The two funerary papyri of Queen Nedjmet
(P. BM EA 10490 and P. BM EA 10541 + Louvre E. 6258)

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This paper aims to present the preliminary results of a new study of two funerary papyri of the Third Intermediate Period. They were both written for a Queen Nedjmet and they probably date from the first part of Dynasty 21. The first papyrus is divided between the British Museum and the Musée du Louvre (P. BM EA 10541 + Louvre E. 6258), and the second belongs to the British Museum (P. BM EA 10490). Despite their difference in content and style, it is generally believed that the two papyri belonged to the same person, and that they originate from the Royal Cache in Deir el-Bahari. Both papyri are well known to Egyptologists, but none has been completely studied, even if Budge published the second one (1899).

The owner of the papyri

It is generally assumed that the two papyri belonged to the same person, Queen Nedjmet, wife of the High Priest of Amun Herihor at the beginning of Dynasty 21, and that they originate from the Royal Cache in Deir el-Bahari. The end of the New Kingdom and the beginning of Dynasty 21 has been the subject of much discussion in recent years, but this is not the purpose of this paper; however, it is appropriate here to consider the identity of the owner of these papyri.

Who was Nedjmet and why did she have two Books of the Dead? Or were there two Nedjmets? The answers are not straightforward, though a Queen Nedjmet is well known from the end of Dynasty 20 and the beginning of Dynasty 21. Nedjmet is given the following titles:

P. BM EA 10541 + Louvre E. 6258
Lady of the Two Lands, King’s Mother Nedjmet
King’s Mother of the Lord of the Two Lands, God’s Mother of Khons-the-child, Chief of the Harim of Amonrasonther, Chief Noblewoman, Lady of the Two Lands, Nedjmet

P. BM EA 10490
King’s Mother Nedjmet, daughter of the King’s Mother Herere
King’s Mother, Who has borne the Strong Bull, Lady of the two Lands

In both papyri, she is designated ‘King’s Mother,’ but it is not clear which pharaoh this refers to. Two graffiti in Luxor could indicate that she was Pinedjem I’s mother (Taylor 1998, 1151–52). As we know the father of Pinedjem was the High Priest Piankh, we can deduce Nedjmet

1 A new study and translation of these two papyri, which will be compared to other manuscripts of the same period, will be published as part of the series Beiträge zum Alten Ägypten.
also married Piankh.

Taylor summarises the various theories, and his conclusion (1998, 1143–55) is followed with some alterations by Broekman (2002). Both follow the interpretation of Jansen-Winkeln (1992) that Piankh was High Priest of Amun before Herihor, instead of the opposite. Others have differed from this view (e.g., Kitchen 2009, 192–96). Here it is assumed that Nedjmet could have married first Herihor (‘traditional theory’) or Piankh (if we follow Jansen-Winkeln).

Regarding the owner of the papyrus, Thijs (1998) proposed two different owners, with one Nedjmet being mother of Herihor (P. BM EA 10541) and the other Nedjmet wife of Herihor (P. BM EA 10490). But it seems difficult to accept that the Nedjmet of P. BM EA 10541 was Herihor’s mother, because Nedjmet was a king’s wife (\textit{nb.t tb\textit{y}}), yet it is difficult to identify a Dynasty 20 king who could have had Nedjmet as queen (see Broekman 2002, 14).

\textbf{P. BM EA 10541 + P. Paris Louvre E. 6258}

This hieroglyphic Book of the Dead papyrus is preserved in lengths of 4.19m (British Museum) and 8.92m (Louvre) and in a third part previously in Munich, but which has been lost or destroyed. The missing part probably measured 1.5m in length, suggesting that the original papyrus may have been over 14m in length. The High Priest Herihor is also present in the papyrus (Fig. 1).

\textit{Provenance}
The papyrus was donated by King Edward VII in 1903 to the British Museum:

As Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII visited Egypt in 1862 and 1869. He presented the first part of the \textit{Book of the Dead} of Nedjmet to the BM in 1903. The end of the manuscript is in the Louvre and a central section with part of BD 17 was in Munich but is now unlocated (Quirke 1993, 8).

