

**Branislav Anđelković**

*Department of Archaeology  
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade  
B.Andelkovic@f.bg.ac.rs*

**Jonathan P. Elias**

*AMSC Research, LLC, Carlisle  
director@amscresearch.com*

**Ernest Brummer and the Coffin of  
Nefer-renepet from Akhmim\***

**Abstract:** The coffin of Nefer-renepet was donated to the National Museum in Belgrade by Ernest Brummer (born in Sombor in 1881) in 1921. The coffin is a fine example of the artistry of the funerary industry of ancient Akhmim. Previous publications have classified this object as belonging to the 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty or Ptolemaic period. The present analysis indicates that it dates to the period of the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., i.e. 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, based on stylistic comparisons, orthography and genealogical information from similar coffins in other collections. This stylistic/chronological phase is not well-represented numerically, and this makes Nefer-renepet's coffin all the more important. The design characteristics of the phase broadly emulate those of the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, but they are clearly distinguishable as belonging to a later era. Among the many distinctive aspects of Nefer-renepet's coffin is the interior decoration of its lid, published here for the first time, showing the 'gliding Nut motif with upward streaming hair' accompanied by abbreviated texts derived from the Book of Day and Book of Night. The goddess represented on the coffin trough is Imentet, with the *maat*-feather on her head as a reduction of the full hieroglyphic symbol for West.

**Key words:** Ernest Brummer, Nefer-renepet, Akhmim, coffin, Nut, Imentet, 30<sup>th</sup> – Dynasty

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\* B. Anđelković is indebted to the National Museum in Belgrade, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library, the Cloisters Archives, John Laszlo, Jennifer Laszlo, Jill Meredith, Emily Teeter, Bojana Borić-Brešković, Ivan Kovačević, Vladimir Tatarević, Charles Robertson, Marija Cindori and Marija Milutinović who, in various ways, helped make this paper possible. J. P. Elias is indebted to Vanessa Davies for her help and kindness. B. Anđelković is participating in the Project no. 177008 of the Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Serbia.

Museum Record Keeping:  
*quis custodiet ipsos custodes*

The recent history of archaeological objects, quite important for tracing their initial provenance, and the proper understanding of when, how, and why they entered a particular museum, has, on occasion, proved almost as taxing as the study of the ancient artifacts themselves. Even more so if such inquiry is burdened with certain additional issues (Anđelković 2013).

The two main, and physically the largest items of the otherwise modest Egyptian collection of the National Museum in Belgrade, are two anthropomorphic wooden coffins.<sup>1</sup> One (reg. no. 13/VI) still contains a human mummy, whereas the other (reg. no. 12/VI) is empty (cf. Anđelković 1991, 70, 75 n. 63; Anđelković, in press). The data concerning the time and the circumstances of their arrival at the Museum were previously known as follows: 1. they "belonged to a German officer who left them in Belgrade during the withdrawal [of the German army]" (Glumac 1963, 21),<sup>2</sup> 2. they were "presented by the Serbian State Railways Board of Directors" (Kolarić 1991, 14); 3. they were "presented by Chester Beatty from London in 1920".<sup>3</sup> However, all these proved inaccurate. It turned out that the first coffin (with mummy) was donated by Pavle Ridički in July 1888 (cf. Anđelković 1993; Anđelković 1994a; Anđelković 1995; Anđelković 1997; Anđelković 2002a; Anđelković 2002b; Anđelković 2003; Anđelković and Asensi Amorós 2005; Anđelković and Teeter 2005; Anđelković and Harker 2011; Anđelković, Anđus and Stanković 1997; Čuljković, Anđelković, Stojković and Romac 2000), whereas the second was formally presented by the Head Office of [Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes] Customs, in September 1923 (Anđelković 1994b). However, the true donor of the second coffin, the empty one, was Ernest Brummer, in July 1921 (Anđelković 1994b; Anđelković 2002b, 215-216). The coffin, part of the former Amherst collection, was purchased by Brummer in June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1921, at a Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge auction in London, and donated to the National Museum in Belgrade. The coffin, previously wrongly attributed to Anpeti (N.N. 1921, 35, No. 351, pl.10/351), or Henufer (Porter and Moss 1973, 821), actually belonged to Nefer-renepet, dancer of Min, from Akhmim (Panić-Štorh 1997; cf. Brech 2008, 138-140, Abb. 6). Although the transport to Belgrade was paid

<sup>1</sup> Since October 1992, the coffins have been kept in the Archaeological Collection of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade.

<sup>2</sup> German troops withdrawal from Belgrade was in October 1944, toward the end of World War II.

<sup>3</sup> This was stated by the official museum [post World War II] record: Additional Collection of the Classical Department of the National Museum in Belgrade, book VI, reg. nos. 12-13.



