

## POTTERY VASES FROM A DEPOSIT WITH FLOWER BOUQUETS FOUND AT DRA ABU EL-NAGA

Maria J. LÓPEZ-GRANDE and Elena DE GREGORIO  
(Universidad Autónoma de Madrid/CSIC)

### Introduction

The Spanish-Egyptian mission led by Dr José M. Galán began its first archaeological season at Dra Abu el-Naga in January 2002. The project is focused on the study and restoration of a group of tombs belonging to the Egyptian elite contemporary with the first reigns of the Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1550-1450), among them those of Djehuty (TT 11) and Hery (TT 12)<sup>1</sup>. These tombs, excavated in the rocky slope of the hill, are dated to the beginning of the New Kingdom<sup>2</sup>.

The open courtyards of these tombs, sometimes very large, were reused for funerary purposes long after the burial of the tomb owner. With each passing century, these rectangular areas, with their floors dug in the rock of the mountain, were filled not only with the remains of offerings and funerary banquets, but also with the debris from successive natural slip of the hillside, and the refuse derived from the small modern settlement of Dra Abu el-Naga located nearby till 2007, when the modern settlement was dismantled.

The archaeological excavation of the courtyards of the tombs under study has provided large numbers of archaeological pieces of funerary nature, some of them clearly related to the main tombs excavated in the hillside, but others belonging to later more modest burials.

The aim of this paper is to present the pottery vases found in a deposit, which were uncovered during the sixth season, carried out in January-February 2007, an assemblage which contains a large number of vessels, most of them in Nile silt B with a few examples in Nile D. The deposit includes sixty-four jars in different shapes and sizes,

\* We would like to express our warmest thanks to Mr. James Land for helping us with the English translation of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> J.M. GALÁN, 'The Tombs of Djehuty and Hery (TT 11-12) at Dra Abu el-Naga', in: J.C. GOYON, C. CARDIN (eds.), *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists*, OLA 150 (Leuven-Paris-Dudley, 2007), 777-87.

<sup>2</sup> S. HODEL-HOENES, *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt. Scenes from Private Tombs in New Kingdom Thebes* (Ithaca and London, 2000), 7-12; F. KAMPP, *Die thebanische Nekropole: zum Wandel des Grabgedankens von der XVIII. bis zur XX. Dynastie*, Theben 13 (Mainz am Rhein, 1996).



Figure 1.

forty of them complete or partially restored and twenty-four identified by their complete bases, some fragmentary bowls and more than a dozen fragmentary dishes.

All the vessels except one jar of medium size were found broken, their fragments lying in a not very large pit, almost round in shape, measuring  $1.10 \times 1.30$  and  $0.70$  m. deep (fig. 1). The pit was found at a distance of 22 m away from the façade.

In addition to the large number of pottery fragments the pit included quite a lot of other interesting finds. Among them, there were forty-four dry bouquets of flowers which were found surprisingly in a good state of preservation<sup>3</sup>. Other items in the same deposit are a tiny fragment of an unwritten papyrus, some human bones, small fragments of wooden coffins, and a small piece of a painted medium-size seated statue. Our paper is focused on the pottery assemblage found in this deposit.

<sup>3</sup> A. FAHMY, J.M. GALÁN and R. HAMDY, 'A Deposit of Floral and Vegetative Bouquets at Dra Abu el-Naga (TT 11)', *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 110 (2010), 73-90.