The papyrus is also cited by Maspero, in his book about the discovery of the Royal Cache in Deir el-Bahari. As we know, many objects were sold by the Abderrassoul brothers from 1871, before the official discovery in 1881.

En 1877, M. De Sauley me remettait les photographies d’un long papyrus ayant appartenu à la reine Nedijmet et dont la fin est aujourd’hui au Louvre, le commencement en Angleterre et en Bavière: l’original était, disait-on, dans les mains d’un drogman qui l’avait acquis à Louxor (Maspero 1889, 512).

Concerning the part in Munich, a footnote stated:

Au témoignage de Lauth (Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung, 1882, p. 658, n° 45) la collection Mook, acquise par le musée de Munich, renfermerait un fragment du Rituel de Nedjemet, comprenant tout ou partie du chapitre XVII (Maspero 1889, 512, n. 1).

\textsuperscript{2} Niwiński 1989, 377 (Location unknown 2). According to Munro (2001b, 10–11), the part in Munich was designated papyrus AS 825.
The coffins and the mummy of Queen Nedjmet were discovered in the Royal Cache at Deir el-Bahari at the moment of the official opening in 1881.

**Content**

P. BM EA 10541  
[Lost part in Munich  
BD 17]

P. Paris Louvre E 6258  
BD 17V–18–V153A–V89–V71–124+vignette (130?)–  
V148–vignette: adoration of Osiris and Isis

**Comment**

This papyrus can be linked to other papyri of the same period. They belong to the group BD.II.1 of Niwiński’s classification of Third Intermediate Period papyri (1999, 118–28). The general appearance is similar to papyri of the Ramesside Period: the use of hieroglyphs and the presence of the vignettes throughout the document. The spells conform to Ramesside traditions. Variants in the papyrus of Nedjmet have not yet been checked with other papyri of the Ramesside Period or Dynasty 21, but this will be undertaken ahead of final publication. Niwiński has identified thirty papyri of the same kind, but only a few have been published. Among them, we can cite papyri similar in style and content:

- P. Cairo S.R. VII 11488 (Saleh and Sourouzian 1987, no. 235)  
  Owner: High Priest Pinedjem I.  
  Provenance: Royal Cache of Deir el-Bahari.  
  Length: 4.44m.

- P. Cairo S.R. IV 955 = JE 95856 = CG 40005 = Boulaq 22 (Mariette 1876, pls. 12–18)  
  Owner: Henuttauy, wife of the High Priest Pinedjem I.  
  Provenance: Royal Cache of Deir el-Bahari.  
  Length: 3.67m.

- P. Cairo S.R. IV 980 = JE 26229 (Naville 1912, pls. I–X)  
  Owner: Maatkare, daughter of Pinedjem I.  
  Provenance: Royal Cache of Deir el-Bahari.  
  Length: 6.12m.

We can thus ascertain that three members of the same family, perhaps four if we accept that Nedjmet was the mother of Pinedjem I, had the same kind of papyrus; these were also found in the same place, the Royal Cache at Deir el-Bahari. The papyrus of Nedjmet is also the longest (at around 14m), while the others are between 4m (Pinedjem I and Henuttauy) and 6m (Maatkare) in length.

For the complete list of papyri of the same kind, see Niwiński 1989, 118–28.
P. BM EA 10541 + Louvre E. 6258 is therefore a typical Book of the Dead in the Ramesside tradition and shares characteristics with other contemporary papyri, especially with those of the family of the High Priest Pinedjem I. As stated before, the next step in the study of this papyrus is to check contemporary texts, as well as earlier papyri, for similarities and/or differences.

**P. BM EA 10490: Provenance and content**

This hieratic papyrus is complete and well-preserved, measuring 3.96 m in length. The papyrus came from the collection of Edward Stanton, British consul in Egypt from 1865 to 1876; the British Museum acquired it in 1894 (Quirke 1993, 13). If we accept that the owner of the papyrus is the same Nedjmet of P. BM EA 10541 + Louvre E. 6258, the provenance of the document is also the same: the Royal Cache at Deir el-Bahari. Like the first document, it would probably have been sold before the official opening of the Cache in 1881. Since the first buyer of the papyrus, Edward Stanton, was in Egypt from 1865 to 1876, it corresponds perfectly to the period when different objects from the Cache were sold.

