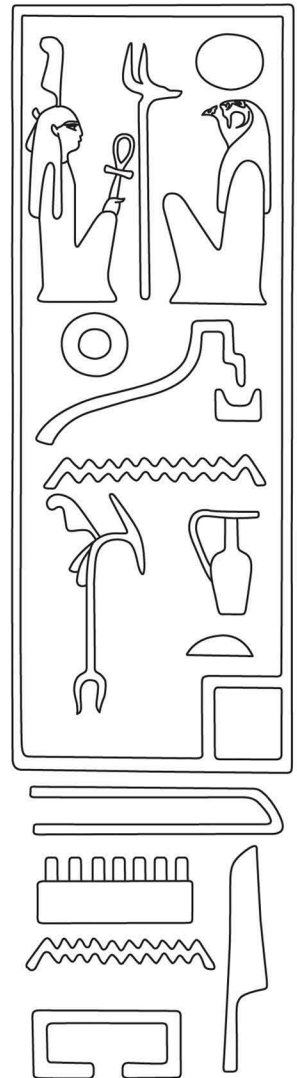


MEMNONIA

BULLETIN ÉDITÉ PAR L'ASSOCIATION POUR LA SAUVEGARDE DU RAMESSEUM



III - 1992



Mohammed Nasr
New Discoveries at Thebes-West

Le Bulletin MEMNONIA traite, en priorité, des études et recherches effectuées sur le temple de Ramsès II longtemps désigné sous l'appellation de *Memnonium*. Périodique annuel d'archéologie et d'histoire régionales, il contient également des études spécifiquement consacrées à Thèbes-Ouest, aire géographique connue sous le nom de *Memnonia* à l'époque gréco-romaine. Financé et édité par l'Association pour la Sauvegarde du Ramesseum, il est adressé gratuitement aux Membres d'honneur, aux Membres donateurs, bienfaiteurs et titulaires.

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NEW DISCOVERIES AT THEBES-WEST [Pl. XXVII-XXIX]

Mohamed NASR *

Because of the increasing number of tourist buses and cars and in order to facilitate their visits to the monuments for thousands of them daily, the Governor of Luxor desired to widen the roads leading from the tourist's and local ferries to the monumental areas of Qurna, which include the Valleys of the Kings, of the Queens and the Nobles.

On the 3rd of July 1990, a request was sent to the Egyptian Antiquities Organization (E.A.O.), the Permanent Committee of which agreed to the project and its realization under the supervision of the Qurna Inspectorate. Thus, the "Nile Company for asphaltting the desert roads" started the works on the 17th of February 1992. The Inspectorate of Antiquities of Qurna oversaw the works and made different archaeological soundings, with the following general results.

At the right corner of the road-crossing Medinet-Habu-Deir el-Medina-Valley of the Queens, at a depth of about one meter, two small steps appeared, leading to a rectangular red-brick tomb, that extends from east to west. Its dimensions are 4,84 × 4,55 m. In the west wall there was a small niche and the floor was plastered and white-washed. The tomb was full of heaps of scattered skeletons, bones and mummies in bad state.

On the east side of the same road, at a depth of one meter too, several mud brick tombs appeared, all rectangular in shape, oriented east to west. Most of them have a small niche in the centre of the west wall and also a mud-plastered floor with white-wash. Each of them contains still more skeletons in bad state of preservation. The site being not far from the *Memnonia* area and considering the style of the tombs, it can be suggested that they belong to the Roman Period⁽¹⁾.

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Another sounding, made at the southern side of the road leading to Deir el-Bahari, revealed a few meters of the stone walls belonging to the causeway of queen Hatshepsut's temple; these walls are situated on the right side when looking towards the Nile.

On the same side, but 50 meters in the direction of the temple and at a depth of two meters under debris from last century excavations, a wooden sarcophagus with a flat lid appeared, containing a wrapped mummy. The coffin is uninscribed and in a very bad state (Pl. XXVIII-A). Beside it, remains of bones and skeletons were scattered.

On the 20th of August 1991 five other wooden sarcophagi were extracted from the debris. All of them are uninscribed, in bad state and contained wrapped mummies (Pl. XXVIIA-B).

After five hours of work in the same site, an anthropoid wooden sarcophagus emerged : 114 cm. long, 31 cm. wide at the shoulders and 16,5 cm. at the feet. It is painted white and the lid shows, sculptured, the deceased's face, stuccoed and painted reddish (Pl. XXVIII-B). Along the lid, beginning under the chest and running down to the feet, extends a vertical line of hieroglyphics, the signs facing right. It reproduces the usual offering formula for the "Osiris" Djedkhonsuyuefankh. The stucco and inscription are partially preserved.

Inside the coffin a wrapped mummy was found, only 92,5 cm. long and 20 cm. large at the shoulders. The coffin probably dates from the Third Intermediate Period and belongs to a child (?).