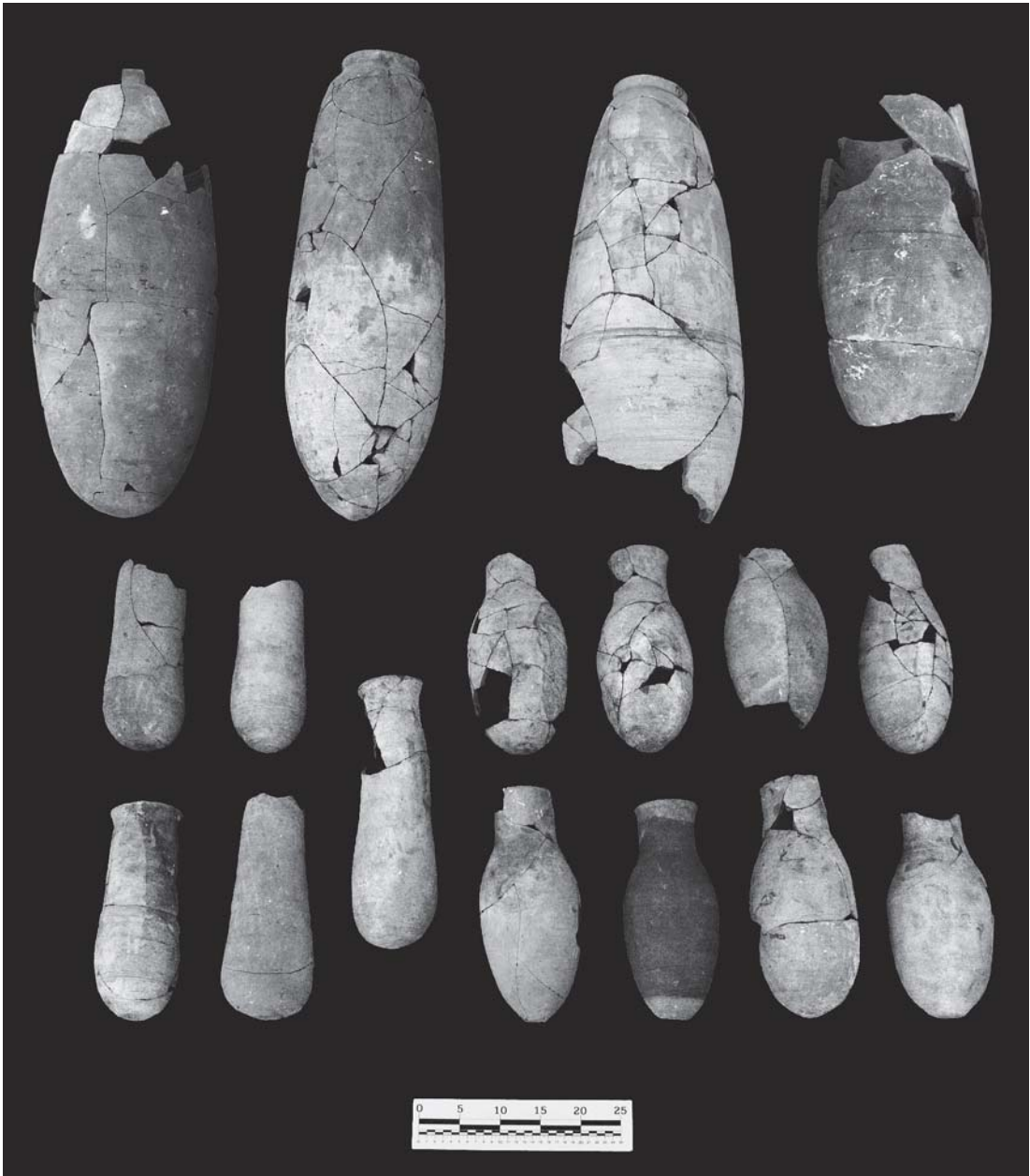


Figure 2.

