

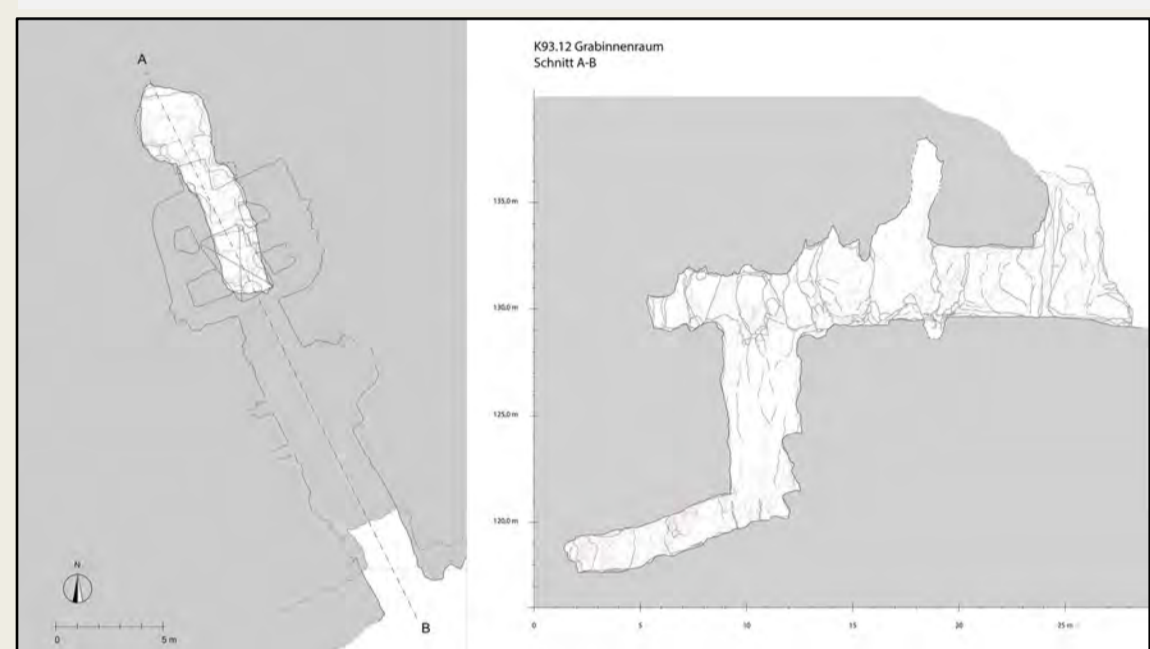
# TRACES OF TRANSITION: FUNERARY ENVELOPES FROM K93.12 IN DRA' ABU EL-NAGA AS ARTISTIC INDICATORS OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE

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A significant amount of funerary envelopes has been discovered in the main shaft and the inner courtyard of tomb K93.12 in Dra' Abu-el-Naga which is being excavated by the German Archaeological Institute Cairo. This tomb constitutes the northern part of the extensive double tomb complex K93.11/K93.12 that was originally cut in the early 18th dynasty, most probably for king Amenhotep I and his mother Ahmes Nefertari.



In the 20th dynasty the site was re-modeled into a monumental tomb-temple by the High Priest of Amun, Ramsesnakht, and his son and successor Amenhotep. The remains of coffins and cartonnages dating from the 18th dynasty to the 25th dynasties, as the entire archaeological record, illustrate the multiple re-uses of this place and testify to its long lasting symbolic importance.



K93.12: Ground plan and plan section of the tomb's interior (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).

Ground plan of the double complex K93.11/K93.12 (status March 2016; © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).

