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Late Middle Kingdom at Qubbet el-Hawa: The Case of QH 35n

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ABSTRACT

Late Middle Kingdom at Qubbet el-Hawa

The Case of QH 35n

Martina Bardoňová – Rosario Guimarey Duarte – Inmaculada Alemán Aguilera –
Ángel Rubio Salvador – Miguel Cecilio Botella López – Alejandro Jiménez Serrano

The present paper concerns the use of one of the well-known ›nomarchak‹ necropoleis, Qubbet el-Hawa, west of modern Aswan, during the locally less explored era of the late Middle Kingdom, subsequent to Amenemhat III. The subject of this article is a multidisciplinary analysis of a group of burials dated between the late 12th and mid-13th Dynasties, recently discovered in a reused monument, tomb QH 35n. The main aim is to present these new finds in their archaeological, spatial, and temporal contexts in order to understand by whom and in which way the ancient necropolis was used and reused during the late Middle Kingdom.

KEYWORDS

Qubbet el-Hawa, burials, tomb reuse, late Middle Kingdom

Late Middle Kingdom at Qubbet el-Hawa

The Case of QH 35n

¹ The reigns of Senwosret III and Amenemhat III represent the climax of significant transformations permeating practically all spheres of the lives of their contemporaries: social relations, politics, administration, royal ideology, religion, and even crafts¹. As such, these reigns initiate a distinctive historical period, the late Middle Kingdom². The latter is characterised, among other factors, by a supposed higher level of central control connected to the decrease of power of local potentates and by changes in expressions of one's identity related to transformations in burial customs³. These were reflected, e. g., in the abandonment of ›nomarchal‹ necropoleis, or more precisely, in the disappearance of large and rich burials of local potentates and their dependants⁴, in the increased number of ›sequential multiple burials‹⁵, and the changing composition of burial goods⁶.

² Qubbet el-Hawa, west of the modern city of Aswan, was no exception to the above-mentioned developments. This necropolis, situated in the vicinity of the ancient city of Elephantine, served for about four centuries as the burial ground for its elites and their supposed dependants⁷. The situation changed only at the break of Amenemhat III's reign. In this sense, in the case of Qubbet el-Hawa, the last grand funerary complex for a governor (QH 33) was constructed during the first half of this reign⁸. However, recent archaeological finds in the same necropolis, such as the burial of Sarenput ›the younger‹

¹ See, e. g., Quirke 1990, 1–8; Bourriau 1991, 10; Franke 1991, 51–55; Hirsch 1999; Grajetzki 2000, 256; Quirke 2004, 8 f.; Tallet 2005; Grajetzki 2006; Grajetzki 2007, 24–34; Grajetzki 2014, 24 f.; Willems 2014, 229; Miniaci 2019.

² Note that no consensus exists regarding the actual length of this period, as it depends on the inclusion/exclusion of part of the 13th Dynasty; see, e. g., Ryholt 1997; Grajetzki 2006; Hornung et al. 2006, 167–198. In this article, we include the first half of the 13th Dynasty as still belonging to the Middle Kingdom.

³ See, e. g., Grajetzki 2006; Grajetzki 2007, 24 f.; Miniaci 2019.

⁴ See, e. g., Bourriau 1991, 10; Franke 1991, 51–55.

⁵ Grajetzki 2007, 24 f.; Miniaci 2019, 122 f. tab. 6, 1.

⁶ E. g., Bourriau 1991, 3–20; Miniaci 2019, 117.

⁷ Contrary to, e. g., the burial ground on Elephantine itself; see, e. g., Seidlmayer 2001, 210 f.

⁸ Jiménez Serrano 2015.

(buried in the courtyard of QH 33)⁹ or the evidence discussed in the present paper, show that Qubbet el-Hawa had never been completely abandoned by the local elite.

3 The aim of this study is to improve the understanding concerning local developments taking place at Qubbet el-Hawa precisely in this (locally) less explored era between the reign of Amenemhat III and approx. mid-13th Dynasty through the presentation of a newly discovered group of interments of this date in their archaeological and local contexts. All these interments were discovered by the Spanish archaeological mission to Qubbet el-Hawa during the 2018 season. Additionally, all originated from a single monument: the mid-size, anepigraphic, and reused tomb QH 35n, situated approx. halfway between two important funerary complexes: the deified Heqaib (QH 35d) and Sarenput I (QH 36; Fig. 1).

4 Despite the problems inherent in this type of archaeological record, only the finds considered most informative will be discussed below in more detail. These include, firstly, the remains of pottery vessels providing the approximate date of the studied interments as well as important comparative material; secondly, the individualised human remains, informing on the identity of the interred persons, more precisely on their age, general health, and sex. Lastly, fragments of related mummy masks providing further information on individuals' identities (name, further aspects of their social status) as well as on the date of the burial are considered. Other types of finds will be mentioned only briefly where necessary.

5 The study is structured in three parts. The first one focuses on the archaeological exploration of tomb QH 35n. The second and main part concerns the description of the late Middle Kingdom material remains and their spatial, temporal, and archaeological contexts. The third then summarises the results and attempts to interpret them in a broader context of the necropolis's use. The main questions addressed here are who used QH 35n during the late Middle Kingdom and in which way, and how typical/untypical these finds are in the context of the whole necropolis.

The Earlier Archaeological Works in QH 35n

6 The material analysed below was recovered in the interior of tomb QH 35n and its courtyard (western half only) during the Spring 2018 season¹⁰. Even though part of the tomb's exteriors had already been explored during the 2016 and 2017 seasons¹¹, the 2018 material was preferred for the analysis, as it provides the most relevant data.