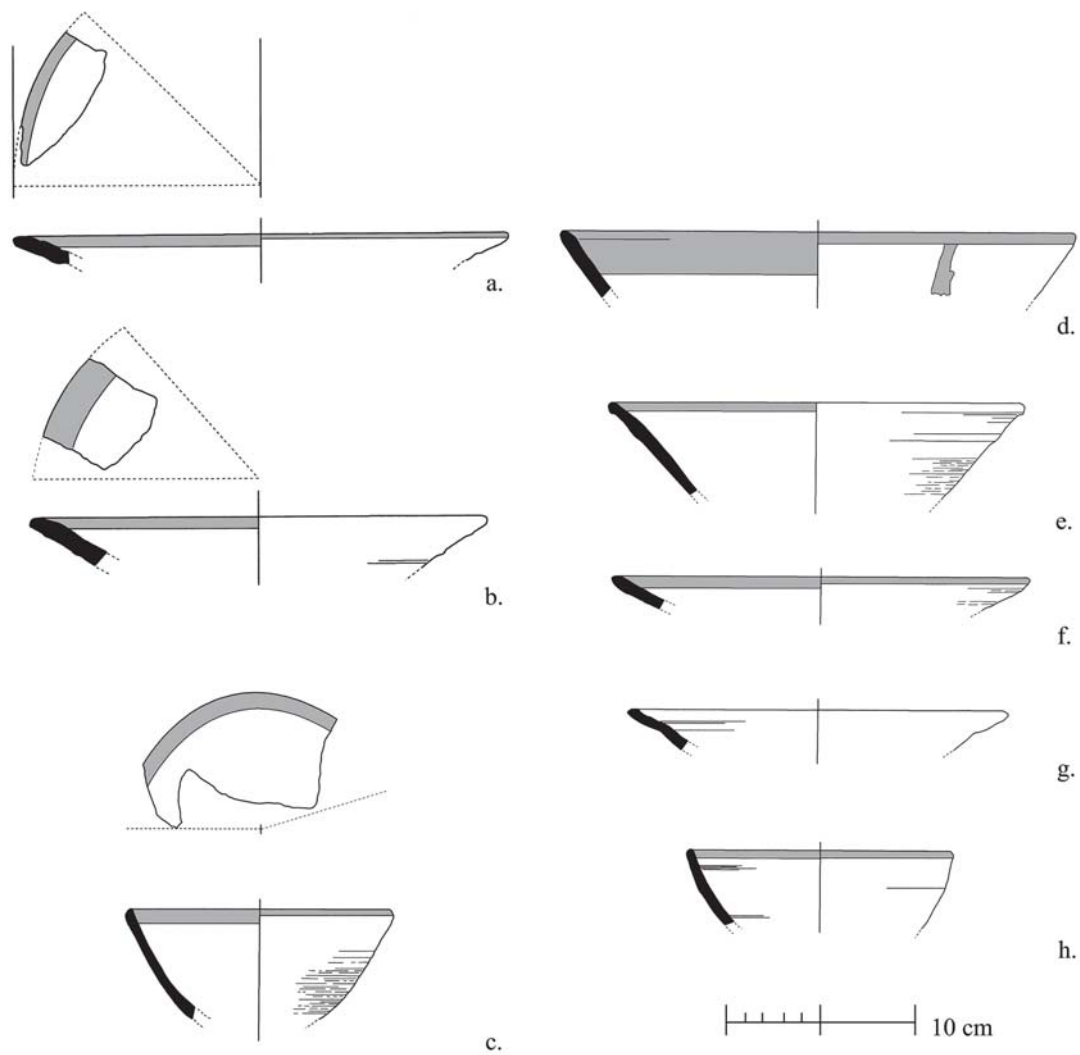


Figure 3.

### Description, chronology and archaeological interpretation

The localisation of the pit could suggest some sort of connection between the pit itself and the material inside it, with the funeral service of Djehuty, the early Eighteenth Dynasty owner (Hatshepsut reign) of the tomb (TT 11) and the courtyard<sup>4</sup>, where the pit was dug, filled and buried. However, the morphology of the pottery vases found inside, as well as their finish and material composition point to a later date which falls well into the late New Kingdom/early Third Intermediate Period, allowing us to suggest a link between this votive assemblage and a multiple interment found during the 2006 field season, not far away from, but at a slightly higher level than the place where the pit with its votive offerings was located.

The pottery assemblage exhibits similarities in finishing style, material composition and technology. It can be divided in open and closed shapes:

#### *Open vases*

This group of vases (fig. 3) is represented by at least three fragmentary bowls (fig. 3, c, h) and an uncertain number of dishes (more than a dozen) (fig. 3, a-b, d-g), all of them in Nile Silt B1 and B2.

The bowls are of small size, their diameter at the rim varies from 12 to 15 cm. Their fabric is Nile Silt B2, with smooth and whitish-orange slipped inner and outer surfaces, and a red line painted in and outside their rims. There are close parallels in the Late New Kingdom and early Third Intermediate Period<sup>5</sup>, a time when the use of red painted bands to decorate vessels, mainly but not exclusively in open shapes, became very popular<sup>6</sup>.

The dishes are also of both small and medium sizes, their diameter at the rim varying from 12 to 22 cm. None of them could be completely reassembled. Like the bowls, the dishes are made of Nile Silt, most of them in Nile B2, have smooth and whitish-orange slipped inner and outer surfaces and most of them show a red line painted on their direct or slightly modelled rims. Like the bowls, they too have close parallels in the Late New Kingdom<sup>7</sup> and early Third Intermediate Period<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> A study of the courtyard of the Tomb of Djehuty (TT 11) can be found in the article by J.M. GALÁN, included in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> D.A. ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, *Archäologische Veröffentlichungen* 95 (Mainz, 1999), 32, pl. 5, 105; 44, pl. 9, 196.

<sup>6</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 28.

<sup>7</sup> D.A. ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, *Die Grabungen des Pelizaeus-Museums Hildesheim in Qantir-Pi-Ranesses* (Mainz, 1998), 582-3, n. 2396-400; 602-3, n. 2464-6.

<sup>8</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 44, pl. 9, 193-5.

*Closed vases*

The second group of vessels of the pottery assemblage comprises the closed shapes (fig. 2). It includes at least sixty-four jars, most of them in Nile Silt B2, and only a few in Nile D. We have organised them into three different categories, according to their shapes and sizes:

*Medium size jars*

The first one includes thirty-three closed jars of medium size, all in Nile Silt B2. Most of them have been restored (fig. 4). In addition we were able to identify a further nine jars from the pieces of bases we found, but there were not enough sherds to enable us to restore them, even partially.