Fig. 1. Ernest Brummer at Luxor excavations, 1912. Photo courtesy of John Laszlo.

for by Brummer – the coffin arrived in Belgrade Railway Station in November 1921 – it took more than two years for the coffin to enter the National Museum. A vaudeville-style set of circumstances – aside from the main protagonists embodied in two concurrent transport companies from Belgrade, "The Balkans" and "Petrović Express et Co" (both somehow involved in the chocolate trade) – included Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the Head Office of Customs, Belgrade Municipal Authorities, and an odd fact that the coffin was in the same railway boxcar as a big chocolate shipment (Anđelković 1994b).<sup>4</sup>

What remains a mystery for the time being is the destiny of a third coffin from the National Museum in Belgrade: namely, Ernest Brummer also donated another, rectangular wooden coffin (including two accompanying items inside: an anthropomorphic wooden coffin and anthropomorphic cartonnage), that was

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<sup>4</sup> Since in-bond storage charges went quite high, in summer 1923, the coffin was even offered by the Head Office of Customs for sale at auction. The National Museum petitioned the Customs to annul this decision, and to (re-)donate the coffin to the Museum, which was eventually done in September 1923. For a detailed account of this matter see: Anđelković (1994b).

also part of the former Amherst collection, and was likewise purchased by Brummer in June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1921, at the Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge auction in London and sent to Belgrade. As stated in Brummer's donation letter,<sup>5</sup> and described in the auction catalogue, this three-piece set belonged to Ari, son of Unnefer (N.N. 1921, 35, No. 352). Lord Amherst of Hackney acquired it in 1865 from the collection of John Lee at Hartwell House, Aylesbury; the drawing of this three-piece set is to be seen in the Lee collection catalogue (Lee 1858, 89-91, No. 596; cf. Sharpe and Bonomi 1858).<sup>6</sup> It seems quite certain that it entered the National Museum in Belgrade in September 1923, along with the Neferenepep coffin,<sup>7</sup> but what happened to it afterwards (and when) is still unclear.

### The Brummer Brothers: Sombor, Paris, New York

Known for "an instinct for the beautiful" (Forsyth 1974a), the Brummer brothers Joseph,<sup>8</sup> Imre,<sup>9</sup> and the youngest Ernest were collectors and "antiqua-

<sup>5</sup> Archive of the National Museum in Belgrade, document no. 453, of September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1921.

<sup>6</sup> For the mummy see Pettigrew (1834, XVI-XVII, pls. IX-X).

<sup>7</sup> Among other things, in the main register of the National Museum in Belgrade, book II, no. 2975, of September 1923, is an entry for: "two mummy coffins, presented by Mr. Brummer" (Anđelković 1994b, 97; Anđelković 2002b, 212 n. 7, 215-216).

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Brummer (November 1883 - April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1947), who was trained as a sculptor, presented to New York art market the works of André Derain, Constantin Brancusi [Joseph met Brancusi "while working for Rodin in 1907" (Teja, Rowell and Temkin 1995, 59)], and many other contemporary artists (e.g. Brummer 1922; Brummer 1923; Brummer 1926; see also: Brancusi Exhibition at Brummer Gallery Hard on Realists but Highly Pleasing to the Imaginative, *New York Times*, November 18, 1933, p. 13). A note on the back cover of the catalogs specify: Joseph Brummer works of art, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Gothic, sculptures, textiles and tapestries, paintings, 43 East Fifty-seventh St., New York, 203 bis Boulevard St. Germain, Paris. The same address in Paris is seen in the donation letter of Ernest Brummer (see note 5; cf. note 12). See also: \$1,300,000 in Figdor sale, New York Dealer Pays \$20,000 for Strozzi Stool In Vienna, *New York Times*, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1930, p. 36; Edward Alden Jewell, Exhibition of Thirty-five Fascinating Canvases by Pierre Roy, French Artist, at the Brummer Gallery, *New York Times*, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1933, p. 18; Joseph Brummer, Dealer in Art, 64, Head of Gallery Here Is Dead – Specialist in Sculptures Sold to Many Museums, *New York Times*, April 15, 1947, p. 25; Ancient Statuette is Sold for \$2,700, *New York Times*, June 8, 1949, p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Imre (July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1889 – June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1928) – (buried at Mount Lebanon Cemetery, Queens, NYC). The Brummer brothers also had an older sister, Etelka. Her name is present, along with the names of her brothers József, Imre and Ernő, on their mother Ida Heller Brummer's Funeral Notice. Moreover, in the letter "regarding the person

rians in the best sense of that old-fashioned word" (Forsyth 1974b, 5). The generous donor of Nefer-renepet's coffin Ernest Brummer was born July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1891 in Sombor, present northern Serbia, to the Hungarian speaking Jewish family of paprika miller Kalman Brummer (b. ca. 1854)<sup>10</sup> and his wife Ida Brummer (née Heller). Ernest was educated at the Hungarian Gymnasium, but also learned the flute, probably at the University of Budapest established by the Jesuits,<sup>11</sup> and subsequently went to Paris where he studied archaeology (fig. 1) and art at École du Louvre – as a student of Salomon Reinach – and the Sorbone (Hyam 1949; Koller and Kahane 1979). In 1906 the Brummer brothers opened a gallery in Paris,<sup>12</sup> with a second office in New York (opened by Imre and Joseph in 1914).<sup>13</sup>