7 The main objective of the 2018 season was to re-excavate QH 35n which, though examined and published by the Bonn mission¹², seemed never to have been completely cleaned¹³. It was also known that the area around QH 35n and potentially also the tomb itself had been partially explored in 1998 by the Egyptian team lead by Abdel-Hakim Karar¹⁴. It was not clear whether any other mission/archaeologist(s) besides the Germans and Egyptians ever entered the monument. The broader area around the tomb was first explored by Sir Francis Grenfell's mission in 1886¹⁵. Nevertheless, while the soldiers worked on most of the slope, they numbered just two tombs: that of

9 Morales 2021.

10 Jiménez Serrano et al. 2018, 45–54.

11 Jiménez Serrano et al. 2016, 22–28; Jiménez Serrano et al. 2017, 37–43; Bardoňová et al. 2019, 217–223.

12 Edel et al. 2008 II, 961 f.; pl. 20.

13 Edel et al. 2008 II, 962; pl. 20.

14 Personal communication between Abdel-Hakim Karar and Alejandro Jiménez Serrano; see Bardoňová et al. 2019, 217 fn. 7.

15 Budge 1887/1888.

Pepynakht-Heqaib (QH 35) and that of Sarenput I (QH 36)¹⁶. Later, in 1892, Ernesto Schiaparelli continued the previous works and discovered the tomb of Harkhuf (QH 34n)¹⁷, which is nevertheless at some distance (to the south) from QH 35n. Also, the subsequent works of this Italian scholar (1913/1914) focused on the area further south (QH 35d, Pepynakht-Heqaib II) from QH 35n¹⁸, which suggests that he left the area of QH 35n unexplored. A similar case is also represented by the works of Labib Habachi, who was interested in the area around tomb QH 35, where he identified the owner of tomb QH 35d with the deified governor Heqaib, whose sanctuary is located in Elephantine¹⁹. Despite Habachi's inclinations towards the sharing of excavated material with other colleagues, esp. with Elmar Edel, who worked at Qubbet el-Hawa since the late 1950s²⁰, his work has never been properly published, although some information on the smaller burials he excavated around QH 35d appear in vol. I, 2 of *Die Felsgräbernekropole der Qubbet el-Hawa bei Assuan*²¹. According to this work, it seems he never focused on the area further north where QH 35n was located, but that he had a storeroom in the nearby tomb QH 36 of Sarenput I.

Late Middle Kingdom Finds in Their Spatial, Temporal, and Archaeological Contexts

Tomb QH 35n

8 QH 35n is a middle-size funerary complex consisting of an almost square courtyard (4.8 × approx. 5 m), a rock-cut chapel of rectangular ground plan (5 × 3.8 × 2 m) with two roughly cut pillars, and three burial apartments which might not have been contemporaneous (Fig. 1 b). The substantial part of QH 35n, approx. 60 out of 70 m³, is excavated in local sandstone, only the lower sections of the shafts and the burial chambers having been executed in a soft *tafl*-layer which is very easy to extract, but difficult to be given any specific form.

9 Specific architectural features suggest the tomb was constructed (cut) at some point between the late 6th Dynasty and the First Intermediate Period. Among these features were found a false door (0.6 × 0.8 m), cut into the western wall of the chapel and serving as a central decorative and functional feature of the tomb, as well as a white-wash of specific elements visible from the entrance, including the entrance area itself, the false door and its surrounding area, and the lower part of the pillars²². Additionally, the specific form of the shafts could also be of chronological significance. All of them are of rectangular shape (2.4 × 1.2 m; 2 × 1.1 m; 1.6 × 1 m) and modest depth (approx. 1.7 m). All feature a kind of steps facilitating the descent²³. These steps were, however, much more carefully constructed in the case of the central shaft than the remaining two. The former then also differs in the form of its burial apartments, consisting of an