On the 2nd of September 1991, on the same site, a small wooden ushabti was found. Its nose and eyes are rough, the body still bears traces of black writing, now unreadable, and the whole figure is in a poor state of preservation.

On the same site, too, came to light the upper part of a small statuette of a woman, wearing a short wig, arms and legs missing (Pl. XXIX). At their emplacements small fixation holes are visible. The figure is 12,5 cm. long and 4,8 cm. large at the shoulders. The female attributes of the object being extremely evident, it belongs to the category of the so-called "concubines of the dead"⁽²⁾.

Finally, on the 7th of September 1991 were found on the same site :

- A round bronze mirror, with handle ; complete (length : 15 cm.; diameter: 10 cm.).
- A bronze pot without base, having a wide mouth with turned-out rim (height : 7 cm. ; diameter : 12,5 cm.).

— A bronze dish, (diameter : 18 cm.; height 5 cm.) decorated with incised vegetal patterns.

NOTES

- (1) Cf. *supra*, M. A. El-Bialy, "Découverte d'une nécropole tardive aux environs de Gurnet Murraï", p. 83-87, and Pl. XIII-XV.
- (2) For complete example from Deir el-Bahari (18th Dynasty), see Cairo Museum CGC 774 = J.E. 21.527: L. Borchardt, *Statuen und Statuetten von Königen und Privatleuten*, CGC, III, 1930, p. 85-86; J. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*, III, 1958, p. 437.

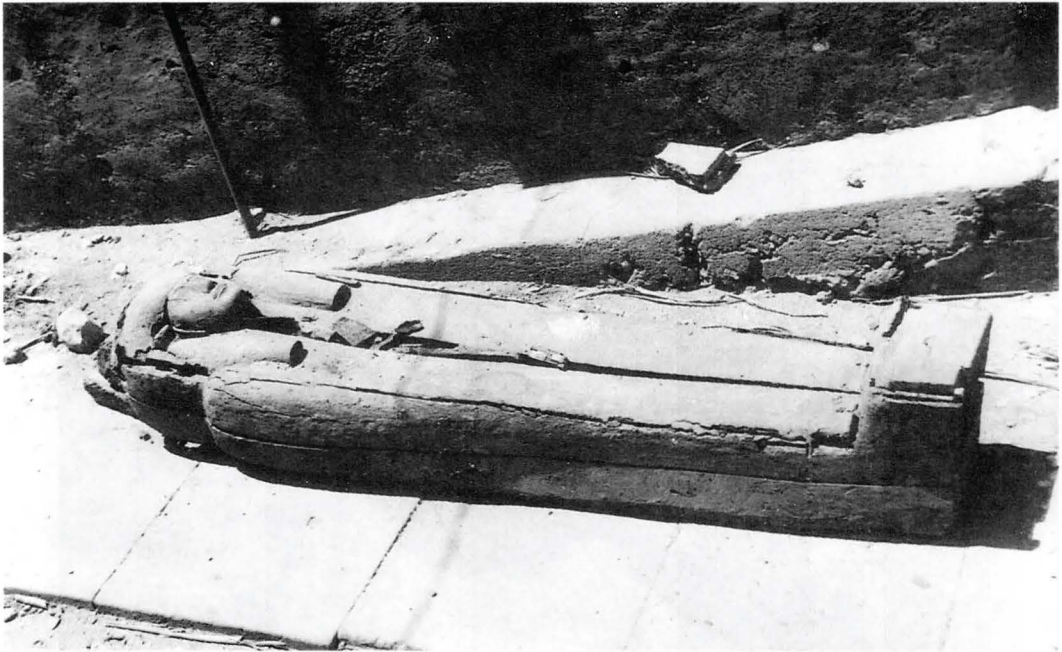
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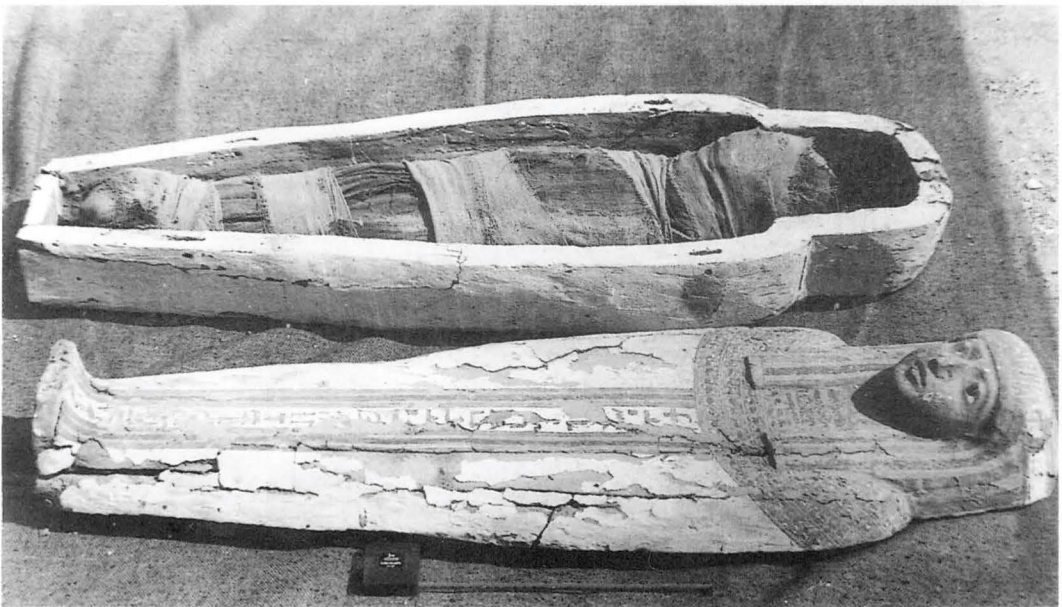
A.- Sounding made at the southern side of the road leading to Deir el Bahari. Discovery of some sarcophagi and mummies. (Cliché Mohamed Nasr).



