

Renpit-Nefert

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Institution: South Australia Museum

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Contact: Dr. Barry Craig

(barry.craig@samuseum.sa.gov.au)

Image Modality: CT, x-ray



Figure 1. Renpit-Nefert's coffin
(South Australia Museum)

Country: Egypt

Dig Site: Thebes

Time Period: Late Period

Dynasty: 26th Dynasty

Date: 664-400 BC

Sex: Female

Age: 35-40 years old

Background:

Renpit-Nefert was brought to the South Australia Museum from Egypt by Reverend Roby Fletcher (South Australia Museum, n.d.). In 1890, Fletcher was commissioned to bring back objects of archeological significance of ancient Egypt, on his next trip to Cairo he purchased Renpit-Nefert and her coffin (South Australia Museum, n.d.). Her name, Renpit-Nefert, means “beautiful year” which suggests her parents were very happy with the birth of their daughter (South Australia Museum, n.d.). The gods painted on her coffin grant her a beautiful burial and the base shows the mummy being carried by the sacred Apis bull (South Australia Museum, n.d.).

On Sunday, June 20, 1999, Renpit-Nefert underwent x-ray, CT, and tissue sample examinations to learn more about the structure and composition of the mummy and more about the life of the mummified person (Morphett, 2000). Renpit-Nefert and George, another mummy from the South Australia Museum, arrived at St. Andrew's Hospital in Adelaide on Friday, June 18 and returned to the museum the morning of the June 21st. During this investigation there was

television, print, and radio media companies present (George et al., 1999). Channels 2, 7, 9, and 10 were there for the Nubian mummy George, print media representatives were there from The Advertiser and The Age, and Barry Craig spoke with Lachlan Parker from 5AN radio with various people speaking to other radio stations (George et al., 1999).

X-rays and CT scans confirmed and presented information related to the osteobiography (George et al., 1999). X-rays did not reveal any jewellery, amulets, or other metallic structures in the wrappings or the mummy itself (Morphett, 2000).

Bone samples were also taken during this time and sent for radiocarbon dating (George et al., 1999). When testing was completed the sample came back as being from between 540-355 BC (Chambers, 2000). Meaning she likely died around 400 BC (South Australia Museum, n.d.).

Pathological Features:

The mummy lies with arms extended and hands crossed over the genital area (Morphett, 2000). The fingers of the right hand are extended while the left hand's fingers are flexed adjacent to the palm with the left thumb extended (Morphett, 2000). Legs are extended with feet beside each other and plantar flexed and not in standing position (Morphett, 2000).

The mummy is that of an adult with no evidence of secondary ossification centres and the shape of the pelvis indicates it is a female (George et al., 1999; Morphett, 2000). From observing parturition scars on her pelvis, it is hypothesized that Renpit-Nefert had at least two children (George et al., 1999). There is no evidence of growth arrest lines which means the individual did not suffer great bouts of physiological stress from malnutrition or major illness during childhood and adolescence (Morphett, 2000). It is estimated that she stood about 160cm (+/- 3cms), about 5'3" (George et al., 1999). There is moderate wear on her teeth with a serious infection of one tooth following caries (George et al., 1999).

Renpit-Nefert was eviscerated and excerebrated (George et al., 1999). Her brain was removed through the nasal area and there is possible remnants of an organ in her chest, but which organ is not specified (George et al., 1999). Resin has pooled in the back of her cranial vault after the excerebration (George et al., 1999). A rolled of piece of cloth is also seen to be inserted through the anal-perineum region and into the lower abdomen (George et al., 1999). Cause of death is hypothesized to be from chronic illness or acute infection during chronic illness (George et al., 1999).

The skin of Renpit-Nefert appears to have a relatively dense band parallel to bony surfaces which is interpreted as being a layer of resin (Morphett, 2000). There are several layers of wrappings around the mummy, many of which appear to be soaked or coated in resin as well (Morphett, 2000).

References

Chambers, D. 2000. Radiocarbon Calibration Report. Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences LTD. Report presented by Dawn Chambers to Barry Craig on February 11, 2000.

George, R., Morphett, T., Hall, J., Hamp, J., Dittman, T., Henneberg, M., Richards, M., Philips, K., O'Donoghue, M., Pardoe, C., & Craig, B. 1999. Results of technical investigations of Egyptian mummies in the collections of the South Australia Museum.

Morphett, T. 2000. Mummy of Renpit-Nefert. Report prepared in January 2000.

Contributions by: Precious Adekoya, Teegan Muggridge, Lauren Poeta, and David Seston