*Long neck slender handleless jars*

Twenty-four of these jars (fig. 4, a-c) present slender bodies without handles, rounded bases and long necks; their length varies from 22 to 28 cm. As mentioned above we identified nine jars more from the pieces of bases we found but we were unable to restore them even partially. As a whole the jars restored do not present an accurate finish. Most of them show their outer surface in whitish-orange or whitish-red slip with smooth upper body and a rather rougher lower body and base with concentric sets of very narrow lines – Janine Bourriau refers to them as rilling lines – which are not parallel to each other. According to J. Bourriau, this special finish is the result of a specific method of shaping used by the potters to remove the excess clay from the base of closed vessels, a technique or skill characteristic of the early Eighteenth Dynasty but not exclusive to that chronology. Following this method, the pot, once modelled and dried in the sun, was returned to the wheel and set on its rim. Then the potter, as the wheel was set in motion, trimmed the base to shape using a knife or another tool<sup>9</sup>. The finish of the resultant vases was, as a rule, scarcely accurate. Some bases of the jars of this category found in our pit show at their outer surfaces incised pot marks whose meaning, if any, we have not been able to ascertain (fig. 4, c).

The shape of these jars, taking into account their overall morphology and finish, has been a common form for vases in Egyptian pottery since early dates, as they became convenient containers easy to handle and carry given their sizes. Details of their shape, more than of their finish, such as the particular way in which the necks of the jars have

<sup>9</sup> J. BOURRIAU, 'Technology in the Pottery of the Middle and New Kingdoms: an Underrated Tool in the Archaeologist's Armoury', in: B. MATHIEU, D. MEEKS and M. WISSA (eds.), *L'apport de l'Égypte à l'histoire des techniques. Méthodes, chronologie et comparaisons*, Bibliothèque d'Étude 142 (Cairo, 2006), 35-7.

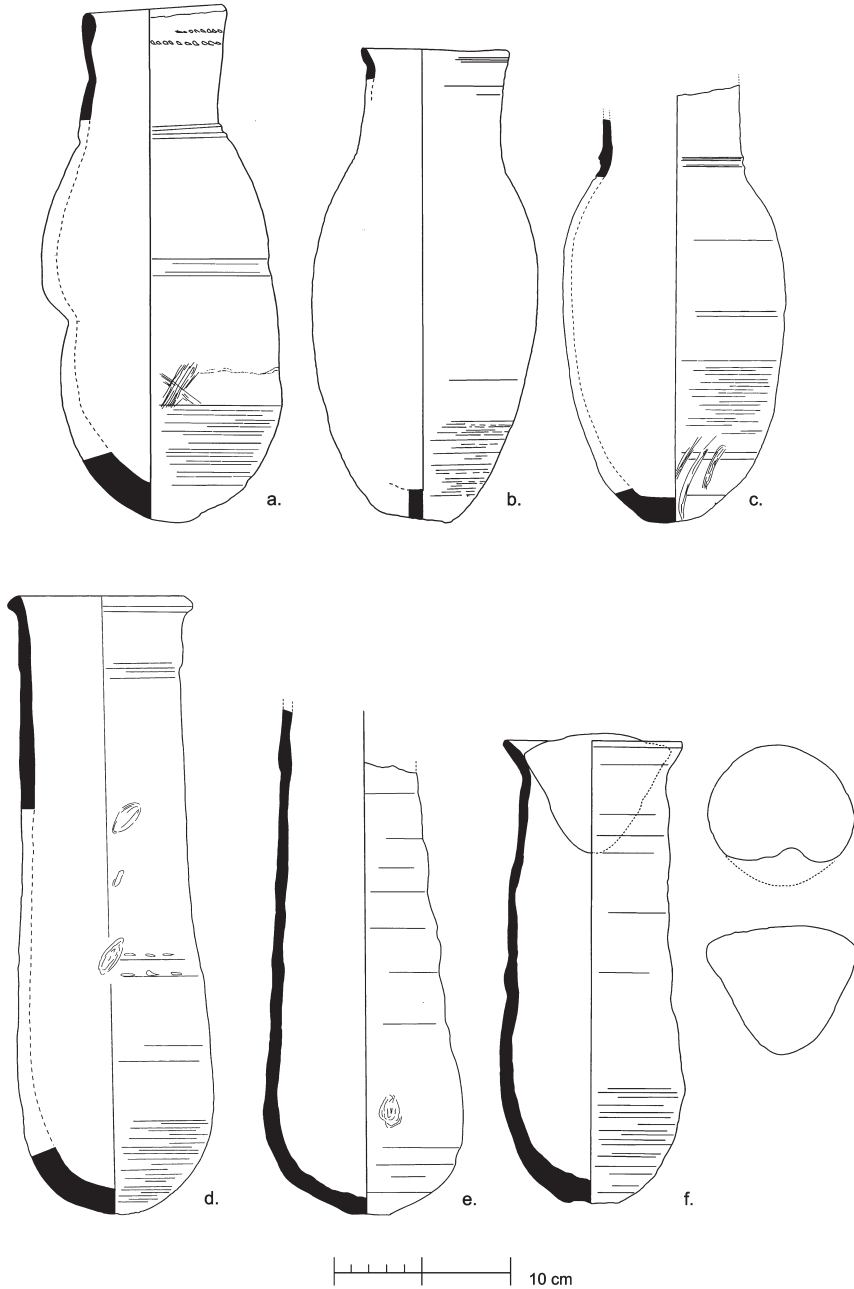


Figure 4.



been modelled, give us some chronological references. For instance, we can find this type of jar, with the same inaccurate finish as the jars of our pit but provided with rather short open necks, in the early Eighteenth Dynasty and even earlier<sup>10</sup>. Nevertheless, the characteristic long necks of the medium size jars located in the pit of our excavation give them a peculiar appearance which points to a later date. It ranges from the late New Kingdom – a time when rather wide and long necks used to be attached to this and other shapes of vases – through to the early Third Intermediate Period, when this tendency probably continued in some pottery workshops, as it enhanced the appearance of the vases, at the same time making it easier to handle and close them. This specific kind of medium size jar, provided with the distinct long neck is, however, not often reported in Egyptological literature. We have attested only one case, which fits well into the suggested chronology: it is a jar in Nile silt, quite similar in shape and size, dated to Twentieth/Twenty-First Dynasties, which was found at Qantir, in an offering pit<sup>11</sup>.

One of the jars of this category of our assemblage shows a deformed body (fig. 4, a), probably because it was inadequately handled when its clay was still wet. Perhaps it was too wet when the potter tried to trim its lower part distorting the shape of the vessel by his own pressure. Probably then the potter set a string around the neck, not far from the rim, to give support at and around the neck which held, at that moment, the weight of the whole jar turned upside down on the wheel. We can see in this jar, and not in any other of the same category in our deposits, the impressions of the strings in two lines; they were made not as a decorative motive, but to avoid the collapse of the vase because of the weight of its own clay, which is quite heavy when it is wet. There is, in this sample, an obvious division between the smooth upper body and the rougher base of the jar.

Inside the pit, among the smashed pottery sherds there were some broken bases of this type which had inside the remains of dry bouquets of flowers. It seems clear that these slender handleless medium size jars were in close connection with the bouquets of flowers, possibly as water-pots to carry water for keeping them fresh, although these vessels are extremely porous, or as convenient containers for the bunches of flowers.

Only one of these jars was found nearly complete (fig. 4, b); it presents only a clean broken piece at its neck which could be easily restored. As its body was well preserved, we were able to determine its capacity by filling it up with water: it was exactly one litre and a half. By this simple experiment we could also witness the extremely porous nature of the Nile B2 ware: as soon as the jar was full of water the

<sup>10</sup> BOURRIAU, 'Technology in the Pottery of the Middle and New Kingdoms', 43, fig. 6.

<sup>11</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 578-9, n. 2377. Jars with similar shape but slightly taller in: ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shape*, 290-1, n. 924.



liquid began to seep through the walls of the vessel, remaining dry only at the lower part of the body and the base, just where the walls of the jar are thicker and the outer surface presents the peculiar rough finish that we found in so many vases in Nile Silt ware. Due to this fact, we can visualise these jars as convenient containers for keeping fresh the bouquets of flowers: most of the water poured into these jars leaked quickly through their walls, leaving them wet and fresh, but part of the liquid would remain at the bottom of the vase refreshing the stems of the flowers arranged inside. We can apply this interpretation at least for those jars whose mouth diameter allowed the bouquets to be put inside. It is also possible that these jars were used as containers for the bouquets in the course of the obsequies given to the deceased beside his resting place, but they could even have been used as water-pots, despite their porosity, carried by those who had offered the bouquets of flowers in a previous stage of the obsequies, perhaps while the funeral procession was approaching the cemetery as can be seen in the mural decoration of the tomb of Ramose (TT 55)<sup>12</sup> and other scenes.

We would like to point to other interesting images attested in the decoration of some tombs, such as that of Menna (TT 69), which evoke the use of jars, similar in shape, finishing and size to the category we are describing, alongside garlands, leaves or bunches of flowers and other products as collections of special offerings presented to the deceased in the course of his funeral services. In the tomb of Menna, on the northern wall of its long hall, we found twice, one above the other, the representation of a group of slender medium size pottery jars, which are arranged in booths: three or six jars in each of them<sup>13</sup>, every one placed on a tall stand made of wood or reeds. All the jars are ornamented with garlands of leaves hanging around their bodies and have been used as containers for bouquets of leaves or flowers, which can be seen at their mouths. Garlands of leaves are also suspended from the ceiling and, beside the stands as well as on the booths' floors, there are loaves of bread and fruits displayed in bowls and plates, set up for the funeral of the tomb owner whose mummy is represented in the lower register, in a scene which evokes the ritual of the Opening of the mouth. From these representations we can infer some special meaning of the offering displayed in the booths; perhaps we can suggest some sort of link between them and the Opening of the mouth ritual, due to the proximity of both sets of images.

