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Book of the Dead Scenes in Private Tombs in Upper Egypt from the Late Period till the End of Roman Period

A thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the master's degree in
Tourism Guidance

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2023

Abstract:

The texts of the Book of the Dead first appeared in the 13th Dynasty, while the accompanying scenes of the Book of the Dead spells appeared for the first time on royal coffins of the 18th Dynasty. The Book consisted of 200 spells as classified by the German scholar, Lepsius. Ancient Egyptians decorated their tombs with various scenes, including those depicting daily life, funerary, and religious scenes. The latter was the focus of this study, as the researcher specialized in studying the scenes of the Book of the Dead inside private tombs. Upon review, it had been found that the scenes of the Book of the Dead had received attention from researchers, whether by studying one spell independently or by studying its effects during the New Kingdom period. It had also been found that there was a lack of research on the Late Period as well as the Greek and Roman periods in Upper Egypt, which left the Book of the Dead shrouded in mystery and in need of further studies and research. The main objective of this study was to provide a detailed examination of the scenes of the Book of the Dead inside tombs.

Methods: The researcher relied on a scientific methodology that included both descriptive and analytical methods. Through the descriptive and analytical methods, the researcher attempted to identify the most used spells in the Book of the Dead, as well as the distribution system of these scenes. The study focused on two types of determinants: temporal and spatial. The temporal determinant shed light on the study of the scenes of the Book of the Dead in private tombs during the period from the beginning of the Late Period until the end of the Roman period. The spatial determinant involved listing, analyzing, and statistically comparing the scenes of the Book of the Dead found in different locations in Upper Egypt.

The structure of the study consisted of several parts, including an introduction and two main sections, as well as a conclusion that summarized the researcher's findings. The introduction focused on the main points of the study, its objectives, methodology, and importance, as well as its determinants and previous studies on this topic. The two main sections were:

1- Documents: This section served as a catalogue of tombs studied.

2- Synthesis: This section consisted of Two Chapters.

The first Chapter addressed the Restriction of Book of the Dead Spells in Upper Egypt Tombs across different Eras. The second Chapter addressed Exploring the Spatial Distribution and Orientation of BD Spells in Private Tombs during the Late and Ptolemaic-Roman Periods.

In conclusion, this study aimed to thoroughly examine the scenes of the Book of the Dead inside tombs. The study shed light on the most commonly used spells in the Book of the Dead, their distribution system, and the intended meaning behind their selection and placement. The study provided insight into the Book of the Dead and its significance in ancient Egyptian culture. The study also included a list of references and sources used by the researcher, which aided in further research and studies in this field.