**Content**

Vignette: adoration of Osiris and Amun-Re-Horakhty


The title of the new spell is: ‘Spell for bringing the garland of triumph during the wag-feast in Upqer, the first month of the akhet-season, (day) 4.’

**P. BM EA 10490: Commentary**

*The vignette (or etiquette, see Lenzo Marchese 2004)* (Fig. 2)

The first vignette of the Book of the Dead is well known from the New Kingdom as a scene of adoration of Osiris. During the Third Intermediate Period, the Book of the Dead was no longer the only funerary papyrus, and with the appearance of the Amduat, Litany of Re and mythological scenes on papyri, the vignettes begin to change. A study of the hieroglyphic papyri of the Theban caches has shown that the god Re-Horakhty appears instead of Osiris at least at the time of the High Priest Menkheperre (Lenzo Marchese 2004, 47), as well as in a new kind of papyrus: abbreviated Books of the Dead, especially with ‘solar’ spells in the papyrus, or with new texts on papyrus, such as the Amduat. Throughout the Third Intermediate Period, the syncretism with other gods became more complicated, including examples with Re-Horakhty-Atum (Lenzo Marchese 2004, 57–58). But in the case of this papyrus, we have two gods: Osiris, as is typical, and Amun-Re-Horakhty, which is unusual and is represented as a falcon-headed god with solar disc. Niwiński, in his article about the solar-Osirian unity, noted that it is the only example with the mention of Amun ‘among thousands
The Book of the Dead spells

The spells of this papyrus can be gathered in different sequences, for instance by their common theme.

**BD 190–148 (I, 1 – II, 11) (Fig. 2)**

It seems that there were two versions of BD 190 during the Third Intermediate Period:

1. BD 190 before BD 133–136A–134–130 (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 35–38) or after BD 141/142 as a kind of rubric (Lucarelli 2006, 156–57) in a continuation of the New Kingdom tradition. For example, P. Nu (P. BM EA 10477) has the following sequence: BD 141–142–190–133–136A–134–130 (Lapp 1997, 40). During the Third Intermediate Period, this spell was shortened when it came at the end of BD 141/142 (Lucarelli 2006, 156–57).

2. BD 190 before BD 148, used as a title (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 35–38), as it would be regularly during the Late Period. The papyrus of Nedjmet shows the first example of BD 190 as the title of BD 148. We find a similar version in a group of papyri, probably from the time of the High Priest Pinedjem II. In fact, as two papyri from the Bab el-Gusus Cache can be dated from the time of Pinedjem II, and as the variants between the other papyri are very similar, we can infer that most of them are from the same workshop, or at least from the same period (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 35–38).

- P. Cairo S.R. IV 564 = JE 95663 (unpublished)
  Spell sequence: BD 190–148–135–1B–15BIII

- P. Cairo S.R. IV 954 = JE 95855 = CG 40030 (unpublished)
  Spell sequence: BD 190–148–135–1B–15BIII–Title 180

- P. Cairo S.R. IV 999 = CG 40027 (partly published: Niwiński 1989, pls. 3a–b).
  Spell sequence: Adoration of Osiris–BD 190–148–135–1B–180
  166_{Naville}–101–155–156–‘Spell for the wedjat-amulet in bia–metal’
  Adoration of Osiris

- P. Cairo S.R. IV 1532 = CG 40020 (unpublished)

- P. Copenhagen Carlsberg 250 (unpublished)

- P. Leiden RA 58 (www.rmo.nl/collectie/zoeken?object=RA+58+vel+1 ) [30 May 2010]
  Spell sequence: Adoration of Osiris and Re-Horakhty–BD 15BIII–180

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4 Niwiński 1987–1988, 104, n. 11. There is also an example of a double vignette in P. Leiden RA 58, where each vignette has a different god: Osiris and Re-Horakhty-Atum, www.rmo.nl/collectie/zoeken?object=RA+58+vel+1 [30 October 2009].

