

A Corn-Mummy from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo

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Abstract

The coffin JE 36546, that is currently displayed at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo under number SR 4/6023, is the subject matter of this paper. It was found at Tehne in the province of the Menia in 1903 by Lefebvre with other pieces of the same type in pit-tombs. The coffin is falcon-headed and in connection with the god it represents, Sokar-Osiris. The coffin contains a pseudo-mummy of Osiris made of a mixture of grains, earth, and straw enfolded in linen wrappings that had been soaked in resin. The head of the mummy was elongated to take the shape of the *atef*-crown. A mask of greenish black wax attached to an *atef*-crown with horns was used to cover the head of the mummy thus representing the god Osiris. Miniature mummies of the four sons of Horus are found within the coffin. The corn mummies are connected to Osiris and his resurrection. The use of grain, and its mixture with earth, are therefore essential to serve this symbolism. The aim of this paper is to publish for the first time piece and discuss the religious idea related to it.

According to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo records, the mummy and its coffin were found in Tehne in 1903. This was the only link of data that the researcher could follow to obtain more data of the object here studied. During the winter of the said year, Gustave Lefebvre and Pierre Jouquet carried out excavations at Tehne,¹ a site located on the east bank of the River Nile, about 260 km south of Cairo, North East of El Menia province. Lefebvre and his team found more than seventy specimens of the same type in pit-tombs at the site. These pit-tombs were found near the ground surface, each containing a stone or pottery sarcophagus that had a wooden coffin and a mummiform figure with other optional objects. Part of the collection was sent to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo where it is on display today, and the larger part was sent to France where it can be found at the Louvre, Lille and Lyon museums.²

The coffin here-studied WITH its contents falls into a category known today as Corn-mummies. The reason for this name shall be discussed below. Two scholars extensively studied and catalogued similar objects, including the Cairo Museum collection. The first is Maarten J. Raven, who classified and cataloged more than forty examples in two of his works,³ and the other is Maria Costanza Centrone, who published the whole Tehne collection and other similar collections in her distinguished PhD dissertation.⁴ However, none of them referred to the piece here studied, and it seems that it has been missed for one reason or MORE, despite of its proximity to the other exhibited specimens. It was also not included in the nine pieces of the Tehne collection that were published by Dieter Kessler.⁵ However, comparisons with parallels indicated that the piece here studied belongs to the find of Lefebvre from Tehne based on stylistic features of a parallel studied by Centrone in the above-mentioned work.⁶ Other coffins of the collection were inscribed with texts including names and epithets of Osiris, *Khnty-Eemnty, nb bHt mr-nfr*. These two latter titles refer to Osiris as the lord of the localities Bekhet and Mer-nefer, both being localities of Tehne.⁷ However, the coffin studied in this paper carries no inscriptions but bears various similarities with some others as shall be discussed below. The collection dates to the period extending from the Third Intermediate Period to the early Ptolemaic Period.⁸

Definition of Corn-mummies

Corn-mummies is a term used to refer to small wrapped mummies, not for living creatures but rather for a mixture of earth and grains.⁹ They were often enclosed in falcon-headed anthropoid coffins, a shape that led to their earlier misnomer of "falcon mummies". Due to their relationship with god Osiris, they were called "pseudo-mummies of Osiris",¹⁰ and more recently Corn-mummies. The reason for the latter name is that they usually contain barley, less frequently emmer wheat or a mixture of both in some cases.¹¹ Corn in this context is used in its English meaning as seeds of grains.¹²

There is little doubt that the Corn-mummies are representations of god Osiris, whose name and epithets are often mentioned on their coffins as Osiris Wennefer, Khenty-Ementy, Lord of Abydos.¹³ In addition, each mummy was habitually equipped with a wax mask of the face and a crown of Osiris, of which *Hedjet*-crown and *atef*-crown occasionally provided with horns, are the most common ones. Other Osirian features were found on some Corn-mummies such as scepters and figurines of the Four Sons of Horus. In addition, some mummies were represented ithyphallic.¹⁴