The booths, holding the slender handleless jars and the other offerings displayed on them, take us back to the assemblage found inside the pit. In the whole collection we probably have the remains of a complete set of significant offerings whose special meaning could be the reason for their burial in a pit excavated for that purpose.

<sup>12</sup> HODEL-HOENES, *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt*, fig. 27; lower register, right, second and fourth men carrying offerings.

<sup>13</sup> HODEL-HOENES, *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt*, 107, fig. 71.

The chronology of Menna's tomb (Eighteenth Dynasty, reign of Tuthmose IV?) is older than the date given by the vessels of our assemblage. Nevertheless the shape and the size of the jars depicted in the mural decoration remind the long neck medium size slender handleless jars found in the pit. It is easy to visualise the latter arranged in similar booths, ornamented with garlands and holding some of the bouquets of flowers found in the pit.

The measurements of the pit and the large amount of pottery and other finds found inside it, suggest to us that the pottery vessels found were deliberately broken, probably as a part of a religious or offering practice; otherwise it would be most improbable to find together in this rather small pit such large number fragments of vessels, some of them of big sizes when they were completed. Rituals involving the breaking of vases are well documented in iconography (some scenes from the Memphite tombs of Ptahemhat and Horemheb, both in Saqqara)<sup>14</sup>, archaeological remains<sup>15</sup>, religious texts (Pyramid Texts spell 244)<sup>16</sup>, and even literature<sup>17</sup>, and probably were a rather common practice in the cemeteries. There, we can image booths with food and drink set up, as shown in the tomb of Menna, for the funeral of the tomb-owner, and jars being ritualistically smashed during the ceremony by the men who perform the obsequies.

Both the Memphite tombs of Ptahemhat and Horemheb, as well as the Theban tomb of Menna, are earlier than the assemblage located in the pit in Djehuty's tomb courtyard, but the use of booths for holding the offerings presented to the deceased, the offering of bouquets of flowers, jars, fruits, loaves of bread, etc. and even the ritual breaking of the vessels, appear to be an inherent part of early Egyptian funerary practice<sup>18</sup>, which, according to the date of our deposits, persisted even beyond the New Kingdom.

### *Medium size cylindrical jars*

Among the closed vessels found at the pit we have another nine jars, Nile Silt B2, in a specific shape. They are cylindrical jars, some of them slightly bag-shaped (fig. 4, d-f); their height varies from 29 to 36 cm, with rounded bases and open mouths whose diameters are around 10 cm. Like the jars previously described, these do not present an accurate finish. Their outer surfaces are in whitish-orange slip or uncoated, with

<sup>14</sup> B. PORTER and R. MOSS, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings*. Vol. III (2) (Oxford, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1981), 711; C.B. ARNST, *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin*, (Berlin, 1962), 82, Inv. Nr. 12411; G.T. MARTIN, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb Comander-in-Chief of Tut'ankhamun*, I. *The Reliefs, Inscriptions, and Commentary*, EES Excavation Memoir 55 (London, 1989), 100-2, pls. 119-23.

<sup>15</sup> M.J. LÓPEZ-GRANDE and F. QUESADA, 'Two Third Intermediate Period/Late Period Pottery Deposits at Herakleopolis Magna', *Sesto Congresso Internazionale di Egittologia, Atti I* (Torino, 1992), 415-25.

<sup>16</sup> R.K. RITNER, *The Mechanics of the Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisations* 54 (Chicago, 1993), 144; J. VAN DIJK, 'Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe', *LÄ VI* (1986), 1389-96.

<sup>17</sup> RITNER, *The Mechanics of the Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 152.

<sup>18</sup> RITNER, *Mechanics of the Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 146.

smooth upper body and a rather rougher base with the same rilling lines mentioned for the previous type.

The tallest vessel of this category is 36 cm high and shows some impressions of strings – two lines – (fig. 4, d) in its body, near the beginning of its base. These strings were added by the potter to give support at and around this part of the jar where the base and the body of the vessel were joined. This was made at the finishing stage of its modelling, when the shaping was in progress with the vessel turned upside down on the wheel. In this sample the division between the smooth upper body and the rougher base is quite obvious, as well as the joint of the two parts, properly sealed. On its outer surface this jar shows some incised pot marks made with a finger, probably by the potter, the meaning of which, if any, we have not been able to determine.

Fragments of a jar rather similar in shape, ware and finish were found in Qantir and dated to the Twentieth/Twenty-First Dynasties<sup>19</sup>, but this is not an accurate parallel. We have not attested any other closer example in Egyptological literature aside of a slight similarity between the shape of our tallest ovoid jars and some cylindrical, tall but not bag-shaped moulds for baking bread, dated to the period<sup>20</sup>, as well as between the more bag-shaped jars of our deposits and some beakers or jars dated to the Libyan Period<sup>21</sup>.