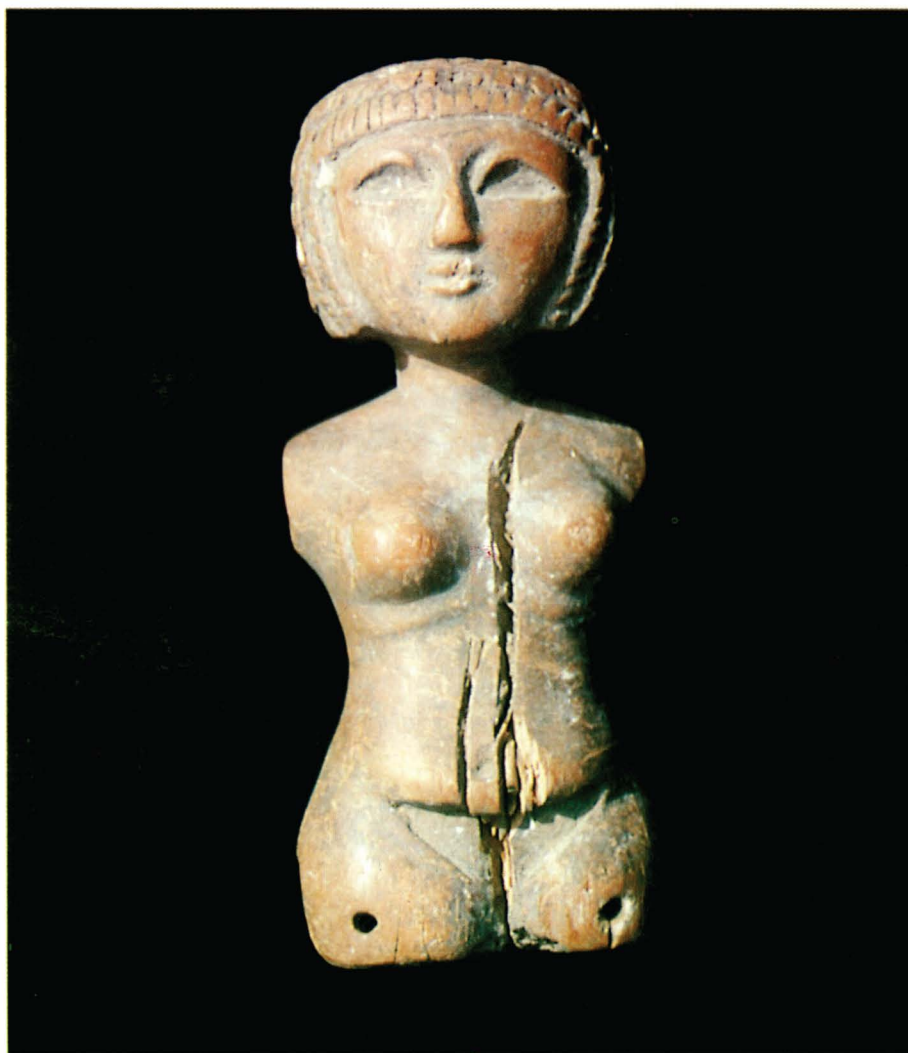
B.- Wooden sarcophagi extracted from the debris, in this area. (Cliché Mohamed Nasr).



A.- Wooden coffin uninscribed. (Cliché Mohamed Nasr).



B.- Anthropoid sarcophagus with usual offering formula for the "Osiris" Djedkhonsuyuefankh. Third Intermediate Period. (Cliché Mohamed Nasr).



Small statuette of a woman. It belongs to the category of the so-called “concubine of the dead”. (Cliché Mohamed Nasr).

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