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# Ceramic Production in the Theban Area from the Late Period: New Discoveries in Karnak

Catherine Defernez, Stéphanie Boulet

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# Thebes in the First Millennium BC



# Thebes in the First Millennium BC

Edited by

Elena Pischikova, Julia Budka  
and Kenneth Griffin

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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Edited by Elena Pischikova, Julia Budka and Kenneth Griffin

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CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

CERAMIC PRODUCTION IN THE THEBAN AREA  
FROM THE LATE PERIOD:  
NEW DISCOVERIES IN KARNAK

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*In memory of Helen Jacquet-Gordon*

**Abstract:** The typological analysis of ceramic productions from the Theban Area during the Late Period has been neglected for a long time due to an evident homogeneity in the ceramic industry at this time. Recent discoveries, made in the chapel dedicated to Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau* and near the Ptah Temple, both located in the northern part of the Amun-Re complex at Karnak, revealed new ceramic contexts dating back to the Late Period. In this paper, we will present some of these new ceramics sets and their impact on the understanding on the evolution of local ceramic industry between the Third Intermediate Period and the sixth century BC.

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\* We would like to express our warmest and grateful thanks to the Ministry of State for Antiquities (MSA), especially Ibrahim Soliman, Director of the site of Karnak, for his support and resources that he kindly offered during many years of studying the ceramic material. All the work undertaken at Karnak has benefitted from the constant help of the Centre Franco-Égyptien d'Études des Temples de Karnak (CFEETK), co-directed by Mansour Boraik (General Director of Luxor and Upper Egypt) and C. Thiers (Director of the USR 3172-CNRS). It is also a pleasure to thank all the inspectors of the MSA and all the workers who helped us during our study. We would like to extend our thanks to the staff of the mission of the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau*, particularly the field-director, L. Coulon (University of Lyon & CNRS, UMR 8189 – HiSoMA), for his kind support since the beginning of our work. Excavations that are conducted at this site, since 2000, are under the authority of the Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire (IFAO). Furthermore, we sincerely thank B. Böhm, P. Calassou, J. Laroye, and A. Peyroux for their photographs and drawings. It must be noted that all inked drawings were made by S. Boulet.

We would like to dedicate our paper to the late Helen Jacquet-Gordon, who died recently. The work she carried out during many years has been fundamental. She pioneered many initiatives in the field of Egyptian ceramic industry, and in particular, on the first millennium pottery from the Theban area. Her fairly extensive analysis of the pottery based on the material uncovered at Karnak-North, particularly from the excavated area of the Treasury of Thutmose I,<sup>1</sup> serves as a reference and will remain an essential tool to archaeologists for decades to come. Numerous examples dating back to the “Late Period” are provided in her book. For this reason, our modest contribution focusing on the Late Period pottery at Karnak is dedicated to her memory, to her pioneering study in the field of the ancient ceramic industry. We hope to continue, to complete, and to improve the work of this great specialist of Karnak and of the Theban region, in light of new material.

## Introduction

As an introduction to the present paper, it is necessary to briefly recall the current state of the study of Late Period pottery. Compared to other periods of Egyptian history, ceramic material from the first millennium is not well-known. As some specialists (and various archaeologists) have recently pointed out, there is no doubt that “Late Period pottery and ceramics of the Ptolemaic era have received some attention, but for funerary contexts, especially at Thebes, the current state of both research and publication still falls far short”.<sup>2</sup> As already suggested by Aston, it is partially due to “the lack of well dated material”.<sup>3</sup> Some studies have focused particularly on the material from the West Bank of Thebes, often based on documentation coming from unstratified levels. Little ceramic material has been uncovered in closed contexts. Instead, the majority comes from severely disturbed and chronologically mixed levels, such as burial contexts. Therefore, it must be reiterated that extensive studies on Late Period pottery are severely lacking.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacquet-Gordon 2012.

<sup>2</sup> See Budka 2010b, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Aston 1996b, 15; Aston 2003, 138. As suggested by Aston (2003, 138): “It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the Late Period, particularly the years c. 575–300 BC, is the least well-known phase of the history of the Theban West Bank. In all general works on the subject it is, at best, hastily skipped over, or, at worst, totally ignored”.

At present, research relating to Late Period pottery is ongoing in Upper Egypt but is still not as developed as the northern part of the country.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, unlike major sites located in the Delta or in the northern part of the Sinai, a large area connected to the Mediterranean Sea, key sites of the Theban area are far from the main trade routes despite their proximity to the Nile. This holds true for all kinds of Theban funerary, urban, or religious sites, which are therefore far from the main trading networks that emerged at that time, particularly from the second part of the first millennium BC. The lack of chronological markers is a consequence of this different state of development between the North and the South. This is partly due to the fact that the collected material usually contains just a small number of foreign products, providing a more precise chronological date.