Furthermore, several of these mummies were found buried in coffins that always were falcon-headed representing god Sokar. C. J. Bleeker suggests that the connection between Osiris and Sokar may be traced back as early as the Old Kingdom when an utterance in the Pyramid Texts mentioned that when Isis found her husband, he called out saying *sj. k rj*, meaning come to me quickly, a cry of help which created the name Sokar that, according to this theory, is considered another name for Osiris.¹⁵ This association between the two gods would continue to appear in the succeeding periods.¹⁶ For instance, the form Sokar-Osiris appeared during the Middle Kingdom and the reversed form Osiris-Sokar appeared during the New Kingdom when Sokar was identified with Osiris, an identification that would continue to develop during the Graeco-Roman Period.¹⁷

Corn-mummies were found buried in cemeteries dating from the Third Intermediate Period until Roman times. The usual size of the mummy was 35-40 cm long.¹⁸ They were found in mimic burials, not in private tombs or temples, buried close to the ground surface.¹⁹ The Corn-mummies were mostly found in five main locations: Wadi Qubanet el Qurud near Medinet Habu²⁰, Tihne,²¹ Meidum, El Sheikh Fadl, and Tuna El Gabal.²²

Piece description

Despite the use of the term Corn-mummy, the piece studied here includes three elements; the coffin, the mummy, and the "equipment", all of which were once placed inside a sarcophagus made of stone or pottery.²³ However, there are no definite details about the used for our piece or the location of this sarcophagus at present. The coffin is made of sycamore wood²⁴ and is 59 cm in length. **Fig. 8** and **9**. The width varies from head to base, the narrowest being 13 cm at the base, and the widest 20 cm at the chest area. The depth of the coffin when closed is 17 cm measured at the base. **Fig. 1** and **2**. The polychrome coffin is in an excellent state of preservation. It takes an anthropoid shape with a falcon head that has human ears, a feature that shall be discussed below. **Fig. 3, a**.

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The dominant color is mustard-yellow with details added in greenish black for the tripartite wig, the eyes and the beak. The chest area of the coffin is adorned with a broad collar of the type *wsH n bik* that is decorated with dark red, grayish blue, yellow beads. The collar does not start from the shoulder area but from the armpit line down covering the waist area. Its two ends are decorated with two falcons that are lower than their usual position on the shoulders. Each falcon has on its head a red sun disc adorned with a cobra. Some white is used in the decoration of the coffin accessories. **Fig. 6.** A rectangular plinth is found at the feet of the mummy. A grayish blue stripe with a black frame stretches from the collar downwards intended to receive a text that was never written. It is flanked by two other thin stripes on both sides. Similar grayish blue stripes are found on three sides of the plinth and appear to have been similarly intended to add texts but were left blank. The frontal stripe is framed in black while the two lateral ones are left unframed. The back has a similar empty stripe but in mustard-yellow surrounded with a thick black frame. **Fig. 7.** Each half of the coffin was provided with three wooden tenons and three mortises that may be seen today. **Fig. 4 and 5.**

The mummy within the coffin is wrapped in blackened linen that contains a mixture of grains and earth.²⁵ It is about 45 cm in length taking the shape of the body of Osiris with imitation of arms folding on the chest. The head of the mummy is elongated to give the shape of *atef*-crown. **Fig. 10 and 11.**

The “equipment” include a greenish black wax mask attached to an *atef* crown with horns. The mask and the crown were found shattered in to pieces. Examination of similar green masks of wax used for Corn-mummies proved that the green color was obtained by mixing beeswax with malachite.²⁶ The study also revealed that the masks were shaped in plaster molds.²⁷ **Fig. 13, 14 and 15.**

