The Amduat papyrus of Panebmontu

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Introduction

In 2008 the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan at the British Museum received as a generous gift a complete funerary papyrus that had been in private possession in England since the late nineteenth century. Inscribed for a Prophet of Amun-Re named Panebmontu, it is an abbreviated version of the Book of Amduat, copies of which were frequently paired with manuscripts of the Spells for Going Forth by Day (the ‘Book of the Dead’) in elite burials of Dynasty 21 and early Dynasty 22. It is a pleasure to dedicate this short description of Panebmontu’s Amduat manuscript to Bridget Leach, whose dedication, skill and professionalism have contributed so much to the preservation and maintenance of the British Museum’s unparalleled papyrus collection.

All that is certainly known of the modern history of the papyrus is that it was formerly in the possession of Edmund Maxwell Dring (1906-1990), managing director of the London firm of Bernard Quaritch, dealers in antiquarian books and manuscripts, and passed from him to his descendants.1 It is possible that the papyrus was originally acquired around 1900 by Edmund Hunt Dring (1864-1928), who preceded his son E. M. Dring as managing director of the same firm, but documentary proof of this is lacking. Brief notes about the papyrus, which have been retained in the donor’s possession, appear to have been written by E. A. Wallis Budge (1857-1934), the former Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum and a recognised authority on ancient Egyptian funerary texts in the early decades of the twentieth century. Although the notes are not signed, the handwriting closely resembles that of Budge, and the notes include page references to his book The Egyptian Heaven and Hell I, The Book Am-Tuat (London, 1906). It would appear probable then that the papyrus was submitted to Budge for his opinion at some time after the publication of that volume.

When acquired by the British Museum the papyrus had been attached to a paper backing and had been mounted under glass in a gilded wooden frame, on which was the inscription: ‘PART OF/THE BOOK OF THE NETHER WORLD/(21st DYNASTY, circ. 1100, B.C.).’ Bridget Leach, of the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research, removed the frame and undertook the conservation and re-mounting of the papyrus, in line with standard British Museum protocols for the handling and display of papyrus manuscripts. Removal of the old backing paper proved to be challenging and, in view of the weakened state of the original papyrus (perhaps as a consequence of long-term exposure to natural light), it was decided to remove only part of the backing and to trim away excess paper in areas where it was visible through lacunae in the manuscript.

The document (EA 79430), consists of a single sheet of papyrus measuring 98.5 by 24.4 cm. It was included in the exhibition Journey through the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead in Japan in 2012 (Taylor 2012, 132-3, 158) and in Perth, Western Australia, in 2013 (re-

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1 See www.quaritch.com/about/our-history (accessed 29 May 2016).
titled as *Secrets of the Afterlife*, and is now housed among the study collection of papyri in the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan.

**Content of the papyrus: general**

Papyrus rolls containing religious texts and images were a regular part of the grave goods of Egyptians of high status from mid-Dynasty 18 (c. 1500 BC) to the Roman period (2nd century AD). The rolls vary in length from under one metre to over 37 metres. The majority of them contain texts from the Book of the Dead, a collection of prayers, hymns and magical spells the purpose of which was to assist the dead and equip them with knowledge for their journey to the afterlife. Other papyri contain extracts from the Books of the Netherworld, which describe the topography of the hereafter and the journey of the sun god through those regions during the hours of the night. The papyrus of Panebmontu belongs to this second category.

