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X-RAY ANALYSIS OF THE ZAGREB MUMMY

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Original scientific paper

The paper describes the results of röntgenogram (x-ray) analysis of an Egyptian mummy — of the so-called Zagreb Mummy. The examination took place at the Clinical Hospital Center Rebro in Zagreb in January 1986. The mummified person was found to be a fully grown female. On the occipital squama, a big bone defect was discovered. Multiple post-mortal fractures of long bones of the extremities and prepared muscles were discovered and so were degenerative changes of the left hip and right knee.

Introduction

Since the times of the earliest dynasties, mummification of dead bodies has been taking place in Egypt. In its modified form, the art has been preserved and is still practised. Although many stages of the mummification process have been clarified, the entire procedure hasn't yet been fully explained.

The physicians therefore focused their attention upon the diseases and causes of death of mummified persons.

The discovery of X-rays made the analysis of anatomical and patho-anatomical features of the bodies possible without interfering into the body's integrity (1). In 1898, three years after X-rays were first discovered, mummies were X-rayed and analysed for the first time. X-raying of mummies revealed some of the procedures in the mummification process. Comparative studies of historical documents and X-rays of the mummies made possible a better understanding of mummification techniques characteristic for given historical periods (Table; 2). Comparing data on mummification procedure with X-ray findings can help roughly determine the period to which a mummy belongs (3).