

CERAMIC DISHES USED IN THE PREPARATION OF KYPHI

MAARTEN J. RAVEN AND ROBERT J. DEMARÉE

Introduction

Among the less well-known Egyptian objects in the National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, RMO) at Leiden is a group of thirty ceramic dishes decorated with depictions of various divinities in black or white ink. These were acquired in 1828 with the first sale of Giovanni d'Anastasi (or Jean d'Anastasy), an acquisition of almost 6,000 objects which is largely responsible for the Leiden Museum's reputation as one of the foremost Egyptian collections in the world¹. Unfortunately, practically all objects purchased on that occasion arrived in Leiden without any further indication of their provenance, and the dishes form no exception in that respect. In the sale's list they are described in some detail and classified according to their representations into 12 different groups², a classification copied in the inventory books of the Leiden Museum³. Originally there were even thirty-two of these vessels, but in 1926 two of them were sent to Leipzig as part of an exchange, where they were lost during the Second World War⁴.

The interior walls of the vessels carry depictions of various Egyptian gods and of several divine barks. These are accompanied by captions in hieroglyphs mentioning the divinities represented. Moreover, there are hieratic docketts along the rim on the inside of most dishes. This explains that the objects drew the attention of Conrad Leemans, who mentioned the dishes in his 1840 catalogue of the collections as the first items in the category of 'vases'⁵.

¹ For the person of Anastasi, see W.R. Dawson, E.P. Uphill, and M.L. Bierbrier, *Who was who in Egyptology* (London, 1995), 15. For the circumstances of the sale, see R.B. Halbertsma, *Le solitaire des ruines, de archeologische reizen van Jean Emile Humbert (1771-1839) in dienst van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Leiden, 1995), 91-108; R.B. Halbertsma, *Scholars, travellers and trade: the pioneer years of the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, 1818-1840* (London, 2003), 99-107.

² *Catalogue originale de la collection d'Antiquités Egyptiennes d'Anastasy* (Archives RMO 3.1/6), 46-47, nos. VT (= *vases en terre cuite*) 98.A-L. Some of the old numbers in black ink are still visible on the interior walls.

³ *Inventaris van het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* 3, 118-119, nos. AT (= *Anastasi terre cuite*) 98.A-L. These numbers were written in red ink inside the ring-base of the vessels.

⁴ Two dishes and the Leiden stela inv. L.XI.12 were exchanged for stone and ceramic vessels excavated at Abusir and Aniba. For the stela, see P.A.A. Boeser, *Beschrijving van de Egyptische verzameling in het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden, VI* (The Hague, 1913), no. 21 and pl. XVII. For the vessels, see *Inventaris* 19, 494-496 (nos. F 1926/6.1-31); W.D. van Wijngaarden, *Oud-Egyptisch steenen vaatwerk, OMRO 7.2* (1926), 79-84. For the exchange, see Archives RMO 17.2.1/21 (correspondentie 1924-1927 St-Zy), correspondence with G. Steindorff and H. Bonnet between 18 December 1925 and 22 November 1926; Archives RMO 17.2.5/3 (correspondence with the Trustees), authorisation dated 22 February 1926. We thank H.W. Fischer-Elfert for confirmation of the war losses and for photographs of the two dishes once in Leipzig.

⁵ C. Leemans, *Description raisonnée des monumens égyptiens du Musée d'Antiquités des Pays-Bas à Leide* (Leiden, 1840), 86-87, nos. H 66-97. It should be noted that Leemans' classification into groups deviates slightly from the one made by Anastasi's agents. For the sake of convenience, we shall use the Leemans numbers to refer to individual vessels. They occur on the vessels in the shape of small paper labels near the interior rim, or as pencil numbers on the base.

In his *Monumens égyptiens*, the atlas of plates which appeared in instalments from 1839 onwards⁶, he dealt with these objects in great detail. Four folio-sized plates give a good impression of the shape of the dishes and their various iconographical motifs, and present a full record of the hieroglyphic and hieratic inscriptions. In 1907, Boeser briefly mentioned the dishes in his new catalogue of the Leiden collection⁷. At the time, twelve of the dishes were on display, the others were kept in the reserves. Later, this number was reduced to four⁸, as was still the case until the 2001 reinstallation which shows no more than one specimen. Apart from a brief entry in an exhibition catalogue⁹, the objects received no further publication.

Still, this interesting group of material deserves to be published in full. The unusual decoration seems to indicate a connection with certain rituals prescribed by the Book of Dead. The hieratic docket, on the other hand, point to the secondary employment of these dishes for the preparation of kyphi, a well-known aromatic mixture for fumigations. Comparative material in other collections is almost non-existent, although a small number of parallels may be found. Finally, there is some excavated material which suggests that the Leiden dishes may have come from Abydos. However, before we can start following up all these clues, we need a proper description of the Leiden dishes themselves.

Description

The thirty dishes still present in Leiden have all been made in the same medium-fine Nile silt fabric. The surface is pinkish brown and has obviously been self-slipped in a rather uneven and negligent manner. There is a fair quantity of burnt-out particles of straw and fragments of limestone, some of the latter quite large (1.5 cm), and other limestone pebbles are still visible on the surface. Obviously, it is impossible to study a fresh break, but several ancient breaks allow us to state that there is a thin red core, the rest of the fabric being reddish brown. The clay is full of inclusions, such as particles of sand and mica, limestone, black and grey pebbles, and lots of fine straw. The characteristic presence of limestone would indicate a classification of this fabric as 'Nile D' in the Vienna system¹⁰. According to the fabric designations used at Saqqara, this would be classified as J3¹¹.

Often, the vessels have been loosely referred to as bowls, but in fact the term 'dish' is more appropriate¹². Their dimensions vary a lot: heights range from 6.0 to 11.7 cm, diameters vary

⁶ C. Leemans, *Monumens égyptiens du Musée d'Antiquités des Pays-Bas à Leide*, livr. 12 (Leiden 1851), pls. 50-53 (= *infra* Fig. 1).

⁷ P.A.A. Boeser, *Catalogus van het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden, Egyptische afdeling* (Leiden, 1907), 184, nos. E.XLII.48-59. These numbers are written in white ink inside the ring-bases.

⁸ [anonymous], *Egyptische kunst en beschaving in het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, gids voor de Egyptische afdeling* (The Hague, 1937), 65.

⁹ H.D. Schneider, *Life and death under the Pharaohs, Egyptian art from the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, the Netherlands* (Perth, 1997), 41, nos. 42-45.

¹⁰ H.-Å. Nordström and J. Bourriau, in: D. Arnold/J. Bourriau (eds.), *An introduction to ancient Egyptian pottery* (Mainz am Rhein, 1993), 174-175.

¹¹ D.A. and B.G. Aston, *Late Period pottery from the New Kingdom necropolis at Saqqâra* (EES Excavation Memoirs, in preparation), Chapter I.

¹² According to the criteria developed by B.G. Aston, *Ancient Egyptian stone vessels* (Heidelberg, 1994), 179-181. Dishes have a vessel index between 275 and 500, which is appropriate in all cases. It should be noted that the height given below for the Leiden vessels is the *maximum* height, a relevant precision since many of the vessels are much warped.

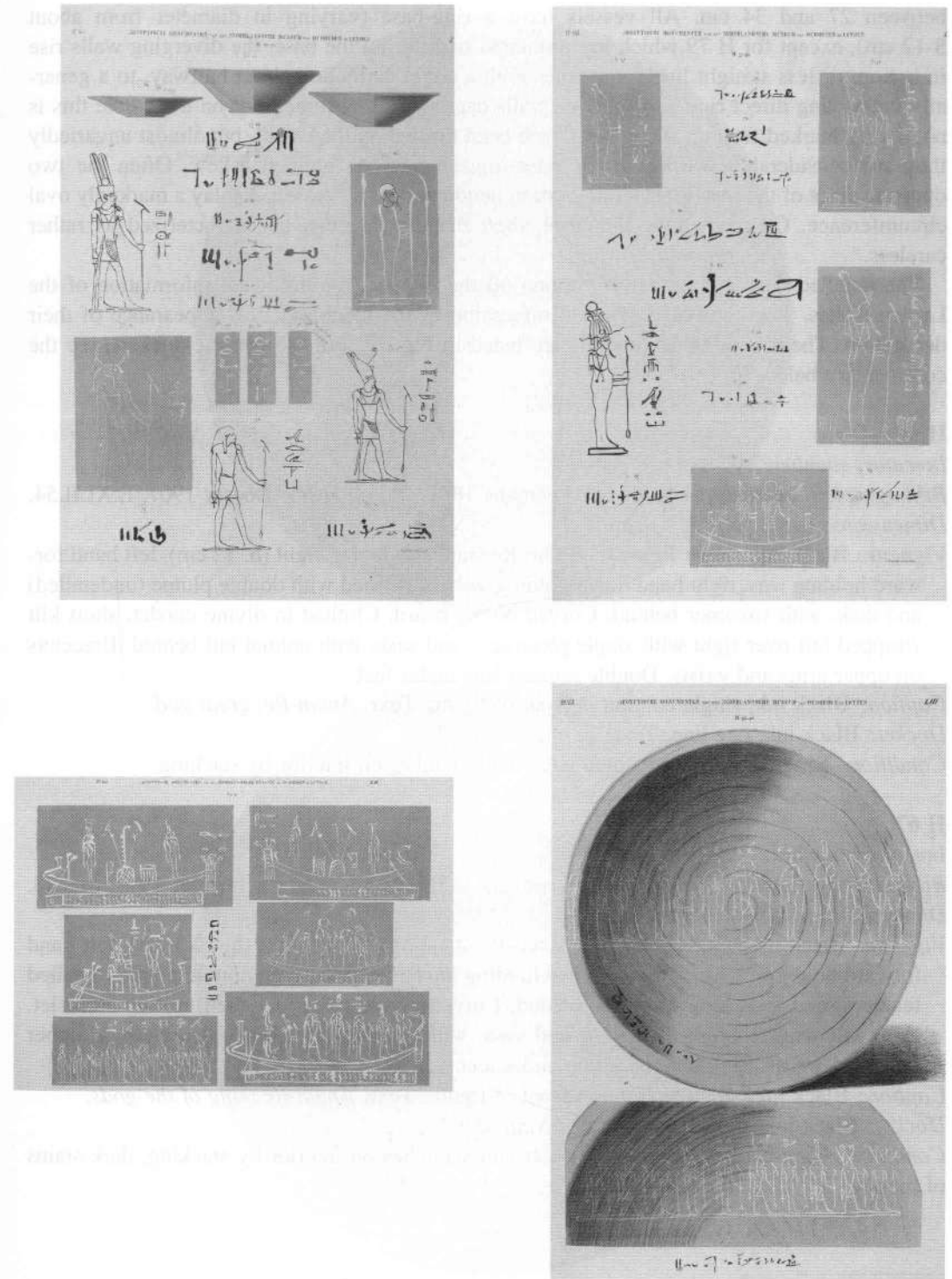


Fig. 1. Leemans, *Monumens égyptiens*, pls. 50-53.

between 27 and 34 cm. All vessels have a ring-base (varying in diameter from about 8-12 cm), except for H 79 which has a pointed base. From the base, the diverging walls rise in a more or less straight line, sometimes with a slight carination about halfway, to a generally outcurving direct rim. The exterior walls can be slightly ribbed but on the whole this is not a very marked feature. All vessels have been thrown on the wheel, but almost unvariedly they are considerably warped or the base-rings have been applied askew. Often the two opposite sides of the rim differ a full 2 cm in height and some vessels display a markedly oval circumference. On the whole, therefore, their manufacture can be characterized as rather careless.

The detailed descriptions below contain all the relevant museological information of the Leiden dishes. They will also give an impression of the iconographical appearance of their decoration. The hieroglyphic captions are listed in Fig. 17. For the hieratic docket, see the commentary below (p. 81-92).

H 66

Inventory number: AT 98.I1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 66; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 66; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.54.

Dimensions: h. 9.1, diam. 31.5 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Amun-Re standing, facing right (h. 12 cm), left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Crowned with double plume (undetailed) and disk, with streamer behind. Curved divine beard. Clothed in divine corslet, short kilt wrapped left over right with single pleating¹³, and sash, with animal tail behind. Bracelets on upper arms and wrists. Double register line under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Amun-Re, great god.*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *ht n ti-šps dbn 5.*

Condition: Ring-base chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking.

H 67

Inventory number: AT 98.I2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 67; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 67; Schneider 1997, cat. 43.

Dimensions: h. 8.1, diam. 27.5 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Amun-Re standing, facing right (h. 10.5 cm), left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Crowned with double plume (detailed feathers) and disk, with streamer behind. Curved divine beard. Clothed in divine corslet, short kilt wrapped right over left, and sash, with animal tail behind. Bracelets on upper arms and wrists. Single register line under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Amun-Re, king of the gods.*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *šw.t Nmti dbn 2.*

Condition: Ring-base chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, dark stains of mould.

¹³ Cf. H. Bonnet, *Die ägyptische Tracht bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches (Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Aegyptens VII, Leipzig, 1917)*, 40-44 (*Galaschurz*), often worn by gods (*ibid.* 44); G.M. Vogel-sang-Eastwood, *Pharaonic Egyptian clothing (Leiden, 1993)*, 62-63 with Fig. 4.15.



Fig. 2. Dishes H 66 and H 67.

H 68

Inventory number: AT 98.J2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 68; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 68.

Dimensions: h. 9.0, diam. 30.2 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Ptah standing, facing right (h. 8 cm), both fists grasping *was* and *ankh*. Head covered with skull cap, straight flaring beard. Body mummiform, with concentric collar, tassel, and crossed stola. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Ptah, who is south of his wall.*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *prt šnī dbn 2.*

Condition: Ring-base chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, dark stains (loss of slip) on interior, white ink faded.

H 69

Inventory number: AT 98.J1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 69; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 69; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.55.

Dimensions: h. 9.7, diam. 30.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink with details of head retraced in black, single figure of Ptah standing in shrine, facing right (h. 10.8 cm), both fists grasping *was*. Shrine with vaulted top and two tent poles, double base line. Head covered with skull cap, straight flaring beard. Body mummiform, with concentric collar, tassel, and crossed stola. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: None.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *ḥt n qdt dbn 3.*

Condition: Ring-base chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, dark stains (root marks?) on exterior and interior, rim cracked.

H 70

Inventory number: AT 98.K3.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 70; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 70; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.51.

Dimensions: h. 11.2, diam. 33 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Re standing, facing right (h. 8.5 cm), left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Crowned with disk encircled by uraeus. Falcon-headed with tripartite wig. Clothed in collar, short kilt wrapped right over left, and sash, with animal tail behind. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Re, <great> god*¹⁴.

Docket: None, or illegible due to fading.

Condition: Ring-base chipped, two flakes lost from rim, two holes in inner wall, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, spots of dark mould on interior and exterior, hieratic much faded.

¹⁴ The sign '3 has been omitted. Alternatively, the *ntr* sign served as determinative only and should not be translated.



Fig. 3. Dishes H 68 and H 69.

H 71

Inventory number: AT 98.K4.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 71; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 71.

Dimensions: h. 9.1, diam. 29.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Re standing, facing right (h. 11.5 cm), left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Crowned with disk encircled by uraeus. Falcon-headed with tripartite wig. Clothed in divine corslet, short kilt wrapped left over right with single pleating, and sash, with animal tail behind. Bracelets on upper arms and wrists and anklets. Single register line under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Re-Horakhte*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *nkpt dbn 3*.

Condition: Ring-base chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, spots of dark mould on exterior, white ink faded.

H 72

Inventory number: AT 98.K1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 72; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 72.

Dimensions: h. 7.0, diam. 27.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Re standing, facing right (h. 9.8 cm). Body mummiform, both fists grasping *was*. Crowned with disk encircled by uraeus. Falcon-headed with tripartite wig. *M3*-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Re-Horakhte, great god*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: almost illegible due to fading; [*prt*] *šni h[nw ...]*.

Condition: Ring-base chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, dark incrustations on exterior, white ink faded.

H 73

Inventory number: AT 98.K2 = Leipzig 3016 (exchange 1926).

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 73; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 73.

