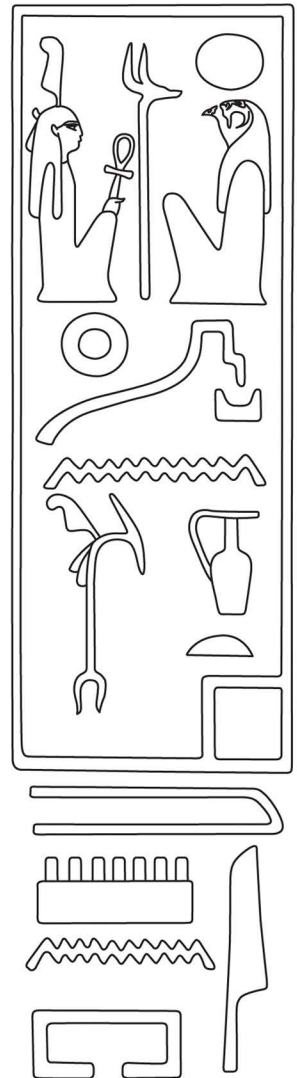


# MEMNONIA

BULLETIN ÉDITÉ PAR L'ASSOCIATION POUR LA SAUVEGARDE DU RAMESSEUM



IV-V [1993-1994]



*Mohammed es-Saghir*

*An anthropological examination of human skulls found  
in the area of Tarif at Qurna.*

## **AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF HUMAN SKULLS FOUND IN THE AREA OF TARIF AT QURNA [Pl.XXX-XXXIII]**

**Mohamed EL-SAGHIR \***

In 1987, the Egyptian Antiquities Organization decided to carry out an experimental excavation in the site occupied by the local market of the village of Tarif which is situated at the north end of the Theban Necropolis. The site which lies just to the east of Petrie's Cemetery B <sup>(1)</sup>, is a large open space area which occupies a total area of 15850 square metres. This site is now bounded on three sides by the villagers' houses and with the Muslim cemetery to the south. The excavations conducted by M. Ismail el-Masry <sup>(2)</sup>, the inspector of Qurna in 1987-1988, revealed a series of ruck-cut tombs datable to the Middle Kingdom period. The general layout of these tombs are similar to those discovered in the adjacent area by Petrie <sup>(3)</sup> in 1908.

As a result of the finds discovered during the course of the excavation, the tombs were secondarily used during the New Kingdom period. This fact is also deduced from the anthropological examination of the twenty one skulls found in the tombs. Since these skulls are a subject of an interest study, I give a short anthropological summary on them here :

**N°1** Male calvarium ; the left side of the maxillar part is missing, the left tuber parietale is broken. The personal age is at about 40 years. Taxonomically he belonged to the proto-mediterranean type with slight negroid features ; the nose is broader and the orbits are more rectangular than at the classical mediterraneans. Dolichocran, mesoprosop.

**N°2** Male calvarium of at about 30-40 years in good preservation. Dolichocran, leptoprosop. The fossa canina is filled, the nose is narrow, but the zygomatic region is high. He belonged to a gracile mediterranean type.

**N°3** A calvarium of a senile (over 60 years old) man in good preservation. The whole calvarium is robust. He belongs to an ancient - most probably to

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the protomediterranean - racial type. Dolichocran, leptoprosop. On the teeth paradontosis ; the facial part is asymmetric.

N°4 A mummified head of a 50 years old woman. The nasal and maxillar part of the cranium is missing. The right eye is in position, the left is missing. The mummification process shows a method, which was used in the XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (XVIII-XX<sup>th</sup> Dynasties). The racial type belongs to the eastern mediterranean stock (cf. Pl. XXX).

N°5 A mummified head of a 40-50 years old man. The lambda region of the cranium and the left eye is missing. The racial type of the man belongs to an "eastern-mediterranean" race ; the nose is a little bit narrower and the orbits are rounder, than "regular". The mummification shows a "praeclassical" method, it means that it was made between the XVIII-XX<sup>th</sup> Dynasties; most probably in the XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (cf. Pl. XXXI).

N°6 A mummified head of an old - at about 60 years old - woman. The complete, well mummified head belongs to an ancient North-African european type — to an ancient southern-mediterranean type. The mummification prepared the head completely ; the brain was taken out by the basis of the cranium. The tongue, lips etc. are well preserved (cf. Pl. XXXII).

N°7 A partially mummified calvaria of an 50 years old man. The mummified layer is destroyed ; it remains only on the top of the calvaria. The partly preserved layer shows a good praeclassical mummification technique of about the XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The mummified man belonged to the south-eastern mediterranean race.

N°8 A mummified head of a 60 years old woman without mandible. She belonged to a gracile-south-mediterranean type, typical for the ancient egyptians. The mummification allowed a good preservation of the face's skin - on the calotte it is secundarily destroyed. The brain was taken out by the occipital part. On the left maxilla we find the traces of a fistula, so the left upper first and second molars are missing. These molars fall out *in vivo*. The mummification method is "praeclassical", most probably made in the XVIII-XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasties.

N°9 A well mummified head of a 40 years old woman. The mummified skin of the cranium is missing, but the facial part is well preserved. The woman belonged to the ancient "southern mediterranean" racial type, typical for the ancient Egyptians. Especially the nose is typical for this region. The mummification method is "praeclassical", of the XVIII-XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasties. Left upper and lower praemolars are missing - fallen out *in vivo*.

**N°10** A well mummified head of a male of mature (40-60) years. The mummification method is of the late XVIII<sup>th</sup> and (or) of the early XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasties. Also the bandages of the head are preserved. The nose is broad and curved ; in the mouth there are tampons. The mummified man belonged to the southern egyptian racial type, which is called "southern-mediterranean-theban" (cf. Pl. XXXIII).

**N°11** A completely mummified head of an adult (at about 30 years old) woman. The whole head is covered by skin and with thin layers of textiles, so, detailed examinations we couldn't do. The woman belonged to the southern-mediterranean-theban racial type, like the head N°10. In the shape of the head, we can find slight negroid traces. The mummification is of the XVIII-XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasties.

**N°12** The posterior part of a calotte, which belonged to a senile (60 years old or older) man. The head was mummified, but only the skin is preserved and some textiles remained. On the head we find some bitumen-spots, it shows the signs of later mummification technique. The fragment belongs to a south-mediterranean racial type.

**N°13** A partially mummified calvaria of a mature (40-60 years old) man. He belonged to the southern-mediterranean racial type. The mummification technique is of the "praeclassical" of the late XVIII<sup>th</sup> - early XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

**N°14** The facial part of a young woman without mandible. The head was well mummified, even the textile bandages remained. She belonged to a southern-mediterranean racial type, but we can find some negroid features in the face also.

**N°15** A mummified head - without mandibular part - of a 40 years old woman. The mummification method is of a later type ; by mummifying too much resin has been used so the skin - mostly the soft parts - are not well treated. She belonged to the southern-mediterranean racial type.

**N°16** The facial part of a mummified female head. She was at about 50 years old. The mummification method is of a later one - too much resin was used. The brain was taken out by the nose. She belonged to an ancient mediterranean racial type ; the face is mesoprosop-euryprosop, the head itself is dolichocran.

**N°17** A partly mummified calvaria of an old (over 60 years old) man. The skin is well preserved, but the bandages are broken or missing. The mummification shows a "praeclassical" method. He belonged to a precisely non determinable mediterranean race ; the typical pentagonoid form of the head is well visible.

**N°18** A partially mummified calvaria of an adult (40-60 years old) woman. From the mummification only some parts of the skin and some textile-traces remained. Besides the mediterranean racial type, we find negrid traces on the head. The mummification shows a XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasty's method.