The main content of the papyrus derives from the Book of the Hidden Chamber, more commonly known today as the Amduat (‘What is in the Netherworld’), the oldest and most important of the Books of the Netherworld. This religious composition was inscribed on the walls of the tombs of several kings from Dynasties 18-20. The Amduat narrates the story of the sun’s nocturnal journey beneath the earth, from its setting below the western horizon in the evening to its re-emergence at dawn in the east. There are twelve divisions, each corresponding to one hour of the night. During his passage it was believed that the sun god and his entourage of deities fought and overcame the forces of chaos (embodied chiefly as the giant serpent Apep), and experienced rejuvenation, enabling him to be re-born the next morning. By placing the text and images of the Amduat on the walls of the king’s tomb, it was believed that the dead ruler was identified with the sun god and would himself share in the rejuvenation which the deity experienced. During the New Kingdom, use of the Amduat was restricted, appearing primarily on the walls of tombs of kings, although it is also attested in the burial place of one non-royal personage, the tomb of the vizier User (Hornung 1963-7, xiv-xvi). In Dynasty 21 (c. 1069-945 BC) the composition ceased to be a purely royal prerogative and became more widely available, and in this period, as well as in the early years of Dynasty 22 (i.e. c. 945-850 BC) versions of it were written and drawn on papyrus rolls which were placed with the mummies of high officials and priests and their wives at Thebes (Sadek 1985, 325-6).

These later manuscripts of the Amduat on papyrus often consist of highly abbreviated versions of the composition. In these the draughtsman selected elements from the last four sections of the Amduat (corresponding to the ninth to twelfth hours of the night), probably following a copy or copies ultimately deriving from the scenes on the east wall of the burial chamber of Amenhotep II in the Valley of the Kings (Niwinski 1989, 159, 179-80). These papyri manifest considerable variation in the way in which the draughtsmen treated the Amduat. In papyri that remain the most faithful to the original versions found in kings’ tombs (Type A.II.1a in Niwinski’s classification system) the images follow earlier convention.

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in that they are arranged in three registers, and the different ‘hours’ are subdivided by vertical divisions (Niwinski 1989, 174-5). However, other sub-categories of Amduat papyri testify to greater freedom on the part of the artists to create new arrangements of the iconography. On these examples the images selected are arranged in one, two or three registers, with the visual elements of the ninth to twelfth hours placed in an irregular sequence, and with the textual component heavily abbreviated (Niwinski 1989, 180-211). In some examples, the content is a mixture, comprising extracts from the Amduat and sections drawn from the Book of the Dead (Niwinski 1989, 188-192 type A.II.3), while another category consists of papyri which combine elements from the Amduat, the Book of the Dead and other Books of the Netherworld (Niwinski 1989, 203-11 type A.III.2, subdivided into A.III.2a – with hieroglyphic inscriptions – and A.III.2b, with inscriptions in hieratic).

The papyrus of Panebmontu corresponds with most of the diagnostic features of type A.II.1b in Niwinski’s scheme of classification (Niwinski 1989, 180-1). The majority of its content is drawn from the Amduat, but although the ‘traditional’ arrangement in three registers has been retained, there are no vertical divisions to separate the ninth to twelfth hours. Instead, selected visual elements from these hours are distributed in an uncanonical manner throughout the three registers. Interspersed among these images are brief pictorial extracts from the Book of Gates, another composition that, like the Amduat, was originally inscribed in royal tombs and later adopted by private individuals. This interpolation of non-Amduat material could associate the papyrus with type A.III.2a in Niwinski’s classification, in which Amduat elements are mixed with images from other compositions (Niwinski 1989, 203-9). However, in view of the small proportion of space that is occupied by the material from the Book of Gates, the papyrus of Panebmontu seems to have a closer affinity with Type A.II.1b. In fact it is probably fair to say that the diversity of content which these manuscripts display sometimes defeats attempts to assign them to any modern system of classification.

**Description of scenes and texts** (Fig. 1)

The papyrus appears to be complete, although an uninscribed margin at the right-hand edge of the roll might once have served to attach a separate sheet on which the deceased was depicted adoring either Osiris or Re-Horakhty. An ‘etiquette’ of this type was often attached to these funerary papyri, although it was by no means indispensable (Sadek 1985, 318-22). One of its functions was perhaps to take the place of such offering scenes which had appeared on the walls of tombs in the New Kingdom and which in Dynasties 21-22 were now usually depicted on wooden stelae placed beside the coffin (Sadek 1985, 322; Niwinski 1989, 99). On some papyri the identity of the deceased was recorded only on the etiquette (Niwinski 1989, 99, 174), but since the name and ancestry of Panebmontu is written twice in the main body of this papyrus the inclusion of an etiquette might have been considered unnecessary in this case.