5 On BD 190, see also Lucarelli 2006, 166–69.
P. BM EA 10094 (unpublished)
Spell sequence: […]–BD 15BIII–180–[…]

P. BM EA 10096 (unpublished)
Spell sequence: Adoration of Osiris–BD 190–148–135–1B

P. BM EA 10988 (unpublished)

Naville –101–155–156 –'Spell for the wedjat-amulet in bia-metal’+
137A rubric–100–137B–137A

P. New York MMA 25.3.32 (unpublished)
Spell sequence: Adoration of Osiris and Isis–BD 190–148–135–1B–15BIII

P. Turin CGT 53001 (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 9–38)

P. Turin CGT 53002 (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 39–43)
Spell sequence: Adoration of Osiris–BD 1B–15BIII

The papyrus of Nedjmet is not exactly the same, but some variants are identical. For example, the junction between BD 190 and BD 148 is the same, with an identical phrase omitted in other papyri of this group (for example P. Gatseshen); this version is an example of the Saite redaction. The variants that were to be retained during the Late Period also occur in this group of papyri and that of Nedjmet, though the paleography differs in the papyrus of Nedjmet. It has some particularities, as well as different spells.

**BD 125 (A and B) (IV, 1 – VIII, 20) (Fig. 3)**
This papyrus includes the first part of the spell: the arrival in the hall of Justice and the list of the gods with the declaration of innocence. Most of the Third Intermediate Period papyri containing this spell, or part of it, are hieroglyphic (47 hieroglyphic and 14 hieratic; Munro 2001b, 67–70).

**BD 100/129 (XI, 6 – XI, 13) and BD 101 (XII, 1 – XII, 14) (Fig. 5)**
Title of BD 100/129: ‘Scroll for making a glorious spirit perfect and causing him to descend in the bark of Re with his retinue’ (XI, 6: md3t nt siki t 3h, rdit h3t.f r wîs n R 3 n.3my wît.f)
Title of BD 101: ‘Scroll for making a glorious spirit perfect’ (XII, 1: md3t nt s3h 3h); the typical title is ‘Spell for protecting the bark of Re’ (Allen 1974, 83).
Even though they are separated by an illustration from the Book of Caverns (fourth division), these two chapters have the same theme and are often found together. The sequence with other spells about travelling in the solar boat and the ikr 3h spells have been analysed by Lucarelli (2006, 62, 80–83).
The title is: ‘Spell for not confining the ba of a man in the necropolis.’ The spell belongs to the group of ‘r n tm spells (‘spells for not...’) (Lucarelli 2006, 63, 80–83). This spell is generally found in lengthy hieratic papyri of the Third Intermediate Period (Munro 2001b, 51): P. Cairo JE 95838 (P. Gatseshen), P. BM 10064 (P. Panesettauy), P. BM EA 10554 (P. Greenfield), P. BM EA 10747, P. BM EA 10793 (P. Pinedjem II) and P. Louvre E. 3661 P. BN 138–140. It also occurs in two hieroglyphic papyri: P. Cairo S.R. VII 10653 and P. Leiden T 6. The version of the spell in P. BM EA 10490 features a different ending, and thus far I am not aware of parallels.

The title is: ‘Spell for entering the <great> house.’ Again, this spell is generally found in lengthy hieratic papyri of the Third Intermediate Period from the same tradition as the P. Gatseshen (Munro 2001b, 67): P. Cairo JE 95838 (P. Gatseshen), P. Cairo S.R. VII 10267, P. BM 10064 (P. Panesettauy), P. BN 62–88, P. Louvre E. 3661, P. BN 138–140 and in two hieroglyphic papyri (vignette only in P. Cairo CG 40007 and P. BM EA 9903). It belongs to a sequence of spells ‘r n ṭk’ 13/121–138–123/139–187–12/120–122, which is also in an abbreviated form in P. Turin CGT 53007.

The spell 1B, ‘Spell for causing the mummy to descend to the netherworld on the day of joining the earth, was no longer used in the Saite redaction. During the Third Intermediate Period we find it in a unique kind of papyrus, the same as the introduction BD 190–148 (see above, and Lenzo Marchese 2007, 9–38). The papyrus of Nedjmet is a complete version: the other papyri of the Third Intermediate Period omit both the end and rubric (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 19).