16 De Morgan et al. 1894, 142. 174–176.

17 Schiaparelli 1892, 4–35.

18 Moiso 2008, 256 f.

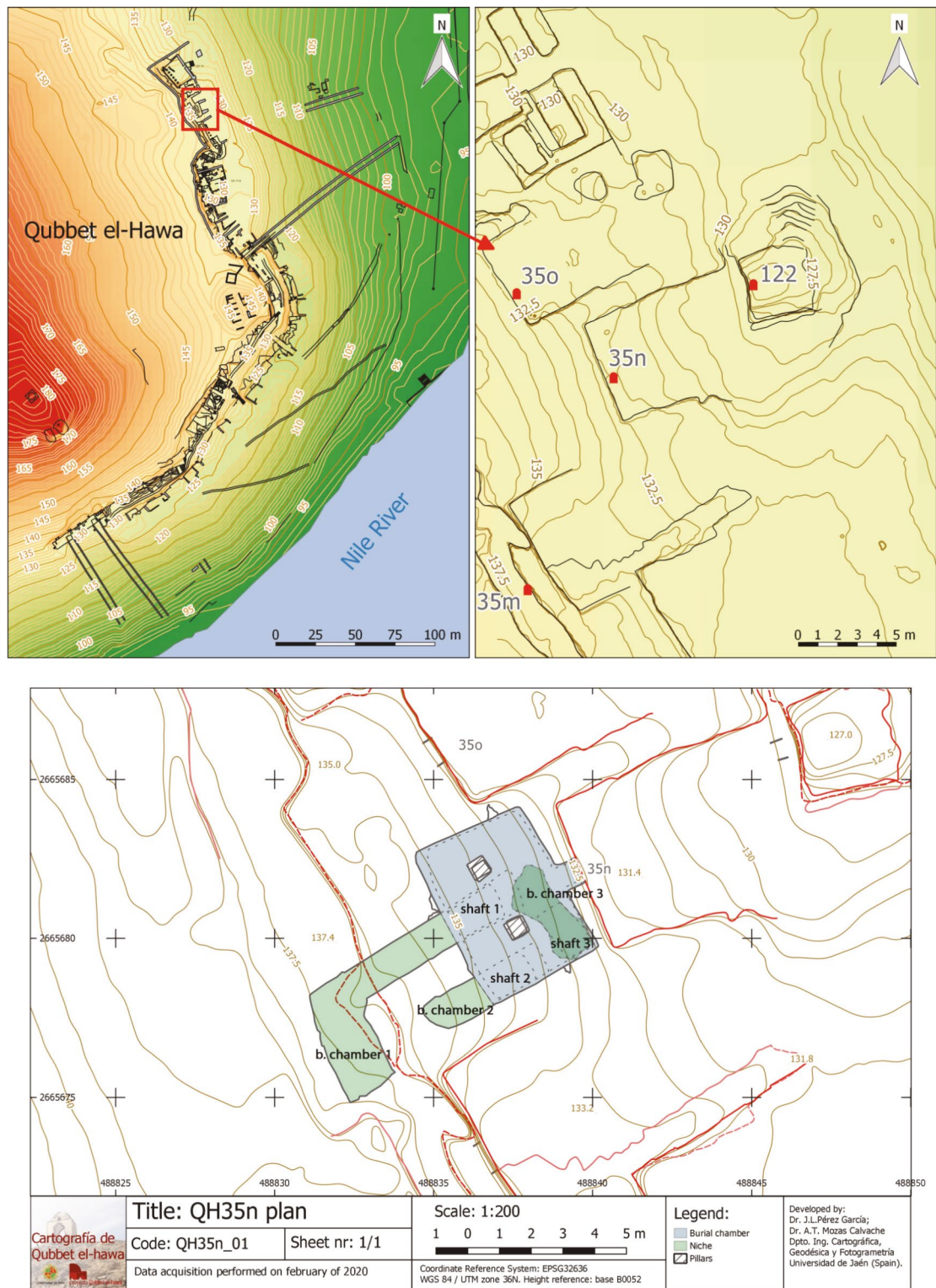
19 Habachi 1981, 11–27; Habachi 1985, 21–23; Kamil 2007, 163.

20 Edel et al. 2008 I, XX–XXIV.

21 Edel et al. 2008 II.

22 Compare, e. g., with Edel et al. 2008 I, 400 fig. 3; 420 fig. 2, 3.

23 Rectangular shafts of similar dimensions have been documented in numerous Qubbet el-Hawa tombs; compare with Edel et al. 2008 I–III. What is much less clear from the existing publications is whether and/or which of these shafts feature steps and/or staircases. A kind of step is mentioned, e. g., in the case of shaft 2 in tomb QH 88, which was, however, approx. 1 m deeper than the QH 35n shafts; see Edel et al. 2008 II, 983. A ramp descending into a rectangular shaft is then attested, e. g., in the newly excavated tomb QH 122, yet here the shaft is much shallower than those in QH 35n; see Bardoňová et al. 2019, 223 fig. 1.



1

Fig. 1: Location of tomb QH 35n within the necropolis and with respect to QH 36 and QH 5d (above; left: scale 1 : 4,000; right: not to scale) and plan of tomb QH 35n (below)

approx. 5 m long and 0.9 m high east-west-oriented corridor leading to the north-south-oriented burial chamber (2.4 × 1.4 × 0.9 m) opening in the corridor's southern wall. The remaining shafts then feature no corridor.

At the same time, however, the tomb shows traces of later modifications and repairs, which are unfortunately difficult to date. The very existence of a single false door, as well as the slightly distinct nature of chisel marks in the upper part of shaft 1, in comparison to those encountered in shafts 2 and 3, indicate that both latter structures did not form a part of the original plan. It was also noticed that some of the fissures

in the chapel's walls were covered with two different kinds of mud plaster; the first had a rather muddy composition, while the second contained more sand. No context was identified where one type of plaster would cover the other. The sandy plaster, however, is of similar, if not the same, composition as plasters and mortars used for the construction of blocking walls in shafts 1 and 3. Lastly, modifications are also visible on the northern wall of the courtyard (see Fig. 8 b). The latter was at some point enlarged towards the east, up to the top of the lower-lying tomb QH 122. There is no irrefutable proof that the wall was not enlarged by the original owner. However, this extended wall would completely close the access to QH 35n from the north and generally complicated its access (see Fig. 8 c), while the QH 122 courtyard was still devoid of later sand deposits (before the Middle Kingdom).

11 The late Middle Kingdom material was retrieved from several parts of this earlier monument, albeit in different quantity and in different contexts: the majority of finds originated from the chapel; less numerous and more fragmentary finds were recovered from shafts 1 and 2 and from the western part of the courtyard.

The Chapel

12 The chapel, as well as a substantial part of shafts 1 and 2, were filled with loose sand. This fill sloped from the entrance towards the west, north, and south. Thus, while the easternmost part of the fill was approx. 1 m thick, only 20–30 cm were detected in the western part of the chapel. It was impossible to clearly differentiate and separate different deposits. The whole fill underneath the superficial layer, as well as that in shaft 2 and in the substantial part of shaft 1, contained scattered remains of the same set of burials as well as dispersed sandstone blocks, probably from wall(s) blocking the entrance to the burial chamber(s)²⁴.