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sought" of October 18, 1945 (addressed to the Union of Russian Jews, Inc. 55 West 42<sup>nd</sup> St., Suite 952-953; New York), the inquirer Joseph Brummer (address: 110 East 58<sup>th</sup> St., New York 22, N.Y.) is searching for his sister Etelka Brummer (father Kalman Brummer, mother Ida Heller Brummer), born in Sombor in November [5<sup>th</sup>] 1881 (last address: Maros utca 5, Szeged, Hungary). He continues: "Last news received - a letter in December 1939. A cousin in Szeged recently cabled that she has not seen Etelka Brummer for a long time" (all documents are from 'The Joseph and Ernest Brummer Records', The Cloisters Archives, Collection no. 31). During World War II most of the Jewish citizens of Szeged were sent to death camps.

<sup>10</sup> At some moment the family moved from Sombor to a nearby town Szeged, in Southern Hungary, close to the border with Serbia and Romania. In the 1920s the Jewish population of Szeged, a town known as the home of powdered paprika spice, reached its peak.

<sup>11</sup> The Jesuit Academy of Music was mentioned as the place where Ernest studied the flute (Koller and Kahane 1979). See also note 15.

<sup>12</sup> There is a story about how the Brummer brothers started collecting: it was popular after the turn of the century [1900s] to buy 'china' from Japan and China. It was often shipped to Paris carefully wrapped in Japanese prints. These were of little or no value in Japan, but had never been seen in Europe and the USA. When people unwrapped their 'china' plates, Ernest [two Paris addresses: Ernest Brummer, Objects d'Art Archéologiques, 36 Rue de Miromesnil; Brummer, Objects d'Art Anciens, 3 Boulevard Raspail, VII<sup>e</sup>] would go around and pick up the discarded prints. He and the brothers would sell them, so this was the beginning of raising capital (John Laszlo, personal communication, October 23, 1998; cf. Forsyth 1974b, 1; Johnston 1999, 213-214; Laszlo 1981).

<sup>13</sup> There are a several addresses in New York (it seems that there were a few galleries): 27 East 57<sup>th</sup> St.; 30 East 57<sup>th</sup> St.; 43 East 57<sup>th</sup> St.; 53 East 57<sup>th</sup> St.; Brummer Gallery Inc., 55 East 57<sup>th</sup> St.; 110 East 58<sup>th</sup> St.; Brummer Gallery, 11 East 68<sup>th</sup> St. New York 21. N.Y.; 383 Park Avenue, between 53<sup>rd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> St. [Jill Meredith, personal communication, October 19, 1998]. Brummers' building – known as "a kind of inexhaustible treasure house" (Hyam 1949) – had a ground floor with two floors and an attic above (photo, The Joseph and Ernest Brummer Records, The Cloisters Archives, Collection no. 31). The gallery was closed in 1949 (cf. Galleries Reduce Auction Schedule, *New York Times*, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1949, p. 80). See also: Ernest Brummer archaeologist, dies,

During World War I Ernest served in the French army as an officer and interpreter, whereas after the war "he became increasingly involved in the art world, traveling widely and collecting objects in Europe and Asia" (Bruzelius and Meredith 1991, 6). With the outbreak of World War II Ernest closed his Paris gallery and joined Joseph in New York. Although Ernest Brummer<sup>14</sup> – "whose great joy lay in seeking out and admiring the works of art which he so successfully and tastefully gathered together, initially for himself, subsequently for others" (Koller and Kahane 1979) – was one of the outstanding collectors of art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he was a rather private person and not many have written about him.<sup>15</sup> The reason why he donated Egyptian coffins to the National Museum in Belgrade is not mentioned in his letter, but presumably, aside from his noble generosity,<sup>16</sup> it reflects a certain sentiment and memory of his youthful days in Sombor. Ernest Brummer died in February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1964 in New York (he was 72 years old).

The Brummers' unique collection, "considered one of the best private collections in the world" (Laszlo 1981), that encompassed thousands and thousands<sup>17</sup> of important, rare<sup>18</sup> and extremely valuable objects of art and archaeology, should

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*New York Times*, February 23, 1964, p. 85; cf. Oral history: interview with Isamu Noguchi, conducted by Paul Cummings, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1973, Archives of American Art.

<sup>14</sup> Aside from one book (Basler and Brummer 1947), he wrote many papers on methods of archaeology and art objects cleaning and conservation "although he did not publish them" (Koller and Kahane 1979). He married Ella Baché (née Laszlo) – the founder and head of her own cosmetics and beauty products company "Ella Baché, Paris" – around the early 1950s. It was his first, and her second marriage. Ernest Brummer did not have children.