The new spell (IX, 1 - XI, 5) (Figs. 4–5)
The new spell is between the sixth division of the Book of Caverns and BD 100/129. The title is: ‘Spell for bringing the garland of triumph during the wag-feast in Upeker, the first month of the akhet-season, (day) 4.’ The theme of the garland of triumph/justification is well known. BD 19 concerns a proclamation of the victory of Horus over Seth in the different tribunals of gods and ends with an instruction that the text is to be pronounced as the garland is placed on (the head of) the dead (the mummy). BD 20 concerns Thoth, and proclaims the victory of Osiris over his enemies in the tribunals. In the offering rituals of the Ptolemaic period, the ‘Offering of the garland of justification’ by the king to the gods is found in different temples, notably at Edfu (Derchain 1955). The ritual is particularly found on pylons, external doors and surrounding walls. Horus is often the recipient, as the legitimate successor to Osiris. The content of these rituals is clearly distinct from the spell on the papyrus discussed here.

Garlands of flowers have also been found on the head of mummies (like crowns, which is why mih has also been translated as ‘crown’) or around the neck (Barguet 1867, 67; further examples cited in Derchain 1955, 225). This garland is a reference to Horus, a garland he

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received as successor to Osiris. The reference to Abydos is clear in our spell with the indication of Uphere and it was certainly the origin of the rite. A statue in the Louvre (A 66) of Dynasty 19 shows that the owner, Unnefer, was a priest of Harendotes in charge of a ritual of the garland in Uphere (Derchain 1955, 235–36). We also learn here that the ritual was performed during the wag-feast.

In our papyrus, the text could be divided as follows. The first part concerns what the priest of Harendotes has to do when preparing himself for the ritual, the offerings of the priest of Harendotes to Horus, the journey to where Osiris is, offerings to Osiris and to the gods that are in this procession, the making of a figure of the goddess Maat, and the journey of the priest of Harendotes in order to bring the garland of triumph. The second part of the text is about the journey of Re in his heavenly bark. The Osirian content is thus complemented by a solar part. At the end, Osiris (as lord of the underworld), Re and Nedjmet are protected. The solar part is a feature of the Third Intermediate Period papyri, as attested by the use of spells like BD 15BIII or 180, in parallel with the association with Osiris. The solar influence later appears in the Ptolemaic temple versions, but is rather less prominent (Derchain 1955, 238–41). At the end of the spell, Nedjmet has thus triumphed over her enemies. This text is important because it is the only known complete version of the ritual of the garland of triumph and because it shows its reuse in a funerary papyrus. Such a reuse of text, or introduction of new texts, is found in other contemporary papyri: P. Gatseshen (Lucarelli 2006, 175–81) and P. Greenfield (Zaluskowski 1996).

The Book of Caverns

The papyrus of Nedjmet also contains some extracts of divisions from the Book of Caverns, in the midst of BD spells:


Among the compositions of the royal tombs of the New Kingdom, the Book of Caverns is one of the least frequently attested. During the Third Intermediate Period, tombs in Thebes featured less decoration and royal funerary compositions, such as the Amduat, are frequently used (e.g., Sadek 1985); the new ‘mythological’ papyri also appeared. In addition, this period witnessed individuals provided with multiple examples of the Book of the Dead, and the use of hieratic instead of hieroglyphs. Nonetheless, this is the only known papyrus with scenes from the Book of Caverns.

Book of Caverns, second division, part of the third register (Fig. 2)

This illustration is situated after BD 148 and before BD 125A. The left segment is part of the third register of the second division of the Books of Caverns. Four figures are depicted in a gesture of adoration before a chest, in which the body of Osiris was hidden (Piankoff 1954, 55). Beneath, four disks and four staffs topped with ram-heads are arranged within a register; the one below contains four wsr-poles and four disks. On the other side, there are two gods with a sun disk in the middle. This scene does not belong to the Book of Caverns, and its
meaning remains uncertain.

