl in daily dress, probably originating from the tomb of Sennedjem at Thebes (Cat.7). It is surprising that – in contrast to the previous objects – in the last two cases the width is not given, as if the authors did not have direct contact with the objects, which seems unlikely; a case of carelessness?

Part 3 (Cat. 8-15, pp. 34-59) consists of coffins of the Third Intermediate Period, Dynasties 21 until early 22. Cat. 8 is classified as Y(ellow)IIa

(cf. p. 35, bipartite leg section) which should be YIIb (tripartite leg section). It should be further noticed that the typology on p. 35, labeled as "Niwiński's Types", does not completely coincide with that scholar's (but rather with Ikram & Dodson (1998: 229, fig. 296; cf. Niwiński, 1988: 68-69, figs. 25-29). Further the rather precise date (c. 961) is not substantiated. Finally, the lotus flower on the elbows is not mentioned. Cat. 9 is not a 'trough' itself, but the *floor board* of a trough or box. Furthermore, the cartouche at the height of the calves is resting on a *serekh* (p. 40, not mentioned). The excellent composition, the kind of iconographic components and the quality of its painting make an identification of the board as originally belonging to a trough or box topped by a 'stola' lid (cf. Cat. 11 & 13) beyond doubt. Although the female owner's name of Cat. 10 is 'uncertain' (p. 41), one would expect at least a suggestion based on the textual remains. Also the term 'fillet' (p. 42) for the wings framing the head is unfortunate, since the term 'vulture headdress' describes what it is (cf. Van Walsem, 1997: 111-113; in German Egyptology known as '*Geierhaube*', Brunner-Traut, 1977: col. 515). Although the drooping contour of the shoulders indeed suggests a re-use of an older coffin (and yet no reason is given for the suggested time period of 500 years earlier, p. 41), the lack of the 'braces' or better 'stolae' here (see below Cat. 11) make it more than likely that Cat. 11, did *not* originally belong to this coffin (cf. pp. 44, 46), even if it was found with it. It resembles very much the case in the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden, where the inner coffin of Djedmonthuiufankh was offered to the museum inside the outer coffin of Ankhfenkhonsu, the names proving that originally they never belonged together (Van Walsem, 1997: 22, n. 74). Cat. 11 is incorrectly gendered as a woman (p. 45). Clenched fists are the attribute *par excellence* of male coffins, while stretched hands are found with women's coffins only (cf. Van Walsem 1997: 112-113, 127, e). The term 'braces' (p. 46) is less correct than the term 'stola/ae', coined by the present reviewer for this distinctive attribute to name the entire class of coffins/mummy covers featuring it 'stola coffins' (*Ibidem*: 15, with n. 46; 116-119). As for this feature, the present reviewer was highly surprised to find not a single reference to Van Walsem's monograph 'The Coffin of Djedmonthuiufankh in the National Museum of Antiqui-

ties at Leiden. Technical and Iconographic/Iconological aspects, I devoted to all coffins of this type known up to then – even though its dissertation edition (1988) figures in the bibliography of Ikram & Dodson (1998). Cat. 12, p. 49, r. col., pls. 7-8 'The mountain bears label texts' is incorrect, since these short columns of text indicate tombs scattered over the Theban hillside. Concerning Cat. 13 it escapes the reviewer why the seven vignettes (numbered by the authors as 1-7) are numbered as 'I-IV' (p. 53-55), where II actually covers the reviewer's numbers 3-5 (verbally numbered there as 'third', 'fourth', 'fifth' by Manley & Dodson), while III=6 and IV=7. On the right exterior wall in the division area between vignettes 4 and 5 ('II' and 'III') an *imentet*-sign and not a *maat*-feather is depicted. It is a pity that the interior has not been completely published but for a single picture (p. 55). In general the exterior head-end vignettes (pp. 43, 48, 53) have not been included in the illustrations, which leaves the visual documentation incomplete: a missed chance. Comparing Cat. 9 (p. 39), 13 (p. 52) makes it obvious that Cat. 15 is a fragment of a box, originally belonging to a stola coffin. All coffins are inner coffins (only indicated as such for Cat. 14).

Part 4 (Cat. 16-23, pp. 61-73) concerns mainly mid-later Third Intermediate Period cartonnages and coffins (22nd-23rd Dynasties, 10th-8th c. B.C.). For Cat. 19, p. 64, no width is given.

Part 5 (Cat. 24-30; pp. 74-93) concerns late Third Intermediate Period coffins (23rd-early 26th Dynasties, 8th-7th c. B.C.). Although Cat. 26 is dated late 25th Dynasty, the presence of a feature that escapes notice, namely small 'braces', *i.e.* stola, on the lid may slightly shift the date to the 24th/early 25th Dynasties. It is a pity that the decoration of the interior of the lid and the exterior bottom of the box are only described in words. In the description of Cat. 27, lid, 3rd vignette, the four identical canopic jars under the bier are not mentioned (similarly Cat. 26, p. 79; Cat. 29, p. 88) and the inner decoration of the trough (p. 83) has apparently been forgotten: large <Ptah>-Sokar-Osiris falcon, looking left, on a standard and encircled by a snake; on the head-end a red sun-disc with flanking uraei, and on the foot-end a large *demedj*-sign; on the side walls (hardly discernable) large figures of Isis (left) and Nephthys (right). In the description of the backside of the box of Cat. 28 (p. 87) the detail of the green sun between the finger-

tips of the arms rising from the *djed*-pillar has been left out (on the lid the same motif on the legs is without a sun). It is a bit surprising that on pp. 90-91 the authors enter into much detail on the long text on the lid of Cat. 30, while there is no comment whatsoever on the considerably extensive texts of Cat. 27 and 29. (pp. 82, 88).

Part 6 (Cat. 31-47, pp. 94-119) deals with coffins and one sarcophagus of the Late or Ptolemaic Period (26th-31st Dynasties, 6th-1st c. B.C.). As for Cat. 31, it escapes the reviewer why the genii in register 4 of the lid are not identified as the Four Horus Sons; again the head-end is only described. The description of Cat. 32 can be supplemented by drawing attention to the four identical canopic jars under the bier of the central register, while it is also obvious that the four deities in side register II-III again are the Horus Sons. It is also a pity that the underside of the feet, depicting a mummy on the back of a bull (*cf.* Cat. 28, p.87) is not shown. And again, why not simply identify the four genii in registers I-II of Cat. 36 (p. 106-107) as the Four Horus Sons? On p. 107, right col., sub III-IV read 'genius' instead of 'genii'. For the 'trapping', Cat. 39, it is obvious that the first four genii are the Sons of Horus.

Part 7 (Cat. 48-64, pp. 120-146), finally, consists of coffins and masks of the Roman Period (1st-3rd c. A.D.). The leaves at the base of the columns of Cat. 49, p. 124-125 are not lotus flowers but the normal triangular sheathing at the base of papyrus plants, copied in architectural pillars (*cf.* Arnold, 1994: pl. 40c-d and e.g. p. 193, right figure). No width is given for Cat. 50 (p. 126), 52 (p. 128), 53 (p. 129) and 54 (p. 131). For Cat. 57, p. 135 no height is given. It is amazing that the top of the head and the sides of the lid of Cat. 61, p. 142 are not described: falcon with spread wings holding 'sticks' in its claws, squatted goddess, top of a *djed*-pillar, standing female(?) figure, papyrus(?) flower, moon sickle.

Following an Appendix, Cat. 75, possibly a fake (no width given, p. 148), three very useful concordances conclude the catalogue proper (pp. 150-160). A Chronology of Ancient Egypt (pp.161-162), a Bibliography (pp. 163-167), a Glossary (pp. 168-169) and an Index (pp. 170-175) complete the book.

Apart from the critical and supplementary remarks in the preceding review, and although the pictures are often too small to be profitably read by the naked eye – especially those

of the exterior lids and/or boxes of e.g. Cat. 10-13 where the reviewer had to use a magnifying glass in order to completely follow the description – one should congratulate the authors and be grateful to them for making this very interesting funerary collection available to Egyptology at large – not an easy task. Its usefulness may be best demonstrated by the fact that the present reviewer, after receiving information on stola coffins in Edinburgh, could include only Ed 1-3 in his dissertation corpus (Van Walsem 1997: 379). Now, thanks to a nice colour photograph, Cat. 15 can be added as Ed 4. The publication in full colour is another thing that will undoubtedly be very much appreciated by the reader/user of the catalogue.

So, in light of the present publication, we are looking forward to a publication promised by Dodson on coffins in south-west United Kingdom collections (pp. 99, 119, n. 15), and that may very well contain some unexpected surprises. I wish him good luck.

Bill Manley & Aidan Dodson. 2010. Life Everlasting. National Museums Scotland Collection of Ancient Egyptian Coffins. – Edinburgh, National Museums Scotland. 176 pp. ISBN: 978 1 905267 170. Price: £ 30.00 (hardback).

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