The open mouths of some of these jars have everted rims (fig. 4, d, f). Their inner diameter fits, for the two restored vessels that we have, with the measurements of the base of a conical mud-stopper also found, alongside pieces of broken ones, inside the pit. This mud-stopper could be fitted to both jars either with its point downward or upward (fig. 4, f). After closing the jar with the mud-stopper, the everted rim would make it easy to seal the vessel, if necessary, with some flexible material tied up below the rim, or with mud. We do not know what these cylindrical jars were used for; among the broken pieces we found adhered to the inner walls of some bases of these jars traces of leaves. In some cases these fragments were covered with levigated mud with inclusions of tiny bits of leaves.

If the mud-stoppers were used for closing these cylindrical jars, we can assume that they were containers, perhaps specially designed – given their particular shape – to keep some specific product offered to the deceased. Nevertheless there is some iconographical evidence which shows us that other types of jars could also be closed with the same kind of stopper<sup>22</sup>, so we cannot assert that the mud-stoppers found inside the pit belong exclusively to the medium size cylindrical jars.

<sup>19</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 598-9, n. 2456.

<sup>20</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 578-9, n. 2374-5.

<sup>21</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 122, pl. 35, 1094.

<sup>22</sup> For example: MARTIN, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb Comander-in-Chief of Tut'ankhamun*, I, pl. 119, scene 83, details.

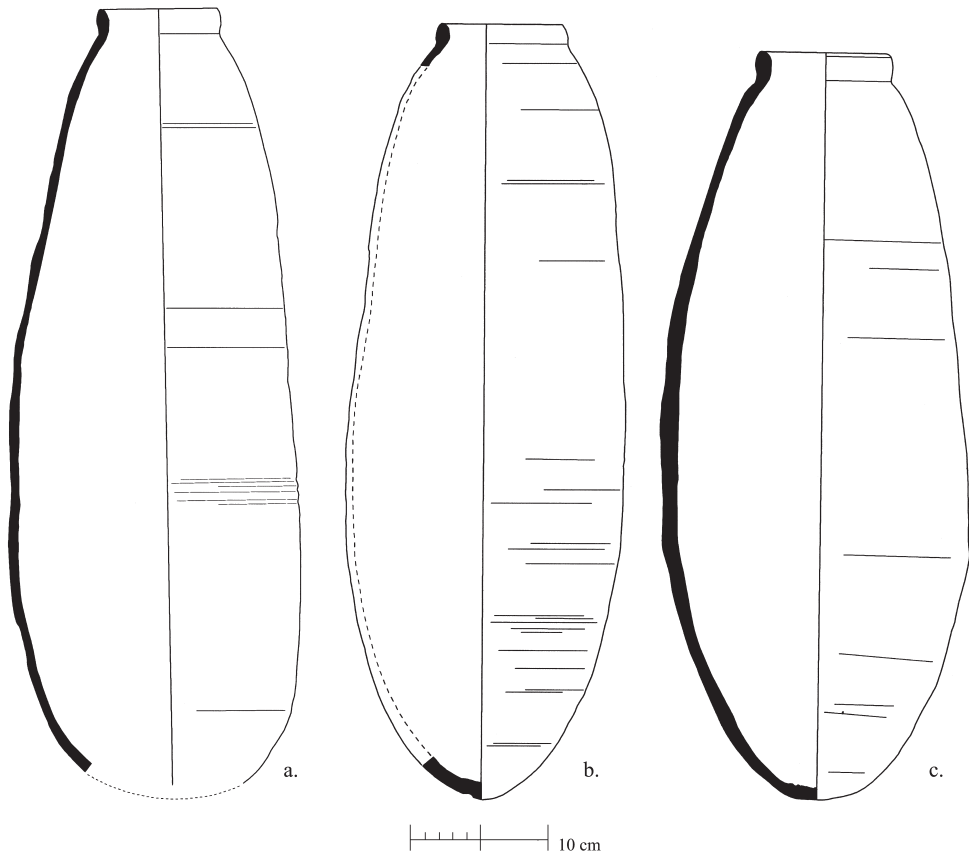


Figure 5.

### *Neckless slender storage jars*

The last category of the closed jars includes at least twenty-two big slender storage jars without handles, without neck, and with short modelled rims (fig. 5). Seven of them have been completely or partially reassembled; four are made in Nile Silt B2; the other three in Nile D. All of them have rounded bases and a maximum width well below the middle of the height. Their height varies from 52 to 58 cm.

These large tall jars present a rather accurate finish. Most of them show their outer surface in whitish-orange, whitish-red or whitish-grey slip, with smooth upper body but a rougher base with the rilling lines that have been described for the two categories of jars reported earlier in this paper.