All of the texts and images are drawn in black ink, the images in the simple ‘sketch-like’ style that characterises the earliest copies of the Amduat such as those in the tombs of Tuthmosis III and Amenhotep II.
Fig. 1: Amduat papyrus of Panebmontu, early Dynasty 22, c. 945-850 BC. British Museum EA 7943.
Along the upper edge of the sheet is a hieroglyphic text, reading from right to left:

‘Words spoken by Re-Horakhty-Atum, Lord of the Two Lands and of Heliopolis: May he cause you to go forth and to enter, your face[?] [several words lost] like the lords of eternity. He has opened for you your mouth; he has opened for you your eyes; he has unblocked for you your ears; he has established for you [your] heart in its chest. You go forth, entering and departing from the interior of the Netherworld. You are one praised before Osiris, Lord of Eternity, O Osiris Prophet of Amun-Re, King of the Gods, Panebmontu, true of voice, son of the Prophet of Amun-Re, King of the Gods, Letter-writer, Great Inspector Ankhefenmut, true of voice.’

The positioning of a speech of Re-Horakhty in this location is unusual, and perhaps served as a textual alternative to the ‘etiquette’ that seems to have been omitted from this manuscript, but that on some other funerary papyri depicted the deceased adoring the solar deity instead of Osiris (Sadek 1985, 160-2 pl. 31b; Niwinski 1989, 100 pls. 1a-b, 2a, 4b, 5a-b, 34b). In its emphasis on freedom of movement and the restoration of the deceased’s bodily faculties, this passage reflects themes that occur in many ancient Egyptian funerary texts, for example in spells 26-29 of the Book of the Dead (Fabian 1988). The precise wording of Panebmontu’s papyrus does not occur in the standard text of the Amduat or in that of the Book of Gates, although the capacity to see and hear is alluded to in different phraseology in the concluding text of the third hour of the Amduat (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 59; Vol. II, 74; Warburton 2007, 101).

**Upper register, left to right**

The first register is occupied by images taken from the Twelfth Hour of the Amduat. At the extreme left is the barque of the sun god, a ram-headed anthropomorphic figure who is seated under a central canopy which is formed of a protective serpent (Fig. 2). An inscription in front of the figure identifies the god: ‘Re-Horakhty-Atum, Lord of the Two Lands and of Heliopolis.’ The sun god is accompanied in the barque by other deities; at the prow stands Maat, identifiable by the feather on her head, and a second goddess wearing a solar disc and cow’s horns, who probably represents Hathor. Behind them stand three male figures, the first two being named as Hu (‘Spoken Command’) and Sia (‘Perception’), while the third is damaged and unidentifiable. A further three male figures, unidentified by inscriptions, stand behind the sun-god’s throne. The barque is towed by ten male figures (older versions of the Amduat have twelve) who are called ‘The Unwearying Ones’. A partially garbled inscription between the figures associates them with ‘the prow of the barque of Re’. The forepart and head of a snake appears in the midst of these ten gods. The standard text of the Amduat describes how the solar barque is towed through the body of this snake, ‘Life of the Gods’, which reverses time so that the dead become young again, ready to enter on a new life. This scene usually occupies the middle register of the Twelfth Hour (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 199-200; Warburton 2007, 366-71).

Further to the right are eight male divinities with arms upraised, whose role is to make adoration of the sun god as he enters the sky. This group appears to be an abbreviated version of a company of twelve deities who usually occupy the upper register of the Twelfth Hour (Warburton 2007, 363-5). In front of each figure is a short hieroglyphic text reading ‘Adoring N’, N being the name of one or more gods. The names of the gods adored, in order from right to left, are (1) Re-Horakhty (2) Atum, lord of Heliopolis (3) Ptah-Sokar (4) lost (5) Anubis, foremost of the divine booth (6) Maat in the barque (7) Khonsu in the barque (8) Hu and Sia. These identifications differ from those in standard versions of the Amduat (cf Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 196-7; Warburton 2007, 363).

To the right, extending the full height of the papyrus, is a depiction of the eastern horizon, the boundary between the world of night and the world of day, and the goal of the sun god’s journey (Fig. 3). A curved pt (‘sky’) sign represents the eastern horizon. The scarab beetle, embodying the dawn sun, flies to the outstretched arms of Shu, god of the air, whose head is shown in the centre, and whose task is to raise the sun into the sky at dawn. Below the head of Shu is a figure in mummy-shape, representing Osiris, ruler of the realm of the dead. He is to remain behind in his subterranean kingdom when the solar deity rises into the sky, and to await the return of the sun the next night. Accompanying this scene is a hieroglyphic text in two vertical columns, repeating the name, title and parentage of the owner of the papyrus: ‘The Osiris, the Prophet of Amun-Re, King of the Gods, Panebmontu, true of voice, son of the Prophet of Amun-Re, King of the Gods, Great Inspector, Letter Writer, Ankhefenmut, true of voice.’
Fig. 3: Conclusion of the Twelfth Hour of the Amduat: the sun-god in the form of the scarab beetle approaches the head and arms of Shu. The Osiris-mummy is depicted below, and the name, title and ancestry of Panebmontu are recorded in the vertical columns of text. British Museum EA 79430.

Central register, left to right
Much of the iconography of this register is drawn from the Tenth Hour of the Amduat. At left, a snake in a barque is towed by four gods, the towrope formed by the body of another snake. This seems to be an adaptation of a scene that in the New Kingdom usually occupies the middle register of the Tenth Hour, consisting of a falcon-headed snake, ‘the living one of the earth’, in a barque, but without any deities towing it (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 174; Warburton 2007, 312). The next image on Panebmontu’s papyrus is also drawn from the middle register of the Tenth Hour, and represents a double-headed snake with two pairs of human legs, and on its back a falcon representing the ba of the funerary god Sokar (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 173; Vol. II, 166; Warburton 2007, 311). The next scenes to the right appear to be extracts from the Book of Gates (Fig. 4). A stylised gateway guarded by a snake is a
greatly simplified copy of one of the impressive gateways that mark the changing hours of the sun god’s journey in New Kingdom versions of this composition. The following image, another large snake with four deities standing between its coils, does not appear in traditional versions of the Amduat, and is probably an abbreviated version of a scene in the Ninth Hour of the Book of Gates (Hornung 1979-80 Vol. II, 221-3; Hornung and Abt 2014, 326-9). Next comes another scene from the Tenth Hour of the Amduat: this shows a large nfr (the hieroglyphic sign for the word ‘god’) with a solar disc protected by snakes and goddesses. This is a condensed version of two adjacent scenes that occupy part of the upper register in older versions of the Amduat (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 169; Vol. II, 163-4; Warburton 2007, 304-5).

Another stylised gateway guarded by a snake is followed by a procession of nine gods, the first four of which are taken from the middle register of the Tenth Hour of the Amduat, where they form part of a group of twelve deities who protect the sun god; one is human-headed, while the others have sun-discs in place of their heads. All four of them carry an object which appears to be a battle-axe, whereas in older versions of the Amduat this company is armed with arrows, spears and bows (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 174-6; Vol. II, 167-9; Warburton 2007, 313). Three of the remaining five figures in the middle register of Panebmontu’s papyrus are taken from the upper register of the Eleventh Hour of the Amduat. At the front of the group is a figure with two heads, one wearing the White Crown and the other the Red Crown; in New Kingdom versions of the Amduat this figure appears to represent the sun god (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 180; Vol. II, 175; Warburton 2007, 330), an identification supported by the depiction of a solar disc between the two heads, which is omitted in Panebmontu’s papyrus. This figure is followed by a deity with two human heads (without crowns) and a second having two serpents in place of a head (for these, Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 183; Vol. II, 176-7; Warburton 2007, 333). A third is damaged and unidentifiable, and the fourth has two heads of long-beaked birds. This last entity is not found in the older versions of the Amduat and may represent an adaptation of a figure from the upper register of the Tenth Hour, who has two arms (or snakes) in place of his head (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 172; Vol. II, 165; Warburton 2007, 308).

**Lower register, left to right**
At left is a third depiction of a gateway guarded by a snake, based on the hour-divisions
of the Book of Gates, after which comes a scene from the Eleventh Hour of the Amduat (Fig. 5). This shows the punishment of the damned, the enemies of the sun-god, with four lioness-headed goddesses spitting fire and wielding knives above dome-shaped furnaces; in these the severed heads and decapitated bodies of the damned are being burned. In older versions of the Amduat, this scene occupies this same position in the lowest register of the Eleventh Hour, but the goddesses are five in number and four of them have human heads (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 190-1 Vol. II, 182; Warburton 2007, 344-7). Next come three large snakes bearing crowns: the Red Crown, from which a human head rises; the White Crown, with two heads at its base; and the feathered atef crown, also with two human heads. The origin of these images are depictions of the Red and White crowns, supported by serpents identified as Isis and Nephthys, which appear in the middle register of earlier versions of the Eleventh Hour (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 187; Vol. II, 179-80; Warburton 2007, 342). These images are followed by four goddesses seated on snakes, a group usually located in the upper register of the hour (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 183-4; Vol. II, 177-8; Warburton 2007, 336-7). Next comes a large winged serpent with human legs, from which the god Atum is emerging, an image usually located in the upper register of the Eleventh Hour (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 181; Vol. II, 175; Warburton 2007, 331). Finally there are two small scenes taken from the Ninth and Twelfth Hours of the Amduat respectively: four snakes spitting fire and resting on the hieroglyph for ‘clothing’, and four goddesses with fire-spitting snakes rising from their shoulders, all of them designed to ward off the sun god’s enemies (Hornung 1963-7 Vol. I, 163-5, 193-5; Vol. II, 158-9, 186-7; Warburton 2007, 290-1, 360-2).

Fig. 5: A stylised gateway with snake-guardian and, to the right, lioness-headed deities burning the dismembered bodies of the unrighteous, from the Eleventh Hour of the Amduat. British Museum EA 79430.
Scenes from the Book of Gates

Most of the visual content of Panebmontu’s papyrus is taken from the Ninth to Twelfth Hours of the Amduat, and in this the manuscript is not unusual. The arrangement of the elements selected cannot be exactly paralleled in other papyri, since no two manuscripts are identical. Although, as Niwinski has observed, some Amduat papyri incorporate elements from other ‘royal funerary compositions’ (1989, 192ff), it is rare to find content from the Book of Gates included among the Amduat scenes. Hornung has suggested that its scarcity in non-royal contexts might be ‘because it is oriented more thoroughly than the Amduat to the person of the king’ (1999, 56). The presence of these elements on Panebmontu’s papyrus therefore deserves further discussion.

The Book of Gates (Hornung 1979-80; 1999, 55-77) was the second of the great ‘Books of the Netherworld’, following the Amduat. It was formulated in the post-Amarna period, and is attested on the walls of many kings’ tombs from Horemheb to Ramesses VII and also on several royal sarcophagi, most notably that of Sety I. Like the Amduat it traces the course of the sun god’s nocturnal journey towards resurrection, but differs from its precursor in several ways, most notably through the inclusion of images of a large gateway, guarded by a giant serpent, which conclude the sections representing the hours of the night. In the Third Intermediate Period, brief extracts from the Gates are found on a few papyri and coffins (for example, elements of the scene of the judgement hall on a cartonnage case of early Dynasty 22 in Harvard, in Hollis 1987, 168-170, 174 pl. 3), while more substantial elements were employed in private tombs and on sarcophagi from Dynasty 26 onwards (Hornung 1999, 56).

Four distinct elements on Panebmontu’s papyrus can be derived from this source: three of these are simply images of the door-leaves of the great gates with their snake guardians, two in the middle register and one in the lower register. Only one other published Amduat papyrus seems to include this image - a single small gate with guardian snake which appears on the highly abbreviated papyrus of Nesmut (British Museum EA 9984: Niwinski 1989, 324-5 pl. 40a dated late Dynasty 21 or early Dynasty 22) (Fig. 6).

![Fig. 6: Part of the Amduat papyrus of Nesmut, with a small image of a gateway with guardian serpent at lower left. Late Dynasty 21 or early Dynasty 22. British Museum EA 9984.](image-url)
The fourth element of the Book of Gates on Panebmontu’s papyrus, in the centre of the middle register, depicts a large serpent with head upraised, and four mummiform figures standing within the coils of its undulating body (Fig. 7). This image traditionally appears in the Ninth Hour of the composition, where it is found in the lowest register, a zone representing events that take place in the region where the unrighteous are punished. In New Kingdom versions, the snake is longer and its coils are occupied by seven deities, rather than four, although the accompanying text states that these figures represent the sons of Horus (Hornung 1979-80 Vol. II, 221-3; Hornung and Abt 2014, 326-9). The serpent spits fire from its mouth towards a line of bound ‘enemies of Osiris’ who, as the text explains, are ‘to be burned’ (Hornung 1979-8 Vol. II, 219; Hornung and Abt 2014, 322).

Fig. 7: Detail of the central register of Panebmontu’s papyrus: four mummiform deities within the coils of a serpent, a scene from the Ninth Hour of the Book of Gates. British Museum EA 79430.

With the exception of the ‘gate’ motif and the judgement scene mentioned above, this image of the fire-spitting serpent appears to be the only element from the Book of Gates that was adopted with any frequency in the private funerary iconography of the Third Intermediate Period. Why this particular scene should have been selected from the hundreds of images that comprise the Book of Gates is unclear. Versions of this image occur on a few other Amduat papyri: one with seven deities between the serpent’s coils, another with six, although the first coil behind the serpent’s head is unoccupied (papyri of anonymous owner, Cairo J. 34000, and Djedkhonsuiuesankh, Paris, Louvre N. 3276; Piankoff and Rambova 1957 nos. 28, 29; cf. Niwinski 1989, 204 no. 52, 278, 358). Both of these examples are assigned by Niwinski to late Dynasty 21. A third example, with three mummiform deities, has been

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3 The scene is to be distinguished from the image of three deities standing within the coils of a serpent, which appears frequently on coffins and also on some papyri of Dynasty 21 (Niwinski 1988b).

4 Another Amduat papyrus with ‘mixed’ content includes what may be a different adaptation of this scene from the Book of Gates: in the top register of the late Dynasty 21 Skrine Papyrus a serpent with only a single mummiform deity standing between its coils is facing four bound and decapitated enemies (Blackman 1917 pl. XXVII). Blackman identifies the source of this image as the seventh hour of the ‘Te’i’ (i.e. Amduat) (Blackman 1917, 123), but there is a stronger resemblance to the scene in the ninth hour of the Book of Gates, discussed above. For the date of the papyrus, cf. Niwinski 1989, 348-9.
dated to late Dynasty 21 or early Dynasty 22 (papyrus of Ankhefenkhonsu, British Museum EA 9980: Niwinski 1989, 323-4).

The version on Panebmontu’s papyrus omits the figures of the enemies and shows only four deities within the serpent’s coils. It can be compared with similarly abbreviated versions of this image which are painted on the sides of some Theban coffins dating to the earlier part of Dynasty 22, notably Manchester 5053 and British Museum EA 6662, where the snake faces three and four figures of enemies, respectively (Petrie 1909 pl. LII; Taylor 2001, 2, pl. 53; cf. Hornung 1979-80 Vol. II, 223; for the date of these coffins, cf. Taylor 2003, 109 no. 131) (Figs. 8-9). These coffin cases provide an interesting parallel to the papyri here discussed as they too are decorated in pictorial ‘strips’ with elements taken from different funerary compositions of the New Kingdom, previously reserved for royalty and now arranged in unconventional order. It is likely that the coffins and the papyrus were products of craftsmen drawing on a common repertoire of source material.

Fig. 8: Scenes on the proper right side of the wooden coffin of Djedkhonsuiufankh, showing a large serpent, surmounted by mumiform deities, spitting fire at bound and decapitated enemies. Earlier part of Dynasty 22, c. 945-850 BC. British Museum EA 6662.

Fig. 9: Similar scene to last on the proper left side of the wooden coffin of Perenbast. Earlier part of Dynasty 22, c. 945-850 BC. Manchester Museum 5053 (from Petrie, W. M. F. 1909. *Qurneh*. London: pl. LII).
The original owner and date of the papyrus

There is no record of the circumstances in which the papyrus was discovered, but since all similar Amduat papyri that have a known provenance are from Thebes this is likely to have been the findspot of Panebmontu’s manuscript, a probability strengthened by his official role as a priest of Amun. The name Panebmontu (‘The god Montu is lord’: Ranke 1935, 112 no. 21) is also a strong indication that the papyrus comes from Thebes, since Montu was traditionally associated with that area, where all his cult centres were located. Several men named Panebmontu are known to have lived and worked at Thebes in Dynasties 20 and 21 (c. 1186-945 BC). A First Prophet of Montu of that name is mentioned in inscriptions in Theban Tomb 222 dated to the middle of Dynasty 20 (PM I, i, 323; Davies 1946, 69-70 pl. XIII). Another Panebmontu is known from his finely painted wooden coffin and mummy-board (Paris, Louvre E.13029, E.13046) the inscriptions of which record his numerous titles: God’s Father of Montu, Lord of Thebes, pure of hands, God’s Father, Beloved of the God, Master of Secrets of the Ished, Chief lector priest of Montu, and Opener of the Doors in the Great Place (Niwinski 1988a, 164, no. 330). The style of the coffin and mummy-board of this Panebmontu are quite clearly characteristic of the beginning of Dynasty 21 (Niwinski 1988a, 164 no. 330) and include features that would very soon thereafter fall out of fashion (such as the ‘duplex’ wig and the plain white ground-colour of the mummy-board). In view of the date proposed for the Amduat papyrus under discussion (below, p. 149), the Louvre coffin set must have belonged to a different Panebmontu, although he may have been an ancestor or collateral relative of the man who owned the papyrus. Some shabtis of Dynasty 21 also bear the name Panebmontu (Petrie Museum, London UC 40254-7; cf. also De Araujo 2003, 449-50).

Unfortunately, the Panebmontu for whom the papyrus was made is not at present known from any other source. He may have been related to the men of the same name mentioned above, but the precise connection, if it existed, cannot be established. On internal evidence it appears that he lived during the later part of Dynasty 21 or the early years of Dynasty 22. Amduat papyri first came into use for non-royal individuals during the pontificate of the Dynasty 21 high priest of Amun Menkheperre (second half of eleventh century BC) and were quickly adopted by Theban priests of lower status, while the latest datable Amduat papyrus is that of a grandson of Osorkon I, who probably died around the middle of the ninth century BC (Niwinski 1989, 234ff, 237).

Where can Panebmontu be placed within this time-frame? Although several Amduat papyri incorporate extracts from different ancient sources, the use of elements from the Book of Gates seems to be rather rare, and this may provide a clue to the date. As has been noted above, the inclusion of the gateway with its guardian serpent occurs on only one other Amduat papyrus, British Museum EA 9984, which has been dated by Niwinski to late Dynasty 21 or early Dynasty 22 (1989, 324-5). Perhaps more significant is the inclusion on

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5 This coffin set was acquired by mineralogist and collector Frédéric Cailliaud during his second visit to Egypt (1819 – 1822) and shipped to France in the latter year. It was first deposited in the Cabinet de Medailles and transferred to the Louvre in 1907 (Mainterot 2011, 274-5, 281, 306). The findspot of the burial is unknown, but the suggestion that it was located among the burials of the later priests of Montu at Deir el-Bahri (PM I, ii, 647; cf. Mainterot 2011, 307) is untenable since the other individuals interred there date to Dynasty 25 or later.
Panebmontu’s manuscript of the image of gods standing within the coils of a serpent, also drawn from the Book of Gates. The few other Amduat papyri on which versions of this image occur have been assigned to late Dynasty 21. It is not attested on the typical yellow-varnished coffins of Dynasty 21 to early Dynasty 22, but as has been noted it does occur on coffins decorated in yellow on a black background, a style characteristic of the succeeding phase, spanning early-middle Dynasty 22, the first examples at Thebes dating to the reigns of Sheshonq I and Osorkon I (Taylor 2003, 103-4). If, as seems likely, the craftsmen who produced the papyrus and the coffins were working within a common tradition, we may be justified in attributing the papyrus to the first part of Dynasty 22, rather than the later years of Dynasty 21.