Dimensions: diam. 27 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Re standing, facing right, left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Crowned with disc encircled by uraeus. Falcon-headed with tripartite wig. Clothed in divine corslet and short kilt. Single register line under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Re, <great> god*¹⁵.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *H3rw*.

Condition: Lost due to war damage.

H 74

Inventory number: AT 98.E.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 74; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 74; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.59; Schneider 1997, no. 42.

Dimensions: h. 9.7, diam. 33 cm.

¹⁵ The sign 3 has been omitted. Alternatively, the *ntr* sign served as determinative only and should not be translated.



Fig. 4. Dishes H 70 and H 71.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Atum standing, facing right, left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Crowned with double crown, divine beard. Clothed in plain collar, divine corslet, short kilt wrapped left over right with single pleating, and sash, with animal tail behind. Double register line under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Atum, lord of Heliopolis*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *iwft dbn 3*.

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped, concentric fissure around base, exterior with white stains around ring-base and grey discoloured patch close to rim, interior with white stain on bottom, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking.

H 75

Inventory number: AT 98.H1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 75; Leemans 1851, Pl. 50, H 75; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.48; Schneider 1997, cat. 45; C. Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen, II* (Leuven, 2002), 455 ref. [69].

Dimensions: h. 9.4, diam. 34 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Werheka standing, facing right (h. 9.1 cm), left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Tripartite wig and curved divine beard. Clothed in short kilt wrapped right over left and sash. Double register line under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Werheka*¹⁶.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *pṛt šnl sn^c hnw 2*.

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, dark stains (root marks?) on exterior, white water stain on bottom of interior, grey discoloration near figure, hieratic faded.

H 76

Inventory number: AT 98.H2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 76.

Dimensions: h. 10.8, diam. 31 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Werheka standing, facing right (h. 7.9 cm), left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*. Tripartite wig and curved divine beard. Clothed in collar, short kilt wrapped left over right with single pleating, sash, and animal tail. Double register line under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Werheka*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *iwft dbn 3*.

Condition: Broken in 11 sherds and rejoined (one small piece missing from rim), black spots of mould on exterior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, figure and caption faded.

H 77

Inventory number: AT 98.D2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 77; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 77.

¹⁶ For the interpretation of the hieroglyph of the hind quarters of a lion (Gardiner Sign-list F 22), see H. te Velde, *JEOL* 21 (1970), 183-184; R.K. Ritner, *The mechanics of ancient Egyptian magical practice* (Chicago, 1995), 25-26.



Fig. 5. Dishes H 72 and H 74.



Fig. 6. Dishes H 75 and H 76.

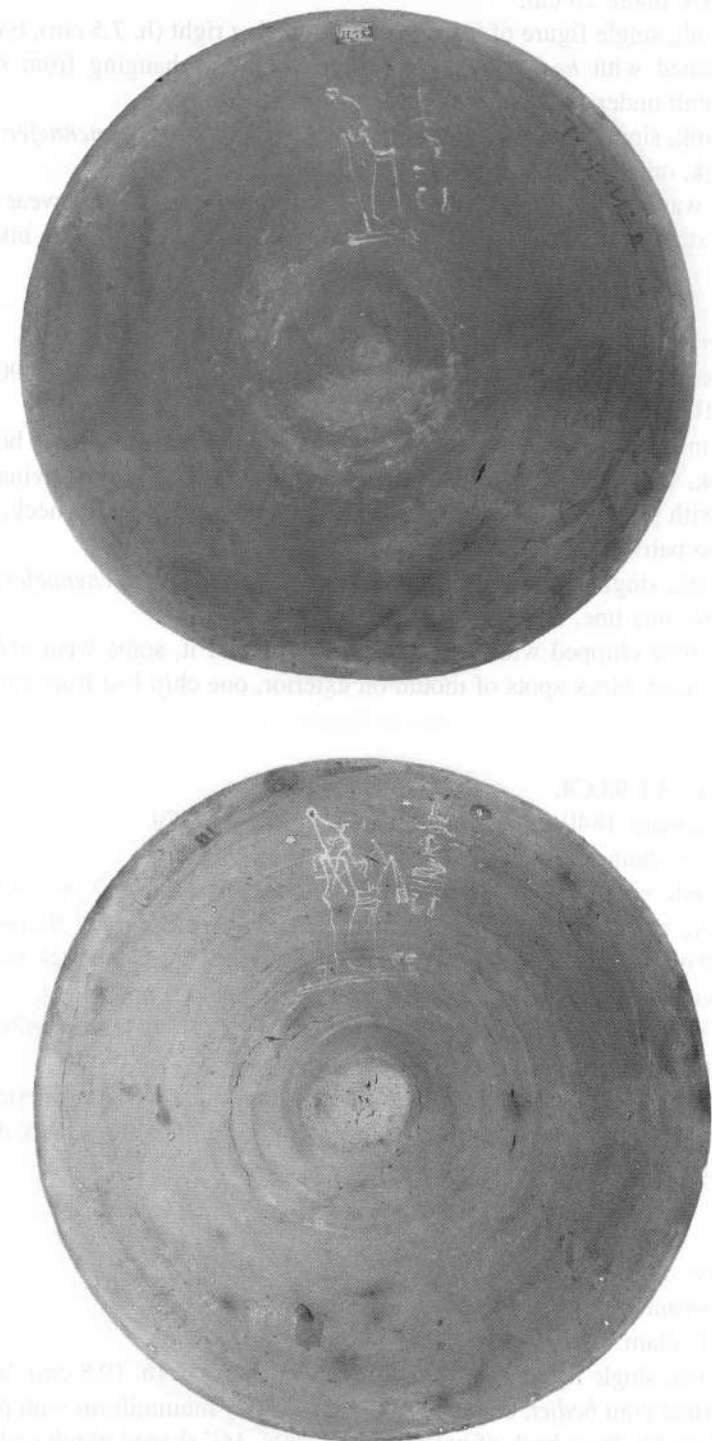


Fig. 7. Dishes H 77 and H 78.

Dimensions: h. 8.4, diam. 28 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 7.5 cm), both fists grasping was. Crowned with *hedjet*. Body mummiform, tassel hanging from back of neck. *M3'*-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Wennefer*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *gnn H3rw dbn 5*.

Condition: Dish warped, ring-base chipped with concentric crack, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, half of interior surface discoloured to grey, white ink faded.

H 78

Inventory number: AT 98.C3.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 78; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 78; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.56.

Dimensions: h. 10.2, diam. 30 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 9.7 cm), both fists grasping was, crook, and flail. Crowned with *hedjet* and uraeus, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. Plinth with two pairs of uraei (one in front, one behind) under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Wennefer*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *pgr dbn 2*.

Condition: Ring-base chipped with concentric crack around it, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, black spots of mould on exterior, one chip lost from rim.

H 79

Inventory number: AT 98.C4.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 79; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 79.

Dimensions: h. 8.5, diam. 28.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 7 cm), both fists grasping was, crook, and flail. Crowned with *hedjet* and uraeus, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with concentric collar (3 ranges), tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. Plinth with two pairs of uraei (one in front, one behind) under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Wennefer*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text (according to Leemans): *qm3...*

Condition: No ring-base but pointed base, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, rim damaged (5 sherds rejoined, one patch reconstructed, minor chips lost), dark drop mark on interior, black ink completely faded.

H 80

Inventory number: AT 98.D1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 80; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 80.

Dimensions: h. 8, diam. 28.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 10.8 cm), both fists grasping was. Crowned with *hedjet*, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M3'*-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Wen(en)nefer*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *ht n ti-šps dbn 5*.

Condition: Some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink faded.

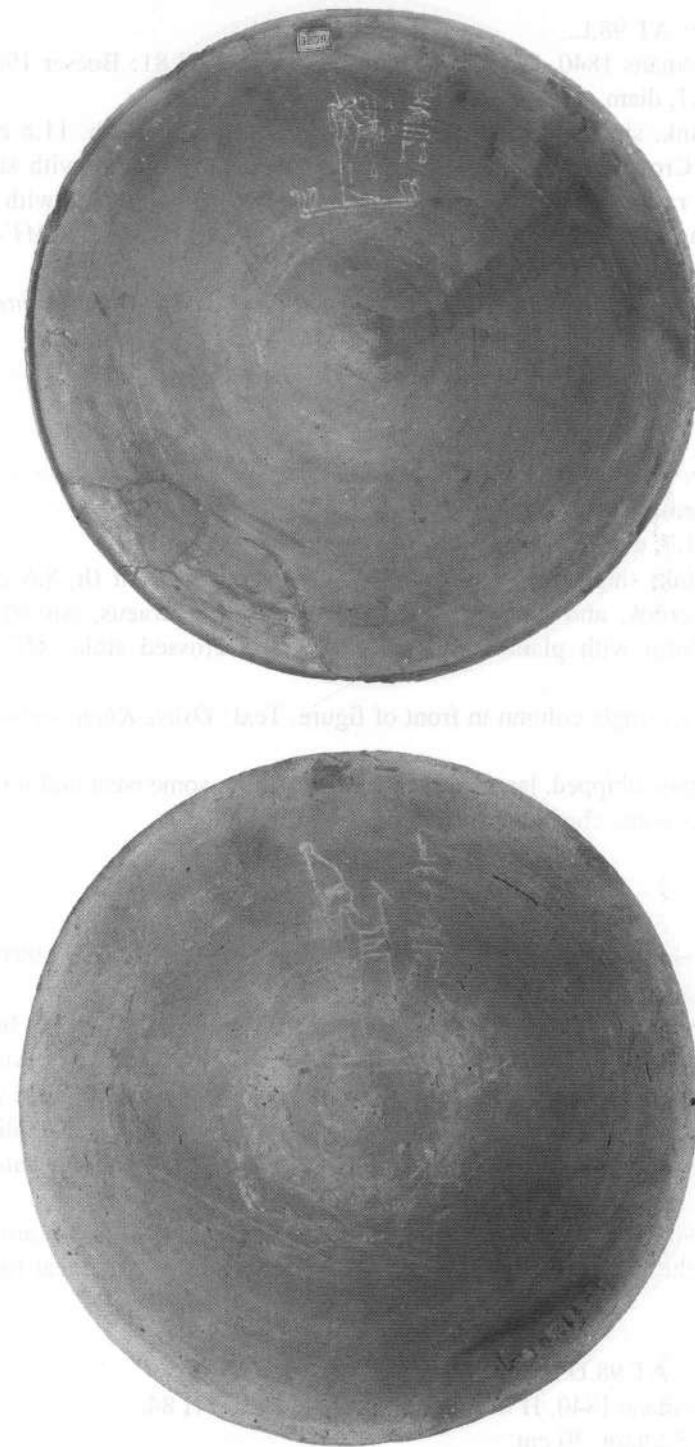


Fig. 8. Dishes H 79 and H 80.

H 81

Inventory number: AT 98.L.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 81; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 81; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.49.

Dimensions: h. 9.7, diam. 32.5 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 11.8 cm), both fists grasping *was*. Crowned with *atef* (central element bundle crown, with sun disk above and below and rams' horns), curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, fringed tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M3'*-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *g3nn H3rw dbn 5*.

Condition: Rim slightly chipped in two places.

H 82

Inventory number: AT 98.G.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 82.

Dimensions: h. 11.7, diam. 33 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 8.6 cm), both fists grasping *was*, crook, and flail. Crowned with *hedjet* and uraeus, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar and crossed stola. *M3'*-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet*.

Docket: None.

Condition: Ring-base chipped, large white stain on exterior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, some chips lost from rim, black ink faded.

H 83

Inventory number: AT 98.F.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 83; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.57; Schneider 1997, cat. 44.

Dimensions: h. 9.8, diam. 29.5 cm.

Vignette: Black ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 9.7 cm), both fists grasping *was*, bracelets on wrists. Crowned with *atef* (central element bundle crown, with sun disk above and below and rams' horns), curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M3'*-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: Black ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet*.

Docket: None.

Condition: Ring slightly chipped, exterior with dark lines and white stain around rim, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, darker discoloured patch near figure.

H 84

Inventory number: AT 98.D3.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 84; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 84.

Dimensions: h. 9.8, diam. 30 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 9.8 cm), both fists grasping *was*. Crowned with *hedjet*, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain



Fig. 9. Dishes H 81 and H 82.

concentric collar, fringed tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *iwft dbn 3*.

Condition: Ring with transverse cuts (ancient), one sherd missing from rim (restored in gypsum), some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink partly faded.

H 85

Inventory number: AT 98.C1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 85; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 85; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.50.

Dimensions: h. 8, diam. 27.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 9 cm), both fists grasping *was*. Crowned with *hedjet* and uraeus, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, fringed tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet, with two pairs of uraei (one in front, one behind).

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *d3rm dbn 2*.

Condition: Some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink partly faded.

H 86

Inventory number: AT 98.D4.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 86; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 86.

Dimensions: h. 9.2, diam. 30.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 8 cm), both fists grasping *was*. Crowned with *hedjet*, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with fringed tassel hanging from back of neck and crossed stola. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet.

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *ht n ti-šps dbn 5*.

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped, dark stains (root marks?) on interior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white and black ink partly faded.

H 87

Inventory number: AT 98.C2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 87; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 87.

Dimensions: h. 9.7, diam. 29.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right (h. 11.8 cm), both fists grasping *was*, bracelets on wrists. Crowned with *hedjet* and uraeus, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, fringed tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M*³-shaped plinth under feet, with two pairs of uraei (one in front, one behind).

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet, Wennefer*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *nkpt dbn 3*.

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped and one side chamfered, black spots of mould on exterior, dark stains (root marks?) on interior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink partly faded.



Fig. 10. Dishes H 83 and H 84.



Fig. 11. Dishes H 85 and H 86.



Fig. 12. Dishes H 87 and H 89.

H 88

Inventory number: AT 98.C5 = Leipzig 3015 (exchange 1926).

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 88; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 88.

Dimensions: diam. 26.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink, single figure of Osiris standing, facing right, both fists grasping *was*. Crowned with *hedjet* and uraeus, curved divine beard. Body mummiform with plain concentric collar, fringed tassel hanging from back of neck, crossed stola. *M3*-shaped plinth under feet, with two pairs of uraei (one in front, one behind).

Caption: White ink, single column in front of figure. Text: *Osiris-Khentimentet, Wennefer*.

Docket: None.

Condition: Lost due to war damage.

H 89

Inventory number: AT 98.B4.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 89; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 89.

Dimensions: h. 8.6, diam. 31 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of solar bark, facing right (h. 6.5 cm). Wickerwork fender draped over prow, surmounted by falcon; sickle-shaped stern with double steering-oars and rudder-posts, all butts ending in falcon heads. The boat carries two standing gods: in front a stick-shaped figure of Re, falcon-headed with tripartite wig, with left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*, crowned with disk encircled by uraeus and clothed in short kilt; behind him a figure of Osiris, mummiform with *hedjet* and curved divine beard, tassel and crossed stola, both fists grasping *was*. Rectangular pool of water (Sign-list N 39) below.

Caption: White ink, two captions identifying the gods. Texts: *Horakhte* and *Osiris*.

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *nnibr dbn 3*.

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped with concentric fissure in centre, dark stains (root marks?) on interior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white and black ink partly faded.

H 90

Inventory number: AT 98.B2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 90; Leemans 1851, Pl. 51, H 90; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.58.

Dimensions: h. 9, diam. 30.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of bark, facing right (h. 6.3 cm). Sickle-shaped prow and stern with single steering-oar and rudder-post, both butts ending in falcon heads. The boat carries two standing gods: in front a stick-shaped figure of Re, falcon-headed with tripartite wig, with left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down holding *ankh*, crowned with disk encircled by uraeus and clothed in short kilt; behind him a figure of Osiris, mummiform with *hedjet* and curved divine beard, tassel, plain collar, and crossed stola, both fists grasping *was*. Rectangular pool of water (Sign-list N 39) below.

Caption: White ink, two captions identifying the gods. Texts: *Horakhte* and *Osiris*.

Docket: None.

Condition: Both exterior and interior with white stains around rim, dark stains (root marks?) on interior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking.



Fig. 13. Dishes H 90 and H 91.

H 91

Inventory number: AT 98.A1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 91; Leemans 1851, Pl. 52, H 91; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.52.

Dimensions: h. 11.7, diam. 31.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of a bark, facing right (h. 7.8 cm). Vertical prow and sickle-shaped stern with single steering-oar and rudder-post, both butts ending in falcon heads. The boat carries a standing stick-shaped figure of Re, falcon-headed with tripartite wig, with left hand forward holding *was*, right hand down, crowned with disk encircled by uraeus and clothed in short kilt; behind him an enthroned figure of Osiris, mummiform with *hedjet*, uraeus, and curved divine beard, tassel, plain collar, and crossed stola, both fists grasping *was*. This bark is flanked by two antithetic solar barks (h. 9 and 7 cm) with wickerwork fender draped over prow, surmounted by squatting child (left) and unclear element (right) between papyrus stalks; sickle-shaped stern with single steering-oar and rudder-post, all butts ending in falcon heads. The boats carry the following elements: stick-shaped figure of Isis, both arms down, crowned with the sign of her name; vaulted cabin; hatched butt with a notched palm-rib flanked by two papyrus stalks with falcons, execution instrument (Sign-list T 18), stick-shaped figure of Nephthys, both arms down, crowned with the sign of her name. Rectangular pools of water (Sign-list N 39) under all three barks.

Caption: White ink, two captions identifying the gods in the central bark. Texts: *Hor[akhte?]* and *Osiris*. Two captions for the two solar barks: *The morning bark* and *the evening bark*.

Docket: None.

Condition: Ring-base chipped, two cracks in bottom, pale discolorations and white stains around rim, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink slightly faded.

H 92

Inventory number: AT 98.B3.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 92; Leemans 1851, Pl. 52, H 92.

Dimensions: h. 6, diam. 27.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of a bark, facing right (h. 6 cm). Vertical prow and sickle-shaped stern with single steering-oar and rudder-post, both butts ending in falcon heads. The boat carries five standing stick-shaped figures: goddess (Isis), unknown god with tripartite wig, Thoth, Re (falcon-headed with tripartite wig, disk encircled by uraeus), and Horus (falcon-headed). All figures have both arms down, except Re who holds a *was* and Horus who wields the rudder. Rectangular pool of water (Sign-list N 39) below.

Caption: White ink, three captions identifying the gods in the bark. Texts: *Thoth*, *Horakhte*, and *Horus*.

Docket: None.

Condition: Ring-base chipped, bottom cracked, one sherd lost from rim, pale discolorations around rim, black stains (root marks?) on interior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink much faded.

H 93

Inventory number: AT 98.B1.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 93; Leemans 1851, Pl. 52, H 93; Boeser 1907, E.XLII.53.

Dimensions: h. 9.8, diam. 28.3 cm.



Fig. 14. Dishes H 92 and H 93.

Vignette: White ink representation of a bark, facing right (h. 7.8 cm). Wickerwork fender draped over prow, surmounted by falcon with *hedjet*, sickle-shaped stern with single steering-oar and double rudder-posts, all butts ending in falcon heads. The boat carries six standing and two squatting stick-shaped figures: Atum with double crown, Shu with ostrich feather on the head, Tefnut, Nut, Geb (all holding *was* and *ankh*), Osiris with *hedjet*, divine beard, and tassel, both fists grasping *was*, Isis and Nephthys squatting (one above the other), crowned with the sign of their name. Rectangular pool of water (Sign-list N 39) below.

Caption: White ink, five captions identifying the gods in the bark. Texts: *Horakhete, Atum, Tefnut, Nut, and Geb.*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *pr.t šnī hnw 2.*

Condition: Exterior with pale and dark stains (root marks?), two holes of burnt out limestone, rim slightly chipped, seriously warped (oval circumference), some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white and black ink slightly faded.

H 94

Inventory number: AT 98.A4.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 94; Leemans 1851, Pl. 52, H 94.

Dimensions: h. 7.2, diam. 28 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of a row of gods, facing right (h. 7.2 cm). Nine standing stick-shaped figures: falcon-headed Horus and Atum with double crown, Shu with ostrich feather on the head, Tefnut (all holding *was* and *ankh*), Geb and Nut with *was* only, Osiris with *hedjet*, uraeus, divine beard, tassel and stola, both fists grasping *was*, Isis and Nephthys, crowned with the sign of their name and holding *was*. Single register line below.

Caption: White ink, seven captions identifying the gods. Texts: *Horus, Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, and Osiris.*

Docket: None.

Condition: Ring-base chipped and cracked, crack in bottom, interior with pale discolorations, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink much faded.

H 95

Inventory number: AT 98.A2.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 95; Leemans 1851, Pl. 53, H 95.

Dimensions: h. 8.2, diam. 28.5 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of a row of gods, facing right (h. 9 cm). Eleven standing stick-shaped figures: falcon-headed Horus and Atum with double crown, Shu with ostrich feather on the head, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris with *hedjet*, tassel and collar, both fists grasping *was*, Isis, unclear god, Thoth, and Nephthys. Several gods holding *was* and/or *ankh*. Double register line below.

Caption: White ink, three captions identifying the gods. Texts: *Tefnut, Geb, and Nut.*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *hsbd sn'' hnw 2 ir n dbn 10.*

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped, interior of rim with dark stains, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink faded.

H 96

Inventory number: AT 98.A5.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 96; Leemans 1851, Pl. 53, H 96.



Fig. 15. Dishes H 94 and H 95.

Dimensions: h. 8, diam. 29 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of a row of gods, facing right (h. 5 cm). Ten standing stick-shaped figures: falcon-headed Horus and Atum with double crown, Shu with ostrich feather on the head, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris with *hedjet*, beard, tassel, collar and stola, both fists grasping *was*, Isis¹⁷, Thoth, and Nephthys. All gods (except Osiris) holding *was* and *ankh*. Single register line below.

Caption: White ink, seven captions identifying the gods. Texts: *Horus, Atum, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, and Thoth.*

Docket: Black ink, one line. Text: *g3y dbn 5 3r n dbn 2.*

Condition: Ring-base chipped, white stain on exterior, dark stains on interior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white and black ink slightly faded.

H 97

Inventory number: AT 98.A3.

Bibliography: Leemans 1840, H 97.

Dimensions: h. 9.5, diam. 29 cm.

Vignette: White ink representation of a row of gods (curving with walls of dish), facing right (h. 5.5 cm). Nine standing stick-shaped figures, probably falcon-headed Horus and Atum with double crown, Shu with ostrich feather on the head, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys. All gods (except Osiris) holding *was* and *ankh*. No visible register line below.

Caption: White ink, at least two captions identifying the gods. Texts: *...Tef[nut], Geb...*

Docket: None.

Condition: Ring-base slightly chipped, hole of burnt-out limestone on exterior, some wear and scratches on interior by stacking, white ink much faded.

Style and date

So far, these characteristic dishes have never been firmly dated, although a Late Period date has usually been taken for granted. The 1937 guidebook to the Egyptian collection in Leiden mentions the 'Saite period'¹⁸, Schneider refers to the period 600-200 BC in his exhibition catalogue¹⁹. This general date can be refined by a scrutiny of the ceramological evidence, the iconography of the vignettes extant on the dishes, and of course the epigraphic character of the inscriptions. The latter aspect will be dealt with below in conjunction with a proper interpretation of the texts. Here, we shall restrict ourselves to some remarks about the pottery and the representations.

Whereas round-based bowls and dishes were predominant during the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period, a change for flat-based or ring-based shapes set in during the Late Period. According to David and Barbara Aston, this occurred during the early to mid fourth century BC, and the new style (their 'Phase D') extended into the Ptolemaic Period²⁰. This statement is corroborated by a scrutiny of, for instance, the well-dated pottery corpus from Elephantine. Although at that site no exact parallels for this specific type of ring-based dishes

¹⁷ With name sign on the head, not seen by Leemans 1851.

¹⁸ [anonymous] 1937, 65.

¹⁹ Schneider 1997, 41, nos. 42-45.

²⁰ D.A. and B.G. Aston, *Late Period pottery*, Chapter VII.

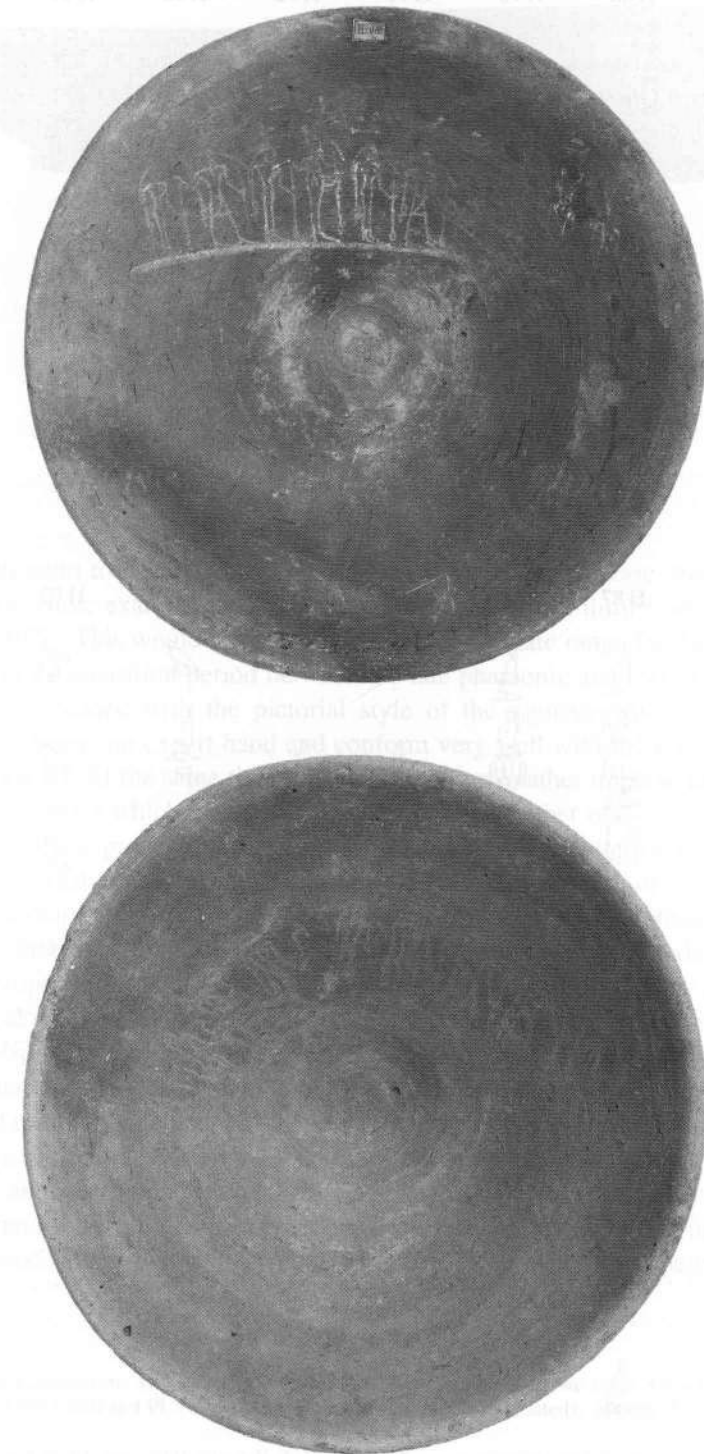


Fig. 16. Dishes H 96 and H 97.

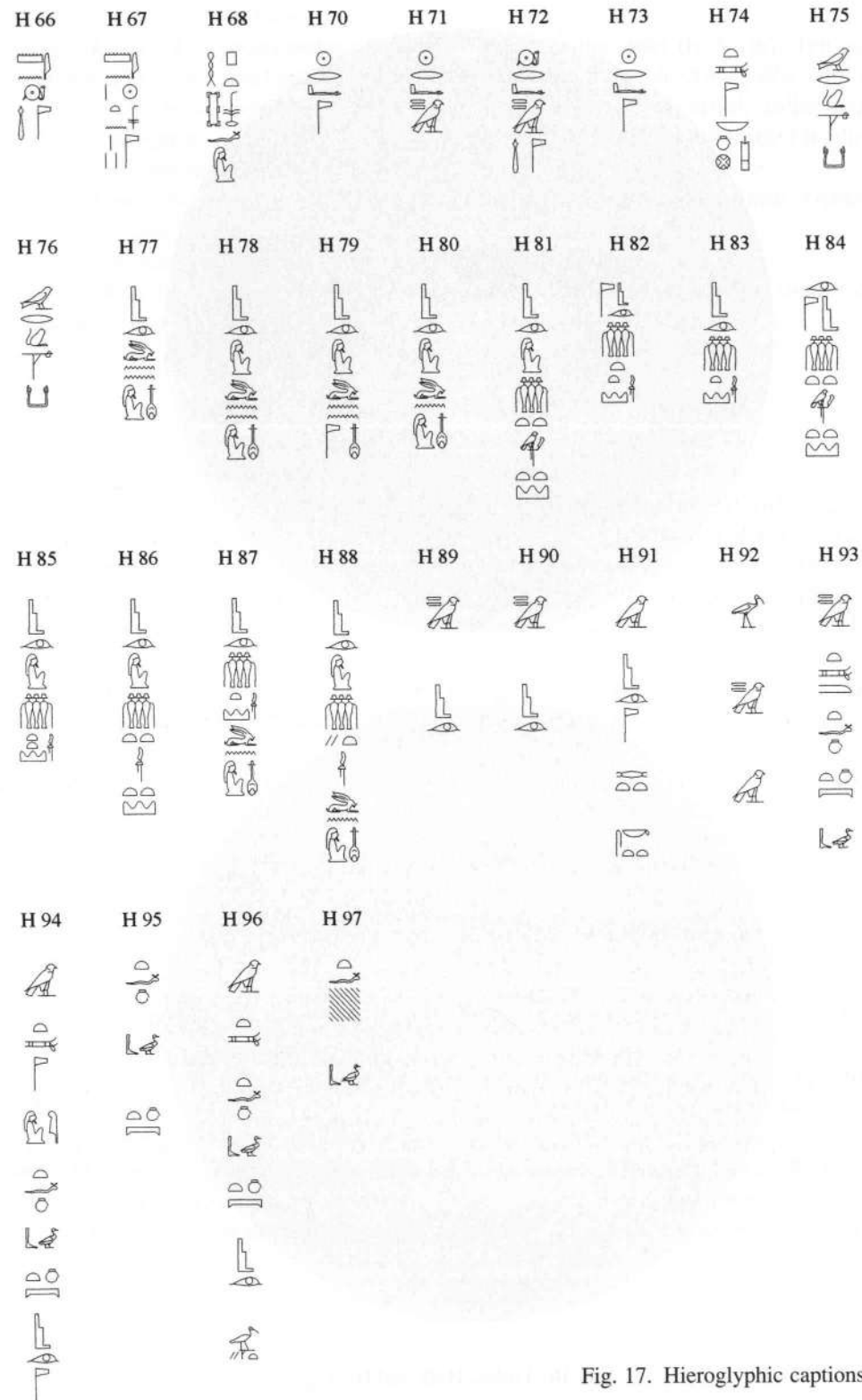


Fig. 17. Hieroglyphic captions.

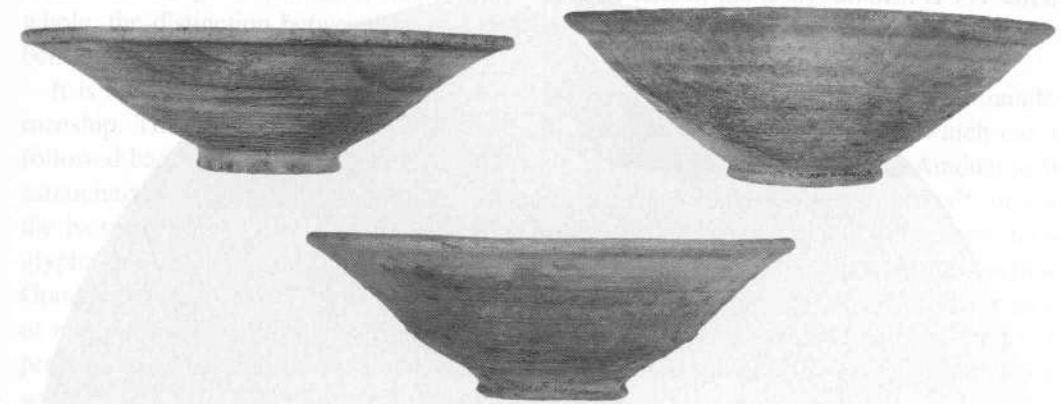


Fig. 18. Dishes H 66, H 82 and H 87.

with direct rim seem to occur, certainly not in the same Nile silt fabric, there is a number of related profiles. These examples have been dated to the fourth²¹, third²², and late third to second centuries BC²³. This would suggest a limitation of the date range for the Leiden dishes to 400-200 BC, in the transition period between the late pharaonic and early Ptolemaic eras.

This is in accordance with the pictorial style of the vignettes drawn on the dishes in question. These betray an expert hand and conform very well with the traditions of Egyptian two-dimensional art. At the same time, this means they are rather impersonal and lack certain individual peculiarities which would enable us to assess whether one or several draughtsmen were involved in their production. Under the circumstances, the latter option is perhaps more probable, and the dishes may even have been produced over a length of years.

Another observation is that two distinct styles of drawing may be distinguished in these vignettes. The first style (Fig. 19) is seen in the depictions of isolated gods and is characterized by well-proportioned bodies with a clear — although highly stylized — rendering of specific anatomical details such as the swelling of individual muscle groups and the correct outline of joints. Great care is shown in representing the attributes and especially the headdresses of the individual gods, so that even without the help of the hieroglyphic captions their identification would not be problematical. The second style can be observed in the dishes depicting barks and rows of divinities. Here the rendering is much more sketchy, the deities have stick-shaped limbs and occasionally even indistinguishable headdresses and attributes, and the barks have often been drawn as if in great haste with a corresponding loss of detail. Still, one should not dissociate the two styles from each other. Even in the first-mentioned style there

²¹ D.A. Aston, *Elephantine XIX, pottery from the late New Kingdom to the early Ptolemaic Period* (AV 95, Mainz am Rhein, 1999), 250 and Pl. 78, no. 2168 (flanged rim, Nile C uncoated); 256 and Pl. 82, no. 2237 (flanged rim, Nile C).

²² *Ibid.* 282-3 and Pl. 91, nos. 2438 (modelled rim, Nile B2 cream-slipped) and 2440 (Nile C uncoated); 284 and Pl. 92, no. 2457 (carinated, Nile C uncoated).

²³ *Ibid.* 332 and Pl. 111, no. 2944 (modelled rim, Nile C uncoated).

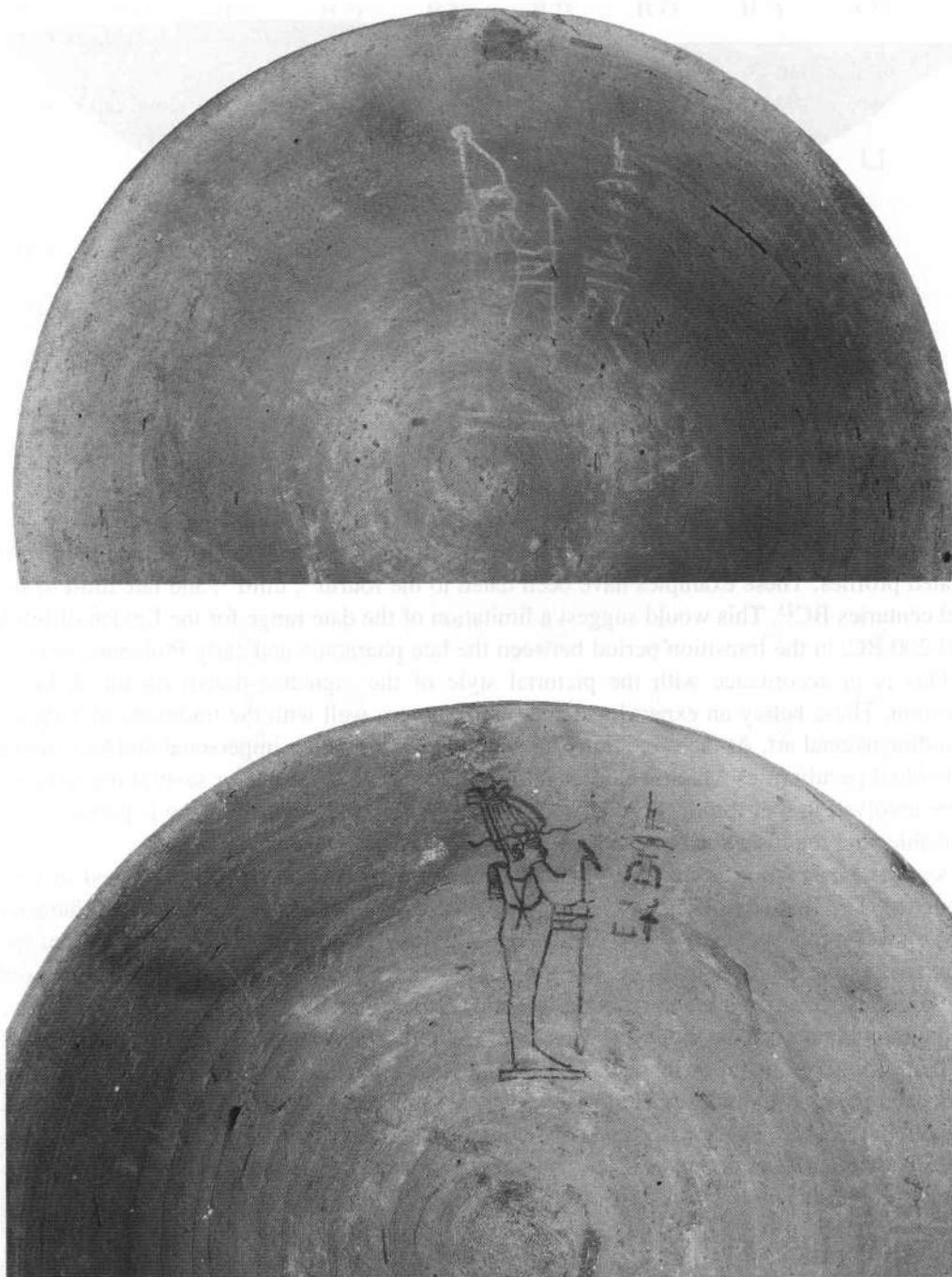


Fig. 19. Vignettes on H 80 and H 83.

occur certain figures with stick-shaped limbs (e.g. the fists of the Osiris on dish H 77). On the whole, the distinction between the two styles seems to be one of scale, the sketchy figures being smaller than the detailed ones.

It is hard to date these two styles because they are very common for Egyptian draughtsmanship. The 'stick-shaped' style represents an old tradition in Egyptian art which can be followed back via the papyri with the texts from the Book of the Dead or the Amduat to the sarcophagus chamber of the tomb of Thutmosis III, the Middle Kingdom coffins²⁴, or even the ivory labels of the Archaic Period. This style developed in the context of cursive hieroglyphs and hieratic (as opposed to proper hieroglyphs) and shares their 'spontaneous' outlook. Good stylistic parallels for the vignettes on the Leiden dishes seem to be offered by a group of monochrome Book of the Dead manuscripts datable to Dynasty XXX and the Ptolemaic period. These seem to share certain characteristics such as the peculiar combination of three sceptres (*was*, crook, and flail) held by Osiris in both fists as if it were a bouquet²⁵, and the fixed combination of collar and crossed stola for Osiris (often also with a *mankhet* tassel)²⁶. Although this stylistic evidence is far from conclusive, it would appear that at least the general period indicated is in accordance with the above-mentioned ceramological evidence.

Parallels and provenance

It is not easy to find good parallels for the Leiden dishes. Inquiry at the British Museum led to the confirmation that this collection comprises eight dishes of virtually identical type compared with the specimens now in Leiden²⁷. These are numbered EA 5135-5142 and were acquired in 1839 from the collections of Giovanni d'Anastasi. They are all made of Nile silt pottery. Their dimensions vary from 5.5-10.3 cm for the height and 27.0-32.5 cm for the diameter. The dishes bear vignettes in white ink (5141 and 5142 in black ink) of the following motifs: 5141 — Amun-Re; 5142 — Werheka; 5138 and 5139 — Osiris (5138 on base with uraei); 5135 and 5140 — bark with Osiris and Re (?); 5136 and 5137 — row of ten deities. Five of these (nos. 5138-5142) also comprise hieratic docketts in black ink. Otherwise, there are the usual captions in hieroglyphs.

Several specimens of a rather different kind are exhibited in Cairo. The first one has Catalogue Général no. 3171 but unfortunately is both unpublished and unprovenanced²⁸. It is

²⁴ Cf. A. de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, VII (Chicago, 1961), plans 1-15.

²⁵ Papyri Louvre 3079, 3087, and 5450; see C.H.S. Davis, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* (New York, 1894), pls. 9, 10, 15; P. Barguet, *Le Livre des Morts des anciens Egyptiens* (Paris, 1967), 91 spell 55, 167 spell 128. Similar detail in Papyrus Zagreb 603 (J. Monnet Saleh, *Les antiquités égyptiennes de Zagreb* (Paris, 1970), 168 cat. 888. It should be noted that this detail is certainly not exclusive to the said period; for New Kingdom examples, see R.V. Lonzoni, *Dizionario di mitologia egizia* (Turin, 1881), pl. 340; C. Seeber, *Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Totengerichts im Alten Ägypten* (Munich 1976), Abb. 12 and page 203 no. 5 (pCairo 4885, Dyn. 19-20); cf. also P. Munro, *Die spätägyptischen Totenstelen* (Glückstadt, 1973), numerous illustrations throughout the Late and Ptolemaic periods.

²⁶ Papyrus Turin 1791: see R. Lepsius, *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter nach dem hieratischen Papyrus in Turin* (Leipzig, 1842), pl. 27 spell 72 and *passim*. Also in Papyrus Louvre 3079: Davis, *op.cit.*, pls. 9, 10, 15, 16.

²⁷ We wish to thank Marcel Marée for his information on this material. Our suspicion that the British Museum might possess such dishes was based on the known presence in London of the mud figurines which will be mentioned at the end of the present section of this article.

²⁸ We wish to thank Geoffrey Martin, Adel Mahmud, and May Trad for checking the museum records on this item. It is briefly mentioned in G. Daressy, *Textes et dessins magiques* (CGC, Cairo, 1903), 57 n. 1.

exhibited with the hypocephali as Special Register no. 10694. This vessel is a Nile silt dish of 19.5 cm diameter, painted in white with a representation of a bark, facing right with sickle-shaped prow and stern terminating in papyrus umbels. A falcon-headed god holds the steering-oar, whereas a small figure in the prow kneels with raised hands behind an offering table. The bark sails over a rectangular pool of water and carries a large disk. Inside the disk there are two registers of squatting divinities identifiable by their headgear: above from right to left the Horus falcon on a shrine, Atum, Re, Shu, and Tefnut; below Geb, Nut, Osiris, Thoth (or Horus?), Isis, and Nephthys. Another specimen exhibited in the same place, Special Register no. 10697 (or 10698?), is smaller (about 15 cm diameter) but has a similar vignette of a bark sailing over a pool of water. Here there are no disk, steering-oar, or kneeling attendant, but just a row of nine standing gods: from right to left the Horus falcon on a shrine, Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys. Although the similarity of these two vessels themselves to the Leiden examples is not very close (they are much flatter, plates rather than dishes), at least the decoration is rather related to Leiden H 92-93, whereas the same gods occur on H 94-97.

A third plate said to come from Lower Egypt entered the Cairo Museum in 1901; this represents the Horus falcon, Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys on two registers of white paintings²⁹. More plates were acquired around the same time from Tell Ibn Salam (Mendes), where they allegedly served as lids for large vessels³⁰. Far more elucidating is a painted dish excavated by Barsanti in the tomb of Tjaennehebu at Saqqara³¹. This has JE number 34372 and was found together with three other, anepigraph specimens on the ground in the burial-chamber, in front of the sarcophagus. It bears a representation in white ink of a bark on a rectangular pool of water; on board are the Horus falcon and the gods Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys³². The four dishes formed part of a group of other objects comprising two model canopic jars in alabaster, five boat models in wood or clay, two magical bricks, and a mud figure of a jackal-headed god. This interesting burial ensemble can be dated to the reign of Amasis in the 26th Dynasty³³.

There is also a group of well-provenanced material excavated by the Pennsylvania-Yale expedition at Abydos in 1967³⁴. The site in question was a temple of Ramesses II erected outside the west gate of the enclosure of the Osiris temple at Kom el-Sultan³⁵, an area previously explored by Mariette and Petrie and known as the 'portal of Ramesses II'. In the debris covering the entrance of the temple no less than fifty sherds turned up, originally belonging

²⁹ G. Maspero, *ASAE* 3 (1902), 285 with ill.; cf. R.K. Ritner, *Mechanics*, 64 n. 289. This object does not appear to be on display.

³⁰ Daressy, loc.cit.

³¹ A. Barsanti, *ASAE* 1 (1900), 264; E. Bresciani, S. Pernigotti, and M.P. Giangeri Silvis, *La tomba di Ciennehebu, capo della flotta del Re* (Pisa, 1977), 73-75 and pl. 27.

³² This identification is merely based on the parallels, not on inscriptions. For a markedly different identification (which we believe to be erroneous), see Bresciani *et al.*, *La tomba di Ciennehebu*, 74.

³³ *Ibid.* 19.

³⁴ D. O'Connor, Abydos, a preliminary report of the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition, 1967, *Expedition* 10.1 (Fall 1967), 10-23, especially 16 and ill. on 17. A final publication of this material is now at an advanced stage of preparation (information by D. O'Connor, 10 October 2005). Unfortunately, it proved to be impossible to obtain further information on these finds.

³⁵ Cf. B. Porter/R.L.B. Moss, *Topographical bibliography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs, and paintings, V: Upper Egypt, sites* (Oxford, 1937), 44.

to what must have been exact parallels for the Leiden and London dishes. The preliminary report mentions 'red or brown ware bowls all of the same shape. What was unusual about these bowls was that the interior had been inscribed in black or white ink with drawings of various gods, sometimes standing on boats and sometimes with their names written in cursive hieroglyphs. Some sherds from similar bowls had a single line of hieratic text.' The preliminary report illustrates only one of these sherds, depicting a standing Osiris very similar to Leiden H 78-79 except that he has a bundle crown like H 81 and H 83. In 1995, four more sherds were published which have hieratic docketts just like the Leiden dishes³⁶.

These finds highly suggest that the dishes now in Leiden and London were also found at Abydos, in this case around 1825. At the time, the Abydos necropolis was looted mainly for its stelae, a large number of which have ended up in Leiden with the Anastasi sale of 1828. More of these stelae were found by Mariette in 1861, and a contemporary letter by his supervisor Gabet mentions that these came from *une grande porte qui donne à l'est et qui devait servir d'entrée aux constructions existant dans le grand Com*³⁷. The Pennsylvania-Yale excavations have clearly shown that this must refer to the 'portal' area, where in fact they found more stelae of the same type themselves. Although similar stelae were found further away by other excavators, it rather looks as if the main bulk of the material was originally erected around 'the terrace of the great god', i.e. the hill immediately west of the Kom el-Sultan enclosure³⁸. Thus, the presence of the Abydos stelae in the Anastasi sales suggests that his agents were indeed active around the 'portal' site, and that the ceramic dishes may have been found there. This is further suggested by the 1967 find in the same area of curious figures of ram heads, cobras and vultures made of unbaked mud³⁹. Again, these are paralleled by a large group of similar figurines from the Anastasi collections, part of which is in Leiden⁴⁰ and the rest in the British Museum⁴¹.

Iconography

For a statistical appraisal of the iconography of the vignettes occurring on these dishes, we can regard the 30 dishes in Leiden, the 2 dishes once extant in Leipzig, the 8 examples in London, the 4 Cairo plates, and the single sherd published from the Abydos find as one group, with a total of 45 specimens. Iconographically, there seem to be two distinct main types:

- I. Vignettes representing a single standing deity (28 examples, 65% or about two thirds of the material);
- II. Vignettes depicting several gods (17 examples, 35% or about one third of the material).

³⁶ W.K. Simpson, *Inscribed material from the Pennsylvania-Yale excavations at Abydos* (New Haven, 1995), 29-30 nos. D 13-16 and Figs. 48-51.

³⁷ Quoted in W.K. Simpson, *The terrace of the great god at Abydos: the offering chapels of Dynasties 12 and 13* (New Haven, 1974), 9.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 6-10.

³⁹ O'Connor, *Expedition* 10.1, 16 and ill. on 17.

⁴⁰ Inv.nos. AT 101-106 (23 items, including a falcon-headed deity, crocodiles, vultures, cobras, and ram's heads).

⁴¹ BM EA 35838-35846, 61902-61918, 61663-61691 (55 items, vultures and ram's heads). We owe this information to Marcel Marée.

Type II can be further divided into the following subtypes:

- Ila. Single bark with two deities (4 examples);
- Ilb. Three barks, the central one with two deities (1 example);
- Ilc. Single barks with 5-11 deities (5 examples);
- Ild. Plain rows of 9-11 deities (7 examples).

By far the most popular god depicted is Osiris. He occurs on more than half of the dishes of Type I (15 examples, one third of the total number of dishes). If we are right in suggesting Abydos as the original place of origin of these vessels, this iconographical phenomenon need not surprise us, since Osiris was the main god venerated in this locality. The attributes with which the god is depicted vary considerably. In the majority of cases he is represented with a plain Upper-Egyptian crown (white crown or *hedjet*), with or without a uraeus serpent on the brow. Three vignettes show Osiris with an *atef* crown instead. The body of the god is invariably mummiform, and he usually wears a concentric collar with a tassel hanging from the neck and a crossed stola on the chest. The two fists protruding from the mummy garments usually hold a single *was* sceptre, but in four cases the god wields also the crook and flail. This combination of sceptres results in the 'bouquet'-shaped arrangement mentioned above. An interesting detail is also the plinth on which the god is standing. In 8 cases this is the common rectangular pedestal with sloping front (*m3'*, Sign-list Aa 11), which can be interpreted as a representation of the primaeval hill, of the 'Terrace of Osiris' (which would be rather appropriate in Abydos), or of the hieroglyph symbolizing 'justice' (a reference to Osiris' function as judge in the netherworld). In the other 7 cases, however, the pedestal shows two pairs of cobras, one of which is in front and the other at the rear. This iconographical motif is rather rare, but there is a parallel with two snakes on a private funerary stela from Abydos; this object dates to Dynasty 26 and the cobras are here designated as Isis and Nephthys⁴². There does not seem to be any connection between the various attributes depicted and the captions written next to the vignettes; the latter mention Osiris' epithets Wen(en)nefer, Khen-timentet, or both of them.

The other gods depicted in the Type I vignettes occur in far smaller numbers. Four vignettes represent the god Re with his characteristic falcon's head surmounted by a solar disk encircled by a uraeus. Two of these stand on the *m3'*-shaped plinth, the other two on a plain register line. In one case the body of Re is depicted mummiform and he grasps a *was* sceptre, the other three vignettes show an ordinary standing male god holding *was* and *ankh*. Again, no connection can be established between these variable attributes and the captions, which mention either Re or Re-Horakhte. The mummiform type is of course assimilated with Osiris and is very common on e.g. Late Period funerary stelae.

Both Amun-Re and Werheka occur three times each. The former has the customary attributes of a flat-topped crown surmounted by two tall feathers and a sun disk, the latter is shown as a standard male god with tripartite headdress and divine beard and would be unidentifiable without the captions. *Werheka* 'great of magic' is not unusual as an epithet of various gods (among which are Amun-Re, Re-Horakhte, Montu, Seth, Khonsu, Thoth, and Osiris) but is

⁴² Munro, *Totenstelen*, 297 and Abb. 152 (Turin 1528), dated 580-520 BC. See also Lanzone, *Dizionario*, Pl. 296.2 (the reference to Papyrus Anastasi 2 on page 783 and 810 n. 179 appears to be erroneous). Cf. also Osiris enthroned on a cobra: A. Piankoff/N. Rambova, *Mythological papyri* (New York, 1957), Figs. 44-45.

not often used as an independent designation of a god⁴³. The god can be depicted in various manners; the two known representations with an ordinary human body are restricted to the Graeco-Roman period and are to be found in the small temple at Medinet Habu and at Dendera⁴⁴. The presence of this rare god in the present context is rather puzzling, but it should be noted that in several temples he was considered to belong to either the small or the great Ennead⁴⁵, an observation which may be relevant in view of the evidence presented below regarding the vignettes of Type II.

Finally, there are the gods Ptah and Atum with two and one occurrences, respectively. Ptah is represented with his usual attire: skull-cap, flaring beard, and mummiform body. The presence of a *m3'*-shaped pedestal is very common for this god, who was often called 'Lord of Ma'at'. Here, however, he is dubbed 'south of his wall', a reference to his Memphite origin. Interesting is the fact that Leiden H 69 depicts the god inside a shrine, and that the head of the god has been redrawn in black over the original white sketch. Atum is represented as an ordinary standing male, crowned with the double crown and holding the usual *was* and *ankh*. The caption explains he is 'Lord of Heliopolis'.

Thus, neither the Type I vignettes nor their captions contain information explaining their occurrence on the pottery dishes. The predominance of Osiris can be explained as typical for their provenance from Abydos, but otherwise the composition of this divine community is rather mysterious. An altogether different picture is presented by the Type II vignettes. Here, the divinities occur in groups, and a predominance of Osiris can no longer be attested. On five dishes (subtypes Ila-IIb) he is depicted in a bark together with the god Re(-Horakhte). Whereas this already suggests a symbolism connected with the aspects of day and night, such a concept is confirmed by the fact that on Leiden H 91 the central bark is flanked by two solar barks labelled *m'ndt* 'morning bark' and *msktt* 'evening bark'. The presence of Isis and Nephthys on board of these two barks suggests that it is Osiris himself who has acquired strong solar connotations here, and indeed characteristics of the solar bark (such as the peculiar fender over the prow, or the falcon heads on the steering-oars and rudder-posts) occur in the bark of Osiris as well.

The vignettes of types Iic-IIc, however, depict Osiris as one of a whole group of gods; Leiden H 92 is an exception in not including Osiris among their company. This dish is also the only example depicting no more than five gods on board of a bark, and because of his size Horakhte seems to dominate his companions (Isis, an unknown god, Thoth, and Horus). All other examples show groups of eight (Leiden H 93: nine gods if we include the Horus falcon on the prow) to eleven deities. In view of this number and of the composition of the group, it is probably justified to interpret these vignettes as representations of the Ennead of Heliopolis⁴⁶. It has often been observed that depictions of the Ennead show a great variability of

⁴³ I. Nebe, in: *LÄ VI* (1986), 1221-1224 s.v. Werethekau (especially 1222 for the male variant); C. Leitz (ed.), *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen, II* (Leuven, 2002), 454-455, with n. [32] referring to Osiris.

⁴⁴ Leitz, loc.cit., type Aa, references [35] and [43]; reference [69] refers to the Leiden dish H 75 and its Late Period date should be corrected in the light of the evidence presented above.

⁴⁵ Leitz, loc.cit.

⁴⁶ For the following, cf. W. Barta, *Untersuchungen zum Götterkreis der Neunheit* (Munich, 1973); H. Brunner, in: *LÄ IV* (1982), 473-479 s.v. Neunheit.

names and numbers and need not be restricted to an exact company of nine⁴⁷. It is also clear that the vignettes on the dishes do not represent the Ennead of Abydos, which comprised gods such as Khnum, Harendotes, and Wepwawet⁴⁸. Their Heliopolitan character is indicated by the more or less fixed order or the gods Atum, Shu and Tefnut, Geb and Nut, Osiris, Isis and Nephthys. The ninth god of the orthodox Ennead, Seth, is markedly absent, probably as a result of his predominantly evil reputation from the Late Period onwards. In order to make up the number to nine (or ten, or eleven), various other gods are included. All our examples show Horus (as falcon or falcon-headed male) at the head of the row of divinities, but one may also observe the inclusion of the gods Re and Thoth (and perhaps a second Horus). Horus and Re both have strong links with the Ennead⁴⁹, whereas Thoth (as moon god) sometimes has a place in the evening bark⁵⁰. Similar compositions of the Ennead are not unknown from other places⁵¹. Thus, Spiegel seems to be right after all that the Heliopolitan Ennead had some place in the rituals enacted in the Abydos temples⁵². The connection with solar barks seems to suggest that these rites referred to the cosmic phenomena of daybreak or sunset.

Magical instructions from the Book of the Dead

So far, our investigation has barely exceeded the boundaries of a pure description of the visual evidence. In order to come to an iconographical appreciation of the inscribed dishes, we need to identify contemporary textual documents relevant to the objects in question. Fortunately, such sources exist in the Book of the Dead, where two texts refer to dishes inscribed with magical images. These are Book of the Dead spells 133 and 134, both of them entitled 'a spell for making able a blessed dead (*r n sīqr ʒḥ*)⁵³. They start with incantations to Re or Khepri at daybreak, and then identify the deceased with Re or Horus in order to help him sail in the solar bark and overcome his enemies in the hereafter. Spell 133 ends with the following magical instruction:

To be recited over a bark of four cubits in its length, made of stalks of papyrus, with the divine crew, after having made a starry sky purified with natron and incense, having made an image (tw) of Re in Nubian earth (stl) on a new dish (mḥ.t) placed in the prow of the bark, and having placed a figure (tw) of this blessed dead whom you want to make able in this bark. This means he will sail in the bark of Re, Re himself will see him in it. Do not make this for just anybody, but only for yourself, your father or your son. Be very careful! It means making able a blessed dead in the heart of Re and causing him to be powerful with the Ennead, so that the gods will see him as one of them. When human beings or the dead see him, they will fall on their faces. He will be seen in the hereafter as the rays of Re.

⁴⁷ Brunner, loc.cit. 475.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Barta, op.cit. 135-184.

⁵⁰ Cf. Brunner, loc.cit., 476 with n. 33.

⁵¹ See the lists in Barta, op.cit. 65-73, especially nos. 28, 55, 64.

⁵² J. Spiegel, *Die Götter von Abydos, Studien zum ägyptischen Synkretismus* (Wiesbaden, 1973); contra Brunner, loc.cit. 478 n. 23.

⁵³ For this translation of *sīqr ʒḥ*, see R.J. Demarée, *The ʒḥ ikr n R'-stelae, on ancestor worship in Ancient Egypt* (Leiden, 1983), chapter IV, especially 242-253.

Spell 134 ends as follows:

To be recited over a falcon with the White Crown standing on its head, (and over) Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephthys, drawn with Nubian earth (stl) on a new dish (mḥ.t) and placed in this bark, together with a figure (tw) of this blessed dead whom you want to make able, which has been anointed with ḥḥnw-oil. Make an offering for them of incense on the flame and roasted birds. This means adoring Re when his bark sails forth. He for whom this is done will be together with Re every day, at every place where he sails. This means truly cutting to pieces the enemies of Re. Really efficacious, millions of times.

Both spells were recently studied by Eschweiler in the context of his study of magical images⁵⁴. In a review of his publication, we have already remarked that the author did not seem to be aware of the fact that many of the magical objects prescribed in the texts or illustrated in the vignettes have actually survived⁵⁵. Thus, Eschweiler does not seem to have noticed the actual existence of the ceramic dishes prescribed in these two spells. Still, there cannot be any doubt that there was some link between the magical prescriptions in question and the extant dishes and plates. At first sight, the great variety of vignettes on the dishes (Types I-II d, described above) is rather confusing. However, a similar confusion prevails in the vignettes of spells 133-134 in the Book of the Dead manuscripts themselves. Spell 133 is usually illustrated by a picture of the deceased and Re sharing a boat⁵⁶, or the deceased standing in front of the boat and adoring Re⁵⁷. The dish mentioned in the ritual prescription is only depicted in the Ptolemaic papyrus Milbank, where the bark carries a figure of Re squatting inside a large disk⁵⁸.

Spell 134 was accompanied by various types of vignettes. Some of these depict the deceased adoring a bark with the Horus falcon on the prow and a row of other gods on deck⁵⁹, others show a bark with the image of the deceased⁶⁰, the deceased and Re together in a boat⁶¹, or Re and a disk or dish in a bark⁶². Thus, none of these early vignettes can be said to be a faithful rendering of what is prescribed at the end of the spell. Literal representations seem to be restricted to the Ptolemaic period vignettes, which depict a bark carrying a large disk adored by a kneeling person; a Horus falcon and nine squatting deities are represented in two ranges inside the disk⁶³. The element of the vignettes which looks like a solar disk must of

⁵⁴ P. Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten, die Verwendung von Bildern und Gegenständen in magischen Handlungen nach den Texten des Mittleren und Neuen Reiches* (Freiburg and Göttingen, 1994), 128-132, 189.

⁵⁵ M.J. Raven, review of Eschweiler, *Bildzauber*, in: *BiOr* 53.5/6 (1996), 692-697, especially 693, 696.

⁵⁶ E.g. E.A. Wallis Budge, *The papyrus of Ani, I* (London, 1913), pl. 21; L. Speleers, *Le papyrus de Neferrenpet, un Livre des Morts de la XVIIIe dynastie* (Brussels, 1917), pl. 17.

⁵⁷ E. Naville, *Das ägyptische Totenbuch der XVIII. bis XX. Dynastie, I: Text und Vignetten* (Berlin, 1886), pl. 146 (papyrus BM 9900 of Nebseny); Bargaet, *Le Livre des Morts*, 175 (papyrus Louvre 3248); Leemans, *Monumens égyptiens III.26* (1873), pl. 29 (papyrus Leiden T 16).

⁵⁸ T.G. Allen, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead documents in the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago* (Chicago, 1960), pl. 86 (papyrus OIM 10486).

⁵⁹ Naville, *Totenbuch*, pl. 147 (pBM 9900 of Nebseny); also reproduced in Eschweiler, *Bildzauber*, Abb. 32a-b.

⁶⁰ E. Naville, *Le papyrus hiéroglyphique de Katseshni au Musée du Caire* (Paris, 1914), pl. 17.

⁶¹ Speleers, *Neferrenpet*, pl. 19.

⁶² Budge, *The papyrus of Ani, I*, pl. 22. For the rare vignettes of a group of Third Intermediate Period papyri depicting two circular dishes only, see now R. Lucarelli, *The Book of the Dead of Gatseshen* (Leiden, 2006), 206-210.

⁶³ Papyrus Leiden T 16, see Leemans, *Monumens égyptiens III.26* (1873), pl. 29; papyrus Louvre 3248, see Bargaet, *Le Livre des Morts*, 176; papyrus OIM 10486 (pMilbank), see Allen, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead documents*, pl. 86. Cf. Lepsius, *Totenbuch*, pl. 55 (with a disk/dish behind the ennead).

course be identified as a depiction of the dish mentioned in the spell's instructions. The falcon and the nine deities depicted inside the disk are the images which had to be painted onto the dish in question. Indeed, the deities closely follow the order prescribed by the ritual, although the figure of Seth has been carefully omitted and replaced by Horus, Thoth, or another god (also in the text of the spell⁶⁴). The kneeling person in the prow of the bark is to be understood as the *twt*-image of the deceased.

Thus, the evidence from the papyri conforms rather well with the extant dishes and their vignettes. Among the isolated gods of Type I there are four depictions of the god Re; these may reflect the magical prescriptions of Book of the Dead spell 133 (... *an image of Re in Nubian earth on a new dish* ...). As we have seen, vignettes on the papyri always depict the god on board of a bark (according to the prescription: ... *a new dish, placed on the prow of the bark* ...) but usually omit the dish. Therefore, the pictorial tradition of the extant dishes is more literal: it was the dish that had to be placed on the bark, not the figure of Re (which was merely painted on the dish). We have no explanation for the occurrence of other gods than Re on the dishes of Type I, since these are not mentioned by the text from the Book of the Dead. The vignettes on the ceramic dishes described above as type IIc (showing a row of standing gods on board of a bark) should be interpreted as vignettes of spell 134 (... *a falcon with the White Crown standing on its head, and Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephthys, drawn with Nubian earth on a new dish and placed in this bark* ...). They seem to follow the same tradition as the New Kingdom papyrus of Nebseny⁶⁵. The vignettes of type II d may probably be understood as a mere simplification of the former. However, depending on the interpretation of the word *rdi.w* 'placed' they may in fact be even closer to the spell of the prescription⁶⁶. Closest to the vignettes in the Ptolemaic manuscripts is the unique representation on the plate Cairo 3171; still, it is rather illogical that the magical dish is represented on this object — which itself is the magical dish prescribed. The vignettes of types IIa-b with their depictions of Osiris and Re, or of two solar barks, seem to stress the theme of day and night which is also present in spells 133-134 of the Book of the Dead. However, they seem to have been influenced by the vignettes of spells 130 and 136, which may show the barks of day and night, or even three barks in a row as on the Leiden dish H 91⁶⁷. Neither of these two spells specifies the use of a magic dish, however.

Theory and practice in the enactment of magic

Close reading of the text of Book of the Dead spell 134 gives rise to a number of remarks which seem to be relevant for our study:

- *twt* obviously is a term referring both to two-dimensional 'images' and three-dimensional 'figures'⁶⁸. In the first occurrence in the instruction of spell 133 it is the former (an image of Re painted on a dish), in the second instance the latter (a figure of the deceased positioned in a bark model). In spell 134 it probably refers to a statuette as well, in view of the

⁶⁴ See Lepsius, *Todtenbuch*, pl. 55, col. 8, where the place of Seth is taken by Horsiese.

⁶⁵ *Supra*, n. 59.

⁶⁶ See below, the discussion of the word *rdi.w*.

⁶⁷ Naville, *Todtenbuch*, pls. 144 and 148.

⁶⁸ For this word, see also Eschweiler, *Bildzauber*, 111-113.

- instruction to anoint it with oil⁶⁹. However, even for the ancient Egyptian magician this was an ambivalent term, thereby causing part of the confusion in the vignettes. These sometimes show the deceased on the dish itself, or Re squatting next to the dish, neither of which is correct according to the prescriptions.
- *sti*⁷⁰ is a term derived from the common designation of Nubia⁷¹ and therefore probably referring to an imported commodity from that area. In the tomb of Rekhmire, white vases labelled with the word *sti* are indeed depicted among other Nubian produce; according to Sethe, this might indicate that the commodity itself was white in colour⁷². The material was used both as a pigment and for medicinal purposes. There is great disagreement about its colour⁷³. Although most authors tend to believe that this word refers to yellow ochre, others interpret it as a green, red, or white pigment⁷⁴. The consistent use of white paint on the magical dishes in question may indicate that *sti* is a white pigment after all. According to Maspero, the pigment on a dish now in Cairo consisted of a 'mixture of flour and plaster'⁷⁵, but this hardly counts as a scientific analysis and may also be exceptional. The prescription of a 'Nubian' material may have been motivated by the high repute of Nubian magic in ancient Egyptian culture⁷⁶, or by the general predilection for imported and thereby rare commodities in magical practices. Of course, the white or yellow colour would also be appropriate in the context of depictions of the sun god.
- *mḥ.t* is a term referring to an unspecified kind of vessel, sometimes made of metal but usually of pottery⁷⁷. Its use was certainly not restricted to magical practices⁷⁸; *mḥ.t* dishes also occur in medical prescriptions and offering lists. The determinatives show flat-bottomed bowls, round-based open dishes, or even closed necked jars, and are probably not very reliable to form oneself an impression of the real appearance of these vessels. *Mḥ.t*-dishes were used as containers for liquids such as oil and honey, but also for solid matter such as meat. Thus it is not very probable that the word was derived from the lexemes meaning 'flood' or 'to float/to swim/to drown' and it may rather be associated with the verb *mḥ* 'to fill'. Hence, a *mḥ.t* would simply be a 'container'. In the present context no mention is made of any contents, however.

⁶⁹ Here an interesting comparison can be made with Cairo JE 38756, a wooden mummiform figurine found in the Valley of the Kings and inscribed for a mayor and vizier Amenemope. This figurine (*twt*) is mounted on a shallow base which bears a painted design (white on black varnish) of a bark with the Horus falcon and the Ennead. Thus, this seems to be yet another interpretation of the ritual prescription of Book of the Dead spell 134, omitting the magical dish. The height of figure and base is 18 cm; it is exhibited in room P 22 (Exh.no. 5979). We thank G.T. Martin for checking the Journal d'Entrée regarding this object.

⁷⁰ WB III.488.3-6.

⁷¹ Ibid. 488.7-10.

⁷² *Urk.* IV, 1099.11.

⁷³ For the following, see J.R. Harris, *Lexicographical studies in ancient Egyptian minerals* (Berlin, 1961), 150-152. Cf. also I. Blom-Böer, *OMRO* 74 (1994), 80 with n. 180; Eschweiler, *Bildzauber*, 252 with n. 117S; Quirke, in: W.V. Davies (ed.), *Colour and painting in Ancient Egypt* (London, 2001), 188-190.

⁷⁴ For scholars in favour of white, see Harris, op.cit. 150, ns. 15-17.

⁷⁵ G. Maspero, *ASAE* 3 (1902), 285.

⁷⁶ Cf. G. Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1994), 45, 52, 58, 95, 161-162.

⁷⁷ WB II.126.11-15.

⁷⁸ For other cases in magic, see J.F. Borghouts, *The magical texts of papyrus Leiden I 348 (OMRO 51, Leiden, 1971) spells 23 and 35, with n. 304.*

- *rdi.t/rdi.w*: in the magical instructions of Book of the Dead spells 133 and 134, it is specified that something has to be placed in a bark. The word used in both cases is a form of the verb *rdi* 'to give, to place'. In spell 133 it is written *rdi.t*, a female form which can only designate the preceding word *mḥ.t*, i.e. the dish has to be placed in the bark. In spell 134, however, most texts seem to write the plural form *rdi.w*⁷⁹, which in this context can only refer to the falcon and the deities of the Ennead, not to the preceding word *mḥ.t*. In other words, not the dish had to be placed in a bark but the deities, i.e. the bark had to be part of the painted scene on the dish⁸⁰. This is corroborated by a comparison of the magical instructions of both spells. The manufacture of a bark model is explicitly mentioned in spell 133 but not in spell 134. Therefore, it is rather surprising that the latter suddenly mentions *wiḥ pn* 'this bark'. Unless we want to interpret this as a reference to spell 133 (but spells from the Book of the Dead never contain cross-references of this kind) this cannot designate a model bark but simply indicates the solar bark mentioned in the first part of the spell in question (134). However, this kind of confusion also baffled the ancient Egyptians themselves, thereby contributing to the confusion in the vignettes.

The purpose of these spells was none other than to allow the deceased to participate in the cosmic circuit of the sun god encompassing the earth, heaven, and netherworld⁸¹. In this respect the circular form of the dishes may have symbolized the cosmic circuit itself, or even the disk which was the chief manifestation of the sun god. However, the use of dishes as containers for certain magical substances was not unusual in Egyptian magic and medicine. The problem is that no such substances are specified in spells 133-134 of the Book of the Dead. The anointing with oil (*wrḥ m ḥknw*) of the figure of the deceased prescribed in spell 134 may have been a means to transfer the power of the image to the deceased (whose mummy may have been anointed with this oil afterwards); perhaps the *twt*-figure concerned was a painted one after all. In papyrus Leiden I 348, a magical spell is written on a new *mḥ.t*-dish, which is then anointed with honey; the honey is used to wash a man suffering from his belly⁸². Possibly, therefore, we have to think of a form of 'ritual consumption' of the magic concerned⁸³. On the other hand, we cannot exclude the possibility of a quite different kind of magic. Perhaps the dish had to be filled with water, so that the ship painted on its inner surface was made to 'sail'. This rather reminds of certain forms of magic described in the demotic and Graeco-Egyptian literature⁸⁴. If the reports about the specimens found at Mendes are true, these would have served as the lids for large vessels, and perhaps this is true for all shallow plate-shaped examples⁸⁵. Thus, not all *mḥ.t*-dishes would have been containers.

The magical instructions of spells 133-134 are equally vague about the exact time or place for the ritual. In view of the fact that both spells start with an incantation to the rising sun, one

⁷⁹ The word can also be omitted; cf. Eschweiler, *Bildzauber*, 131 n. 290.

⁸⁰ *Contra* Eschweiler, *Bildzauber*, 131, who asserts that also in this case the dish had to be placed in a bark. See also Raven, *BiOr* 53.5/6, 696.

⁸¹ See Ritner, *Mechanics*, 62-64.

⁸² pLeiden I 348, rt. 13.2-3 (spell 23); Borghouts, *Magical texts*, 26.

⁸³ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 105 with n. 509.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 219 n. 1020.

⁸⁵ *Supra*, n. 30.

may surmise that daybreak was the ideal moment for the performance of the magical act prescribed. According to Egyptian mythology, the red colour of the morning sky was caused by the slaughtering of the enemies of the sun god, another theme alluded to in the two spells. In this respect, the red colour of the Nile silt dishes would also be very appropriate, as shown by the parallel of the Ritual of Breaking the Red Pots⁸⁶. However, all this is never specified, and the text is also silent about what was to be done with the dishes after they had served their purpose. The specimen found in the tomb of Tjaennehebu at Saqqara⁸⁷ makes it clear that during the 26th Dynasty at least these objects could be deposited inside the burial-chamber of the deceased. A similar funerary context is perhaps indicated by the wooden figurine in Cairo⁸⁸. However, the objects now in Leiden and London were probably found inside the temple precinct at Abydos. Whether this means that at the time they were made (which is thought to be the Ptolemaic period) the magical acts were performed inside temples, and perhaps in favour of the local god rather than of deceased human beings, must remain an open question. The circumstance that their design is rather uniform in style and execution may point to a centrally-organised ritual activity, rather than a private burial rite. On the other hand, we should be aware of the fact that their deposition inside the sacred enclosure of the Osiris temple may be secondary only. This seems to be indicated by the occurrence of hieratic docketts on most of the dishes from Abydos.

The docketts

Beside the sketch drawings of deities, 21 of the 30 Leiden dishes also bear docketts written in hieratic, with occasionally a sign in demotic. Similar docketts occur on five of the eight dishes now in the British Museum, as well as on several of the sherds found by the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition at Abydos. Already a cursory first reading immediately shows that the brief texts of these docketts refer to ingredients of the famous scented paste *kyp̄hi*. The docketts are written in a variety of different hands. Several are most probably penned by the same scribes, like H 66 and H 69; H 67, H 74 and H 76; H 77 and H 89; H 84 and H 93. Due to a lack of comparable published material (i.e. texts written on pottery and not on papyrus), a precise dating of this type of brief docket texts is rather difficult. In general, however, most hieratic signs show the forms in use after the 26th dynasty and more specific in the early Ptolemaic period⁸⁹. Indicative in this respect are: the bubalis *iw* (E 9, Möller 143) in H 74, H 76 and H 84; the recumbent lion *r* (E 23, Möller 125) in H 77, H 78 and H 89; the tree determinative (M 1, Möller 266) in H 66, H 69, H 77, H 78, H 80, H 86 and H 89; and the plant determinative (M 2, Möller 268) in H 67, H 71, H 74, H 76, H 81, H 84 and H 87. All in all the evidence favours a dating in the period between 500 and 100 BC, and this would also account for the occurrence of a few signs in demotic in the docketts on H 75 and H 95.

The recipe and the ingredients of *kyp̄hi*, the Latin version of a Greek transcription $\kappa\upsilon\phi\iota$ ($\kappa\eta\phi\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ in P. Carlsberg 500, 106/8) of the ancient Egyptian *k3p.t*, 'fumigation', have been

⁸⁶ Cf., among others, J. van Dijk, *The New Kingdom necropolis of Memphis, historical and iconographical studies* (Groningen, 1993), 173-188.

⁸⁷ *Supra*, ns. 31-33.

⁸⁸ *Supra*, n. 69.

⁸⁹ For a thorough study on the palaeography of late hieratic, see U. Verhoeven, *Untersuchungen zur späthieratischen Buchschrift* (OLA 99, Leuven, 2001).

the subject of some major studies in recent years⁹⁰. The earliest recipe for *k3p.t* is found in the medical Papyrus Ebers⁹¹ from the early 18th dynasty, listing the following ingredients: *'ntiw*; *prt šnl*; *sntr*; *g3w*; *ht n ti-šps*; *šb.t*; *nbl.t n.t D3hy*; *ynktn*; *dmtn*; *gnn n nywbn*. This 'fumigation' was used to cense the home and clothes, as well as to disguise bad breath. Later this mixture was used in great quantity in temples, and probably also manufactured there. Several ingredients are recorded among deliveries to the temples in the lists of Papyrus Harris I from the 20th dynasty⁹². Some are also mentioned together in the long lists of commodities on the ostraca Cairo CG 25677 (vs. 36-38) and 25678 (rt. 12-16)⁹³. The use of *kyphi* in the daily temple ritual is also widely referred to by several classical authors⁹⁴. According to Plutarch⁹⁵, in temples of the sun-god Re incense was offered to the sun three times a day: frankincense in the morning, myrrh at noon, and *kyphi* at sunset. That *kyphi* was manufactured in or beside the temples is indicated by three recipes for the preparation of this scent recorded in hieroglyphs on the walls of the so-called laboratories (apothecaries may be a more appropriate term) in the temples of Edfu and Philae: a traditional recipe in both temples and a revised version in the temple of Edfu⁹⁶. The traditional recipe lists eleven basic aromatic substances, the first nine of which are given an alternate name in the revised recipe; the first seven are measured in *deben*, the last four in *hin*.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| (1) <i>gnn/knn</i> | - <i>sb.t ndm</i> |
| (2) <i>šw.t Nmti</i> | - <i>qm3 Kš</i> |
| (3) <i>šb</i> | - <i>fd</i> |
| (4) <i>dd3 n qdt</i> | - <i>ht n qdt</i> |
| (5) <i>ti-šps</i> | - <i>ht ndm</i> |
| (6) <i>g3y</i> | - <i>nkpt</i> |
| (7) <i>db'</i> | - <i>d3rm</i> |
| (8) <i>prš</i> | - <i>prt w'n</i> |
| (9) <i>mrh.t n'r</i> | - <i>prt šnl</i> |
| (10) <i>pqr</i> | |
| (11) <i>šbn, g3yw n wh3.t</i> | |

Of these eleven ingredients ten are also represented in the docket texts on the Leiden dishes, either by their traditional or their alternate names. Several occur more than once, which is explained by the fact that the dishes belonged to more than one 'series', as shown by the different hands of the scribes of the dockets referred to above. One ingredient is missing

⁹⁰ The most important are: A. Lüchtrath, 'Das Kyphirezept', in: D. Kurth (ed.), *Bericht über drei Surveys. Materialien und Studien* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 97-145; and L. Manniche, *Sacred luxuries. fragrance, aromatherapy, and cosmetics in Ancient Egypt* (Ithaca and London, 1999), chapters 1 and 3.

⁹¹ P. Ebers, 98,12-14b (Eb 852); cf. Von Deines/Gradow, *Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter* (Berlin, 1958), IV 1 (translation), 261 and 290, and V(text), 499.

⁹² P. Harris I, 15b,16-16a,5; 53a,3-9; 64c,4-9; cf. P. Grandet, *Le Papyrus Harris I* (BdE 109, Cairo, 1994), I, 243-244, 295, 316; II, 83 (note 308), 181 (note 739) and 208 (note 861).

⁹³ Cf. J. Černý, *Ostraca hiératiques* (Cairo, 1935), I.1, 57-58, 78*-79*; I.2, plates LXXV and LXXVI.

⁹⁴ Cf. Manniche, op.cit., 47-53.

⁹⁵ *De Iside et Osiride*, chapters 52 and 79-80. For an interesting specific use of *kyphi* in a demotic tale dating originally to the 4th century BC, see K. Ryholt, *The Story of Petese son of Petetum* (The Carlsberg Papyri 4, Copenhagen, 1999), 41-42 and 80 (P. Tebt. A+B, 5/27).

⁹⁶ E. Chassinat, *Le Temple d'Edfou* (MMAF XI/II², Cairo, 1990), 203-204 (traditional recipe) and 211-212 (revised version). For Philae, cf. Porter/Moss, *Topographical bibliography VI*, 221 (136); this text will be published by E. Winter in Philae III.



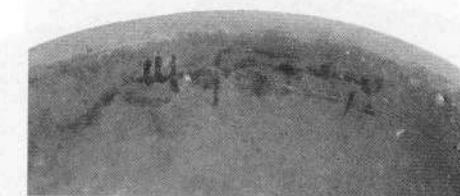
H 66



H 67



H 68



H 69

Fig. 20. Dockets on H 66, H 67, H 68 and H 69.

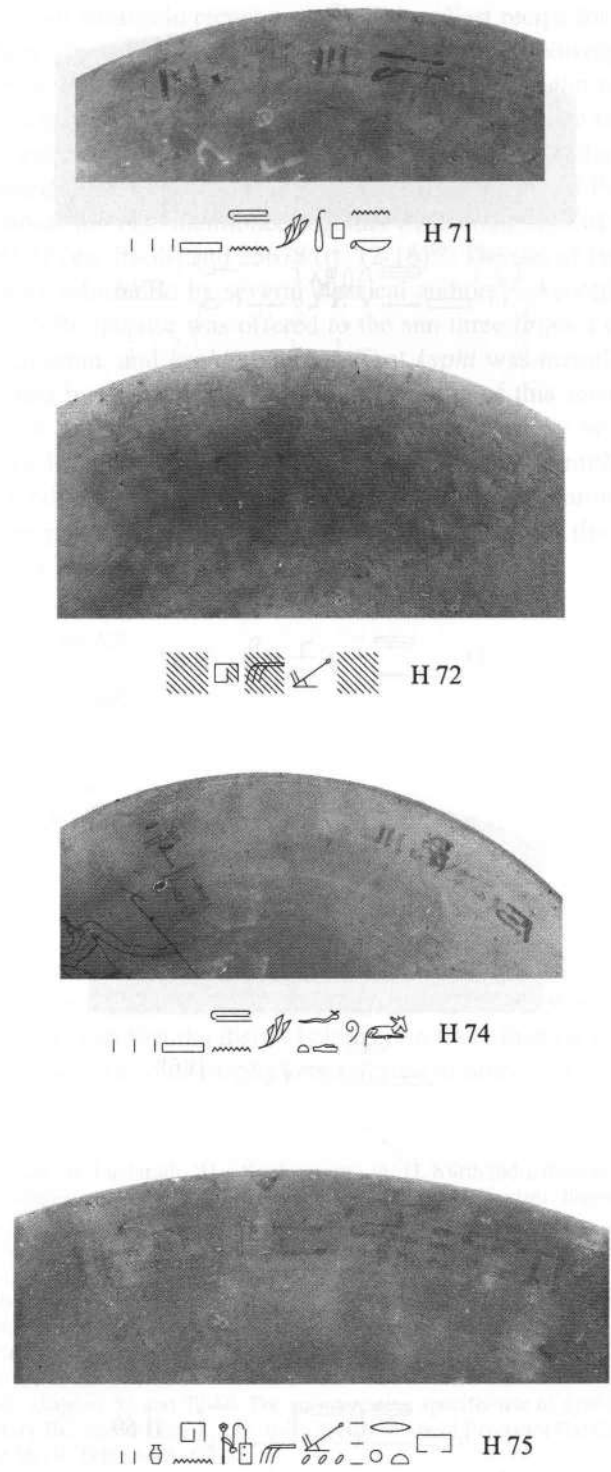


Fig. 21. Dockets on H 71, H 72, H 74 and H 75.

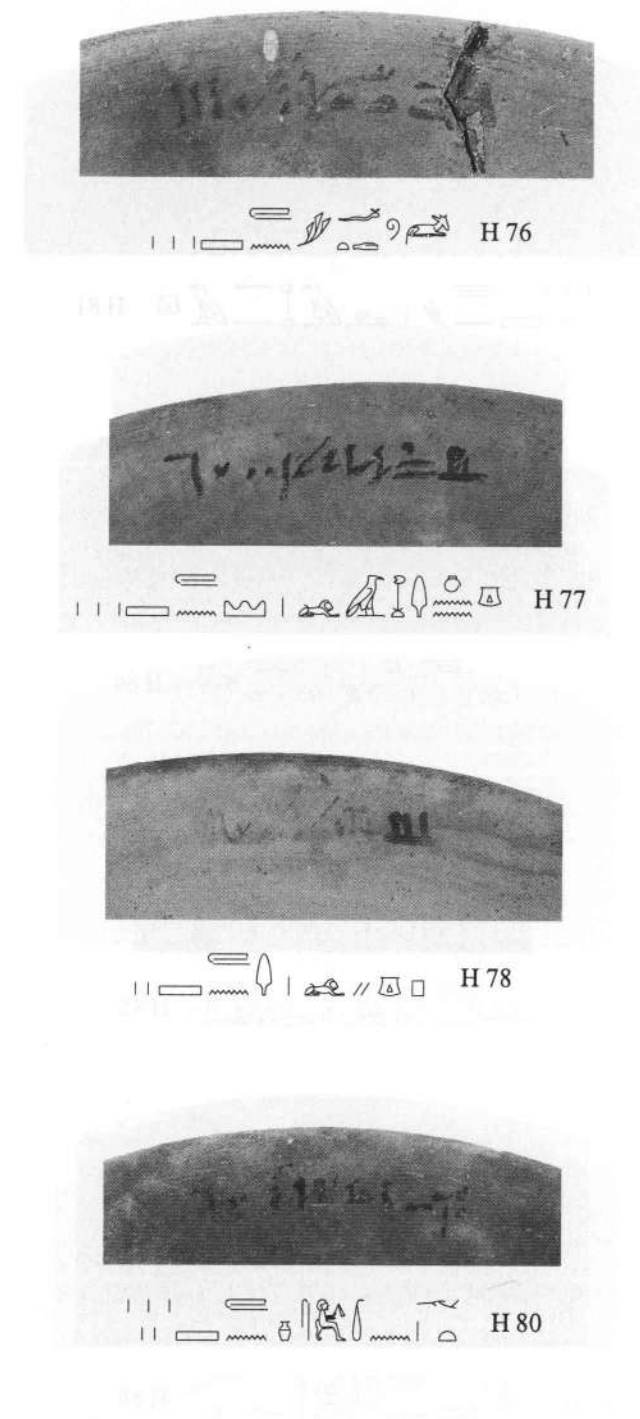


Fig. 22. Dockets on H 76, H 77, H 78 and H 80.

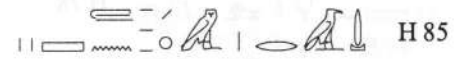


Fig. 23. Dockets on H 81, H 84, H 85 and H 86.

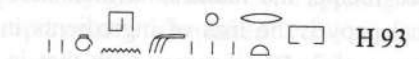


Fig. 24. Dockets on H 87, H 89, H 93 and H 95.

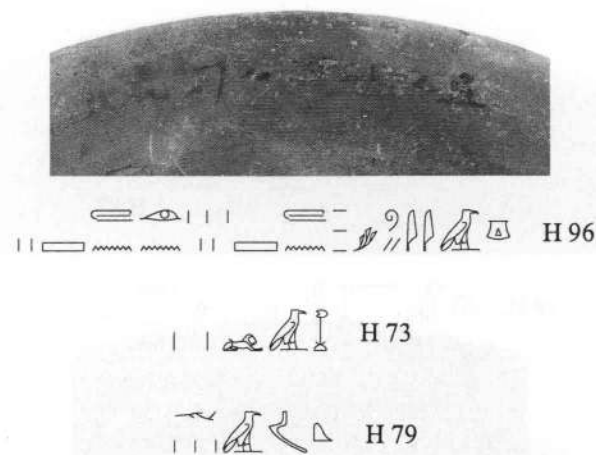


Fig. 25. Dockets on H 96, H 73 and H 79.

— *prš/prt w'n* —, but this is probably fortuitous. On the other hand the presence of *hsbd*, 'blue pigment', is surprising, although explainable.

The products mentioned in the docket are (in alphabetical order):

iwft

in the docket on H 74, H 76 and H 84, written in hieratic. In all three cases the amount noted is 3 *deben*. *iwft* is listed as the third ingredient in the revised Edfu recipe, where the name is written *fd*, as an alternate name for the plant product *šb*. According to both Manniche⁹⁷ and Lühtrath⁹⁸ this product is mastic, the resin of the *Pistacia lentiscus* L. Differing from the spelling *fd* in the revised Edfu recipe, the name is written here in the traditional spelling known from recipes in medical papyri, the lists of ingredients in P. Harris I, O. Cairo CG 25678 (rt. 14), etc.⁹⁹. The amount of 3 *deben* agrees with that in the revised version of the Edfu recipe.

prt šni

in the docket on H 68, (H 72??), H 75¹⁰⁰ and H 93, written in hieratic. The amount noted in the docket on H 68 is 2 *deben*, in the docket on H 75 2 *hin* (after the indication that the product had to be ground fine *sn*¹⁰⁰), and in the docket on H 93 likewise 2 *hin*. The few remaining traces of the docket on H 72 also seem to indicate an amount measured in *hin*.

⁹⁷ Op.cit., 29.

⁹⁸ Op.cit., 117-119.

⁹⁹ Cf. Von Deines/Grapow, *Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter*, VI (Berlin, 1959), 210-211; Grandet, op.cit., II, 84-845 (note 311). A possible link of this word to a Semitic root, as proposed by J.E. Hoch, *Semitic words in Egyptian texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton, 1994), 22 (no. 8), is refuted by D. Meeks in his review in *BiOr* 54 (1997), 34.

¹⁰⁰ Not noticed by Leemans, *Monuments égyptiens*.

prt šni

is listed as the ninth ingredient in the revised Edfu recipe, as an alternate name for *mrḥ.t n'r*. Manniche¹⁰¹ thinks *prt šni* to be pine kernels, but according to Lühtrath¹⁰² this product is most probably a jelly or pulp of juniper-berries of *Juniperus phoenicea* L. It is mentioned already in the P. Ebers *kyphi* and other recipes and also in O. Cairo CG 25678 (rt. 16)¹⁰³. The amount of 2 *deben* or 2 *hin* agrees with that noted in the Edfu and Philae traditional recipes.

pqr

in the docket on H 78¹⁰⁴, written in hieratic. The amount noted is 2 *deben*. It is listed as the tenth ingredient, *pqr*, in the traditional Edfu recipe. According to Lühtrath¹⁰⁵ this product is most probably a gum-resin, known to classical authors as *galbanum* (either *Chaerophyllum* or *Ferula gummosa*)¹⁰⁶. The spelling *pqr* of this word is already known from a docket on a vase from the tomb of Tutankhamun¹⁰⁷. The present spelling *pqr* seems to be unknown from other sources. The amount of 2 *deben* agrees with that in the revised Edfu recipe.

nnibr

in the docket on H 89, written in hieratic. The amount noted is 3 *deben*. This ingredient is not listed as such in the Edfu and Philae recipes, but it is clearly a variant writing for a product called *nywbn* in the P. Ebers recipe and in P. Harris I as the wood from which *gnn/knn*, 'styrax', was produced¹⁰⁸. The amount of 3 *deben* agrees with that noted in the revised Edfu recipe for what is there called *sb.t ndm* as an alternate name for *gnn/knn*.

nkpt

in the docket on H 71 and H 87 (*nkpd*), written in hieratic. In both cases the amount noted is 3 *deben*. *nkpt* is listed in the revised Edfu recipe as an alternate name for the sixth ingredient 'g3y. Whereas Manniche¹⁰⁹ still advocates the identification of *nkpt* with 'mint', according to Lühtrath¹¹⁰ this product is almost certainly tragacanth, the gum-resin of *Astragalus gummifer* L. (although 'g3y is most probably gum arabic). The spelling of the name is almost the same as in the Edfu recipe and represents a 'simplified' version of the New Kingdom group writing known from P. Harris I and other sources¹¹¹. The amount of 3 *deben* agrees with that in

¹⁰¹ Op.cit., 23.

¹⁰² Op.cit., 127-130.

¹⁰³ Cf. Von Deines/Grapow, op.cit., IV 1, 290, V, 499 and VI, 200-202.

¹⁰⁴ Not noticed by Leemans, op.cit.

¹⁰⁵ Op.cit., 130-132.

¹⁰⁶ For galbanum, see also Manniche, op.cit., 28-29.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. J. Černý, *Hieratic inscriptions from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun* (Oxford, 1965), 5, nr. 27.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Lühtrath, op.cit., 112-115; Von Deines/Grapow, op.cit., IV 1, 290 and V, 499; Grandet, op.cit., II, 83 (note 306). *nnlbn* also occurs (written in group writing *in-ḫw-šbw*), together with *prt šni*, *qnnl* and *ti-šps*, in a recipe in P. Chester Beatty VI, rt. 5, 11-12, cf. A.H. Gardiner, *Hieratic papyri in the British Museum, third series* (The Chester Beatty Gift), II (London, 1935), pl. 30.

¹⁰⁹ Op.cit., 22.

¹¹⁰ Op.cit., 122-123.

¹¹¹ Cf. Grandet, op.cit., II, 84 (note 310). A possible link of this word to a Semitic root, as proposed by Hoch, *Semitic words in Egyptian texts*, 194 (no. 260), is refuted by D. Meeks in his review in *BiOr* 54 (1997), 44-45.

the revised Edfu recipe. A docket reading *nkpt* is also found on one of the dishes/dish-fragments discovered by the Pennsylvania-Yale expedition at Abydos, nr. D 15 (wrongly transcribed as *'kp nfr*)¹¹². Here the amount noted is 2 *deben*.

hsbd

in the docket on H 95, written in hieratic and demotic. The word *hsbd* is followed by the demotic writing¹¹³ for Gardiner Sign-list Y 3, the usual indication in recipes (also in the Edfu *kyphi* recipes) for *sn'*, 'made smooth' or 'ground fine'. The amount is then noted as '2 *hin*¹¹⁴ which makes/equals (?)¹¹⁵ 10 *deben*'. This calculation seems roughly in accordance with the data inferred from the Edfu and Philae *kyphi* recipes: 2 *hin* is c. 950 gram, and 10 *deben* is c. 910 gram. *hsbd* is also found in a docket on a dish in the BM (EA 5142), and on two dockets found by the Pennsylvania-Yale expedition at Abydos, nos. D 13 and D 14¹¹⁶. The word *hsbd* cannot refer to 'lapis lazuli' here, a commodity which was usually denoted as *hsbd m3'*. Instead, it seems to indicate a blue pigment, although this is never mentioned among the ingredients in the known *kyphi* recipes. This pigment was not produced from real lapis lazuli, but from a synthetic cuprorivaite¹¹⁷. It was obviously not added as an aromatic substance, but rather to give its colour to the finished mixture which was to be offered, as noted above, to the sun god Amun-Re or Re-Horakhte, whose skin colour, being the god of the sky and the air, is often depicted as blue¹¹⁸.

ht n qdt

in the docket on H 69, written in hieratic. The amount noted is 3 *deben*. This is listed as the fourth ingredient in the revised Edfu recipe, as an alternate name for *dd3 n qdt*. According to Lüchtrath¹¹⁹ all authors agree that this ingredient is a pine resin, most probably from the Aleppo pine, *Pinus halepensis* MILL. *ht n qdt* is not yet listed in the P. Ebers recipe, but is known from among imports together with *nnib* wood from Syria¹²⁰. The amount of 3 *deben* agrees with that noted in the revised Edfu recipe.

¹¹² Cf. W. Kelly Simpson, *Inscribed material from the Pennsylvania-Yale excavations at Abydos* (New Haven and Philadelphia, 1995), 29-30, fig. 50.

¹¹³ See W. Erichsen, *Auswahl frühdemotischer Texte, 3. Heft, Schriftliste* (Copenhagen, 1950), 107b.

¹¹⁴ Also in demotic. For the form of this group, see W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar* (Copenhagen, 1954), 277.

¹¹⁵ The form of the sign is somewhat unorthodox, but it most probably stands for *ir n*.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Simpson, op.cit., 29-30, figs. 48 and 49. On D 13 the hieratic sign after the name of the product clearly reads *sn'*, 'ground fine'.

¹¹⁷ Cf. I. Blom-Boër, *OMRO* 74 (1994), 62; B. Aston, J. Harrell/I. Shaw, in: P. T. Nicholson/I. Shaw (eds.), *Ancient Egyptian materials and technology* (Cambridge, 2000), 40: '... there is no evidence that powdered lapis lazuli was used as a pigment.'; and likewise L. Lee/S. Quirke, *ibid.*, 111: '... no evidence that either powdered lapis lazuli or powdered turquoise were used as pigments.'

¹¹⁸ Cf. K. Sethe, *Amun und die acht Urgötter von Hermopolis* (Berlin, 1929), §215. For Amun depicted with a blue skin, see A.M. Calverley et al., *The temple of King Sethos I at Abydos*, II (London and Chicago, 1935), pls. 6 and 7; and a scene in the temple of Amada, cf. R. H. Wilkinson, *The complete temples of Ancient Egypt* (London, 2000), 221. For the symbolic aspects of the blue pigment (lapis lazuli and turquoise), see also S. Aufrère, *L'univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne*, 2 (Cairo, 1991), 463-517 (chapters 16 and 17).

¹¹⁹ Op.cit., 120; cf. also Manniche, op.cit., 29.

¹²⁰ Cf. W. Helck, *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, V, 298 (906).

ht n ti-šps

in the dockets on H 66, H 80 and H 86, written in hieratic. The name of this product is determined by the usual tree-sign in the dockets on H 66 and H 86, but by the vase-sign (Sign-list W 23) on H 80, possibly as a result of a confusion with *ti-šps*-oil. In all three cases the amount noted is 5 *deben*. *ht n ti-šps* is listed as the fifth ingredient in the Edfu and Philae traditional recipes as *ti-šps*. According to Manniche¹²¹ and Lüchtrath¹²² this is cinnamon, the wood of the *Cinnamomum camphora*. It is known already from the P. Ebers recipe, and also occurs in P. Harris I, O. Cairo CG 25677 (vs. 36), CG 25678 (rt. 12) and many other sources¹²³. The amount of 5 *deben* agrees with that in the Edfu and Philae traditional recipes.

šw.t Nmti

in the docket on H 67, written in hieratic. The amount noted is 2 *deben*. It is listed, in a similar spelling, as the second ingredient in the Edfu and Philae traditional recipes. Whereas Manniche¹²⁴ still favours the identification of *šw.t Nmti* with camel grass, according to Lüchtrath¹²⁵ this aromatic plant product is calamus, the dried root/rhizome of *Acorus calamus* L. In the medical P. Ebers it is called *nbl.t n.t D3hy*, and in P. Harris I *šr.t H3rw*¹²⁶. The amount of 5 *deben* agrees with that in the traditional Edfu and Philae recipes. A docket reading *šw.t Nmti* is also found on the dish BM EA 5138, where the amount noted is 5 'hand-fulls, refined making 2 *deben*' (this accords well with the note in the traditional recipes that from 5 *deben* after refining only 2/5 = 2 *deben* remains for use).

qm3

probably mentioned in the docket on H 79, written in hieratic (no longer visible, but copied by Leemans, op.cit. pl. 51). This ingredient is listed in the revised Edfu recipe as an alternate name for *šw.t Nmti*, calamus.

g3yw

in the docket on H 96, written in hieratic and demotic. The amount noted is 5 *hin* (?) which makes/equals 2 *deben*. The sign before the number '5' most probably represents the demotic writing for *hnw*, *hin*, while the sign following this number appears to be the same as that in the docket on H 95 (see above under *hsbd*), meaning *ir n*, 'which makes/equals'. *g3yw* is listed as the eleventh ingredient in the revised Edfu recipe (*g3yw n wh3.t*, *g3yw* of the oasis), as an alternate name for *šb/šbn*. According to both Lüchtrath¹²⁷ and Manniche¹²⁸ *g3yw* refers to the roots of cyperus grass (sedge), *Cyperus rotundus* L., *Cyperus longus* L. or *Cyperus articulatus* L. This plant product occurs already as *giw* in the medical Papyrus Ebers¹²⁹. The amount differs from that prescribed in the temple recipes, where 1 *hin* equalling 1 *deben*, or 1 *hin* equalling 1/2 *deben* are indicated.

¹²¹ Op.cit., 17.

¹²² Op.cit., 121-122.

¹²³ Cf. Von Deines/Grapow, op.cit., IV 1, 290 and V, 499; Grandet, op.cit., II, 83-84 (note 308).

¹²⁴ Op.cit., 15-16.

¹²⁵ Op.cit., 115-117, referring for the name of this plant also to E. Graefe, *GM* 18 (1975), 15ff.

¹²⁶ Cf. Von Deines/Grapow, op.cit., IV 1, 290; Grandet, op.cit., II 139 (note 556).

¹²⁷ Op.cit., 132-134.

¹²⁸ Op.cit., 17-18.

¹²⁹ Cf. Von Deines/Grapow, op.cit., IV 1, 290 and V, 499.

gnn Ḥ3rw

in the docket on H 77 and H 81, written in hieratic. The amount noted in both cases is 5 *deben*. *gnn Ḥ3rw* is listed as the first ingredient in the traditional Edfu and Philae recipes as *gnn* or *knn*. Although Manniche¹³⁰ still favours the old identification of *gnn* as 'sweet flag', according to Lüchtrath¹³¹ this product is certainly styrax or storax, either *Styrax officinalis* L. or *Liquidamber orientalis* MILL. It occurs already in the P. Ebers recipe¹³², in P. Harris I¹³³, in O. Cairo CG 25677 (vs. 37) and CG 25678 (rt. 12). Probably this product was also meant in the docket on H 73. The dish is now lost (see description above), but Leemans published a drawing of the hieratic text which clearly reads *Ḥ3rw*.

The second element of the name *gnn Ḥ3rw* on our docket is in accordance with the occurrence of this product in the tomb of Rekhmire, where a bundle of sticks called *knn* is depicted among tribute from Syria¹³⁴. The amount of 5 *deben* agrees with that noted in the Edfu and Philae traditional recipes. In the revised Edfu recipe the ingredient is named *sb.t*, a term which does not occur in the docket on the Leiden dishes, but is found in two dockets on dishes in the British Museum, EA 5139 and EA 5140, both in group-writing *s3-b3*.

ḏ3rm

in the docket on H 85, written in hieratic. The amount noted is 2 *deben*. This ingredient is listed in the revised version of the Edfu recipe as an alternate name for *ḏb.t*. Whereas Manniche¹³⁵ favours an identification of *ḏ3rm* as a plant ingredient known as 'aspalathos' from various classical sources, according to Lüchtrath¹³⁶ this product is most probably a resin known as Burgundy-pitch. The amount of 2 *deben* does not agree with that noted in the revised version of the Edfu recipe, where only 1 *deben* is used. Dockets reading *ḏ3rm* are also found, again written in hieratic, on the dish BM EA 5141 and the dish/dish-fragment found by the Pennsylvania-Yale expedition at Abydos, no. D 16¹³⁷; in both cases the amount listed is also 2 *deben*.

Conclusions

The thirty dishes now in Leiden, all painted with vignettes in white and most of them also provided with black ink dockets, prove to be part of a find complex originally from the precinct of the Osiris temple at Abydos. They must have been discovered there around 1825 by the agents working for Giovanni d'Anastasi or his representative in Upper Egypt, Piccinini¹³⁸. At least forty dishes ended up in Anastasi's private collections, from which they were sold to the Leiden Museum (32 specimens) and the British Museum (8 specimens). Two

¹³⁰ Op.cit. 23-24.

¹³¹ Op.cit., 112-115. Cf. also R. Germer, *Flora des pharaonischen Ägypten* (Mainz am Rhein, 1985), 147.

¹³² Cf. Von Deines/Gradow, op.cit., VI, 302.

¹³³ Cf. Grandet, op.cit., II, 83 (note 305) and 181 (note 739).

¹³⁴ Cf. N. de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Rekh-mi-Re' at Thebes* (PMMA 11, New York, 1943), pls. 21 and 48.

¹³⁵ Op.cit., 14-15.

¹³⁶ Op.cit., 124-126.

¹³⁷ Cf. Simpson, op.cit., 29-30, fig. 51.

¹³⁸ Cf. W.R. Dawson/E.P. Uphill/M.L. Bierbrier, *Who was who in Egyptology* (London, 1995), 333-334.

of the Leiden dishes were later exchanged with the Leipzig Museum, where they were lost during the Second World War. In 1967, the Pennsylvania-Yale expedition found some fifty sherds of virtually identical bowls at Abydos, thereby indicating the original provenance of the objects in Leiden and London.

On the basis of the ceramological evidence, the style of the vignettes, and the ductus of the hieratic script (which includes some demotic signs), the dishes were probably made and used during the Ptolemaic period or just before that, at the end of the Late Period. However, we should distinguish two different phases of use. The dockets were executed in black ink, as opposed to the white ink generally employed for the execution of the vignettes. Moreover, they were clearly added at random, without taking into account the iconography, position, or orientation of the vignettes. All this suggests that these dockets are secondary and betrays a reuse of the dishes in question. This reuse concerned their employment for the preparation of *kyphi*, a well-known mixture of fragrant substances used in fumigation. According to texts from Edfu and Philae, this commodity was prepared in the laboratories of the great Ptolemaic temples. The dishes in question are the only *realia* attesting that this ritual was actually performed at the time. A comparison with the published lists of ingredients on the temple walls is very interesting in this respect. Of the eleven ingredients mentioned in the recipes, ten occur in the dockets on the dishes. On the other hand, the dockets contain an ingredient not listed in the recipes, *viz.* blue pigment.

It rather looks as if the priests or skilled workmen involved in the preparation of the *kyphi* mixture simply took a number of convenient pottery dishes which happened to be at hand near the temple workshop. These were apparently used to set out the various ingredients of the mixture in their prescribed weight ratio. After they had served their purpose, the dishes appear to have been deposited outside the temple, but still within the grounds of the sanctuary. Since the names of the ingredients mentioned in the dockets occur from one to four times, clearly several sets ended up mixed together. The fact that so many of the vessels have survived intact seems to indicate a rather careful deposition, perhaps in a storage space of some kind. The broken pieces picked up by the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition need not have broken in antiquity, and perhaps they sustained their damage only in the course of the 19th-century excavations of the area.

Previous to their reuse in the temple laboratories, the dishes seem to have served a quite different purpose. This is indicated by the iconography of their vignettes, which are based on the illustrations accompanying spells 133 and 134 from the Book of the Dead. This would imply that originally these were made as magical dishes to be used in acts of productive — or perhaps rather defensive — magic¹³⁹. The spells from the Book of the Dead aimed at identifying the deceased with the sun god himself, in order to guarantee free access to all compartments of the created world and victory over his enemies. The use of a circular dish may have been suggested by its formal similarity to the sun disk or by its symbolic equation with the eternal circuit of the cosmos. A predilection for Nile silt pottery may have been motivated by its use in the Ritual of Breaking the Red Pots and the symbolic notions connected with the colour red. The exact way how these vessels had to be manipulated in the course of the ritual

¹³⁹ Cf. J.F. Borghouts, in: *LÄ III* (1980), 1137-1151 *s.v.* *Magie*, esp. 1142-1145.

is not quite clear. Perhaps they had to be filled with liquids or to be anointed; however, we can only conclude from the preserved evidence that even the ancient Egyptians themselves had some trouble in interpreting the ritual prescriptions.

The dishes now in Leiden and London are not the only ones which can be associated with this ritual. Although the Book of the Dead spells as such (including the ritual prescriptions which interest us here) came in use at the beginning of the New Kingdom, actual dishes do not seem to predate the Late Period. The earliest dated and provenanced specimen is an example from the tomb of Tjaennehebu at Saqqara, a contemporary of Pharaoh Amasis. Its use in a private funerary context seems to be in accordance with the prescriptions from the Book of the Dead, although these never specify where the ritual in question was to be performed and where the dishes had to be deposited afterwards. Several other specimens — plates or lids rather than dishes — are alleged to have come from Mendes and other Lower Egyptian sites; none of these can be properly dated.

As stated before, the specimens from Abydos seem to have been manufactured somewhere during the 4th century B.C. or the Ptolemaic period. Here a connection with private tombs seems to be out of the question. Their deposition inside the temple precinct is concededly secondary, but is hard to imagine that the priests would have collected such dishes from the cemeteries for reuse inside the temple. Instead, the dishes in question had probably first served for other cultic purposes. This would imply that the private funerary rites of the New Kingdom had been adapted to the requirements of the temple, and that the magic acts now aimed at strengthening the position of the local gods. Perhaps this explains that apart from the sun god the vignettes also show a range of other divinities who may have shared the benefits of the ritual. An alternative explanation for the presence of such vessels in the temple grounds could be that the dishes needed for private funerary rituals were manufactured by the temple workshops. The workmen involved in the preparation of *kyphi* would then have helped themselves to the unsold stock. The Abydos finds thereby offer a fascinating glimpse behind the scenes of a large Ptolemaic temple. It is to be hoped that additional finds in the future may help us to interpret the magic or cultic reality of the painted dishes.

FÜNF URKUNDEN AUS DEM ARCHIV VON PERUWA, SOHN VON ŠUPPIBRA

IRFAN ALBAYRAK (ANKARA)*

Die Beziehungen zwischen Einheimischen und den in Kaniš wohnenden Assyern sind bereits wiederholt thematisiert worden. Für das Studium der frühesten schriftlich belegten Gesellschaft in Anatolien ist jedoch die Erforschung von Schriftzeugnissen, die von Anatoliern verfasst und/oder in ihren Häusern aufbewahrt wurden, von grosser Bedeutung. Eine Voraussetzung für ein vielversprechendes Studium der einheimischen Wirtschaft und Verwaltung in Kaniš bildet die Publikation einheimischer Archive. Der vorliegende Artikel, worin fünf aus einem solchen Archiv stammende Texte vorgestellt und diskutiert werden sollen, ist als Beitrag dazu gedacht.

Einführung

Bis heute sind über 23000 Texte aus der sogenannten Altassyrischen Zeit gefunden worden.¹ Diese Texte, die größtenteils in Kültepe ausgegraben wurden, entstanden in einem Zeitraum von ca. 100 bis 150 Jahren. Obwohl ein bedeutender Teil im Rahmen geschäftlicher Aktivitäten der assyrischen Händler und ihren Familien verfasst wurde, befinden sich unter den gefundenen Dokumenten auch solche, die Auskunft über das Geschäfts- und Privatleben der einheimischen Bevölkerung Anatoliens geben. Da zu dieser Zeit die Bevölkerung Anatoliens hauptsächlich im Bereich von Landwirtschaft und Tierzucht tätig war, geht es in den meisten einheimischen Texten entsprechend um Getreide- oder Silberdarlehen. Daneben gibt es Kaufurkunden von Sklaven, Feldern, Häusern, sowie familienrechtliche Urkunden zu Erbteilung oder Eheschliessung. Aus Schicht II sind zum Beispiel Textgruppen um Enišru (Veenhof 1978) und Aši'et (Donbaz 1988) untersucht worden. Der Palast von Kaniš als Institution zur Zeit der Siedlung der Schicht II ist aus assyrischen Texten, häufig im Kontext von Besteuerung eingeführter Waren, gut bekannt. Es fehlen aber Informationen über das Verhältnis von König und Königin zur lokalen Bevölkerung. Eine wichtige Ausnahme bilden einige Schuldurkunden, die die Möglichkeit erwähnen, dass der König einen Schuldenerlass verfügte (Balkan 1974).

Die in den Texten genannten einheimischen Personennamen zeigen, dass die Bevölkerung aus hattischen, hurrischen, hethitischen und luwischen Elementen bestand; auch die in Kaniš verehrten Götter entstammen unterschiedlichen Kulturkreisen.² In den bisher bekannten

* Ankara Üniversitesi, Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi, Eskiçağ Dilleri ve Kültürleri Bölümü, Sumeroloji Anabilim Dalı. E-mail: albayrak@humanity.ankara.edu.tr oder ialbayrak2006@yahoo.de.

¹ Michel 2003, I-VII. Zur Chronologie der Altassyrischen Zeit siehe Veenhof 2003 und Kryszat 2004.

² Zu den nichtakkadischen Namen in altassyrischen und hethitischen Dokumenten und zu ihrer Analyse siehe Laroche 1966, 247f.