**Book of Caverns, sixth division, final register** (Figs. 4, 11)
This illustration is situated after BD 125 and before the new spell. It forms the final register and the last part of the Book of Caverns, showing the rebirth of the sun after his journey in the underworld (Piankoff 1954, 119–20). This theme is well known and occurs frequently in the Amduat. When hours of the Amduat were chosen for inclusion in Third Intermediate Period papyri, the twelfth and last hour, representing the rebirth of the sun, is most common. Thus the selection of the closing part of the Book of Caverns is not surprising. If we compare the papyrus version with scenes in tombs in the Valley of the Kings, it is notable that the direction of the scene is reversed (Figs. 11–12).

**Book of Caverns, fourth division, first register** (Figs. 2, 9)
The complete division has three registers and more texts (Piankoff 1954, 7); here only the first register is included. The illustration is between the New Spell, BD 101 (‘to descend in the bark of Re’) and BD 100 (‘to protect the bark of Re’). The label in the tomb of Ramses VI helps us to understand the meaning (Piankoff 1944, 36–38): Osiris, between Isis and Nephthys, is in his cavern and the disk enters the cavern and talks to Horus and Anubis (next scene) in order to be in charge of the body of Osiris. Osiris is designated $\text{hnth s$t'h}$, ‘at the head of his mysteries.’ The meaning of the last illustration is not clear, even if there is a link between Horus and the ichneumon. There could be a link between these illustrations and the new spell which precedes it, which also concerns Osiris and Re. As with the sixth division, the scene, compared with those in the royal tombs, is not in the same direction (Figs. 9–10).

**Book of Caverns, first division** (Figs. 6–7)
The text in Ramesside tombs indicates that the first division concerns the entrance of Re ‘in the Netherworld (in the) first Cavern of the West’ (Piankoff 1954, 48–53), and he addresses the gods who are in the first Cavern of the Netherworld. If we compare the scene on P. BM EA 10490 with that in the tomb of Ramses VI (Figs. 7–8), it is clear that the orientation is reversed. Was the papyrus to be read starting with this first register from the *Book of Caverns*?

**P. BM EA 10490: Preliminary observations**

Considering the papyrus as a whole, the contents can be summarised as:

- **BD 190–148**: Beginning of the BD and ‘spell for provisioning the blessed one.’
- **Book of Caverns, second division**: concerning the chest of Osiris, and another scene whose meaning is not yet clear.
- **BD 125**: Osiris’ tribunal.
- **Book of Caverns, sixth division**: end of the journey of the sun in the Netherworld.
- **New Spell**: offerings to Osiris, overthrow of his enemies, journey of Re, victory of Re, rebirth, overthrow of the enemies of Nedjmet.
- **BD 100/129**: ‘to descend in the bark of Re.’
Book of Caverns, fourth division: Osiris in his cavern and the entrance of Re.
BD 101: to protect the bark of Re.
BD 91: ‘Spell for not confining the ba of a man in the necropolis’ (i.e., to be free to move).
BD 123/139: ‘Spell for entering the <great> house’ (i.e., entrance to the tomb).
BD 1B: ‘Spell for causing the mummy to descend to the netherworld on the day of joining the earth.’

Book of Caverns, first division: beginning of the journey of the sun in the Netherworld.

Two separate parts of the papyrus can be distinguished. Firstly, the beginning of the Book of the Dead with BD 190–148 emphasising the importance of the provisioning. The selection of BD 125 is not surprising here, but the presence of the second division of the Book of Caverns, between BD 148 and 125, is more difficult to explain. Secondly, the final register to the first register of the Book of Caverns is included, with the scenes in reverse orientation to that found in the royal tombs. This may indicate the direction in which the papyrus should be read: if we commence reading at the ‘end’ of the papyrus, it opens with the first part of the Book of Caverns (the entrance to the Netherworld). This would explain the choice of both spells and illustrations from the Book of Caverns. A clear parallel exists between the journey of the deceased and the course of the sun, with both Osirian and solar aspects. The papyrus would then read as follows:

The entrance of the sun to the Netherworld (BC first division) and the descent of the mummy into the Netherworld (BD 1B), the entrance to the tomb (BD 123/139), and the importance of being free to move (BD 91)
The protection of the bark of Re (BD 101) and the descent in it (BD 100/129)
The link between Re and Osiris through the fourth division of the Book of Caverns could also be connected to the new spell, with the final goal of overthrowing all the enemies and the obtaining of the crown of triumph. The illustrations of the Book of Caverns are after BD 100/129, maybe because the scribe preferred to insert it at the end of the page, because the link between BD 100/129 and BD 101 seems to be certain.
The last part is then the end of the journey of the sun in the Netherworld and its rebirth, with the final register of the Book of Caverns.