The equipment also include four miniature mummies representing the four sons of Horus filled with similar components as the Osirian mummy. **Fig. 16.** Similar examples were provided with wax masks of the four sons of Horus,²⁸ a human mask for Amsty, a baboon for Hapy, a jackal for Dwamutef, and a falcon for Qebehsenuef.²⁹ It is not possible to determine if the figurines in our case were provided with similar masks due to the shattered condition of the wax accessories. **Fig. 12, 16 and 17.**

In addition to these, a disc-shaped resin figure that Maarten J. Raven called a “pillow” and suggested that it might have been a scarab was also found.³⁰ **Fig. 16.** Nevertheless, the detailed description of Gustave Lefebvre explains the function of such a disc. It was placed above the head of the Osirian mummy in the space between the top of the head and the coffin as a support for a wax scarab that should appear on the head of Osiris. The scarab is missing in our example but was well documented by the excavator in other examples.³¹

Commentary on the dating

Due to lack of documentation concerning the exact location of the find as well as the absence of any text, the dating of the piece was somehow challenging. A comparison was therefore made with other coffins of Corn-mummies. Two other specimens were found to be of much similarity. One of them, the Cairo Museum JE 29740 Exhibit Number 4/6007 belongs to the Tehne collection and was dated to the early Ptolemaic Period.³² The other one is in the McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture at the University of Tennessee, number 145/648. Although dated to the Roman Period in the museum registration data, the information provided from the museum lacks any further details regarding provenance or excavation mission to confirm this dating. However, based on stylistic comparisons, M. Centrone was able to date it to the early Ptolemaic Period.³³ A stylistic comparison was made between the three said coffins, showing that the two Cairo ones are almost identical and that of the McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture bears much resemblance to both. Accordingly, a dating for the coffin and its equipment was determined as the early Ptolemaic Period.

Commentary on development and purpose

Origins of Corn-mummies may be rooted back to the Middle Kingdom. Maarten Raven points to oval and rectangular lumps of mud with germinated grain found buried by the entrance of the pyramid of Senusert II at El Lahun as being the prototypes of the Corn-mummies.³⁴ These probably developed into other types in the New Kingdom known as “Osiris Beds”. Corn-mummies were first thought to be used in the same manner as the Osiris Beds, also known as “*Osiris Végétant*”, but are now considered their descendants.³⁵

From the New Kingdom onward, other types of Osirian figurines were developed. Of these it is worth mentioning those known as Ptah-Soker-Osiris statues. Some of the Late Period specimens contained miniature Corn-mummies³⁶ that can be considered the missing link in the development from Osiris Beds into the falcon-headed coffins containing Corn-mummies.

However, there are some differences and some similarities between the Osiris Beds and the Corn-mummies.³⁷ Regarding the differences, Thus the Osiris beds are bi dimensional, the Corn-mummies are triad dimensional. In addition, while the former contained germinated grains, the latter contained un-germinated ones. Nevertheless, this “rule” has its exceptions as some Corn-mummies were found partly germinated, for example, some of the ones found in Wadi Qubnet el Qurud.³⁸ As for their origination, the seven known Osiris beds all date to the Eighteenth Dynasty, while the Corn-mummies date to the period from the Third Intermediate Period to the Roman Period.³⁹

Concerning the similarities, both effigies had linen beddings or wrappings, and both were filled with sand or earth and barley and/or wheat,⁴⁰ linking them to god Osiris and to his connection with grains, a connection that may be traced back to as early as the Old Kingdom⁴¹, and more clearly from the Middle Kingdom.⁴²

There are indications that both effigies were related to the celebrations of the month of Khioak,⁴³ the fourth month of the *Akhet* season. From the Middle Kingdom onward, the Feast of Sokar that was celebrated on the 26th of the month was merged with the Feast of Osiris celebrated in the same month and by the Graeco-Roman Period was totally absorbed in it.⁴⁴