13 The fill in the eastern and central part of the tomb (UEs 24, 29, 33), including part of shaft 1, consisted of greyish sand and unidentified small particles. It contained not only remains of looted burials but also Late Antiquity pottery and even contemporary material. The exact origin of this deposit is unclear. It might be, as a whole, a product of recent activities by the Egyptian mission or, eventually, a part (or parts) of it could have resulted from activities of earlier explorers/visitors/robbers. Regardless of how the deposit was formed, at least part of the dynastic material found in it matched with fragments encountered elsewhere in the tomb.

14 An unexpected find in this respect is represented by the pottery jar with a registration number of Habachi's mission found in the uppermost part of the chapel's fill. From the registration number on the vessel, it is clear that it was encountered on 03.01.1949 in the burial labelled with Yo, supposedly located somewhere in the courtyard of QH 35d, some 35–40 m south of QH 35n²⁵. The jar might have fallen off during transport to the magazine in the neighbouring QH 36, where Habachi stored uninscribed vessels of this type²⁶, and later entered the tomb in the backfill.

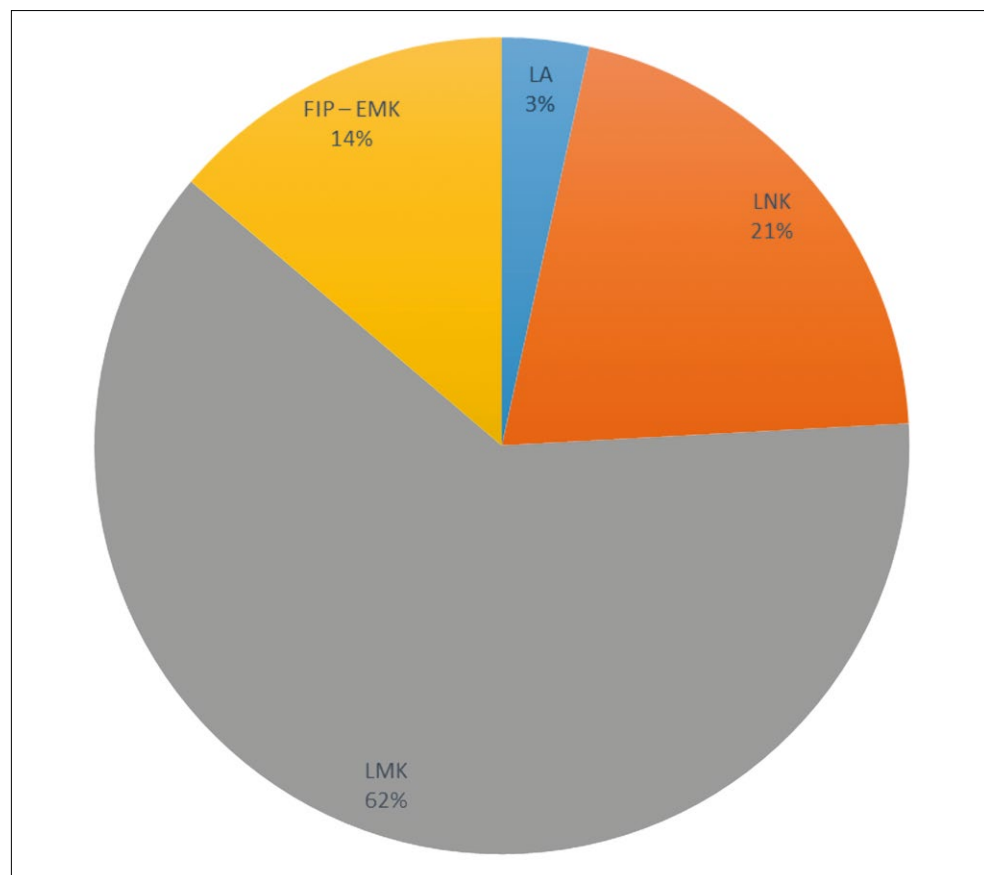
15 Contrary to the eastern and central part of the chapel, the western half and almost the whole southern wing were filled with yellowish sand containing only the dynastic material from looted burials. The latter then notably accumulated in the southern sector (UE 27), while it was somewhat scarcer in the northern one (UE 28), as well as in the contemporary deposits in the centre (UEs 24, 29, 33). The pottery encountered together with these looted burials was dated to three different eras: First Intermediate Period, late Middle Kingdom, and late New Kingdom.

24 Note that specific pottery and cartonnage fragments (although not all) from various deposits were matching.

25 Edel et al. 2008 II, 771 f.

26 Edel et al. 2008 II, 840.

Fig. 2: Proportion of differently dated diagnostic shards recovered from the QH 35n chapel. FIP = First Intermediate Period; LMK = late Middle Kingdom; LNK = late New Kingdom; LA = Late Antiquity



2

¹⁶ This ceramic evidence consists of 140 fragments²⁷ of which 29 were diagnostic, while another eleven pieces then represent complete and completely reconstructed vessels. As has been stated above (§ 13 and 15), they are dated to four different historical eras: Late Antiquity (only modern deposits), late New Kingdom, late Middle Kingdom, and First Intermediate Period (Fig. 2).

¹⁷ As shown in Fig. 2, the largest proportion of pottery encountered, present in both ancient and modern deposits, was from the late Middle Kingdom and will be further analysed below. The second most frequently found pieces, again found in both types of deposits, were from the late New Kingdom. The late New Kingdom pottery was represented by the remains of six beer jars of which two were complete²⁸, the majority of which were found in the modern era deposits (UEs 24, 29, 33), and also possibly by the remains of three bowls/dishes found in UEs 27 and 31, though the date of these latter is not clear. The origin of these vessels is problematic; they might either have entered the tomb in the backfill(s) or belonged to a potential Ramesside interment once buried in the tomb. Hopefully, more clues will be at our disposal once all the material recovered from QH 35n has been analysed.

¹⁸ Like the late Middle Kingdom and late New Kingdom pieces, the First Intermediate Period pottery was also found in both main types of contexts. These pieces, although relatively small and slightly worn, could represent remains of funerary material once deposited in the tomb, as the same types of vessels were also found in the burial

²⁷ Ten vessels do not figure in these statistics: firstly, a jar marked by Habachi's mission; secondly, a similar jar inscribed with *nbs*-fruit and found in the same context; thirdly, one small-size lid and seven very small fragments of plates/dishes which are difficult to assess with certainty.

²⁸ For parallels, see Aston 1999, pl. 3, 57–60.

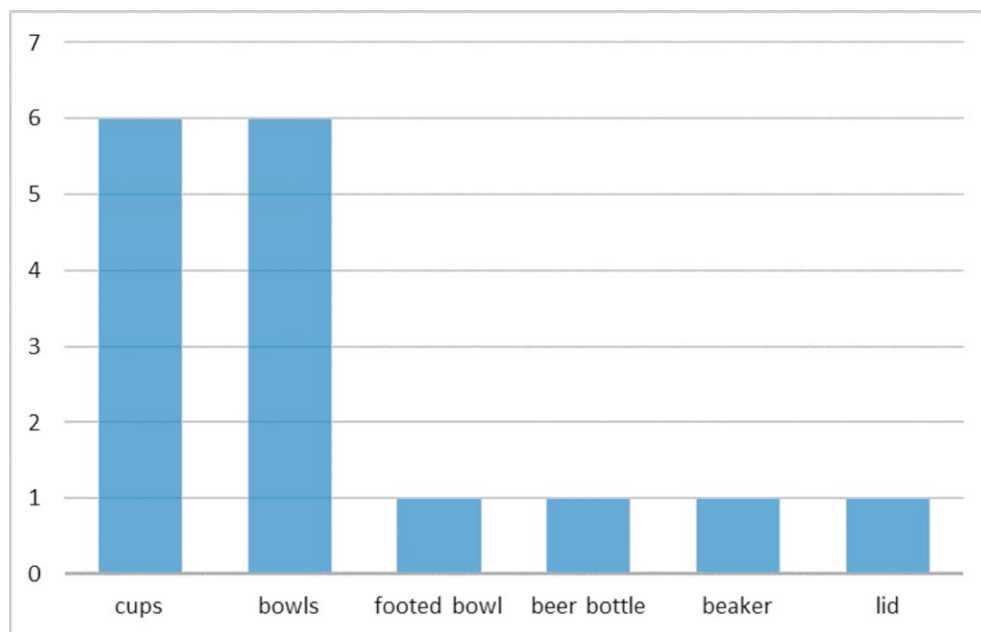


Fig. 3: Attested types of late Middle Kingdom pottery found in the QH 35n chapel

3

chamber of shaft 2. Another possibility is that they were once present in shaft fills, as pieces from a similar date, or only slightly older, were found in the fill of shaft 3, which was most probably original.

¹⁹ The Late Antiquity fragments, all relatively small in size, weathered and/or eventually burnt, and attested only from the modern deposit(s), seem to have entered the tomb in the backfill.

²⁰ The pieces of the late Middle Kingdom pottery were found in a fragmentary state, and breaks were frequently old. Despite this problem, five vessels were able to be reconstructed to a complete profile, while the majority of the diagnostic fragments were at least reconstructed to a considerable size. The state of preservation was overall relatively good, with only a few pieces being more considerably weathered. The most noticeable example of this kind represents a bag-shaped beaker (ChD_1). Overall, it seems that we are, at least in most cases, dealing with actual remains of funerary/cultic goods once deposited in tomb QH 35n rather than with fortuitous finds that entered the tomb in the backfill. However, this does not mean that it is possible to reconstruct once-present individual funerary assemblages and to provide more than an incomplete overview of present forms from different dates, which were either deposited during the late Middle Kingdom as part of funerary equipment or used within the funerary cults at Qubbet el-Hawa.

²¹ The majority of the pieces encountered belonged to open forms, mostly cups and slightly less frequently to bowls. The closed forms are attested in only two, respectively three cases (Fig. 3), one of them being the above-mentioned beaker ChD_1 and in the second case a beer bottle (ChD_32; see Fig. 7).

²² So-called drinking cups represent the most ubiquitous type of Middle Kingdom pottery and an important chronological marker. Two types of cups were present in the QH 35n chapel: hemispherical cups (ChD_2, 27, 28; see Fig. 5, ChD_27)²⁹ and slightly inflected cups (ChD_7, 25, 26; see Fig. 5, ChD_7, 25)³⁰. Both forms usually feature the red

²⁹ The precise shape is unclear as none has been preserved in full profile. However, for the suggested form, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 84–87 type(s) I.A.10 and/or I.A.11. Further parallels, e. g., Arnold 1982, 27 figs. 3, 4, 5; 4, 3; von Pilgrim 1996, 335 fig. 148 k; 339 fig. 150 j; 343 fig. 152 f; 345 fig. 153 b; Seiler 2005, 53 fig. 12; Rzeuska 2012, 344 fig. 5, 28–31; Ayers 2018, 60 fig. 1 a. b.

³⁰ For this type, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 220 f. type I.E.8a; further parallels, e. g., Arnold 1982, 62 fig. 18, 2, 6; von Pilgrim 1996, 343 fig. 152 e. m; Ayers 2018, 60 fig. 1 c.

band on their rims and, with a few exceptions, have a rim diameter of 10 cm³¹. All were fabricated from Nile B1 clay. Unfortunately, only a single cup was reconstructed into a complete profile (see Fig. 5, ChD_7). The latter has been classified among the inflected cups. It has the vessel index 161, suggesting its date to be around the break of the 13th Dynasty³². Nevertheless, taking into account the material from Elephantine, ChD_7 falls within ranges attested for BS 13 (Amenemhat III and late 12th Dynasty) and BS 12 (13th Dynasty)³³.

23 Six different forms of bowls were recovered from the QH 35n chapel, all of Nile C clay. Two of them were shallow bowls with round base (ChD_9, 16). Both are relatively large with rim diameters of 30 and 35 cm and heights of 6 and 10 cm respectively. The first bowl (ChD_9), and the smaller of the two, is slightly inflected and its exterior bears traces of whitewash³⁴. Despite the fact that this form is attested throughout Egypt in settlement and funerary contexts³⁵, the closest parallels to this piece come from Upper Egyptian necropoleis in Thebes³⁶ and Elkab³⁷. None of these pieces, however, features whitewash. A shallow bowl of an almost identical shape was also found at the funerary complex of Senwosret III in southern Abydos³⁸, although this latter shows string imprints on its exterior. All the above-mentioned examples date to the late 12th and 13th Dynasties.

24 The second bowl (ChD_16; see Fig. 6) is very similar to the first one, but its contour is rather simple³⁹, although very similar pieces from the cemetery F/I in Tell el-Dab'a were in fact listed among the inflected bowls⁴⁰. Other similar vessels were found in the Memphite region⁴¹. However, unlike these latter, ChD_6 is decorated with a white band on the rim, while further traces of white colour are visible all over its interior. In addition, a white line running from the rim to the base is also visible. However, there are no clear traces of a cross, which is attested on this type of bowl later during the 17th Dynasty⁴². The closest examples then again date to the late 12th and 13th Dynasties.

25 The next two pieces (ChD_4, 6; see Fig. 6, ChD_4), measuring 24 and 28 cm in diameter respectively, have the same form as deep, uncoated bowls with modelled rim and rounded base⁴³. The closest parallels to ChD_4 and ChD_6 all come from the funerary context, namely from the Theban necropolis, and are dated rather to the 13th Dynasty⁴⁴. Interestingly, while these bowls are considered to be used for food preparation and presentation⁴⁵, no. 4 displays spots with soot at its rim, which means that something, potentially a knot or something similar, was burnt inside it.

26 The following piece is a whitewashed, footed carinated bowl (ChD_29; see Fig. 7) with a rim diameter of 18 cm, base diameter of 11 cm, and height of 14 cm, used as an incense burner⁴⁶. The latter form is attested in all types of contexts in the Delta, the Memphite-Fayum region, at Abydos, and Nubian fortresses. It started again to be

31 No. 28 has a larger diameter of 12 cm and does not feature the red band on the rim, suggesting it might be slightly older.

32 Arnold 1982, 60–65; Arnold 1988, 140 f.; Smith 2012, 399–403.

33 Von Pilgrim 1996; see references in fn. 30 above.

34 For the form, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 198 f. type I.E.2.

35 See distribution in Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 198.

36 Seiler 2005, 61 fig. 18; Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 199 fig. 3; 200 fig. 7.

37 Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 199 fig. 2.

38 Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 200 fig. 8.

39 See Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 140 type 1.D.1.

40 Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 198 type I.E.2; 199 figs. 1. 4.

41 Arnold 1982, 30 fig. 6, 1.

42 For Elephantine, see von Pilgrim 1996, 325 fig. 143 k; 329 fig. 14 a.

43 For the form, see Seiler 2005, 55 figs. 13. 14 (»große napfförmige Schüssel«); Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 72 type I.A.5; 73 figs. 2. 3.

44 Seiler 2005, 54 f. figs. 13 (ZN 01/725). 14 (ZN 02/262).

45 Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 72.

46 For the type, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 364 type I.H.6.

produced during the late 12th Dynasty and continued in use during the 13th Dynasty⁴⁷. The so-far closest encountered parallels to no. 29 were found in Nubian Askut⁴⁸ and Dahshur⁴⁹ and suggest the date to be around the break of the 13th Dynasty or within the 13th Dynasty rather than earlier.

27 The next piece and, at the same time, also the last open form is the red-coated, carinated bowl with modelled rim, a diameter of 23 cm, and decoration featuring a white band on the rim over the red slip (ChD_12). While this decoration is very similar to the next piece (ChD_13), the exact parallel for ChD_12 has not yet been identified, although it resembles a bowl discovered at Dahshur. The latter, however, is made of Marl C clay instead of Nile C and dates rather late into the 13th Dynasty⁵⁰.