<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, Ernest Brummer "an archaeologist-turned-art-dealer" had "a lovely dry sense of humor"; one of his light moments was "to be the nude model for Rousseau's flutist" (John Laszlo, personal communication, October 23, 1998). The painting in question was perhaps *The Dream*, from 1910 (The Museum of Modern Art) with a black snake charmer playing his flute. The year before, in 1909, Henri Rousseau made a portrait of Joseph Brummer (cf. 'Picture By Ridiculed Artist May Fetch Millions', *Daily News*, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1993, p. 10).

<sup>16</sup> Aside from the antiquities sold, a number of the pieces were actually donated (cf. Forsyth 1974a). Later donations to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Duke University Museum of Art, the Israel Museum, etc. are given by Ernest Brummer's widow Ella Baché Brummer, in memory of her late husband. In 1980s she also donated Joseph and Ernest Brummer records to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Ella Baché Brummer (99) has died in November 1999 in New York.

<sup>17</sup> After 1921 some 400 objects were sold to the Metropolitan Museum of Art alone (Forsyth 1974a, 106); see also: Smith College Museum Acquires Rare Sculpture, *New York Times*, January 9, 1938, p. 7; Rita Reif, Rarities With the Brummer Imprimatur, *New York Times*, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1979, p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> Including some "atypical and slightly eccentric work" (Bruzelius and Meredith 1991, 7).

not to be perceived as "the two collections", i.e. of Joseph and Ernest respectively (contra Bruzelius and Meredith 1991, 7; cf. Forsyth 1974b, 3), but represented the joint and long-lived effort of all three Brummer brothers – Joseph "one of the most influential figures in the field of art in America" (Hyam 1949), a "strong-willed, hypnotic little man", Imre "who kept the accounts", and Ernest with his "knowledge of art history and his natural sensitivity" – and was intended, as a whole, to "find a home in an American museum" (Forsyth 1974a), "dedicated to the work of the Brummers" (Laszlo 1981). However, some two years after the sudden death of Joseph Brummer, the first part of the collection had to be sold for financial reasons in April 1949 (cf. Hyam 1949; Forsyth 1974a, 107). The second large part was sold in November 1964 (cf. Sotheby & Co 1964), whereas the third part was sold two years after Ernest's death, in the spring of 1966.<sup>19</sup> Finally, the fourth part was sold in October 1979 (cf. Koller and Kahane 1979).

### The Coffin of Nefer-renepet and the Importance of Collar Style

The decorated anthropoid wooden coffin with plinth<sup>20</sup> (L. 183.5 cm, max W. 51 cm) is empty save for a fragment of resinated cloth from the mummy's back (25.5 x 18 cm) still adhering to the interior of the trough. Two small tubular blue faience beads were found: one (L. 0.62 cm) stuck inside the lid base, another (L. 0.53 cm) in one of the trough mortise holes (bottom, on the viewer's right side). The lid and trough edges have two mutually matching surface levels each. The outer level of the lid is some 0.7 cm higher than the inner one. Four pairs of rectangular mortise holes (*e.g.* trough, top, on the viewer's right side, *ca.* L. 4.25 cm, W. 1.35 cm, D. 4.25 cm) were cut into the edge of the lid and trough respectively. The tenons (only two of them left: 10 x 4.65 x 1.4 cm; 9.8 x 4.7 x 1.05 cm) were rectangular, with one hole only<sup>21</sup> (for the tenons with two holes see Anđelković and Asensi Amorós 2005, pls. 4-5). Top part of the feet, originally fixed to the coffin lid by two tenons, is now detachable.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The collection for decades "had been hibernating in a New York warehouse and in the apartment of Mrs. Brummer" (Heckscher and Moeller 1967), or as put by Bruzelius and Meredith (1991, 7, 11 n. 21) was "kept either in the apartment of Ernest and his wife Ella Baché in Manhattan or in one of several warehouses".

<sup>20</sup> The photo of the coffin was for the first time published in Serbia, as far as we can tell, in 1938 (Oraovac 1938, 342) merely to illustrate one of the objects kept in the Prince Pavle Museum; the label, now damaged, with the name Anpeti, stuck on the coffin, at the neck part, was well visible at the time.

<sup>21</sup> No lateral holes for safety pegs are present on the lid.

<sup>22</sup> Part at the middle of the feet area, that was present in 1974 (see photo in Perc 1974, no. 51; cf. Oraovac 1938, 342), is now missing, which is hardly a surprise with

