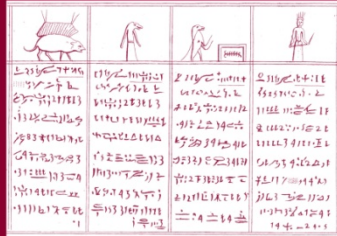


Beiträge zum Alten Ägypten 8

Barbara Lüscher



Der sogenannte „Calendrier Égyptien“
oder die Mumienbinden der Aberuai
(BN 89 + BN 229 / Louvre N. 3059 u.a.)

Zur frühen Rezeptionsgeschichte
eines späten Totenbuches

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SUMMARY

The present book offers the first publication of two manuscripts from the collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. While BN 89 is a fragment of a mummy bandage from the Ptolemaic Period, BN 229 is a modern facsimile of a corresponding fragment now in the Louvre (N. 3059), hand-drawn by the famous decipherer of the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, Jean-François Champollion. It can be shown that they both belong to the same document, a hieratic Book of the Dead for a lady named Aberuai from Saqqara.

The mummy's unwrapping together with the discovery of her inscribed bandages goes back to the year 1698, described by the French consul in Egypt at the time, Benoît de Maillet. Unfortunately, immediately after discovery the linen bandages were cut by scissors and distributed among the few people who were present at the event of unwrapping. Subsequently those fragments took their way into various private collections and so-called "cabinets of curiosities", including the French royal collection of Louis XIV in Paris.

As a result of the current research it has been possible to relocate at least some of the original fragments in Paris (BN 89 and Louvre N. 3059), while other parts could be identified in the form of more or less accurate hand-drawings in several publications of the 18th and early 19th Century. The best-known of these is the so-called "Calendrier Égyptien" (actually a facsimile of BN 89), so named by its first publisher Bernard de Montfaucon in 1724 because he misinterpreted its content of BD spell 149 as depictions of an ancient Egyptian calendar. Other fragments appeared in articles or books already since the year of 1704.

Another interesting aspect of those mummy bandages is the fact that they also played an important role in the early history of decipherment of the ancient Egyptian script, especially the Hieratic, of which only very few specimens were known or seen at those early days.