28 The last pot discovered, a red-coated (10R 5/6) bowl/basin with a ledged rim, a diameter of 32 cm, and decoration featuring a white band on (and around) the rim over the red slip (ChD_13; see Fig. 6), has a rather closed shape. Even though a similar vessel was found in the Askut fortress⁵¹, the closest parallels encountered so far are bowls from a cemetery at Hawara⁵². These latter, though having a slightly different rim orientation, feature the same type of decoration. They were dated to the reign of Amenemhat III⁵³. Similar pieces were then also noted in other cemeteries in the broader Memphite-Fayum region, such as Dahshur⁵⁴ and Harageh⁵⁵.

29 The next piece represents a red-coated beer bottle with a kettle mouth, sloping neck, and measuring 9 cm in rim diameter (ChD_32; see Fig. 7). Like the bowls, the beer bottle was also made of Nile C clay⁵⁶. The so-far closest parallel encountered of this vessel dates to the second third of the 13th Dynasty and was recovered from the administrative complex in Edfu⁵⁷. Other bottles with this form were found in Thebes⁵⁸, Dahshur⁵⁹, and the Askut fortress⁶⁰, although at least some of them featured slightly different, more slender necks.

30 The bag-shaped beaker ChD_1 is rather problematic. Its form is similar to the late Middle Kingdom type II.E.1.a.3⁶¹, but the closest parallels seem to be found rather in the 17th Dynasty⁶². In addition, the firing (and related clay tone) of this piece also correspond to what is at Qubbet el-Hawa rather attested in pieces with parallels in the 17th Dynasty, eventually later⁶³. What is less clear is the origin of this piece. Namely, was it deposited in the tomb as part of funerary equipment or not? As has been mentioned already, although it was possible to (almost) fully reconstruct this vessel, it displays a higher degree of weathering than most of the remaining pieces. It was, thus, exposed to the open air for a longer time than the rest and might, therefore, be intrusive to QH 35n.

47 Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 364 type I.H.6; 365 fig. 2; 366 fig. 7.

48 Smith 2012, 396 fig. 15 d. e.

49 Arnold 1982, 33 fig. 9, 22.

50 Arnold 1982, 35 fig. 11, 1.

51 Smith 2012, 338 fig. 8 d.

52 El-Senussi 2012, 199 fig. 4, 86/1. 93.

53 El-Senussi 2012, 197.

54 Allen 2000, 46 fig. 1, 4.

55 Engelbach 1923, pl. 34, 12 s. u.

56 Discussion of form in Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 674–677.

57 Ayers 2018, 64 fig. 4 c.

58 Seiler 2005, 75 fig. 29.

59 Arnold 1982, 31 fig. 7, 2; 33 fig. 9, 13.

60 Smith 2012, 389 fig. 9 k.

61 See Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 536. 537 figs. 1. 3; see also von Pilgrim 1996, 335 fig. 148 a–c.

62 See, e. g., von Pilgrim 1996, 331 fig. 146 k; Seiler 2005, 88 f. figs. 39. 40.

63 One of the examples is, e. g., a drinking cup encountered just east of QH 35n, which has its closest parallel in BS 11 at Elephantine (see von Pilgrim 1996, 329 fig. 145 c). Another example represents a carinated bowl with ›uncut‹ rim, again encountered east of QH 35n. For Qubbet el-Hawa parallels, see Seiler 2005, 145 fig. 64, 1. 3–5; Jiménez Serrano et al. 2009, 59 fig. 11; see also the re-evaluation by Budka 2013.

31 Lastly, the red-coated lid ChD_20 has its closest parallel at Elephantine and seems to date to the late 12th Dynasty⁶⁴.

32 To sum up, the late Middle Kingdom pottery recovered from the chapel does seem to cover the period from the late 12th Dynasty to the second third/mid-13th Dynasty. The present forms, in general, started around the break of Amenemhat III's reign and continued into the 13th Dynasty. However, in specific cases, it is possible to state that the shapes correspond better to 13th than 12th Dynasty evidence. Specific forms attested in QH 35n have expected parallels in Elephantine material. This close connection is most obvious in the case of the drinking cups, but less recognisable in the cases of several other forms. In addition, close parallels to pottery encountered in QH 35n were found in several Upper Egyptian and Lower Nubian centres, namely in Thebes, Edfu, and Nubian fortresses, and to a lesser degree also in the Memphite-Fayum region and even in the Delta. We can esp. highlight similarities of several 13th Dynasty vessels to material from the Theban necropolis⁶⁵.

33 The pottery was luckily not the only material encountered in the QH 35n chapel. Modern and ancient deposits in the chapel also yielded human remains of at least 22 different individuals of all age groups and both sexes. The bodies seem to have been bandaged, but not properly mummified. Some individuals nevertheless do preserve mummified body parts, usually extremities. These, however, seem to have resulted from natural desiccation⁶⁶ rather than specific mummification techniques. It was possible to further individualise seven of these 22 individuals. All seven were discovered in ancient deposits localised in the southern sector of the chapel. Four bodies were found in UE 27 above the shafts' mouths, while the remaining three come from the upper part of shaft 2 (UE 31). Interestingly, while attributing all human remains encountered to a particular historical era is impossible, the seven individualised remains, or at least their majority, most probably do date to the late Middle Kingdom.

34 This tentative dating allowed the evaluation of scattered remains of burial equipment, namely of particular mummy masks and coffins, found with the bodies and all over the deposit. The latter, esp. the mummy mask fragments, represent together with the pottery the most numerous finds recovered from QH 35n. Other finds like writing tools, arrows, or fragments of stone vessels are much less attested. With the exceptions of a few better-preserved mummy masks and potentially also one coffin, no material could be ascribed to a particular interred individual.

