COFFIN COMMERCE

How a Funerary Materiality Formed
Ancient Egypt

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Coffin Commerce

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Elements in Ancient Egypt in Context

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**Abstract:** This discussion will be centered on one ubiquitous and rather simple Egyptian object type – the wooden container for the human corpse. We will focus on the entire “lifespan” of the coffin – how they were created, who bought them, how they were used in funerary rituals, where they were placed in a given tomb, and how they might have been used again for another dead person. Using evidence from Deir el Medina, we will move through time from the initial agreement between the craftsman and the seller, to the construction of the object by a carpenter, to the plastering and painting of the coffin by a draftsman, to the sale of the object, to its ritual use in funerary activities, to its deposit in a burial chamber, and, briefly, to its possible reuse.

**Keywords:** Egypt, funerary culture, materiality, coffins, economy

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