A development of iconographic representations of the solar-Osirian unity is attested on coffins and papyri of Dynasty 21 (Niwiński 1987–1988); the papyrus of Nedjmet is a good example of this development, which began in the New Kingdom. This papyrus is rather original, with many innovations. It is one of the earliest Books of the Dead in hieratic, if we accept it belongs to Nedjmet, wife of Herihor. The hieratic writing is very rarely employed for this kind of text during the New Kingdom, while from Dynasty 21 it starts to be used more often. The next datable hieratic papyri are from the time of Amenemope/Pinedjem II (Lenzo Marchese 2007, 177). But it is not impossible that other caches or tombs of the time of Pinedjem I, Masaharta or Menkheperre are yet to be found, and may yield earlier hieratic papyri.

The initial vignette with the presence of Amun-Re-Horakhy, as well as Osiris, is another innovation. Re-Horakhy may be included to emphasise solar aspects; for Amun’s inclusion the reasoning is less evident, although the supremacy of this god in post-New Kingdom
Thebes may have been a factor. As already noted, it is the only mention of Amun in this type of scene during Dynasty 21 (Niwiński 1987–1988, 104 n. 11).

Besides the traditional spells of the Book of the Dead, a text not attested before in this corpus relates to the victory of Osiris, Re and the deceased. Extracts from the Book of Caverns are included rather than parts of the Amduat, the Litany of Re or the so-called mythological scenes. As for the new spell, the illustrations seem to have been chosen to produce a coherent whole, presumably by a priest with a good knowledge and understanding of the content and purpose of the composition.

A final distinctive feature of P. BM EA 10490 is the use of spells (the sequence BD 190–148 and the spell 1B) which would later be found in a new ‘abbreviated’ Book of the Dead during the time of the High Priest Pinedjem II (e.g., P. Cairo CG 40030, P. Cairo CG 40027 and P. BM EA 10988). The use of BD 190 as a title for BD 148 would survive the Saite recension.

Conclusion: Position of both papyri in the study of the Book of the Dead

Why would one person have two Book of the Dead papyri? During the Third Intermediate Period, it was common to own two funerary papyri instead of one, perhaps to compensate for the lack of decoration in tombs. This increase in the number of papyri accompanying the deceased may have prompted the composition of new kinds of texts on papyri: abbreviated versions of the Amduat, mythological papyri, the Litany of Re, and hieratic Books of the Dead. This last group includes full versions, as in the New Kingdom, or abbreviated ones using the principle of ‘a part for a whole’ (pars pro toto). If we analyze the group of papyri from the different caches, we can see that people took two papyri with them to the tomb for the afterlife: typically a Book of the Dead (hieroglyphic or hieratic) with an Amduat, a mythological papyrus or a Litany of Re (Lenzo Marchese 2004, 52–53). Amongst the papyri from the Bab el-Gusus cache, two hieroglyphic papyri were provided for one person, while another owned two mythological papyri. Most of the papyri, however, date from the time of the High Priest Pinedjem II/King Amenemope onwards. It must also be said that among the occupants of the Royal Cache, only Henuttauy (wife of Pinedjem I), Pinedjem II and his son-in-law Djedptahiuefânkh, owned two papyri. In the case of Nedjmet, the hieroglyphic papyrus may have been seen as the ‘real’ Book of the Dead, and the hieratic one as the second papyrus with ‘new’ texts.