A New Kingdom text describing how the Osiris Beds functioned, gives details that the eighteenth day of the fourth month of the inundation season was the day of watering the barley and the day of spreading the bed for Osiris Neferhotep, a ritual that would be repeated daily for eight days until the twenty-fifth day of the month.⁴⁵ A description of this ritual was later echoed in the Temple of Hathor at Dendera where the festivities of the month were described in excessive details. However, it is important to note that according to the latter texts, three different Osirian effigies were made during the feasts of Khioak, one for Sokar-Osiris, one for Osiris-Khenty-Ementy, and one for the Divine Members of Osiris.⁴⁶ The second one is of much relevance to both Osiris Beds and Corn-mummies. The molds of the figures of Khenty-Ementy were provided with drainage grooves, covered in linen, filled

with barley and sand, then watered daily from the 12th to the 21st day of the month until the grains germinated, a detail that bears considerable resemblance with the earlier Osiris Beds as described in the tomb of Neferhotep.⁴⁷ Dendera texts reveal that the molds of the Khenty-Ementy figures were made of gold and were one cubit long,⁴⁸ which would make them of a size similar to the Corn-mummies, and much smaller than the Osiris Beds. The figures produced were human-headed figures wearing the white crown and packed with earth and grains, then enclosed in a wooden coffin,⁴⁹ and taken to be buried in the necropolis. On the 24th day, the previous year's figures would be brought out and placed in sycamore coffins until the 30th when they would be buried. These seven days symbolizes the seven days of Nut's pregnancy of Osiris that are equal to the seven months after which he was born.⁵⁰ However, it is difficult to prove that the Corn-mummies were produced during the Khioak feasts. For instance, the names of the towns mentioned in Dendera texts are different from those where the mummies were found.⁵¹ In addition, the techniques of the manufacture of the Corn-mummies are different in the description given at Dendera than those suggested by examination of some specimen done by Louis-Charles Lortet and Claude Gaillard, who concluded that the linen wrappings were first built as a hollow body without a head. For the linen to hold, it was covered with resin. When the hollow headless wrappings' model was firm, it was then filled with barley and a thick adhesive to ensure that the grains hold together. The head was prepared separately and joined to the body when it was firm enough. The two scholars also observed the traces of the joint between the head and the body of the pseudo-mummy.⁵² However this does not match the Dendera texts description of preparing the mummies in gold molds. These similarities and difference were thoroughly discussed by both Maarten Raven and Maria Centrone. While the former concluded that regardless of the differences, the Corn-mummies were produced on annual basis during the Khioak feasts, the latter challenged the view and concluded that they belonged to two different sets of rituals.⁵³

However, despite the absence of concrete evidence that Corn-mummies were produced during the Khioak feasts, the resemblance between the textual and the archaeological evidence is hard to miss. It is likely that at the end of the feast, one Corn-mummy was buried on an annual basis to relate to Osiris's resurrection in a similar, yet unidentical, manner to that described in Dendera. This is indicated by the varied styles of the mummies of the same group as they were manufactured at different times, taking- for example- the diversity of the Tehne group, to which our example belongs. It is safe to presume that the nature of the celebrations and the sequence of the rituals would differ through ages, considering that, even though Dendera texts are of Roman date, the origins of the feast evidently started in Dynastic Egypt at least from the New Kingdom onward.⁵⁴ Other effigies were probably used in a similar context. For instance, the pottery molds of Osiris that were once believed to be used for making Corn-mummies. These were given the name Osiris Bricks due to their shape, each as a brick with an incision of Osiris, in order to distinguish them from Osiris Beds. It is evident that the Corn-mummies were not made in such molds as all the molds found were much smaller than most Corn-mummies. Also, some of them still contained remains of sand and un-germinated grains indicating that they were used in rituals on their own not just as molds. However, the fact that some specimens were found in Wadi Qubanet el Quroud in Thebes⁵⁵ at the same cemetery where Corn-mummies were discovered, would make it likely that they were related to the same feast, meaning the ceremonies of Osiris in the month of Khioak. In addition, some of these bricks were found with other Osirian figurines, some of which were falcon headed.⁵⁶ Add comment about the four sons of horus as they appear in the feasts of Osiris in the papyrus jumilac open in google links on my laptop