Everywhere in the Theban area, imported vases (from Greece, Cyprus, or the Levantine coastline) are poorly attested. In the absence of such evidence with a significant impact to understanding the development of the Late Period material culture, the establishment of a fine typology is quite a difficult task. Thus, this is precisely the reason why, during a long time period, it was common to attribute the pottery largely to the still neglected period of Egyptian history, to the Late Period in general. In a number of publications relating to Upper or Middle Egypt, the terminology regarding the Late Period remains very unspecific.<sup>5</sup> This terminology is commonly applied and used in many parts of the country despite the extensive research providing more details. It is timely to avoid such an unspecific term, even if the context was largely disturbed (as is regularly the case in funerary contexts). A label as “Late Period” means that the material covers a long time span (more than four centuries)—but thanks to recent studies several phases may actually be defined—even if

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<sup>4</sup> Investigations conducted in the northern part of Egypt have, in effect, provided the opportunity to identify several chronological phases during the first millennium BC, more specifically for the second part of this period, from the sixth to the end of fourth century BC: imported products from ancient Ionia, Attica, Cyprus, and Phoenician cities were uncovered at several sites (in addition to Naukratis and Tell Dafana, other major sites have provided a large number of finds, such as Abusir, Saqqara, Mendes, Tell el-Balamun, Tell el-Maskhuta, and, most recently, Heracleion-Thonis, Tell Hebua II, and Tell el-Herr). In this area, ceramological studies have increased due to the contribution of new archaeological data from a reliable stratigraphy. For more precise bibliographic information, see Defernez 2011, 109–126; Defernez 2012, 387–407.

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the pottery specific to the second part of the first millennium BC was often included in a wide chronological phase, so-called “Late Period pottery”.

we consider that the Upper Egyptian ceramic industry had a longlasting tradition.

When we began our work at Karnak more ten years ago,<sup>6</sup> Ms. Helen Jacquet-Gordon argued that one could not establish a fine classification of the Late Period pottery. She correctly noted that, with the then available material, the Theban pottery industry appeared to be uniformly from the Twenty-fifth Dynasty to the beginning of the Ptolemaic Period. At this time, when our work in the area of the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau* was just beginning,<sup>7</sup> the evidence of an homogeneous ceramic industry was clear. As suggested by French,<sup>8</sup> two different groups (and therefore several workshops) existed during the first millennium BC, particularly during the second part: one specific to the north, and another one to the south (including Middle Egypt).

At present, with the essential work of Aston based on the material from Elephantine<sup>9</sup> and other sites located within the Theban necropolis<sup>10</sup>—not forgetting the recent work of Budka,<sup>11</sup> Schreiber,<sup>12</sup> and Masson<sup>13</sup>—, the development of a precise typology is now a possibility.<sup>14</sup> Recent investigations made within the Amun-Re complex at Karnak (or in adjacent areas) have provided reliable stratigraphic material enabling us to come closer to our goal of a better understanding of the development of the Late Period ceramic industry.

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<sup>6</sup> It was during our first encounter in 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Our project, comparable to the work conducted in the north of Egypt (see Defernez 2003), is very ambitious, aiming to establish a comprehensive classification of the Late Period pottery.

<sup>8</sup> See French 1992, 83–93. On this topic, see recently Aston and Aston 2010, 167.

<sup>9</sup> Aston 1999; Aston 2007, 419–445.

<sup>10</sup> Aston 2003, 138–166; Aston 2008.

<sup>11</sup> For the material from the Theban West Bank, see Budka 2010a; Budka 2010b, 22–72; Budka in this volume. For the Late Period pottery at Abydos, see Budka 2010c.

<sup>12</sup> See Schreiber 2003; Schreiber 2008. See also Schreiber's paper in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> See Masson 2007, 593–623; Masson 2011, 269–310; Masson (forthcoming).

<sup>14</sup> The results and analysis presented here are only preliminary. An extensive study is currently being prepared by Stéphanie Boulet as part of her PhD thesis. A complete study involves statistical data—which is essential to understanding the development of the main sequence—with the aim to define the evolution, the nature, and the spatial distribution of the main groups.



## The Contextual Framework

The various phases that have recently been identified are based on the documentation coming from four important excavated areas that can be dated from the Third Intermediate Period to the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty. These contexts, which will be described in detail below, are all located within the northern part of the Amun-Re complex at Karnak (figs. 31-3–4). Three of them are located in the sector of the chapel dedicated to Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau* and dated to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty (fig. 31-3).<sup>15</sup> The main areas where new data was found can be briefly described as follows:

The first one, located just inside the chapel, in close proximity to the hypostyle hall, deserves special attention (fig. 31-3 [1]). It consists mainly of several pits, which have provided sets of pottery dating back to the Third Intermediate Period.<sup>16</sup> Until now, this chronological sequence has not been well-documented at Karnak.<sup>17</sup>

The second area consists on a vast deposit uncovered close to the first gate located just to south to Ptah Temple, in the area excavated during the 2011–2012 season (fig. 31-4).<sup>18</sup> Previously, the limits of this deposit remained undetermined but as will be outlined below an important homogeneous pottery assemblage, consisting of fragmentary vessels, was unearthed.

The third find spot is also located in the area of the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau* (fig. 31-3 [2]). This one includes several deposits unearthed during the 2006 and 2008 seasons. At that time, a series of soundings were performed in order to understand the stratigraphical relations between the chapel and the way to the Ptah Temple.<sup>19</sup> One of the main discoveries in this sector was a large ceramic deposit unearthed in front of the monumental gate of the chapel. This set yielded an abundance

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<sup>15</sup> Described by Coulon in this volume.

<sup>16</sup> See Defernez and Boulet 2013, n. 1 (with references). See also Coulon and Giorgi 2009, 572–575; Coulon and Giorgi 2010, 354–355; Giorgi and Coulon 2010, 34–46, figs. 26, 30 (SD 03).

<sup>17</sup> Except studies based on the material from the Mut Temple. See Sullivan 2011, 531–554; Sullivan 2013.

<sup>18</sup> For more information, see Boraik and Thiers 2012, 15–20; Boulet and Defernez 2013 (sector 2, trench 7 – US 247–248, 250, 253); see also the paper by Licitra, Thiers, and Zignani in this volume.

<sup>19</sup> See Coulon and Frangin 2008, 421–424; Frangin and Bruant 2010, 3–5, figs. 1–2, 10 (US 5274/5407).

of pottery, which highlights the transition between two important sequences.

Since 2001, a large number of pieces were gathered from the excavations of a massive mud-brick edifice, built directly behind the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau*.<sup>20</sup> Numerous finds were uncovered from successive occupational layers of this building (not presented here)<sup>21</sup> although most of them come from a thick red layer (fig. 31-3 [3]).<sup>22</sup> Ceramic material collected from this context was quite abundant, including a wide range of shapes, and its study was recently completed. This important layer yielded numerous potsherds but also fragments of burnt mud-bricks and limestone chips. One may note the emergence of a few new shapes, which seem to belong to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty.

## Preliminary Analysis of the Ceramics

Recent excavations in the chapel dedicated to Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau* and in the area of the Ptah Temple to the north of the Amun-Re complex at Karnak have provided new data on the Theban ceramic industry during the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties. Interesting ceramic sets were discovered, which have facilitated the development of new chronological sequences of local Egyptian pottery productions.

The first set was located beneath the hypostyle hall from the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau*. During the 2009 and 2010 seasons, a few soundings were carried out beneath the pavement of the Osirian structure where several deposits containing numerous sherds were excavated.<sup>23</sup> Initial analyses suggested that this context dated back to the Third Intermediate Period, specifically from the end of the Twenty-first to the beginning of the Twenty-second Dynasty. The majority of the vessels,

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<sup>20</sup> For more information on this building, see Coulon and Defernez 2004, 160–190; Defernez 2004; Coulon 2005, 457–458; Coulon and Defernez 2006, 382–384; Coulon and Defernez 2007, 295–296; Coulon and Defernez 2008, 425.

<sup>21</sup> The material from this mud-brick structure will be published later. Among the notable finds, a few fragments of imported amphorae from the most famous sites of the classic period (Chios, Mende, Sidon, etc.) were attested. Despite their small number, these pieces have allowed us to determine the chronology of some levels.

<sup>22</sup> See Giorgi and Coulon 2010, 8, 47–51 (SD 08); Defernez and Boulet 2013.

<sup>23</sup> The survey extends from the first gate to the western limit of the base of the first column in the hypostyle hall of the chapel. See Giorgi and Coulon 2010, 34–46, and footnote 16 above.

such as complete storage jars or large carinated cups (fig. 31-1 [A]),<sup>24</sup> were manufactured in Nile clay. The corpus was also composed of conical cups, often characterised by a red slipped rim (fig. 31-1 [B]);<sup>25</sup> large jars with thick handles, always covered by a light red slip, a surface treatment specific to this period, were also well-attested (fig. 31-1 [C]).<sup>26</sup> In addition to the Nile clay productions, some pieces in Marl clay were uncovered, for example, fragments of amphorae with a short bulging neck (fig. 31-1 [D]).<sup>27</sup>

Among these findings, some groups of ceramics show the borrowing of morphological details commonly attributable to the Ramesside Period ceramics industry,<sup>28</sup> such as the jars with a bulging neck<sup>29</sup> or cups with a red slipped rim,<sup>30</sup> mentioned earlier. However, to these previous borrowings, we may add formal features specific to the Third Intermediate Period such as bevelled rims, internally bulbous rims, and the use of a light red slip on the outer surface of the vessels.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the use of alluvial clays is predominant in this period unlike in the Late Period, as we will explain later.

The analysis of this first set is essential for enriching our knowledge of the evolution of Theban productions around the end of the Third Intermediate Period. It shows many similarities between the productions of the north and the south of the country's ceramic industries.<sup>32</sup> Thus, these recent discoveries bring to light the technological and morphological developments of the ceramic material culture during the mid-eighth

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<sup>24</sup> Defernez and Isnard 2000, 176, 214, pl. 16 [25A]; Aston and Jeffreys 2007, 21, fig. 44 [508].

<sup>25</sup> Aston 1999, 72–74, pl. 17 [527–533]; Defernez and Isnard 2000, 175, 214, pl. 16 [24A, 24B].

<sup>26</sup> Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 94, 243, fig. 94h [P.2668].

<sup>27</sup> Aston 1999, 82–83, pl. 21 [617–619].

<sup>28</sup> Aston 2009, 317.

<sup>29</sup> Aston 1996b, 66, 305–306, figs. 203–204 (Group 49); Bourriau et al. 2005, 38–40, figs. 19–20 [103–104]; 69–70, fig. 36 [183].

<sup>30</sup> Aston 1999, 28–30, pl. 4 [74–93].

<sup>31</sup> Although we have little information about surface treatments specific to the Third Intermediate Period in the Theban region, we can observe that the use of a red slip is common at Karnak. See Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 87–97, 227–249, figs. 87–97. This is clearly visible on the ceramic material from the Osirian chapel.

<sup>32</sup> Many comparisons can be made with the ceramic assemblies from Tanis (Defernez and Isnard 2000), Memphis (Aston and Jeffreys 2007), and Elephantine (Aston 1999).

century BC. We can observe the emergence of a new formal repertoire as well as the use of finer fabrics specifically in Marl clay.<sup>33</sup>

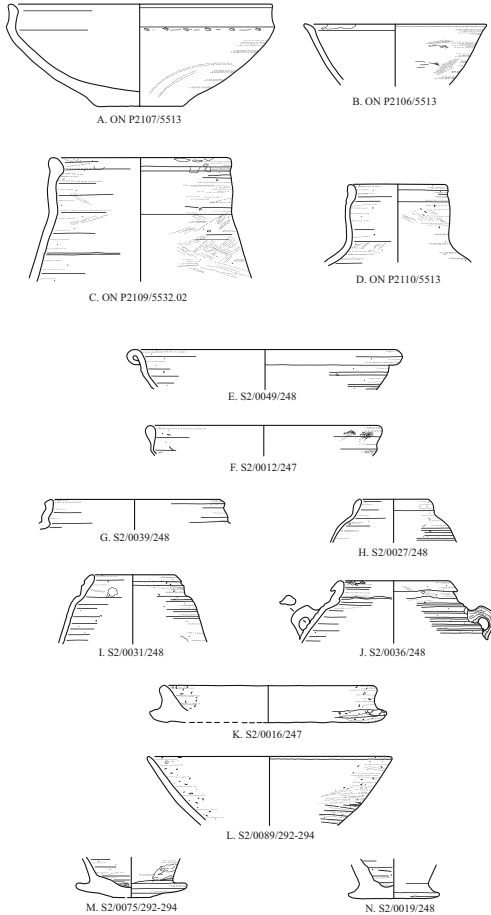


Fig. 31-1: Ceramics from the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau* and the Ptah Temple. A–D: Third Intermediate Period. E–O: Twenty-fifth Dynasty (© Barbara Böhm and Pauline Calassou).

<sup>33</sup> In February 2013, new secure contexts from the end of the Third Intermediate Period to the beginning of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty were discovered, enabling us to redefine the typo-chronology and to better understand the development of some fabrics.

The second set, located at the first southern gate of the Ptah Temple was excavated from December 2011 to May 2012, under the direction of P. Zignani and C. Thiers,<sup>34</sup> also illustrates these fundamental changes. Mainly composed of potsherds, this deposit seems to date back to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, more precisely to the end of the eighth century BC, and probably to the first part of the seventh century BC.<sup>35</sup> Although some pieces seem to be remnants of the late Third Intermediate Period,<sup>36</sup> most of the vessels belong to the corpus established by Aston for the South-Phase III.<sup>37</sup> Numerous sherds were manufactured in Marl clay, and more precisely in BE 1 and BE 2.<sup>38</sup> The corpus consists of large cups or bowls with a thick or modelled rim<sup>39</sup> (fig. 31-1 [E]), convex bowls,<sup>40</sup> and carinated cups that are easily identifiable by their thick rim<sup>41</sup> (fig. 31-1 [F]). Closed shapes in these fabrics are characterised by typical two-handled jars marked by a ribbed outer surface and a complex modelled rim,<sup>42</sup> as well as by jars with a *S*-profiled rim<sup>43</sup> (fig. 31-1 [G]), by a convex rim<sup>44</sup> (fig. 31-1 [H]), and by a triangular rim<sup>45</sup> (fig. 31-1 [J]). Thanks to

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<sup>34</sup> Boulet and Defernez 2013, and footnote 18 above.

<sup>35</sup> In this paper, we do not include the Twenty-fifth Dynasty in the Third Intermediate Period. Indeed, from a ceramological point of view, the mid-eighth century BC belongs to a period marked by profound changes in the regional ceramic industry that will persist throughout the Late Period. For this reason, the wide terminology of “Late Period” is used for the time between the Twenty-fifth and Thirtieth Dynasties. Cf. Budka 2010a, 21, n. 1, and *passim*.

<sup>36</sup> Intrusive elements not presented in this paper find secure parallels among the material dated to the end of the Third Intermediate Period at the sites of Tanis and Elephantine. Cf. footnote 32 above.

<sup>37</sup> Aston 1996b, 72–77.

<sup>38</sup> These fabrics correspond to the “Marl A4 Variant 2” (Aston 1999, 4) in the Vienna system. For this classification, see Nordström and Bourriau 1993, 168–182. For more information about the fabric classification of the Osirian chapel, see Coulon and Defernez 2004, 171–174.

<sup>39</sup> Myśliwiec 1987, 69–70, [611–612]; Spencer 1993, 44–45, pl. 55 [A4.54.2, A4.54.3]; Lopez Grande et al. 1995, 100, 192, pl. 58, figs. d, f; Marchand and Lainsney 2000, 269, 285, fig. 61; Jet 2007, 345, 353, pl. 7, fig. 6020.2; Sullivan 2011, 539, 544, 552, figs. 37, 38; Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 99, 254, fig. 99j [P.75].

<sup>40</sup> Spencer 1993, 44–45, pls. 52–53 [A4.23, A4.24, A4.28].

<sup>41</sup> Spencer 1993, 44–45, pl. 51 [A4.15].

<sup>42</sup> Spencer 1993, 45–46, pl. 66 [E1.79]; Vincentelli Liverani 1997, 122, 125, fig. 3 [nr. 8].

<sup>43</sup> French 1986, 157, 183, fig. 9.17 [MJ3.2.2 (P)]; Spencer 1993, 45–46, pl. 66 [E1.85, E1.87]; Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 101, 258, fig. 101n [P.83].

<sup>44</sup> Dunham 1950, 87–88, pl. 42F, fig. 29b [19-3-1224]; Myśliwiec 1987, 60–61, fig. 403; Spencer 1993, 45–46, pl. 65 [E1.44]; Lopez Grande et al. 1995, 91–92,

this context, we can follow the evolution of some categories of vessels, such as the cups with modelled rims. Actually, the earliest examples seem to have a short flat convex rim, while more recent pieces seem to have a thicker rolled rim.

Nile clay ceramics are less frequent and mainly consist of domestic shapes like *dokka* (fig. 31-1 [K]) and deep inverted cups with a direct rim (fig. 31-1 [L]) or with a slight modelled rim. Many examples of cups with a ledged base, commonly used as incense burners specific to the Theban ceramic production of the Kushite times (figs. 31-1 [M–N]).<sup>46</sup> With regard to this last group, it should be noted that earlier examples are distinguishable by a rounded base,<sup>47</sup> whereas later examples can be defined by a flattened base.<sup>48</sup> In this deposit, it is interesting to note the presence of many body-sherds, which were made in coarser red clay with calcareous inclusions (BE 6/BE 5), easily identifiable by the white spiral decoration on the outer wall. These fragments belong to storage jars, characterised by a sloping shoulder with a marked carination at the junction with the body, a short neck, a rolled rim, and a rounded base.<sup>49</sup>

Complete ceramics were poorly represented in this context but, despite their small number, the collected sherds give a good idea of a chronological phase previously poorly attested at Karnak. We hope that further research in the area of the Treasury of Shabako<sup>50</sup> and in the sector of the Osirian chapel will provide us with more information. This new ceramic repertoire endured and evolved during the end of Twenty-fifth and the beginning of Twenty-sixth Dynasty, as can be seen with the next pottery corpus.

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180, pl. 46: figs. k, e; Aston 1999, 206–207, pl. 64 [1884]; Jet 2007, 345, 353, pl. 7, fig. 6020.4; Aston 2008, 357, 359, 360 [2965].

<sup>45</sup> Myśliwiec 1987, 62–63 [411], 65–66, [463]; Aston 1999, 186–187, pl. 56 [1699].

<sup>46</sup> Spencer 1993, 45, pl. 56 [B2.16]; Lecuyot 1993–1994, 106–107, fig. 2n; Aston 1999, 169, 171, pl. 50 [1566–1567].

<sup>47</sup> For some examples of cups with a rounded base, see Aston 1999, 80–81, pl. 20 [597]; Budka 2010c, 53, fig. 34 [1–2].

<sup>48</sup> For some examples of cups with a flattened base, see Aston 1999, 169, 171, pl. 50 [1563–1573]; 179–180, pl. 53 [1650–1655]; 199, 201, pl. 61 [1814–1817]; Budka 2010b, 56, fig. 15 [6].

<sup>49</sup> This kind of storage jar is very common at this time, with many examples attested at Thebes. Castel and Meeks 1980, 40, pl. 19b [60–61]; Lecuyot 1993–1994, 107–108 [3b]; Aston 2008, 357, 359–360 [2955–2958]. Others parallels have been found at Elephantine (Aston 1999, 172–173, pl. 51 [1596]) and Abydos, without carinated shoulders (Aston 1996a, 3–4, 6, fig. 2b).

<sup>50</sup> See the recent research of Licita, in this volume.

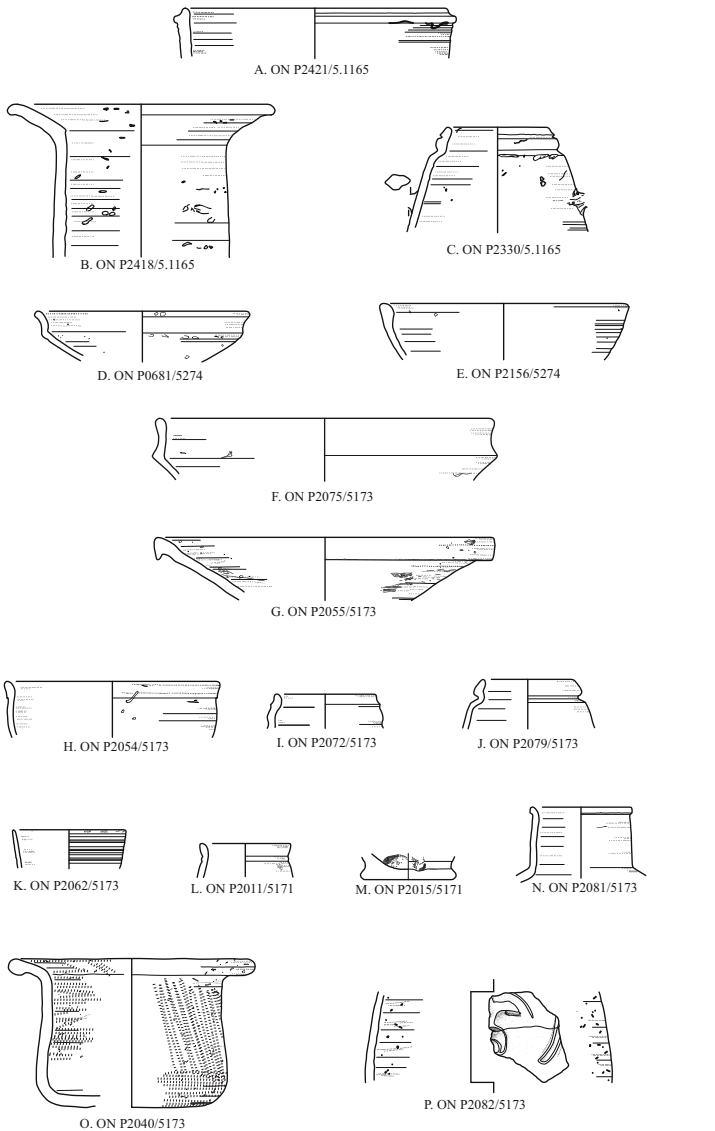


Fig. 31-2. Ceramics from the chapel of Osiris Wenfer *Neb-djefau*. A–E: from the end of the Twenty-fifth to the beginning of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. F–P: from the end of the seventh to the beginning of the sixth century BC (© Pauline Calassou, Barbara Böhm, Juliette Laroye, and Stéphanie Boulet).

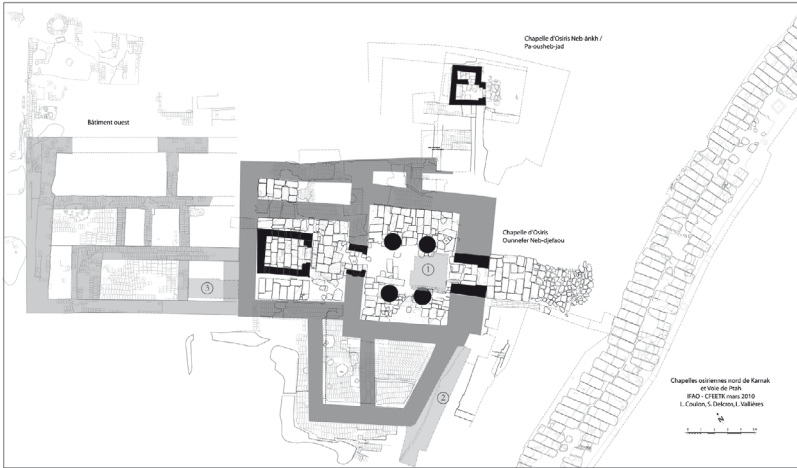


Fig. 31-3: General view of the area of the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau*. [1] Third Intermediate Period Pits; [2] deposit between the main door of the chapel and the way to the Ptah Temple; [3] thick red level.

The third interesting context, which we have studied, was excavated in front of the door to the chapel of Osiris Wennefer *Neb-djefau*.<sup>51</sup> A large number of ceramics completed the corpus previously described. Among the well-attested finds, we noted the presence of deep bowls, of cups with a modelled rim, and also of the previously mentioned jars with a modelled rim. Of major interest is the introduction of a few new shapes, in particular, in Nile clay: deep bowls characterised by a double rim<sup>52</sup> (fig. 31-2 [A]), and wide-mouthed jars with a red or creamy slip clearly visible on the outer surface<sup>53</sup> (fig. 31-2 [B]). This last group was probably produced in the late Third Intermediate Period, from the eighth century BC. However, it seems to be more frequent during the seventh century BC.<sup>54</sup> As discussed below, the latest examples should be dated to the sixth century BC. The most common material used for the majority of ceramics at this time is still Marl clay (BE 1/BE 2 or Marl A4 Variant 2 of the Vienna system). We identified carinated cups with a thinner rim than the earlier

<sup>51</sup> Cf. footnote 19 above.

<sup>52</sup> B  out et al. 1993, 171, 194, fig. 18 [349 (forme 25)].

<sup>53</sup> B  out et al. 1993, 170, 192, fig. 16 [146 (forme 10)]; Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 94, 243, fig. 94k [P.584].

<sup>54</sup> See examples from Ashmunein. Spencer 1993, 45, pl. 59 [C1.25–32].



examples<sup>55</sup> (fig. 31-2 [D]), convex bowls with a thick inner rim<sup>56</sup> (fig. 31-2 [E]), and long ribbed jars with a modelled rim<sup>57</sup> (fig. 31-2 [C]).

Our first preliminary observations regarding this deposit show continuity in the technique and morphology of the ceramic repertoire from the late eighth to the early seventh century BC for some types of vessels such as carinated cups or convex bowls. Furthermore, this period is also characterised by the emergence of new forms of pottery in the local Theban ceramic industry.

In 2009 and 2010, a sounding was conducted between the chapel and a vast mud-brick structure located just behind the Osirian monument in order to understand the stratigraphy in these two areas.<sup>58</sup> A thick red layer composed of both potsherds and burnt mud-bricks was unearthed, providing evidence of the Late Period industry. The associated presence of elements specific to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty and shapes belonging to the first part of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty is well-established. Products of the regional ceramic industry of the seventh century or early sixth century BC were also well represented.<sup>59</sup> Changes may be noted in the mass of sherds in Marl clay fabric, still manufactured in BE 1 and BE 2.

In these findings, opened shapes are illustrated by carinated cups more accentuated<sup>60</sup> (fig. 31-2 [F]) and mortars characterised by a ledge rim<sup>61</sup> (fig. 31-2 [G]). This phase clearly shows an emergence of new shapes still using Marl clay<sup>62</sup> (fig. 31-2 [H]). The presence of a few large storage jars with modelled rim and ribbed walls<sup>63</sup> (fig. 31-2 [I]), spherical and/or globular pots, which are characterised by a thick convex, very pronounced

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<sup>55</sup> Béout et al. 1993, 171, 195, fig. 19 [11 (forme 32)].

<sup>56</sup> Spencer 1993, 44–45, pl. 52 [A4.23–24].

<sup>57</sup> Dunham 1955, 21, fig. 10 [17-2-1861]; Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 101, 258, fig. 101m [P.724].

<sup>58</sup> Cf. footnotes 20–22 above.

<sup>59</sup> For a preliminary report, see Defernez and Boulet 2013.

<sup>60</sup> Béout et al. 1993, 171, 195, fig. 19 [10 (forme 32)]; Lecuyot 1993–1994, 107–108, fig. 3g; Marchand and Laisney 2000, 269, 285, figs. 55–56; Coulon and Defernez, 2004, 177–178, fig. 19 [7]; Defernez 2004, 36, 44, fig. 5; Jacquet-Gordon 2012, 99, 253, fig. 99e [P.43].

<sup>61</sup> Myśliwiec 1987, 69–70 [637–638]; Béout et al. 1993, 173, 198, fig. 22 [421 (forme 46)].

<sup>62</sup> No comparison could be made for some types of vessels.

<sup>63</sup> Béout et al. 1993, 172, 196, fig. 20 [527 (forme 34)]; Aston 1999, 210–211, pl. 65 [1902].

rim<sup>64</sup> (fig. 31-2 [J]) should also be mentioned. Another group of smaller vessels consisting of cups, bowls, beakers, and jugs manufactured in a porous whitish marl clay (BE 3)<sup>65</sup> were found<sup>66</sup> (fig. 31-2 [K–L]). Some of them are covered by very fine grooves, a type of decoration that seems to be a hallmark of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. A few pieces of cups with a flattened base,<sup>67</sup> beakers and cups with a ledged base less prominent than the oldest examples in Nile clay were also excavated<sup>68</sup> (fig. 31-2 [M]). Cylindrical jars,<sup>69</sup> showing a slight convex profile rim (fig. 31-2 [N]), and wide-mouthed jars covered by a burnished red slip (fig. 31-2 [O]) show the introduction of profound changes in the later periods. Additional shapes, including a fragment of a Bes jar, seem to belong to a specific type of the beginning of the sixth century BC based on comparisons to similar jars coming from Karnak<sup>70</sup> (fig. 31-2 [P]). This red layer provides new evidence of the local Egyptian pottery industry, dating back to the end of seventh, and the beginning of sixth century BC.

In conclusion, thanks to recent discoveries conducted within the complex of Amun-Re at Karnak, it is possible to identify several phases of a distinct development of the ceramic industry in the Theban area from the ninth to the sixth century BC. Even the small part of the ceramic material presented here, provides some details concerning the evolution of the Theban ceramic industry during the first part of the Late Period. After the Third Intermediate Period, characterised by many similarities between the ceramic data from the north and the south of Egypt, the mid-eighth century showed a period of differentiation in the productions from Upper Egypt with technical and morphological changes that persisted during the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. Other levels found in the Osirian chapel must be noted also as they provided interesting material dating back to the fifth and

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<sup>64</sup> Myśliwiec 1987, 63–66 [418, 471–475]; Béout et al. 1993, 171, 172, 195, fig. 19 [19 (forme 33)]; Aston 1999, 229, 231, pl. 71 [2036]; Jet 2007, 345, 353, pl. 7, fig. 6020.1; Sullivan 2011, 539, 544, 551, figs. 32, 34.

<sup>65</sup> This fabric corresponds to the Marl A3 from the Vienna system (Nordström and Bourriau 1993, 177) and to the fabric 3 of C. Grataloup (Béout et al. 1993, 169)

<sup>66</sup> Myśliwiec 1987, 66, 69 [594]; Béout et al. 1993, 172, 197, fig. 21 [259 (groupe 41)]; Masson 2011, 277, 299, figs. 52, 53, 55.

<sup>67</sup> Anus and Sa'ad 1971, 234, fig. 19 [240.63 2]; Lecuyot 1993–1994, 106–107, fig. 2m; Jet 2007, 345, 353, pl. 7, fig. 6006.8.

<sup>68</sup> Castel and Meeks 1980, 35, 37, pl. 18b [12, 34]; Béout et al. 1993, 169, 191, fig. 15 [55 (forme 3)]; Lecuyot 1996, 153, 162, fig. 2.

<sup>69</sup> Petrie 1909, pl. 54 [832, 833, 834, 835]; Aston 1999, 222–223, pl. 68 [1975], 224–225, pl. 69 [1996]; Masson 2007, 610, 636, pl. 11, fig. 3; Budka 2010a, 670–671, pl. 290 [Reg. 141].

<sup>70</sup> Béout et al. 1993, 170, 191, fig. 15 [68, 70, 559 (forme 6)].

the fourth century BC. This new data will contribute to the study of ceramic productions in the Theban region during the Late Period.



Fig. 31-4. Area of the Ptah Temple. Deposit uncovered close to the first gate identified to the south of the Ptah Temple (© CFEETK – Christophe Thiers).

## Ceramic Catalogue<sup>71</sup>

Record nr.	Description	D.	H.	Fabric	Fig.
ON P2107/5513	Carinated cup with a flattened base	29	11	Nile B2	31-1 [A]
ON P2106/5513	Cup with a red slipped rim	20	6.7	Nile B2	31-1 [B]
ON P2109/ 5532.02	Large jar with a bulging neck and a light red slip on the outer surface	20	13.6	Nile B2	31-1 [C]
ON P2110/5513	Amphora with a short bulging neck	11	9	Marl A	31-1 [D]
S2/0049/248	Large cup with a modelled rim	30	5	BE 1	31-1 [E]
S2/0012/247	Carinated cup with a thick rim	26	3.3	BE 1	31-1 [F]
S2/0039/248	Jar with a S-profiled rim	19.8	3.2	BE 1	31-1 [G]
S2/0027/248	Jar with a convex rim	8.8	4.6	BE 2	31-1 [H]
S2/0031/248	Jar with a modelled rim	11.5	7.4	BE 1	31-1 [I]
S2/0036/248	Jar with a triangular rim	14	6.7	BE 1	31-1 [J]
S2/0016/247	Dokka	24	4	BE 4	31-1 [K]
S2/0089/ 292-294	Conical cup with a direct rim	26.8	7.5	BE 6	31-1 [L]
S2/0075/ 292-294	Cup with a ledged base	12	4.4	BE12 Variant	31-1 [M]
S2/0019/248	Cup with a ledged base	10	4.2	BE 5	31-1 [N]
ON P2421/ 5.1165	Deep bowl with a modelled rim	25	4.4	BE 12 Variant	31-2 [A]
ON P2418/ 5.1165	Wide-mouthed jar	23.5	13.5	BE 5	31-2 [B]

<sup>71</sup> D = diameter. For S2/0075/292-294, S2/0019/248, and ON P2015/5171, the diameter of the preserved base is given. H = height of the sherd.

ON P2330/ 5.1165	Jar with a modelled rim	9	9.3	BE 1	31-2 [C]
ON P0681/5274	Carinated cup	19	4.5	BE 2	31-2 [D]
ON P2156/5274	Convex bowl with a thick rim	22	5	BE 1	31-2 [E]
ON P2075/5173	Carinated cup	30	5.4	BE 1	31-2 [F]
ON P2055/5173	Cup with a triangular rim, so-called "mortar"	30	5.5	BE 1	31-2 [G]
ON P2054/5173	Bowl with a S-profiled rim	19	5	BE 1	31-2 [H]
ON P2072/5173	Jar with a S-profiled rim and a bulging neck	9	3	BE 1 Variant	31-2 [I]
ON P2079/5173	Jar with a convex rim	9.5	4.4	BE 1	31-2 [J]
ON P2062/5173	Bowl with thin ribbed walls	10	3.4	BE 3	31-2 [K]
ON P2011/5171	Little vase	8	2.9	BE 3	31-2 [L]
ON P2015/5171	Cup with a ledged base	8.5	2.3	BE 12	31-2 [M]
ON P2081/5173	Jar with a cylindrical neck	9	6.7	BE 5	31-2 [N]
ON P2040/5173	Wide-mouthed jar with a polish red slip	21.8	13.2	BE 12 Variant	31-2 [O]
ON P2082/5173	Bes jar	23	8	BE 5	31-2 [P]

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