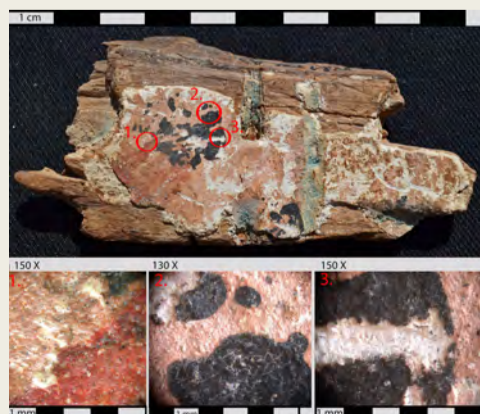
A major albeit very fragmented piece is the coffin of the High Priest of Amun, Amenhotep, dating to the end of the 20th dynasty (Ramses IX-XI) which was found in the main shaft of K93.12. Although this personality is well attested in ancient Egyptian sources, his burial was not known until its discovery in 2009. Besides, his coffin is exceptional in terms of both the period of production and its originality: Only very few coffins of the 20th dynasty are known to date. Moreover, technical and iconographical details show that it was intended to imitate a stone sarcophagus, a rather uncommon feature that illustrates clearly the economical crisis of this period.



K93.12 – Main burial chamber: Face of Amenhotep HPA coffin (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).



K93.12 - Main burial chamber: Part of the case of Amenhotep HPA coffin (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).



K93.12 - Main burial chamber: fragment of Amenhotep HPA coffin showing the painted background imitating granite © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).

## Technical features:

- The surface is engraved in sunk relief, a time-consuming technique usually used on stone sarcophagi rather than wooden coffins.
- The polychromy displays the peculiar pattern of red and black spots on a pinkish background which can be interpreted as an imitation of granite.
- The face and hands are coloured in green. Unusual during the 20<sup>th</sup> dynasty, this feature appears in some instances on coffin faces of the 26th Dynasty. Given the very few examples of polychromy remains on stone sarcophagi, it can only be hypothesized if this green flesh colour was another stylistic element in imitating an original stone model.

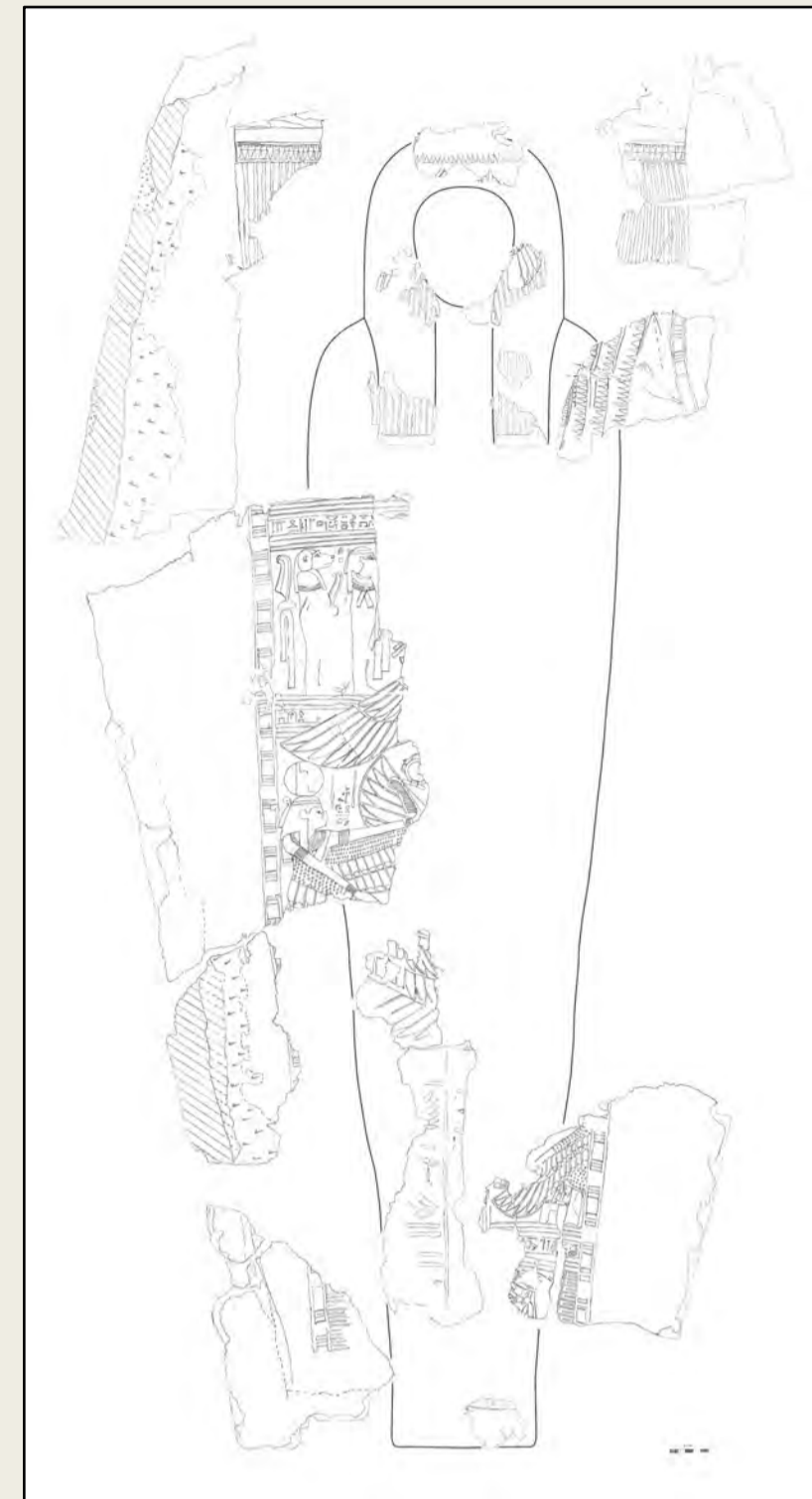
## Iconographical feature:

A solar bark is depicted on the side of the case (only the stern is visible). During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasty, this feature is more likely to be encountered on stone sarcophagi (for example the granite sarcophagus of Ramesses III (that was probably first intended for Sety II)).

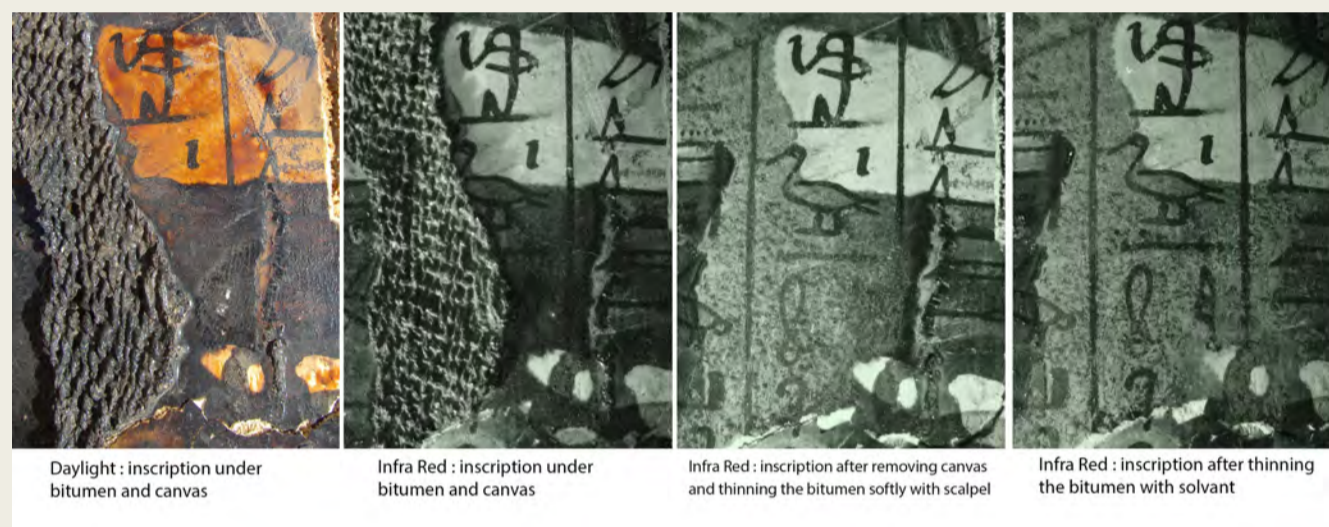
Besides the remains of Amenhotep's burial, a group of five 22nd dynasty cartonnages (four adults and one child) showing a very fine decoration allowing to date four of them from the beginning of this dynasty was discovered in the main shaft. They display traces of fire: they are partially burned or covered by soot that darkens or completely masks the decoration. Moreover, two of them are partially covered with "bitumen". By the use of infrared photography along with local cleaning, it was possible to expose the decoration beneath the black crust. As a result, the inscriptions were clearly readable and in one case yielded the name, genealogy and the titles of the deceased.