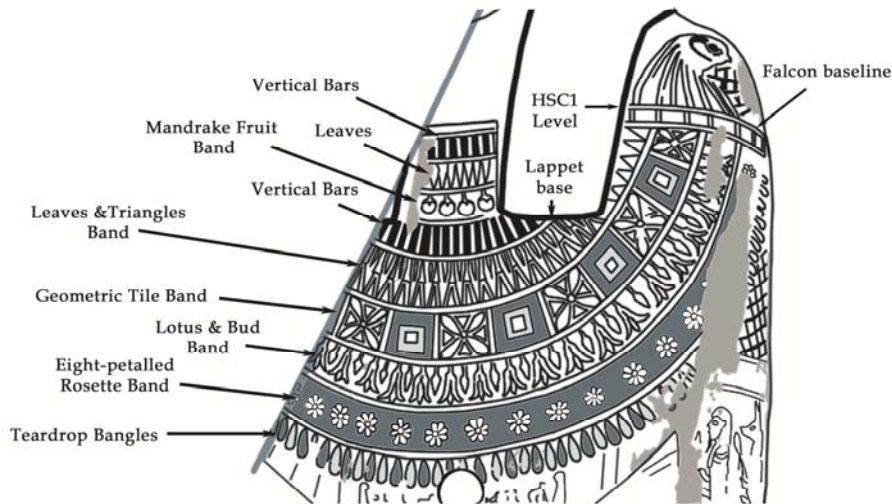


Fig. 2. The collar of Nefer-renepet's coffin showing design features.

When he acquired the coffin of Nefer-renepet, Ernest Brummer became the owner of a coffin possessing what is arguably one of the most beautiful faces produced by later Egyptian artists. It has an unusually light flesh tone, sensitively-drawn eyes, and well-carved ears with piercings. Even today, the image reaches out to us, making it one of the more memorable coffins produced by the coffin workshops of Akhmim. It wears a winged headdress strongly reminiscent of 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty prototypes, and the hair is patterned as rectangles staggered like bricks arrayed inside vertical stripes, another 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty feature on women's coffins. The style of painting below the level of the head is less composed. These features suggest the possibility that the coffin was originally a Saite period manufacture that was reworked in a later period. Brech (2008, 145) noted the distinct possibility that the coffin of Nefer-renepet was pre-Ptolemaic, and commented that it was likely the earliest of those burial containers assigned to her Group C.

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the most recent history of the coffin in mind. For instance, the coffin was from 1986 to 1991 in the depot of 'Art Gallery of Non-aligned Countries "Josip Broz Tito."' in Podgorica, Montenegro (cf. Anđelković 2013). It seems that the transport and storage of this coffin was rarely in accordance with the proper standards for such objects. Let alone that it did not receive any sort of conservation treatment.



The analysis of the exterior of the coffin lid arises from on-going research on the stylistic evolution of Akhmimic coffins based on consideration of design details and the genealogical position of coffin owners, study of which began nearly two decades ago (Elias 1996) and about which more is learned every day. The chronology is anchored to radiocarbon dates where these are available, and more importantly, to changes in orthography within coffin inscriptions. The system we developed sees the handling of collar design as an extremely important index of a coffin's temporal position and a basis for phasing in ten-year increments in the period between 360 and 290 B.C. Egyptian artists contended with many difficult rendering tasks, not the least of which was the extensive broad collar zone with complex motifs set within quasi-circular concentric arcs. This zone was especially sensitive to experimentation through time.

The design of Nefer-renepet's falcon-headed broad collar (*weskhet en bik*) shows characteristics which only appear in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (fig. 2). One of the most important stylistic features noted in Nefer-renepet's coffin, is the placement of the baseline from which the heads of the two falcon terminals rise up onto the shoulder compartments. Here it is set very high, meaning that the falcon baseline is located significantly above the ends of the wig lappets (i.e. 25-50% of total lappet length). The very high set collar (coded as HSC1) is, in our opinion, a major chronological index helping to distinguish coffins manufactured before the last quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Genealogical analysis linked to owners of coffins displaying the HSC1 characteristic, indicates prevalence around the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Any notion that this coffin is a Ptolemaic manufacture, and that its collar design is "dated to the beginning of the Ptolemaic Period" must be dispensed with (contra Panić-Štorh 1997, 82).

The narrow bands favored during the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty are a fashion long-since abandoned, in favor of broad bands featuring stylized well-articulated floral patterns. When compared to 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty collar patterns, there is here a general increase in the width of the individual bands making up the collar, and a related reduction in the number of bands. Nefer-renepet's collar contains nine bands (including the outermost zone of teardrop-shaped bangles). Each band is separated by a relatively thick white line; other coffins in this class have as few as seven design bands. Favorite elements are eight-petalled rosettes (generally in white on a dark blue ground); lotus blossoms alternating with buds; triangular leaves pointing downward with interspersed smaller red triangles pointing upward. A band with stylized mandrake fruit is restricted to the part of the collar that occurs between the lappets. The placement of the 'mandrake fruit band' and bands consisting of simple vertical bars (alternating dark and light pigment) in the upper part of the collar are factors seen frequently in this style.

The collar is distinguished by a major strand composed of geometric shapes segregated within rectangular compartments like tiles. Two designs predominate: a rosette with four petals arranged diagonally (in red upon a blue ground); and a square within a square (black within red upon a blue ground). The inclusion of a geometric band amongst the array of floral patterns is a hallmark of collar design at Akhmim in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

Below the broad collar we see the image of Nut, goddess of heaven. Interestingly, the inscription refers to her under the name Khuyt 'protectress'. Comparison with the burial equipment of other individuals, such as the cartonnage collar on the mummy of Nesmin MMA 86.1.51 (Stuenkel 2008) shows that this designation is somewhat common during the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., co-extensive with the period prior to the onset of major Ptolemaic stylistic innovations at Akhmim. The occurrence of symmetrically placed Nefertem totems below Nut is an interesting addition to the register.

### Orthographic Dating Criteria

Nefer-renepet's coffin is inscribed with texts which leave little doubt as to when they were inscribed. There is strong agreement with the orthography of the coffin of Nesmin, son of Irethorrou, son of Nes-hor (Buffalo Museum of Science 654.138), a coffin with a very similar collar design, datable to the 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (Elias 1996, 44-45). In recent years, it has proven possible to link this coffin with one belonging to his uncle, Djed-hor, son of Nes-hor (Cairo Tr. 27-9-16-2).<sup>23</sup> Djed-hor's coffin is an elite, plain type with a collar decorated in a similar 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty fashion, with bands containing eight-petalled rosettes in circles linked by strands, several lotus and bud bands, and stylized leaves alternating with triangles. The orthography of these coffins exhibits the following features: 1. writings of the expression *dd mdw in: mdw* are written with Gardiner sign-list U33 (pestle) where one expects sign-list S43 (walking-stick) (Gardiner 1978); 2. the spelling of the name Osiris: shows changes from Saite Period writings; the innovation is a reversal in the position of the seat (Q1) and the god-pennant (R8) – the latter now precedes Q1; another development is a 4-glyph spelling of Osiris', featuring the eye above the pennant (R8), the seat (Q1) and a seated-god (A40); 3. the title *sm3ty* (stolist) is consistently expanded to include the locative term *Ipw* (Akhmim): a tendency common on objects of the pre-Ptolemaic era, but increasing generalized, without locative indicator, appearing as simply *sm3ty* in Ptolemaic times.

<sup>23</sup> Coffin unpublished, currently in storage in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

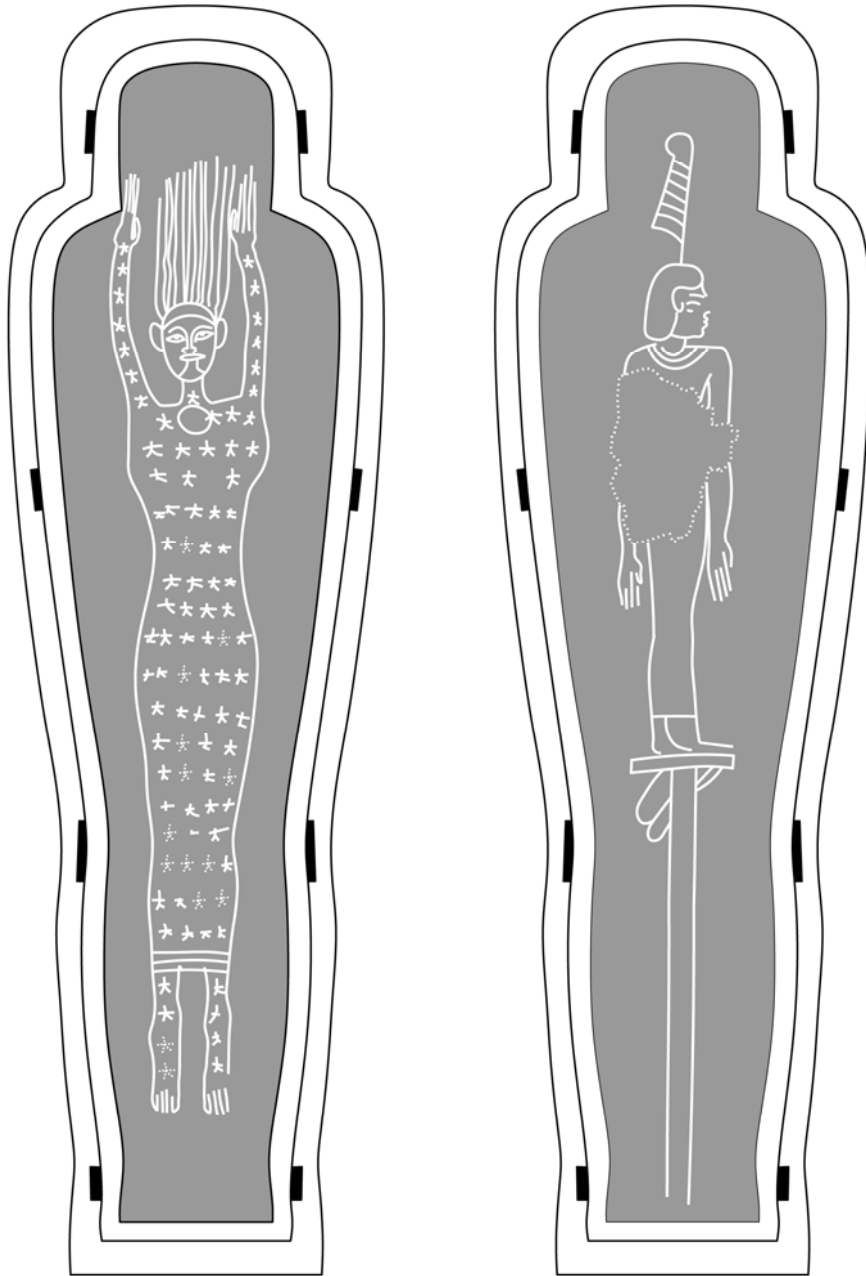


Fig. 3. The Nefer-renepet coffin interior: a). Nut (lid); b). Imentet (trough).

## Coffin Interior

The designs found on the interior surfaces of the lid and trough of Neferrenepet's coffin<sup>24</sup> (fig. 3) present an artistic and technical contrast to the outer coffin decoration,<sup>25</sup> and were rendered in whitish-yellow line work<sup>26</sup> on a rough ground of thick black pigment (upon thin pinkish plaster coating in some places).

The image of Nut painted on the interior of the coffin lid (fig. 4a) is an extremely important iconographic element. It is reasonable to describe it as a kind of 'missing link' showing us how the goddess Nut was depicted on the inner surfaces of coffin lids in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The specific variant can be called the 'gliding Nut with hair streaming upward'. Her body is be-decked in a tight-fitting gown decorated with stars and a solar disk can be seen at the level of the neck.

As far as we can determine, this specific iconography developed from Nut images with outstretched arms but having tight lappet wigs, found on elite burial containers dating to the late 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. An early representative of the type is the inner coffin (A. 70034) containing embalming materials inscribed for the chief steward of the god's wife Ibi found in Theban Tomb 36 (Graefe 1975, 17-19, fig. 8). Ibi is believed to have died around 625 B.C. (Taylor 2003, 96). Its use extended well into the later 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, as shown by the Nut image cut into the sarcophagus of Ankhenesneferibre (Sander-Hansen 1937). The best-known example of the variant Nut image with streaming hair occurs on the Leiden coffin of Peftjauneith (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden Inv. Nr. AMM 5) (Schmidt 1919, 218, fig. 1238). In this case, Nut's image is accompanied by *Stundenwachen* figures and texts (Junker 1910). A second example of the gliding Nut motif with streaming hair occurs on the coffin of Beniutehy from Hierakonpolis (last seen in a private collection in Stuttgart). This latter Nut image (blue-bodied with yellow stars) is very small, but is nonetheless of great importance, in view of the rarity of such images. It is ostensibly of the late 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, and follows the Saite tradition of surrounding Nut figures with archaic spells glorifying her, such as Pyramid Text utterances 638a/b and 1607 (Brunner and Pitsch 1984, 1073-1078). All of this suggests that the iconography on Neferrenepet's coffin in Belgrade

<sup>24</sup> For unknown reasons the previous publication of the coffin (Panić-Štorh 1997) does not mention at all that its interior is decorated.

<sup>25</sup> It is possible that the work on these areas of the coffin can be attributed to the style of two different artists.

<sup>26</sup> In contrast to the spots on the coffin exterior where white background plastering is to be seen, the whitish-yellow paint of Nut, Imentet and hieroglyphs in the coffin interior is passive under an ultraviolet-ray lamp.



Fig. 4. The Nefer-renepet coffin: a). lid interior  
(June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013 photo by V. Tatarević).



Fig. 4. The Nefer-renepet coffin: b). trough interior  
(June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013 photo by V. Tatarević).

is expressive of the goddess' protection of the deceased throughout an eternal cycle extending along the hours of day and night (Doll 1978, 31-61, 85-107). This is in fact confirmed by the texts inscribed on the sides of the coffin of Nefer-renepet surrounding Nut's image, which though quickly dashed off in large hieroglyphs, clearly show the names of the hours of day (on the viewer's right side) and the names of the portals of night (on the viewer's left). This is already seen in 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty coffins.<sup>27</sup>

Peftjauneith's coffin is widely held to be a 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty product (e.g. Janák 2010, 26), but its provenance, and precise date are uncertain. What is known is that it begins to show some of the stylistic elements followed by the artist responsible for the decoration of Nefer-renepet's coffin: a simplified collar layout (with fewer bands) set very high (HSC1) and a collar band with eight-petalled rosettes). It is certainly rooted in the design principles of the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, but seems to point toward what comes later on, and a date in the late 6<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. should be entertained.

The coffin of Nefer-renepet has much in common with AMM 5 except for the addition of the gown. The goddess is shown nude in 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty renderings. Nevertheless, the solar disk below the chin, the star motif and basic position of hair and body are all shared characteristics. Nefer-renepet's coffin shows that the design pattern of the later 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty was still influencing artistry two centuries later. Another interesting comparison to Nefer-renepet's Nut image, is the figure painted on the interior of the lid of British Museum EA 6678 (Hornedjitef) (Budge 1924, 133, pl. 27; Schreiber 2011, 116, fig. 20). This coffin is probably datable to the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. It differs in no longer featuring a star-covered body, but it is surprisingly close to the image on Nefer-renepet's coffin, and precisely in the way we should expect, since the kind of image painted on Nefer-renepet's coffin around a century earlier, clearly led to the development of early Ptolemaic Period versions.

