Unpublished Four Canopic Jars from Al-Ashmunein Magazine

أربعة أوان كانونية غير منشورة بالمخزن المتحفي في الأشمونين

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ملخص:

يتناول هذا البحث نشر أربعة أوان كانونية من العصر المتأخر موجودة بالمخزن المتحفي في الأشمونين مركز ملوي محافظة المنيا. ويبدأ البحث بوصف عام للأواني الكانونية الأربعة ثم يتناول كل إينة على حدة مع ترجمة للنص الموجود على الجزء الأمامي من الإينة، وهو عبارة عن سطرين هيروغليفين يتألفان من كل إينة، كذلك شكلت رأس كل إينة على هيئة أحد أبناء حورس الأربعة: "إسمتي، وحابي، وفبح سنو إف، ودوا موت إف". كما قام الباحث بعمل فاكسميلي لكل نص موجود على أحد الأواني، مع وجود صور فوتوغرافية لكل إينة، واللافت للنظر أنه في كل نص لا بد من قراءة السطر الثاني قبل السطر الأول، حتى يستطيع النص. 

والأواني الكانونية الأربعة من الألبستر وتحمل اسم Nwb-ii.ti، لكن لا يحمل أي نصوص إشارة إلى وظيفته أو أسرته، ثم تطرق البحث إلى تاريخ الأواني وفقًا لطبيعة ومميزات النص الموجود عليها، وهو عبارة عن صيغة انتشرت منذ الدولة الحديثة والعصر المتأخر.
The four Canopic jars published here were found by the police in year 1981, with some robbers in Maghagha, El-Minia Governorate. Then they were moved to Al-Ashmunein Magazine, and kept under the Inventory number 3204 and 5161-4 in the Magazine’s register book. The original location in where these jars were found is still unknown.

Each one of those jars bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic enclosed in a frame, with the traditional formula usually written on the Canopic jars since the Saite Period. This formula invokes the protection of the four protection goddesses Isis, Nephthys, Selqet and Neit.¹

**The direction of the inscription**

The text on the body of each one of the four Canopic jars consists of two vertical lines of hieroglyphic text. It is noticeable that the second line is written before the first one, as that was known from the other traditional formula. To obtain the correct meaning, we must read the second line before the first one until the formula is completed. The occasion the Canopic jars of the Saite Period onwards. It is the first time, as to my knowledge, the text comes disarranged.

On the other four Canopic jars, the date of the late Libyan period came from Gurnah district at Thebes. We find five vertical lines on each jar arranged from right to left although the direction of the text runs from left to right.²

1. **The first Canopic jar with a human headed lid**

   Inv. Nr: 5161
   Material: Alabaster
   Height: 34 cm.

   **Description**

   Yellowish alabaster Canopic jar with a human head as a symbol of *Kbh-snw:f* without beard

   (Fig. 1) The first Canopic jar with a human headed lid.

bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic, enclosed in a rectangular frame. The jar is polished outside, the cover is in a good state of preservation with painted eyes and mouth carefully cut in the stone.
1. The first Canopic jar with a hawk headed lid
Inv. Nr: 516/2
Material: Alabaster
Height: 34 cm.

Description

Yellowish alabaster jar with a hawk head bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic, enclosed in a rectangular frame. The jar is polished outside; the cover is in a good state of preservation with painted eyes and mouth carefully cut in the stone. The text in both lines is damaged in some parts.

1) ḫḏ mdw ẖr in šrt n kš.k skd ẖr ṭ’-nb ḫr īr mkt n ḫb-snw.f nty [im.i]
2) ḫḏ n šrt n kš.k skd ẖr ṭ’-nb ḫr īr mkt n ḫb-snw.f nty [im.i] sš Wṣir ḫb-snw.f Wṣir ḫb-snw.f

Recitation by Selqet for your ka, I get the protection daily to make the protection of ḫb-snw.f who is in me, the protection of Osiris ḫb-snw.f, Osiris Ṣwb-ii.ti is ḫb-snw.f.

K. Sethe studied the whole formulas on the Canopic jars from the Old Kingdom to Late Period, he classified them in types, the last type (XIX) is from the Saite Period.12

2. The second Canopic jar with a hawk headed lid
Inv. Nr: 516/2
Material: Alabaster
Height: 34 cm.

Description

Yellowish alabaster jar with a hawk head bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic, enclosed in a rectangular frame. The jar is polished outside; the cover is in a good state of preservation with painted eyes and mouth carefully cut in the stone. The text in both lines is damaged in some parts.

1) ḫḏ (n) ẖr ṭ’-nb ḫr īr mkt n ḫb-snw.f nty [im.i] sš Wṣir ḫb-snw.f Wṣir ḫb-snw.f
2) ḫḏ n šrt n kš.k skd ẖr ṭ’-nb ḫr īr mkt n ḫb-snw.f nty [im.i]
3) ḫḏ mdw ẖr in šrt n kš.k skd ẖr ṭ’-nb ḫr īr mkt n ḫb-snw.f nty [im.i] sš Wṣir ḫb-snw.f Wṣir ḫb-snw.f

Recitation by Selqet for your ka, I get the protection daily to make the protection of ḫb-snw.f who is in me, the protection of Osiris ḫb-snw.f, Osiris Ṣwb-ii.ti is ḫb-snw.f.