K93.12: Cartonnages from the main burial chamber (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).



K93.12 Main shaft: Hand-drawing of cartonnage 2 (drawing by S. Fetler; © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).

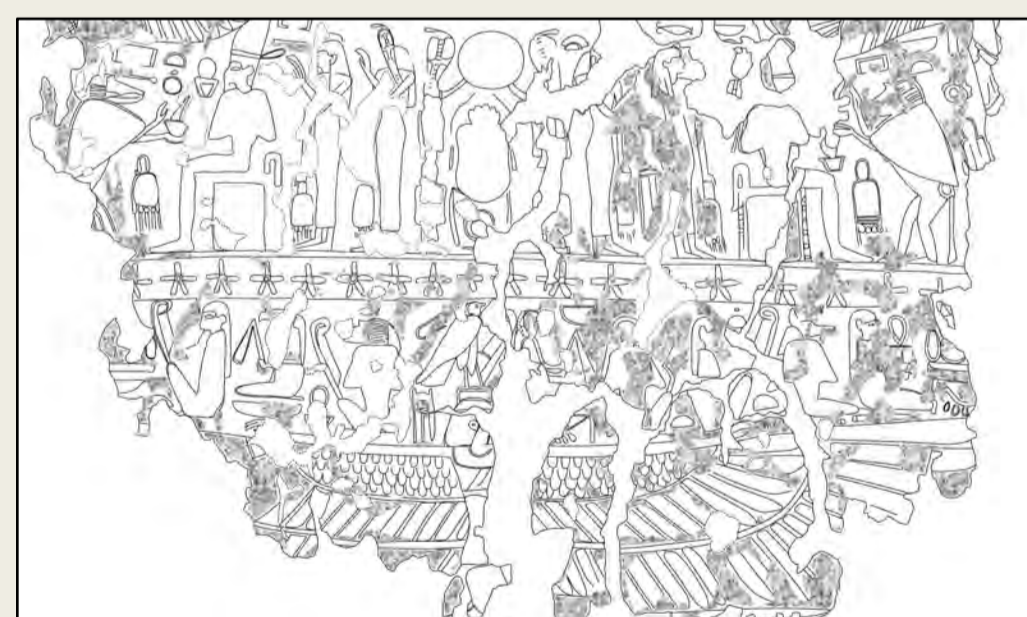


K93.12: Cartonnage no 3 - Steps of local cleaning combined with infra red view allowing to read the inscription beneath the black layer (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).

Furthermore, in the inner courtyard of K93.12, more than 20 lids of "yellow coffins" dating to the late 21st/early 22nd dynasties were discovered. They were displaced from their still unknown original location by tomb robbers and tossed into the court, partly on top of each other. Although the objects are very fragile, their decoration could be recorded by drawing and offers highly interesting typological features. Moreover, this group of coffins along with the contemporaneous cartonnages from the main shaft provide instructive evidence of a political and cultural change at the transition from the 21st to the 22nd dynasty. Being still in their archaeological context, they form a solid starting point for a study of artistic production networks which would improve our understanding of the integration processes of new symbolical values in the Egyptian funerary culture at that time.



K93.12: Location of the "yellow coffins" in the inner courtyard (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).



K93.12: Vector drawing of coffin no. 1 from the inner courtyard - detail (drawing by S. Fetler; © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).



K93.12: Coffin no. 14 from the inner courtyard (© Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo).