TWO FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSITS AT DRA ABU EL-NAGA
[Pl. XXXI-XXXV]

María J. LÓPEZ GRANDE * et Elena de Gregorio TORRADO **

The Spanish-Egyptian Mission led by Dr. José M. Galán began its first archaeological season at Dra Abu el-Naga in January 2002. The aim of the project is the study and restoration of a group of tombs belonging to the Egyptian elite contemporary with the first reigns of the XVIIIth Dynasty (c. 1550-1450), among them those of Djehuty (TT. 11) and Hery (TT. 12) (Galán : in press). The tombs were hewn in the rocky slope of the hill, and their typology matches that of other tombs found in the ancient Theban necropolis area dating to the beginning of the New Kingdom (Hodel-Hoernes : 2000, 7-12 ; Kampp : 1996).

The open courtyards of these tombs (cf. Pl. XXXI) 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.

The archaeological excavation of the courtyards of the tombs under study has improved our knowledge of their measurements, shapes and later reuses. Large numbers of archaeological pieces of funerary nature have been unearthed, some of them clearly related to the main tombs excavated in the hillside, but others belonging to later more modest burials.

A. FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSIT UE-12 sm: 1

The deposit UE-12 was found during the 2005 season in the area 9-D.01, north-eastern side, located above the courtyard of Djehuty’s tomb (TT. 11). First, two big well-preserved jars were found (cf. Pl. XXXII-A ;

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fig. 1). One of them, of a globular shape and without handles, was found nearly complete, but its neck and rim were lost (cf. fig. 1e). The jar was filled with an earthy content, which was examined later. The other vessel was located 150 cm away from the globular one. It was also a big jar, elongated in shape and without handles. It was found broken in pieces, which nevertheless kept the vessel’s shape in situ (cf. Pl. XXXII–A; fig. 1a). Both jars were lying on the ground.

Under these vessels and related to them, there were the remains of a wooden coffin in a very poor state of preservation, a human skull, little flakes of limestone and many pottery shards from which a complete elongated jar without handles was restored (cf. fig. 1), as well as two fragmentary ones of the same type (cf. fig. 1 e, b). Another vessel, a small jar with handles, was part of the same deposit (cf. fig. 1f). The upper part of this ceramic - its complete rim, one of its shoulders, a small handle, and part of its body - was partially restored from fragments scattered through the area, but the rest of it was not found at that time.

The six jars mentioned above, complete or partially restored, were the components of an interesting assemblage of pottery of a funerary nature. The typology of the vessels, as well as some technical details related to their more or less accurate finish, allowed us to date the whole cache to the late Third Intermediate Period or early Late Period (c. 650 BC.), in accordance with known parallels for the different vessel types, as well as compilations of pottery of the same shape, material composition, style and technique of decoration already found in the Theban necropolis environment (Gukasch: 1995, Abb. 48; 50; Aston: 1996, 49-54, figs. 157 (3) and 158 (1,3); Dorman: 1991, 83, Pl. 41b; Rose: 2003, 203, fig. 1). These have been located in the surrounding area of important and more ancient tombs, which belong to members of the Egyptian elite, such as Ramose (TT. 55), Amenemheb (TT. 85), Minnakht (TT. 87), Menkhpeterraeneb (TT. 79), or Senenmut (TT. 353) among others, and they are related to the funeral rites that were in use up to the end of the Late Period. At that time the courtyards of the ancient tombs must have been nearly or completely filled up, and the later funerary deposits were placed in pits or graves made for that purpose in the filled area.

The contents of one of the jars of the funerary deposit UE-12, the one shown in fig. 1e, led us to separate and distinguish this cache from others found in the surroundings of the tombs of Djehuty (TT. 11) and Hery (TT. 12), and rename it as "Funerary Pottery Deposit UE-12 sm 1", for reasons that will be explained in the following pages.
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The contents of one of the jars of the funerary deposit UE-12, the one shown in fig. 1e, led us to separate and distinguish this cache from others found in the surroundings of the tombs of Djehuty (TT. 11) and Her (TT. 12), and rename it as “Funerary Pottery Deposit UE-12 sm: 1”, for reasons that will be explained in the following pages.
DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.01

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1a).

Morphology: tall, elongated jar without handles and neck. Rounded base and a maximum width below the middle of the height. Deformed rim and body, probably because the jar was inadequately handled when its clay was still wet, before its firing or at the beginning of this process.

Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 57.1 cm; its maximum width 21.1 cm and its rim (deformed) 11.3 cm.


Finish: well-finished vase – as it is related to marl clay vessels – in spite of its deformity. White slipped outer surface with evidence of wheel marks at some places of its body.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.02

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1b).

Morphology: tall, elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth and a rather prominent shoulder. Rounded base and a maximum width below the middle of the height.

Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 58 cm; its maximum width 23.6 cm and its rim 14.4 cm.


Finish: smooth and whitish-orange slipped outer surface.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.05

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1c).

Morphology: fragmentary tall, elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth and a rather prominent shoulder. Rounded base and a maximum width lying well below the middle of the height.

Measurements: its approximate maximum length is 46 cm; its approximate maximum width 20.7 cm; its rim 8.3 cm.


Finish: smooth and whitish-orange slipped outer surface.

TWO FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSITS

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.07

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1d).

Morphology: fragmentary tall elongated jar. Rounded base and a maximum width lying well below the middle of the height; it is quite similar in shape and material composition to several jars already described (cf. fig. 1a-c).

Measurements: its preserved maximum length is 64.7 cm and its maximum width 22.3 cm.


Finish: smooth and whitish-orange slipped outer surface.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 93.04

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1e).

Morphology: globular jar of rounded base, without handles. It has lost its neck and rim, but its shape is known to us by parallels found in similar archaeological contexts, in Western Thebes (Aston: 1996, fig. 158, 1.3). Its preserved length is 41.3 cm and its maximum width is 29.4 cm.

Material composition: mixed Nile silt/marl clay (Bourriaud et all: 2000, 19-25) which gives the vessel an accurate finish.

Finish: smooth and uncoated outer surface with a crude white spiral decoration, which begins at 13.9 cm, from the rounded base of the jar, and advances towards its neck, imitating a bandage that gets wider at the upper part of the vase. There are some small perpendicular white lines beside the beginning of the spiral decoration, resembling fringes or thread of the bandage. Also on the outer surface there are some impressions of strings, which were used by the potter to give support at and around the maximum diameter of the jar, while its shaping on the wheel was in progress. These impressions were made not as a decorative effect, but to avoid the collapse of the vase because of the weight of its own clay, quite heavy when it is wet.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 93.03

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1f).

Morphology: small ovoid-bodied jar with convex short neck, rather marked shoulders and two small handles; rounded base and a maximum width below the middle of the height. The vase shows thin exterior ribbed lines above its base.
DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.01

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1a).
Morphology: tall, elongated jar without handles and neck. Rounded base and a maximum width well below the middle of the height. Deformed rim and body, probably because the jar was inadequately handled when its clay was still wet, before its firing or at the beginning of this process.
Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 57.1 cm; its maximum width 21.1 cm and its rim (deformed) 11.3 cm.
Finish: well-finished vase — as it is related to marl clay vessels — in spite of its deformity. White slipped outer surface with evidence of wheel marks at some places of its body.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.02

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1b).
Morphology: tall, elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth and a rather prominent shoulder. Rounded base and a maximum width well below the middle of the height.
Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 58 cm; its maximum width 23.6 cm and its rim 14.4 cm.
Finish: smooth and whitish-orange slipped outer surface.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.05

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1c).
Morphology: fragmentary tall, elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth and a rather prominent shoulder. Rounded base and a maximum width lying well below the middle of the height.
Measurements: its approximate maximum length is 46 cm; its approximate maximum width 20.7 cm; its rim 8.3 cm.
Finish: smooth and whitish-orange slipped outer surface.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 97.07

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1d).
Morphology: fragmentary tall elongated jar. Rounded base and a maximum width lying well below the middle of the height; it is quite similar in shape and material composition to several jars already described (cf. fig. 1a-c).
Measurements: its preserved maximum length is 64.7 cm and its maximum width 22.3 cm.
Finish: smooth and whitish-orange slipped outer surface.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 93.04

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1e).
Morphology: globular jar of rounded base, without handles. It has lost its neck and rim, but its shape is known to us by parallels found in similar archaeological contexts, in Western Thebes (Aston: 1996, fig. 158, 1.3). Its preserved length is 41.3 cm and its maximum width is 29.4 cm.
Material composition: mixed Nile silt/earthenware mixture (Bourriaud et alii: 2000, 19-25) which gives the vessel an accurate finish.
Finish: smooth and uncoated outer surface with a crude white spiral decoration, which begins at 13.9 cm, from the rounded base of the jar, and advances towards its neck, imitating a bandage that gets wider at the upper part of the vase. There are some small perpendicular white lines beside the beginning of the spiral decoration, resembling fringes or thread of the bandage. Also on the outer surface there are some impressions of strings, which were used by the potter to give support at and around the maximum diameter of the jar, while its shaping on the wheel was in progress. These impressions were made not as a decorative effect, but to avoid the collapse of the vase because of the weight of its own clay, quite heavy when it is wet.

Archaeological identification: 9-D.01 25/1/05 93.03

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 1f).
Morphology: small ovoid-bodied jar with convex short neck, rather marked shoulders and two small handles; rounded base and a maximum width well below the middle of the height. The vase shows thin exterior ribbed lines above its base.
Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 23.1 cm; its maximum width 16 cm and its rim 9 cm.

Material composition: hard pink marl ware A4/1b variant of the Viena System.

Finish: whitish pink surface; body with thin exterior ribbed lines above its unstable and smooth base. The joining of the handles to the body is rather rough.

B. FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSIT DISCOVERED NEARBY: 8-D.01

Near UE-12 sm1 1 there were found, also during the 2005 season, two tall elongated jars which belong to the same type as the long jars of the deposit already alluded to (cf. fig. 1a-d), which could also be dated to the late Third Intermediate Period nearly Suite Period (c. 650 BC.). Both of them were found in the area 8-D.01, opposite Djehuty’s tomb, lying on the ground, one beside the other (cf. Pl. XXXII-B and fig. 2), as a small pottery deposit. Both vessels appeared empty, but one of them had at its mouth a piece of linen cloth that covered it partially, without actually sealing or covering the whole rim. Not far from these jars two mumified corpses were found. They showed a poor state of preservation, as if they had been interfered with after their burials. It cannot be assured that the small pottery deposit found in the area 8-D.01, and/or the one found in 9-D.01, the one called UE-12 sm1 1, are related to those mumified corpses, but their proximity could suggest some kind of link.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL

Archaeological identification: 8-D.01 01/2005 01

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 2a).

Morphology: tall elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth, rather prominent shoulder, unstable base (deformed) and a maximum width well below the middle of the height. The jar was probably inadequately handled when its clay was still wet, before its firing or at the beginning of this process, and its base could have been deformed then.

Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 56.5 cm its maximum width 18.3 cm and its rim 9.2 cm.


Finish: smooth and whitish slipped outer surface.

As we have already mentioned, a piece of linen cloth was found beside the mouth of this jar during its excavation.
Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 23,1 cm; its maximum width 16 cm and its rim 9 cm.

Material composition: hard pink marl ware A4/1b variant of the Viena System.

Finish: whitish pink surface; body with thin exterior ribbed lines above its unstable and smooth base. The joining of the handles to the body is rather rough.

B. FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSIT DISCOVERED NEARBY: 8-D.01

Near UE-12 sm1 1 there were found, also during the 2005 season, two tall elongated jars which belong to the same type as the long jars of the deposit already alluded to (cf. fig. 1a-d), which could also be dated to the late Third Intermediate Period/Renaissance Phase (c. 650 BC). Both of them were found in the area 8-D.01, opposite Djehuty’s tomb, lying on the ground, one beside the other (cf. Pl. XXXII-B and fig. 2), as a small pottery deposit. Both vessels appeared empty, but one of them had at its mouth a piece of linen cloth that covered it partially, without actually sealing or covering the whole rim. Not far from these jars two mummified corpses were found. They showed a poor state of preservation, as if they had been interfered with after their burials. It cannot be assured that the small pottery deposit found in the area 8-D.01, and/or the one found in 9-D.01, the one called UE-12 sm1 1, are related to those mummified corpses, but their proximity could suggest some kind of link.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL

Archaeological identification: 8-D.01 01/2005 01

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 2a).

Morphology: tall elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth, rather prominent shoulder, unstable base (deformed) and a maximum width well below the middle of the height. The jar was probably inadequately handled when its clay was still wet, before its firing or at the beginning of this process, and its base could have been deformed then.

Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 36,5 cm its maximum width 18,3 cm and its rim 9,2 cm.


Finish: smooth and whitish slipped outer surface.

As we have already mentioned, a piece of linen cloth was found beside the mouth of this jar during its excavation.
Archaeological identification: 8-D.01 01/2/05 02
Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 2b).
Morphology: tall, elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth, rather prominent shoulder, unstable base and a maximum width well below the middle of the height.
Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 65.6 cm; its maximum width 26.7 cm and its rim 12.4 cm.
Finish: smooth and whitish slipped outer surface.

C. RITUAL AND SYMBOLIC MEANING OF THE FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSIT UE-12 sm1 1

The excavation and study of this funerary pottery deposit has provided us with archaeological evidence of a funerary ritual well attested in textual and iconographic sources, fundamental to the religious beliefs of ancient Egyptians, the “Opening of the Mouth”. This important ritual used to be performed in the necropolis, beside the tomb, immediately before the act of burying the mumified corpse (Otto, 1960; Goyon: 1972, 95-96; Assmann: 2003, 53-60).

This globular jar was found nearly complete, but without neck or rim, and filled with an earthy content (cf. Pl. XXXIII–A). We carefully emptied out this content onto the table in the excavation camp “laboratory”. In this earthy content of the vase, we found, in a first layer, remains of dry plants – small leaves and fragments of stems – and flakes of flint, which were registered and kept for further study. After taking this layer out, some fragments of pottery came to light. We thought that they could be the lost fragments of the vase that we were emptying, its neck and its rim, but we realized immediately that neither the fabric of the new found shards, nor their thickness and finish, matched it. Instead we determined that they correspond to the lower part – body, small handle and unstable base – of Viena System marl A4/Ib fabric vase. The fragments found with the content of the globular jar could have been placed inside it only when the upper part of this jar was already broken, without rim or neck, providing an opening wide enough to have been used as its mouth. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to place inside it the fragmentary marl vessel we had found (cf. Pl. XXXIII–B), given the size of its rounded base, joined to the body part that shows thin exterior ribbed lines. When all the fragments found inside the globular jar were put together, we were delighted to find that with they complete the vessel (cf. fig. 1f; Pl. XXXIV–A), found in the excavation of the deposit sm1 1 (UE-12), 9-D.01. This vase is quite striking among the group of six vessels that belong to the same deposit, due to its smaller size and material (marl A4/Ib); there is only one more marl fabric vase in this group shown in fig. 1a) and its careful finish, with thin ribbed lines on the outer surface of its body. Although this vase shows a marked difference from the other jars, its type (morphology and material composition) is well attested in Egyptian necropolises, specially in Upper Egypt, from XXV dynasty onwards (López Grande et alí, 1995: 91-92). The location of fragments of this vase inside the globular jar is something for which we have as yet found no clear explanation.

We went on with the careful excavation of the contents of the globular jar and found some middle size pieces of limestone, bigger than those, which were found in the pottery deposit’s layer. One of the limestone pieces located inside the jar was stained with white paint. We took them out and proceeded with the “micro-excavation” of the jar’s contents. We found that stuck to the inner wall of the jar, at its bottom, there was a heap of linen cloth pieces, pressed hard by a limestone of an irregular shape and a bigger size (18 x 12 cm) than the original mouth of the vase, so it must have been placed inside after the jar was broken in its upper part, and already had a big opening replacing its neck and rim. Then we made an interesting and significant find, a lock of human hair (cf. Pl. XXXIV–B) which we set aside for further study. Finally, we removed the stone that held down the heap of linen cloth, which we were then able to ease off the inner wall and bottom of the jar. Placed on the table for examination (cf. Pl. XXXV–A), we realized that it was a tied bundle of pieces of linen cloth. Their extraordinary preservation enabled us to untie them without any problems, and verify that the bundle contained three pieces of linen cloth. Inside one of them there was a large lock of human hair, wrapped up in a rectangular piece of cloth the ends of which had been knotted once, to protect its contents (cf. Pl. XXXV–B).

D. THE ROLE OF HUMAN HAIR IN THE “OPENING OF THE MOUTH” RITUAL

During the performance of the “Opening of the Mouth” ritual, two women, who have participated in the mourner’s cortège, play an outstanding role. At a precise moment, they leave the mourners’ group and join the priests who are to perform the “Opening of the Mouth” ritual, their role being to reanimate the deceased. During the performance of the ritual, these two women personify and emulate the actions of the goddesses Isis and Nepthys who, according to Egyptian beliefs, were in ancient times deeply involved in the process of the rebirth of Osiris into a new life after death.
Archaeological identification: 8-D.01 01/2/05 02

Object: pottery vessel (cf. fig. 2b).

Morphology: tall, elongated jar without handles or neck, elongated convex rim, wide mouth, rather prominent shoulder, unstable base and a maximum width well below the middle of the height.

Measurements: the maximum length of the jar is 65.6 cm; its maximum width 26.7 cm and its rim 12.4 cm.


Finish: smooth and whitish slipped outer surface.

C. RITUAL AND SYMBOLIC MEANING OF THE FUNERARY POTTERY DEPOSIT UE-12 sm/1

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This globular jar was found nearly complete, but without neck or rim, and filled with an earthy content (cf. Pl. XXXIII–A). We carefully emptied out this content on to the table in the excavation camp “laboratory”. In this earthy content of the vase, we found, in a first layer, remains of dry plants – small leaves and fragments of stems – and flakes of flint, which were registered and kept for further study. After taking this layer out, some fragments of pottery came to light. We thought that they could be the lost fragments of the vase that we were emptying, its neck and its rim, but we realized immediately that neither the fabric of the new found shards, nor their thickness and finish, matched it. Instead we determined that they correspond to the lower part – body, small handle and unstable base – of Viena System marl A4/1b fabric vase. The fragments found with the content of the globular jar could have been placed inside it only when the upper part of this jar was already broken, without rim or neck, providing an opening wide enough to have been used as its mouth. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to place inside it the fragmentary marl vessel we had found (cf. Pl. XXXIII–B), given the size of its rounded base, joined to the body part that shows thin exterior ribbed lines. When all the fragments found inside the globular jar were put together, we were delighted to find that with they complete the vessel (cf. fig. 1f; Pl. XXXIV–A), found in the excavation of the deposit sm/1 (UE-12), 9-D.01. This vase is quite striking among the group of six vessels that belong to the same deposit, due to its smaller size and material (marl A4/1b); there is only one more marl fabric vase in this group shown in fig. 1a) and its careful finish, with thin ribbed lines on the outer surface of its body. Although this vase shows a marked difference from the other jars, its type (morphology and material composition) is well attested in Egyptian necropoli, specially in Upper Egypt, from XXV Dynasty onwards (López Grande et al., 1995: 91-92). The location of fragments of this vase inside the globular jar is something for which we have as yet found no clear explanation.

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In their role as mourners of the deceased, they made some specific movements with their hair, sm3 in ancient Egyptian language (Wb. IV, 122.1). Their hair was shaken, placed over their faces, doing what has been called the ritual movement mwn (Wb. II, 222.5), and spread out. All these movements, with the locks of hair above both temples close to the forehead, were done in order to express sorrow or grief. But, at the same time, they were also made in order to excite the deceased, when he was a mule, to revive his virility. Both goddesses launched into an exhortation designed to stimulate his waking up and his absorbing of the vital energy which was in their hair (Derret : 1973, 101). According to Egyptian thinking, the hair is full of vital energy, and the energy of divine hair is transmitted from the goddesses to the deceased in order to make his rebirth easier (Mayassisi : 1955, 354-362).

Egyptian funerary texts tell us how Isis and Nephthys actually give their breast to the dead, as well as locks of their hair as an offering. We should understand that this offering takes place after the performance of the mwn ritual movements. The verb that is used to express the delivery of the hair offered by the goddesses is ml. It is interpreted as expressing a physical action by the mourners who personified the roles of Isis and Nephthys, literally giving their hair to the deceased believing that they thus contributed to the regeneration of life, a belief expressed in funerary texts, as well as in other writings related to mother’s breasts suckling (Valdesoso : 2005, 14-19).

The cutting of the hair from the mourner’s temples seems to be reflected in the tombs’ decoration with images of women with their hair cut, shown in scenes which correspond to the performance of the “Opening of the Mouth” ritual, such as that of Sobek-Mose, in Er-Rizeikat (Hayes : 1939), and in Theban tombs as those of Amenemhat (TT. 82) and Rekhmire (TT. 100), among others. The physical act of placing the mourners’ hair among other offerings given to the deceased seems to be attested in the funerary pottery deposit found in the area 9-D.01, UE-12, of our excavation. A large lock of human hair was carefully placed and wrapped up in a rectangular piece of linen cloth the ends of which were knotted to protect its contents. This parcel was later placed inside a globular jar, at its bottom, and held down by a big stone. All of this gives us archaeological evidence of the performance of a ceremony related to the symbolic presentation of the goddesses’ hair to the deceased, in order to transfer to him the power of regeneration included in the divine hair. Likewise, the rest of the globular jar’s contents does not seem casual: some middle sized flakes of limestone, one of them stained with white paint, the remains of the vessels shown in fig. If, flint flakes - perhaps used for cutting the mourner’s hair - and remains of dry plants. Probably this sizeable jar, with its mouth broken to receive inside those quite big items, and decorated on its outer surface with a crude white spiral painted line, simulating a bandage, had an important role in the assemblage because it was used as the container of the most significant elements of the funeral offering. Among these, the most important was a lock of hair of one of the goddesses, Isis or Nephthys, cut from the mane of the mourner who personified her at the performance of the ritual which was understood by ancient Egyptians to be essential to rebirth, a necessary step towards attaining eternal life.

SUMMARY :

Two pottery deposits found during the 2005 field season in the cemetery area of Dra Abu el-Naga are studied. The two assemblages contain a number of vases that exhibit similarities in shape, style and technique of decoration, material composition and technology. One of them offers archaeological evidence of a funerary ritual well attested in textual and iconographic sources, the “Opening of the Mouth”.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :


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SUMMARY:
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RESTAURATIONS POST-AMARNIENNES COMMANDITÉES PAR RAMSES II : UN CAS D’ÉCOLE À DEIR EL-BAHARI [PL. XXXVI-XLV]

Philippe MARTINEZ *

Le temple érigé sur les ordres d'Hatshepsout à Deir el-Bahari fut un des sites les plus sacrés de Thèbes-Ouest et un des principaux reposeurs de la barque d'Amon lors de la "Belle Fête de la Vallée". Son histoire dépasce donc largement la seule époque de son érection et il dut traverser de nombreuses vicissitudes dont il porte encore les stigmates. C’est à certaines traces de l’activité ramesside sur ce site prestigieux que s’intéressent les pages qui suivent.

Les reliefs où se mêlent les figures d'Hatshepsout, de Thoutmôsis III mais aussi de Thoutmôsis Ier et de Thoutmôsis II, ont subi, pour la plupart, d’importantes dégradations volontaires. Cependant, si les images de la reine ont été sauvagement martelées, il n’en est pas de même de celles des autres représentants de la famille royale qui, au contraire, ont été pieusement sauvegardées. Dans cette action perpétrée contre Hatshepsout, on a longtemps voulu voir une trace de la haine de Thoutmôsis III à l’encontre de sa tante qui l’aurait trop longtemps écarté du pouvoir. Mais on sait aujourd’hui que les martelages de ses monuments par Thoutmôsis III, n’ont eu lieu que pour tond dans le règne du roi, aux alentours de l’an 42 (1). Il s’agit donc, dans ce cas, de la résultante d’une prise de conscience politico-religieuse lentement murée, plutôt que d’un acte simplement vindicatif.

En général, à des martelages très soigneux, laissant largement deviner la silhouette des figures ou des signes hiéroglyphiques ainsi détruits, succède

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Tombe de Nakhtamen (Deir el-Medineh. TT.335, caveau C). Anubis criocéphale figuré en compagnie de Pây, fils de Nakhtamen, préfère-wa/b d'Aménhotep Ier et sculpteur d'Amon. Époque ramesside.
[Cliché © Samoh Mohamed Zaki].

Plan of the site with the squares of the findings (8-D and 9-D). [Drawing of the Spanish-Egyptian Mission].
A. — Two big jars of the Funerary Pottery Deposit UE-12 9-D in their original place. [Cliché © of the Spanish-Egyptian Mission].

B. — Archaeological context of the pottery jars found in the area 8-D.01. [Cliché © of the Spanish-Egyptian Mission].

A. — Globular jar filled up with an earthy content on the table of the excavation camp laboratory. [Cliché © of the Spanish-Egyptian Mission].

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A. — Heap of linen cloth placed on the laboratory's table of the excavation camp. [Cliché © of the Spanish-Egyptian Mission].

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