K. Sethe studied the whole formulas on the Canopic jars from the Old Kingdom to Late Period, he classified them in types, the last type (XIX) is from the Saite Period.12

2. The second Canopic jar with a hawk headed lid
Inv. Nr: 516/2
Material: Alabaster
Height: 34 cm.

Description

Yellowish alabaster jar with a hawk head bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic, enclosed in a rectangular frame. The jar is polished outside; the cover is in a good state of preservation with painted eyes and mouth carefully cut in the stone. The text in both lines is damaged in some parts.
1) [ii.ti]^{(d)} the justified is the protection of Imsty, Osiris Nwb-ii.ti the justified is Imsty.

Comment

a. The verb "sm3 to slay, to destroy" is written here without the sign and without a determinative.

It is usual in this kind of text to find the verb in metatheses such as where the letter \( i \) introduced on the letter \( m \). The determinative of the verb varies between \( \text{,,} \), \( \text{,,} \), and \( \text{,,} \).

b. The word "d3it foe, enemy, opponent" ends with the determinative or or with both determinatives. So, the scribe here was confused between the determinative and \( \text{,,} \).

c. Addition of the suffix pronoun, first person, singular.

d. The first line starts with a damage part; there is enough space to put the last part of the deceased name.

3. The third Canopic jar with a jackal headed lid

Inv. Nr: 5163
Material: Alabaster
Height: 34 cm.

Description

Yellowish alabaster Canopic jar with a jackal head as a symbol of Dw-imw.f bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic, enclosed in a rectangular frame. The jar is polished outside; the cover, not polished, is in a good state of preservation with painted eyes carefully cut in the stone.

1) \[\text{fig. 2}\]

(Fig. 2) The second Canopic jar with a hawk headed lid.
2) ḥd n Nit sdw3.i smšr.i rˁ-nb hr [ir] mkt n Dw3-mwt.f nty im(i) s3 Ws-

1) ḫr Nwb-ii.ti mšr-hrw s3 Dw3-mwt.f Wsir Nwb-ii.ti mšr-hrw pw Dw3-mwt.f

2) The speech of Neith: (i) spend the morning, (a) evening and everyday make protection of Dw3-mwt.f who is in (me), (c) the protection of Os-

1) ir Nwb-ii.ti mAa-xrw s3 Dw3-mwt.f Wsir Nwb-ii.ti the justified is the protection of Dw3-mwt.f, Osiris Nwb-ii.ti the justified is Dw3-mwt.f.

Comment

a. ṣdw3 'spend the morning, make an early start' appeared in the Saite Period and was written in different ways on the other Canopic jars such as and and 25 and 26.

b. smšr 'spend the evening' appeared in the Saite Period. 27 The word is written in a strange way, where the first sign is unclear; it is probably that the scribe was confused between it and the sign . As for the two last signs of the word, maybe intend or , so the correct writing probably is where the word appeared in the same spelling in parallel texts. 28 The part after the word was confused, the first proposition is increased while it is suggested to be the verb after the second proposition hr. the comparison of this formula with others on the Canopic jars appears that formula reads as:

(Fig. 3)
Recitation by Neit, i spend the morning, the evening and the day making protection of Dw³-mwt.f who is in me, the protection of Osiris N is the protection of Dw³-mwt.f, Osiris N is Dw³-mwt.f.

c. addition of the suffix pronoun, first person, singular.

4. The fourth Canopic jar with an ape headed lid

Inv. Nr: 516/4  
Material: Alabaster  
Height: 34 cm.

Description

Yellowish alabaster jar with an ape head as a symbol of ḫpȝ bears two vertical lines of inscribed hieroglyphic, enclosed in a rectangular frame run from right to lift. The jar is polished outside. The cover is in a good state of preservation with painted eyes and mouth carefully cut in the stone.

1) ḫd n Nb-t-hwt (h)p(.i) stst₃ hr ir bs₃ n ḫpȝ nty im(.i) st Wsir

2) ḫd n Nb-t-hwt (h)p(.i) stst₃ hr ir bs₃ n ḫpȝ nty im(.i) st Wsir

1) Nwb-ii.ti m³₃-hrw s³ ḫpȝ Wsir Nwb-ii.ti m³₃-hrw pw ḫpȝ

2) The speech of Nephthys: (i) conceal (a) the secret (b) and make protection (c) of ḫpȝ who is in (me) (d), the protection of Osiris.

1) Nwb-ii.ti the justified is the protection of ḫpȝ, Osiris Nwb-ii.ti the justified is ḫpȝ.