Imentet,<sup>28</sup> the goddess of the west (a form of Hathor) is represented on the coffin trough in whitish-yellow lines (fig. 4b).<sup>29</sup> The Belgrade example shows the goddess facing the viewer's right, wearing a diagonally-veined *maat*-feather on her head, clearly a reduction of the full hieroglyphic symbol for 'West'. She stands upon a perch and her arms are pendant. The accompanying inscriptions (written hastily on the sides of the trough) are barely legible, but were possibly intended as additional *Stundenwachen* texts, intended to further ease Nefer-renepet's journey through the netherworld.

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<sup>27</sup> An example of this is the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty coffin lid of Peftjawyese in Milan, Inv. Nr. 1011 (Lise 1978, 83).

<sup>28</sup> Alternate: Amentet. The previous suggestion that this is a representation of Maat should be corrected (Anđelković 2002a, 41; Anđelković 2002b, 216; cf. Brech 2008, 139).

<sup>29</sup> The image was painted quickly.

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Branislav Anđelković i Džonatan P. Ilajes

Odeljenje za arheologiju, Filozofski fakultet, Beograd  
AMSC Research, LLC, Carlisle

#### Ernest Bramer i kovčeg Nefer-renepet iz Akhmima

Ernest Bramer (rođen 1881. u Somboru) poklonio je 1921. Narodnom muzeju u Beogradu staroegipatski drveni kovčeg pokojnice Nefer-renepet. Prethodne publikacije su ovaj kovčeg, izvanredan primer umetničke veštine funerarne industrije drevnog grada Akhmima, datovale u vreme 22-25. dinastije ili Ptolemejski period. Nova analiza, zasnovana na stilskom poređenju, ortografiji, i genealoškim podacima vezanim i za nekoliko drugih kovčega, ukazuje da kovčeg potiče iz sredine 4. veka pre naše ere, odnosno iz 30. dinastije. Stilsko-hronološka faza kojoj kovčeg Nefer-renepet pripada je manje poznata i slabije brojčano zastupljena u svetskim kolekcijama, što ga u naučnom smislu čini još dragocenijim. Mada se pomenuta faza po svojim karakteristikama generalno ugleda na kovčege 26. dinastije, ipak se može jasno razlikovati i izdvojiti. Među brojnim osobenostima kovčega Nefer-renepet je i predstava na unutrašnjoj strani poklopca, publikovana ovde po prvi put, koja prikazuje motiv 'lebdeće boginje Nut sa kosom koja stoji uspravno'. Predstava je praćena hijeroglifskim natpisom sa skraćenim izvodima teksta iz staroegipatske Knjige dana i noći. U unutrašnjosti lednog dela kovčega nalazi se predstava Imentet, boginje Zapada, sa *maat*-perom na glavi, kao redukovanom formom punog znakovnog simbola za zapad.

*Ključne reči:* Ernest Bramer, Nefer-renepet, Akhmim, kovčeg, Nut, Imentet, 30. dinastija

## Ernest Brummer et le cercueil de Nefer-renepet d'Akhmîm

Ernest Brummer (né en 1881 à Sombor) a offert en 1921 le cercueil en bois de Nefer-renepet au Musée National de Belgrade. Ce cercueil est un très bel exemple du savoir-faire artisanal funéraire de la ville d'Akhîm. Les précédentes publications l'ont daté de l'époque ptolémaïque. Une nouvelle analyse, basée sur la comparaison du style, suggère que ce cercueil date du milieu du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-C., époque de la 30<sup>e</sup> dynastie. Il n'y a pas beaucoup d'exemples appartenant à cette phase stylistique et chronologique dans les collections mondiales, ce qui donne une valeur ajoutée au cercueil de Nefer-renepet. Cette phase, bien que semblable par ses caractéristiques aux cercueils de la 26<sup>e</sup> dynastie, est aisément différenciable. Parmi les nombreuses caractéristiques du Cercueil de Nefer-renepet, la scène figurant à l'intérieur du couvercle, publiée ici pour la première fois, montre la déesse Nout flottant dans l'air et avec les cheveux dressés. La scène est accompagnée d'inscription hiéroglyphique avec de courts extraits du Livre du Jour et de la Nuit. Sur le fond du cercueil se trouve représentée Imentèt, déesse de l'Ouest, portant sur la tête la plume de Maât comme une forme simplifiée pour symboliser l'Ouest.

*Mots clés:* Ernest Brummer, Nefer-renepet, Akhmîm, Cercueil, Nout, Imentèt, 30<sup>e</sup> dynastie

Primljeno / Received: 01. 06. 2013.

Prihvaćeno / Accepted for publication: 10. 06. 2013.