Symbolism of Corn-mummies

Two main points regarding Corn-mummies are found to be the most intriguing. The first is the symbolism of the grain fillings, and the other is the symbolism of the wax accessories of the mummified figure. Concerning the symbolism of the grain fillings, there is a general consensus amongst Egyptologists at the present time that the symbolism of grains in regard to Corn-mummies and other types of Osirian figures is linked to the changing yet cyclic nature of grains that relates to resurrection and repetition of life rather than being related to food and nourishment.⁵⁷ Taking this interpretation in mind, the ceremonies of the month of Khioak and all related Osirian figures are mere depictions of resurrection⁵⁸ rather than being agrarian portrayals to ensure the fertility of the land as was believed earlier.⁵⁹ However, the two ideas are connected to one another in a way that makes it difficult to trace which of them led to the other.⁶⁰ The symbolism of resurrection on the Corn-mummies is indeed prominent. For instance, the association with Sokar as demonstrated by the falcon head in the Corn-mummies is considered a strong hint of the idea of resurrection.⁶¹ Another link is found in the use of sycamore wood for the coffins. The sycamore wood was associated with Nut⁶² and has strong implications in the rebirth of Osiris from his mother Nut and thus to resurrection.⁶³ Representation of the goddess was likewise a common feature on Corn-mummies.⁶⁴ The choice of the burial places of the Corn-mummies near the ground surface should be taken into consideration. It was suggested that the reason for that was to enable the grains to germinate due to occasional rain.⁶⁵ In other words, the grains within the mummies would be buried under the ground without germination only to germinate afterwards in a reference to the resurrection of Osiris from the death. Furthermore, some of these were found buried in locations with high probability of water contact. The Theban mummies, for instance, were found in ravines where flash floods occurred,⁶⁶ while the Tehne mummies were found in a plain that gets covered with water for a day or two each winter.⁶⁷ Unfortunately, exact information about other localities of Corn-mummies is not available to us. Therefore, it is probable that Corn-mummies were placed with their corn un-germinated, hoping that it will germinate. Nevertheless, since most excavated specimens were found with the grains un-germinated, it is likely that this was intended to germinate in a purely symbolic way in the next life. It is worth mentioning that in legendary context, the reference to Osiris resurrection is envisioned as a resurrection in the next world,⁶⁸ not in the world of the livings. As for the symbolism of the wax mask and accessories, this resonates with the preservative purpose of mummification. In addition to its preservative aspect, wax was considered a mystic substance with magical powers that vary from defensive to protective. It was also associated with god Re due to its susceptibility to heat. The melting of wax at sunlight was considered a sign of returning to life after a standstill state.⁶⁹ It is possible that wax was used in funerary context, among others, due to this changeable nature.⁷⁰ However, an intriguing relationship is noted between wax and Osiris in Diodorus Siculus's account of the legend of Osiris. Although brief, it gives some interesting details about the time when Isis found the dismembered pieces of Osiris's body. In order to make Osiris be worshipped in many towns around Egypt, she made over each piece she

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found a life-size figure of her husband out of wax and spices, buried it in the town where she found the piece and convinced the priests of each town that the whole body of Osiris was buried in it.⁷¹ The researcher therefore proposes that the use of wax for the Corn-mummies was intended as a replication of Osiris.