(Fig. 4)
Comment

a. It is clear that the scribe wrote only the sign of the verb he forgot the sign which comes so much in the parallel texts.

b. 'secret'. It is clear here that the sign came later after the group but it came in parallel texts of Canopic jars in its normal place such as and .

c. The verb 'to protect' is written with an incorrect determinative. It is probably that the scribe intended the sign which usually comes as an end for the verb such as , but the great potential that the scribe confused between the determinative of the verb which is found in the oldest formula of Nephthys, and the determinative of verb . The same occurs in other verbs such as verb which usually ends with the determinative or . It appears taking the determinative . The verb appeared with different determinatives such as , , and .

d. Addition of the suffix pronoun, first person, singular.

Owner of the jars

The owner of these Canopic jars is 'the gold came'. It is attested as a proper name in the texts of the Middle Kingdom, or even earlier in the First Intermediate Period, and became common in the Late Period. The owner's name is written, as it came before, one time with the sign mistakenly, but the right full name is A female form from the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty bears the same name.

The inscriptions of the four Canopic jars mentioned the owner's name, but did not mention the name of his father or his mother. On the other hand, no title or profession of the deceased is mentioned.

Dating of Canopic jars

The date of those Canopic jars is unknown; the registration of Al- Ashmunein Magazine dates them to the Saite Period, but depending on the characteristics of the lids and hieroglyphic inscriptions, it is more appropriate to place them in the Era between the Saite Period and the Thirtieth Dynasty. The traditional formula which occupied the Saite period onward and the appearance verb did not permit to put these Canopic jars before this period. So, I am inclined to suggest dating them to the first occupation in Persian Period because the errors in the texts were spread in the first Persian occupation in Egypt, especially in the texts of the sarcophagi.

However, the formula of the four Canopic jars (CG. 43754378-), which resembles the current jars in the opposite direction of the lines dated to the Libyan Period, is not a complete formula, so we cannot include them in the same Period.

In addition, Dolzani divided the formulas of the Canopic jars into seven forms. He dated the last one, which looks like ours to the Saite Period onwards, according K. Sethe who divided the formula of the Canopic jars into nineteen types, the last one also dated to the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty.

The characteristics of the inscriptions

Apparently, there is a tendency to that the words lack the determinatives, and the signs themselves inscribed on the jars are very thin and not deep. They resemble the graffiti on the rocks, especially in some signs such as sign and sign. There is no proportion in the size among the different signs; some of them are small and the others are big; more words are written errors or decreased letters. On the texts of the four Canopic jars, the suffix pronoun first person singular is omitted, whether following verbs or
following propositions.

For example, the name of Osiris is written eight times, four of them ⲍ and four ⲍ, in the eight times the name is written without the divine determinative ⲓ�⬢. It seems that the name was a written likeness on the Canopic jars of the Saite Period.

Notes


2 Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4375, 4376, 4377, 4378.

3 K. Sethe, Zur Geschichte der Einbalsamierung bei den Ägyptern und einiger damit verbundener Bräuche (Berlin, 1934), 12.

4 Sethe, Zur Geschichte der Einbalsamierung bei den Ägyptern und einiger damit verbundener Bräuche, 13*(1).

5 Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4101, 4109, 4117, 4121, 4124, 1440, 4144, 4148, 4158, 4160, 4174, 4269; Dolzani, Vasi Canopi, n. 19001-19153; Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino IV, n. 19035.

6 Sethe, Zur Geschichte der Einbalsamierung bei den Ägyptern und einiger damit verbundener Bräuche, 13*-14*.

7 Brovarski, Canopic Jars, MFA I, 160.

8 Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4101, 4109, 4117, 4121, 4124, 4129, 4174, 4269, 4280.

9 See: Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4140, 4148, 4152, 4156, 4160, 4174.


11 Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4121 for more examples see: Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4148, 4156, 4160, 4174, 4269; Brovarski, Canopic Jars, MFA I, 125, 160; Reisner, ZÄS 37, 71.

Middle Egyptian, 84; Lesko, A Dictionary of Late Egyptian I, 139; Wilson, A Ptolemaic Lexicon (Leuven, 1997), 332.

36 Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4103, 4115; Malek, JEA 64, 139.

37 Reisner, ZÄS 37, 66.

38 Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4151.


40 H. Ranke, Die Ägyptischen personennamen I (Glückstadt, 1935), 190 (7).

41 PM VIII3, 199 (803-030-304).

42 Canopic Jar number 516\2.

43 Canopic Jar number 516\3.

44 Canopic Jar number 516\4.

45 M. Daressy, 'Inscriptions hiéroglyphiques du Musée d’Alexandrie', ASAE 5 (1904), 117; C.R. Williams, 'The Egyptian Collection in the Museum of Art at Cleveland, Ohio', JEA 5 (1918), 40.

46 Wb. IV, 144, 1.


48 Dolzani, Vasi Canopi, 10-11.


50 Dolzani, Vasi Canopi, n. 19028-19036; Brovarski, Canopic Jars, MFA I, 68, 122; Reisner, Canopics, CG, 4107. 4108, 4109, 4123, 4124, 4182 etc.