If we accept that the owner of this papyrus was Queen Nedjmet, wife of Herihor, whose mummy was found in the Royal Cache at Deir el-Bahari, it would seem that she probably died during Pinedjem’s pontificate or kingship. Her hieroglyphic papyrus and her coffin are very similar to those of Pinedjem I and his wife Henuttawy (Taylor 1998, 1148). The hieratic

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7 Niwiński 1989, 211, indicates a papyrus with extracts of the Amduat together with the Book of the Earth (Turin 18 = P. Turin 1789).
8 P. Cairo S.R. VII 10230 and P. Cairo S.R. VII 11495 of the time Pinedjem II / Menkheperre.
9 P. Cairo S.R. IV 544 and P. Cairo S.R. VII 10252 of the time of Menkheperre.
10 Concerning the reference to a ‘first year of Pinotmou’ on a bandage from her mummy (now lost) and whether it indicates the date of her death, see Taylor 1998, 1148 who believes that Nedjmet was still alive during Pinedjem’s kingship.
Funerary Papyri of Queen Nedjmet

Papyrus was possibly one of the first attempts to use the compositions of the New Kingdom royal tombs in a new way on papyrus. Later, the Amduat or the so-called 'mythological scenes' were preferred. Niwiński emphasised how this atypical content illustrates 'an extraordinary privilege' provided to Nedjmet by the king (1989, 210). This is perhaps more understandable if she was the mother of Pinedjem I.

Another papyrus of a slightly later period, P. Greenfield (P. BM EA 10544; Budge 1912), also found in the Royal Cache, belonged to a daughter of Pinedjem II and requires consideration here. This is another extraordinary document with a mixture of Book of the Dead spells, new spells and mythological scenes. Why did the daughter have such a papyrus, while her parents owned a shorter hieratic Book of the Dead? Niwiński suggested that the hieratic papyrus of Nedjmet was written later, at the time of the High Priest Pinedjem II, i.e., fifty years after the burial, and wonders whether the original second papyrus of Nedjmet, an Amduat-type, was 'destroyed by thieves who plundered her mummy, and was replaced by another papyrus at her reburial' (Niwiński 1989, 210). This might be possible if Nedjmet was not buried directly in the Royal Cache but in some other tomb, as might be the case with Herihor and Piânkh. The use of BD 190–148 can be dated with certainty by other papyri to the time of Pinedjem II, even if the palaeography and the variants are not identical to those on other papyri likely to be from the same workshop.

The hieroglyphic papyrus (P. BM EA 10541 + Louvre E 6259) is clearly in the tradition of the Ramesside period—which persisted throughout Dynasty 21—whereas the hieratic papyrus reflects significant changes in the Book of the Dead tradition. The finding of other papyri in some tombs or other caches from the very beginning of Dynasty 21 to the time of Pinedjem II/Amenemope would help us to understand exactly the position of the second hieratic papyrus (P. BM EA 10490); perhaps an ‘intermediate’ stage is still missing. It now seems certain that many innovations occurred during the time of Pinedjem II.

Both papyri require further study, but it is already evident that Nedjmet occupied a special position at the beginning of Dynasty 21, and that the analysis of her papyri is important for understanding the wider history of the Book of the Dead.

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Bibliography


http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_15/lenzo.aspx
Fig. 1: P. BM EA 10541, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
Fig. 2: P. BM EA 10490.1, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 3: P. BM EA 10490.2, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_15/lenzo.aspx
Fig. 4: P. BM EA 10490.3, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 5: P. BM EA 10490.4, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
Fig. 6: P. BM EA 10490.5, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_15/lenzo.aspx
Fig. 7: Book of Caverns, first division (P. BM EA 10490.5), courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 8: Book of Caverns, first division. Tomb of Ramses VI (KV 9, from Piankoff 1954, fig. 10).
Fig. 9: Book of Caverns, fourth division, first register (P. BM EA 10490.4), courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 10: Book of Caverns, fourth division, first register. Tomb of Ramses VI (KV 9, from Piankoff 1954, fig. 13).
Fig. 11: Book of Caverns, sixth division, final register (P. BM EA 10490.3), courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 12: Book of Caverns, sixth division, final register. Tomb of Ramses VI (KV 9, from Piankoff 1954, fig. 20).