It was noted that some of the Tehne Corn-mummies were provided with eight wax aurei each,⁷² a feature that relates to the unity between Osiris and Ra that appeared during the New Kingdom,⁷³ and is a sign that the falcon heads of the coffins refer to Ra as well as Sokar.⁷⁴ In fact, indications of the solar aspect of Sokar are found from the New Kingdom when Sokar was identified with Ra for the first time, an identification that developed through the Graeco-Roman Period when the form Sokar-Ra appeared.⁷⁵ Another indication of the relationship with Ra is the scarab representing god *Kheper* found with some of the Corn-mummies placed on the head of the Osirian mummy.⁷⁶ A significant link between *Kheper* and Sokar is found in the Fifth Hour of the Imduat, where *Kheper* emerges from a mound representing the dark cave of Sokar.⁷⁷

In addition, the dominant yellow color of the coffin and several other coffins has a strong connection with the sun. M. Centrone focused on this point: "I believe the fundamental reason for the use of yellow (or gilded) paint for colouring the background of the corn-mummies' coffins lays on the association of this colour with the sun and its reviving and rejuvenating power".⁷⁸

In other words, the symbolism of the Corn-mummies mixes ideas of the resurrection of Osiris, with the association between Osiris and Sokar and his union with Ra, with aspiration to a renewed life. The use of both grains and wax therefore is purely symbolic and ensures magical powers to the notion.

Commentary regarding the human ears' features:

An intriguing feature on the coffin was the human ears attached to the falcon head. Fig. 3, a. Therefore, a comparative study was made by the researcher with other Corn-mummies coffins. The conclusion was that it was a common feature within the Tehne Collection where twelve examples in addition to the one studied in this paper were provided with human ears.⁷⁹ The feature is less common in other collections. For instance, In the Meidum collection none of the coffins have ears, neither does any of Tuna El Gable specimens and Sheikh Fadl collection; only one of the three coffins has human ears.⁸⁰ Seven other examples of unknown provenance had the same feature.⁸¹ As for Wadi Qubanet El Qurud, none of the mummies were placed in coffins.⁸² The fact that the artist who took much care in adding human ears to falcon heads could not be left unrecognized. It echoed with the New Kingdom votive objects that were provided with ears and dedicated to specific gods who would listen to the individual's prayers during the Eighteenth Dynasty, or to respond to his prayers during the Ramesside Period.⁸³ The ears votive objects of the New Kingdom were dedicated to several gods including Horemakht and Rahearakhty, two divinities that are considered images of Ra.⁸⁴

During the Greco-Roman Period, this religious practice took a somehow different allegory and spread from Egypt to the other countries.⁸⁵ Some of these objects during the Greco-Roman Period had in addition to the ears, the *atef* crown and were in some cases, related to the worship of Isis and Osiris.⁸⁶ In this regard, the ears were intended as a way to ensure that the god would listen.⁸⁷ Accordingly, there is a probability that the function of the ears in the Corn-mummies was to pass the prayers to god Osiris. However, as discussed earlier, the Corn-mummies were mostly related to the ceremonies of Osiris during the month of Khioak and were strongly connected to rejuvenation and resurrection of Osiris. It has also been elucidated that this resurrection was meant as a resurrection into Re, with whom Osiris would unite in his nightly journey from the New Kingdom onward. The association of the ears with god Ra is attested in some examples. For instance, an early Roman Period sarcophagus was provided with the ears and eyes of Ra in the court of the judgment of Osiris in order to enable the former to rule in the judgment of the deceased.⁸⁸

Therefore, it may be concluded that, with the popularity of the worship of Osiris from the Third Intermediate Period onward, and with the spread of the idea of the unification of Osiris with Ra in the afterlife, the Corn-mummies served an additional purpose of transmitting prayers to Ra.

Conclusion:

In the current study, the researcher was able to identify that Corn-mummy JE 36546, SR 4/6023 dates to the early Ptolemaic Period based on comparison of stylistic features of other parallels. It was found at Tehne in 1903 by Lefebvre with others of the same type.

Corn-mummies are likely a later step in the development of effigies relating grain germination to the resurrection of Osiris ; they were used since the New Kingdom. They are therefore prospective descendants to the Eighteenth Dynasty Osiris Beds, and may well be a development of the Late Period miniature Corn-mummies that were found inside some Ptah-Soker-Osiris statues.