**N°19** A well preserved female calvarium belongs to this number as well as an extra bandage-part, taken from the head. The woman belongs to the gracile-mediterranean racial type ; hyperdolichocran, euryprosop. The mummification method is "prae-classical" ; the skin is well preserved, but the mummification is secondarily destroyed.

**N°20** A mummified head of a mature (40-60 years old) woman without mandible. She belongs to the southern-mediterranean and partly nubian racial type ; mesocran and mesoprosop. On the top of the head we find bitumen traces ; it shows that the mummification method was a late one. On the left first upper molar, we find a tuber Carabelli.

**N°21** A mummified head without mandible of a 55-60 years old man. He belongs to the gracile-mediterranean racial type, but some negroid traces we could be found in it. The mummification method is "prae-classic" of at about the XIX<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The brain was taken out by the occipital part - through the Foramen occipitale magnum.

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#### NOTES

- (1) Petrie, *Qurneh*, London, 1909
- (2) Ismaïl El-Masry, JACF (ISIS), vol.II, 1988, pp.83-86 ; du même auteur, "La nécropole d'El- Taref", dans *Les Dossiers d'Archéologie* N°149-150, mai-juin 1990, pp.120-121.
- (3) Petrie, *op. cit.*

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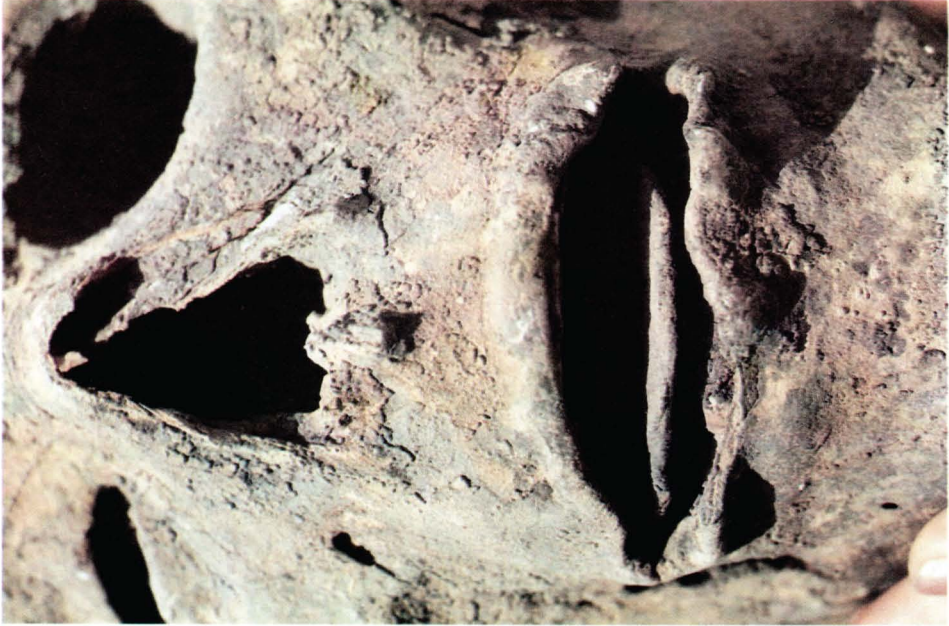


N° 4. A mummified head of a 50 years old woman (face and profile). New Kingdom. [Cliché Mohamed El-Saghir].



N° 5. A mummified head of a 40-50 years old man (face and profile). New Kingdom. [Cliché Mohamed El-Saghir].





N° 6. A mummified head of an old ( $\pm 60$  years) woman (face and profile). The tongue is well preserved. [Cliché Mohamed El-Saghir].



N° 10. A well mummified head of a male of mature (40-60 years). New Kingdom. The bandages of the head are preserved. [Cliché Mohamed El-Saghir].

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**Supervision montage et impression : Moustapha Fayçal Soliman.**

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