Vessels of this type were generally thrown in three pieces, one of its joints, between the base piece and the lower body, is clearly noticeable in most examples by the distinct change in thickness of the section<sup>23</sup>. The other joint, usually less easily noticed, is located in the upper part of the body, where it joins with the rim. Comparable vessels have been rather rare in the Egyptological bibliography until recent publications probably, as Aston has suggested, because such slender vessels, due to their size, would rarely have survived intact<sup>24</sup>. However there are known parallels from Saqqara, Gurob, Amarna and Thebes dated to late Ramesside period<sup>25</sup>, and some examples in the Theban area whose dates range from the Twentieth to the Twenty-First Dynasties<sup>26</sup>. Other jars of the type identified to this date have been attested at Elephantine<sup>27</sup>, Matmar<sup>28</sup> and Qantir<sup>29</sup>. The evidence suggests, as Aston has pointed out, that this specific type of large tall jars was probably being made, practically unchanged, from the Late New Kingdom to the early Libyan Period<sup>30</sup>.

According to the date given by the other pottery vases found inside the pit, the neckless slender store jars might be dated to the early Third Intermediate Period, a date which is also suggested by archaeological evidence found outside the pit: a multiple interment covered with an earthen tumulus found nearby the deposit. The study of this tumulus and its content is still in progress, but some of the burials below the large pile of earth, broken reliefs and pottery sherds, can be dated by clear evidence given by their decorated coffins to the Third Intermediate Period.

Nothing was found inside the broken pieces of the neckless storage jars. Given their sizes they might have been used as containers but we do not know what kind of products they were meant for; perhaps those made in Nile B2 – at least nineteen of them – had a different use from that of the three jars made in Nile D, given the different porosity of the two wares.

<sup>23</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 310.

<sup>24</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 310.

<sup>25</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 310-311, n. 999-1012; D.A. ASTON, *Egyptian Pottery of the Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period (Twelfth-Seventh Centuries B.C.)*, Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens 13 (Heidelberg, 1996), 17, fig. 8b, a.

<sup>26</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 44-5, pl. 9, 198; 128, pl. 37, 1161.

<sup>27</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 44-5, pl. 9, 198; 128, pl. 37, 1161.

<sup>28</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 72, pl. 17, 521.

<sup>29</sup> ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1. Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*, 310-1, n. 999-1012.

<sup>30</sup> ASTON, *Elephantine XIX. Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, 72.

## Conclusions

The archaeological evidence related to this pit found at our excavation (smashed pottery, bouquets of flowers, fragments of garlands, reeds, and so on), allow us to deduce that similar booths to those depicted in the mural decoration of Menna, Ptahemhat, Horemheb and other tombs, were once put to use in Djehuty's tomb courtyard. These booths might have been erected for displaying the jars, the bouquets of flowers and other items found in the pit. Given the large amount of broken pottery found inside the pit, and the number of medium size closed jars restored, twenty-four, we could visualise several booths holding these offerings, perhaps four booths with six jars arranged in each of them. We have suggested above that the medium size closed jars could have been used as containers for the bouquets of flowers, but we have to remark upon the fact that there were forty-four of them in a very good state of preservation inside the pit. So, twenty of these bouquets of flowers do not have their correlate vases, if they were slender medium size jars. There were sherds enough in the assemblage to allow us to identify nine more jars of this type but their restoration, even partial, was not practicable.

These offerings were part of a funeral service performed long after the burial of Djehuty, the owner of the tomb TT 11, a clear indication, among others, that the open courtyards of ancient tombs were reused for funerary purposes for prolonged periods of time<sup>31</sup>.

Given the chronology of the broken pottery vases found in the pit, the assemblage seems to have been offered to a group of people who were buried in Djehuty's courtyard in a multiple interment found during the 2006 field season<sup>32</sup>. It was covered with an earthen tumulus, not far away from, but at a slightly higher level than the place where the pit storing the assemblage of offerings was found. It can be easy to deduce that after the performance of the funerary ritual the booths were dismantled and the pottery vases ritualistically smashed. The pieces of the broken vases together with some mud-stoppers, the bouquets of flowers and the garlands of leaves which ornamented the booths were then tossed into the pit dug for this purpose. Once filled with these remains, the pit was buried and carefully hidden, to keep, for eternity, these significant items out of the sight of living eyes but ever close to the resting place of the deceased to whom they once and forever belong.

<sup>31</sup> M.J. LÓPEZ GRANDE, E. DE GREGORIO, 'Two funerary pottery deposits at Dra Abu el-Naga', *Memno-  
nia* XVIII (2007), 145-56.

<sup>32</sup> See the article by J.M. GALÁN in this volume.

ORIENTALIA LOVANIENSIA  
ANALECTA  
————— 241 —————

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
TENTH INTERNATIONAL  
CONGRESS OF EGYPTOLOGISTS

University of the Aegean, Rhodes  
22-29 May 2008

Volume I

edited by

P. KOUSOULIS and N. LAZARIDIS



PEETERS  
LEUVEN – PARIS – BRISTOL, CT  
2015