Every year during the celebrations related to Osiris in the fourth month of the Inundation Season, one Corn-mummy was prepared and buried. Five cemeteries have given us the main collections of Corn-mummies that are ranging in date from the Third Intermediate Period to the Roman Period.

The preferred burial place for the Corn-mummies was near the ground surface to be close to possible rain water. Some of them were not only buried near the surface but also in valleys that can collect flash floods. The purpose for this choice was to aspire to grain germination. The researched extrapolates that the anticipated germination was not expected to happen in this life but in the next life. Therefore, the grains in the mummies were left un-germinated.

The extensive use of wax in the Corn-mummies accessories might not be just for its preservative or protective nature but more likely for its Osirian connotation. The researcher inducted that since wax was used by Isis to produce copies of her husband, it is subsequently used to turn the Corn-mummies magically into copies of Osiris. This would be enhanced with the fact that the sarcophagi of the Corn-mummies were made of sycamore wood, thus symbolizing the body of Nut from whom Osiris would be born anew.

In conclusion, Corn-mummies were magical objects used to insure ideas related to resurrection and rejuvenation through the combination of Sokar-Osiris that was popular in the later periods of the Ancient Egyptian history as well as the union of Osiris and Re.

The Figures



(a)



(b)

Fig. 1
The coffin



Fig. 2
A side view of the coffin



(a)



(b)

Fig. 3
Pictures showing details of the coffin

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Fig. 4

A Side view of the coffin showing the tenons and mortises



Fig. 5

A Close side view of the coffin showing the tenons and mortises



(a)



(b)

Fig. 6

A Side view of the coffin showing lateral details



Fig. 7
The back of the coffin



Fig. 8
The lower side of the base of the coffin showing the sycamore wood



Fig. 9
The inside of the coffin showing the sycamore wood, the tenons and mortises



Fig. 10
The contents of the coffin in their place

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Fig. 11
The mummy



Fig. 12
Another view of the mummy



Fig. 13
The details of the head and the shattered mask



Fig. 14
The crown



Fig. 15
Green wax broken accessories



Fig. 16
The mummy and its equipment



Fig. 17
The Four Sons of Horus and the resin disc

ملخص البحث

يتناول البحث مومياء صغيرة من النوع المسمي موميوات الحبوب وهي المومياء رقم JE 36546 المعروضة بالمتحف المصري بالقاهرة تحت رقم عرض SR 4/6023. وقد تم اكتشافها ضمن مجموعة من نفس النوع في حفرات دفن بمنطقة تحنا بمحافظة المنيا بواسطة جوستاف لوفيفر سنة 1903. والمومياء محفوظة بداخل تابوت برأس صقر يمثل الإله سوكر-أوزوريس وهي مومياء وهمية لأوزوريس مصنوعة من خليط من الحبوب والتربة والقش وملفوفة في لفائف كتانية مغموسة في الصمغ العربي. رأس المومياء مشكلة بشكل تاج الأتف وذلك لتأخذ تاج الأتف المصنوع من الشمع الأسود المائل للون الأخضر والمزود بقرنين. يشكل التاج قطعة واحدة مع قناع يمثل وجه أوزوريس والذي وجد محطما بداخل التابوت. بجوار المومياء وجدت أربع موميوات صغيرة تمثل أبناء حورس الأربعة. ترتبط موميوات الحبوب بعبادة الإله أوزوريس وعقيدة البعث المرتبطة به ولذلك تم استخدام الحبوب المخلوطة بالتربة لخدمة هذه الرمزية. يهدف البحث الحالي إلى نشر التابوت والمومياء وملحقاتها حيث أنهما لم يسبق نشرهما.

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- ¹ G. Lefebvre (1903), “sarcophages égyptiens trouvés dans une nécropole Gréco-Roman, a Tehneh”, *ASAE* 4, 227-231.
- ² M. J. Raven (1982), “Corn-mummies”, *Oudheidkundige mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* 63, 7-38.
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