Prosopographical evidence broadly supports the date just suggested. The name of Panebmontu’s father Ankhefenmut was common during the Third Intermediate Period. No other reference to this particular individual is known, but the titles which he held, rwD a3 and sS št, are well-attested on Theban monuments of Dynasty 22. The first, rwD a3 may be translated ‘Great Inspector’ and is a vague title, although it was often more narrowly defined in Dynasties 22-26 by the addition of the epithet hsf n niwt, ‘Controller of the City’. The second title sS št denoted ‘Letter writer’ or ‘Secretary’. This designation was often expanded with the phrases ‘of Pharaoh’ or ‘of the lord of the two lands’, or could take the form sS št n ḫ-ṛṣyt, ‘Secretary of the Southern Region’ (Payraudeau 2014, I, 197-204). The titles rwD a3 and sS št occur together in one of the prominent Theban official families of Dynasty 22, that of Nebneteru (Payraudeau 2014, I, 145-7), which had a kind of ‘family monopoly’ on the ‘secretary’ role in Upper Egypt (Payraudeau 2014, I, 198). Nebneteru ‘iv’ of this family is recorded as having held the titles rwD a3 (in one inscription expanded to rwD a3 n pr-nsw, ‘Great Inspector of the Royal Domain’) and sS št n ḫ-ṛṣyt/n nb t3wy, and he was also, among other offices, a priest of Montu (Payraudeau 2014, II 482-4). The Nebneteru family held the post of secretary throughout most of Dynasty 22 but its extensive genealogical ramifications are by no means fully documented, so it is possible that Ankhefenmut could have been related to this powerful clan in some way.

In view of these circumstances the most probable date for Panebmontu’s papyrus seems to be the first part of Dynasty 22, perhaps between the middle of the tenth and middle of the ninth century BC; a later date is excluded, since the tradition of producing Amduat papyri seems to have come to an end at Thebes before the advent of Dynasty 25 in the second half of the eighth century (Niwinski 1989, 237).

Burial context

The contents of Panebmontu’s original burial assemblage can only be conjectured. As a priest of fairly humble status, living probably during the earlier part of Dynasty 22, it may be assumed that he possessed one or possibly two wooden coffins (outer and inner) and that his mumified body would have been enclosed in a cartonnage case bearing brightly painted religious images (for the typical Theban coffins of the period, cf. Taylor 2003, 104-111, pls.

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6 For the basic title rwD a3, cf. Vernus 1980, 223-4; Payraudeau 2003, 132. The more specific title rwD a3 hsf n niwt was evidently used to designate the governor of Thebes in Dynasties 22-26 (Payraudeau 2003, passim; Payraudeau 2014, I, 224-230).
45-60). Faience shabti-figures in wooden boxes and a small painted wooden stela were also standard components of such burials. In Dynasty 21 and early Dynasty 22 it was customary for persons of rank to be buried with two papyrus rolls, one containing an abbreviated version of the Book of the Dead, the other an Amduat. It is likely then that Panebmontu had a second papyrus. Whereas the Amduat was usually placed within the wrappings of the mummified body, the Book of the Dead papyrus was often secreted inside a hollow wooden statuette of the god Osiris, which would stand close to the coffin in the tomb (Niwinski 1989, 106-7, 109). However, no Book of the Dead manuscript bearing Panebmontu’s name has so far been identified, and it may be that his Amduat papyrus is all that remains of his burial outfit.

Bibliography


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