35 The first more substantially preserved human remains⁶⁷ were found 50 cm above the floor level⁶⁸, south-east of the southern pillar (UE 27_462, 463, 465; see Fig. 9 a, individual 1). The skull was found separated from the body which still preserved several desiccated parts, namely both feet and the left arm and hand, which were still covered with tissue. These human remains belonged to a young woman with an approximate height of 151 cm. Her age at death was between 18–20 years, and the dorsal pits on her pubis suggest she had given birth to at least one child⁶⁹. Several pathological findings,

64 Von Pilgrim 1996, 339 fig. 150 c.

65 See Seiler 2005. There may be bias towards the Theban material, as the authors did not have the chance to consult contemporary material from other Upper Egyptian necropoleis.

66 Contact with the sand after the looting.

67 Sex and age of the individuals analysed were estimated based on the skulls and *os coxae* and in accordance with methods presented in Buikstra – Ubelaker 1994; particular attention was given to the method of Thomas W. Todd concerning the pubis and quite precisely in the studied cases. The height was determined based on measurements of large bones; see Raxter et al. 2008, 147–155. Macroscopic observation was used to study normal variability and ancestry (for the latter, see Hefner 2009) as well as pathologies. The body is considered complete when long bones of extremities, the axial skeleton, and the skull have been preserved.

68 The body was sloping, the upper part was approx. 30 cm higher than the lower one.

69 Snodgrass – Galloway 2003.

namely *cribra femoralis*, *spina bifida*, and osteitis in the right *scapula*, point out her difficult life conditions, though not the cause of her death.

36 Next to the body of this female were found fragments of a cartonnage mummy mask (QH 35n_INV 33, Fig. 9 e), although the spatial proximity does not necessarily confirm that it belonged to her. The preserved part of the mask displays what seems to be a *nemes*-head cover with interchanging blue, green, and red stripes, all painted with very vivid and saturated colours⁷⁰. The *nemes*-head cover does not seem to be found frequently in non-royal Middle Kingdom burials. But our view might be biased by the fact that the best-published masks all come from just one site, the Mirgissa fortress, situated approx. 350 km south of the Aswan area⁷¹. Despite this limitation, several fragments found in Mirgissa tomb 131 and dating between the late 12th and 13th Dynasties do seem to represent a similar *nemes*-like head cover⁷². This indicates that this interment could be dated to the late Middle Kingdom and could also have been equipped with a mummy mask that had parallels 350 km upstream, on the other end of Lower Nubia.

37 Two other individuals from UE 27 are known only from their skulls. The first one (UE 27_464; individual 2) was found together with the skull of the aforementioned woman (individual 1) and belonged to a child in the second stage of infancy who suffered from *cribra orbitalia*. The third skull (individual 3), belonging to an elderly lady, was found in the immediate vicinity. The pathological findings of this third skull similarly show *cribra orbitalia* as well as porotic hyperostosis that could be related with response to an ›environmental stress‹. No mummy masks could be ascribed to these latter individuals.

38 The best-preserved interment from UE 27 belonged to a mature lady (UE 27_534; individual 4; cartonnage QH 35n_INV 32) found at the southern wall of the chapel at the mouth of shaft 2. A substantial part was still wrapped in several layers of linen cloths (see Fig. 9 c). It does not seem to have been properly mummified, but again the body parts that ended up in direct contact with the sand conserve desiccated tissues. The lady was approx. 152 cm tall. On her spine were observed degenerative lesions, namely osteoarthritis and degenerative disc disease, as well as spondylitis. The latter is esp. interesting, as it could have been caused by an infectious disease, probably tuberculosis. At some point in her life, this woman also suffered fractures of nasal bones and a rib, both of which healed completely.

39 The only piece of funerary equipment which without any doubt belonged to this lady is her cartonnage mummy mask⁷³. The fragments of this mask were still attached to her mummified body, but the very face was missing. What survived was a part of the blue-painted head cover/wig with white ends displaying horizontal black lines reaching up to the lower part of the broad *wesekh*-collar. The latter was decorated with pendants of uniform colour. If the material from Mirgissa represents a relevant comparison, these pendants would suggest a date to the late 12th Dynasty⁷⁴. The central vertical band bore an inscription, which was rather hastily engraved. In addition, the name of the deceased, Senbet, was added to the mask with smaller signs, and possibly also by a different hand (see Fig. 9 b)⁷⁵. The cartonnage mask could have been purchased for lady Senbet's burial as a finished product, to which only the name was added later⁷⁶.

70 Comparable, e. g., to the colours on the collar of the Mirgissa mask E26061 in Rigault-Déon 2012, 208 f.

71 See Rigault-Déon 2012, 31–35.


72 Rigault-Déon 2012, 221 frag. j.

73 See also Jiménez Serrano et al. 2018, 148.

74 Rigault-Déon 2012, 43 f. type 1.

75 For a preliminary report, see Jiménez Serrano et al. 2018, 148.

76 For the possibility that at least some mummy masks were produced ›in advance‹, see Rigault-Déon 2012, 59.

46 As in the case of lady Senbet's mummy mask, here the name of the deceased was also added at a later stage and with a different hand than the remainder of the inscription. The exact name of the owner is, however, not completely clear. The phrase *n kꜣ n* is followed by signs *s-ztj* (S29-T9a). It is not clear whether the word *ztj* was used here as a title/provenance indicator (archer [?], inhabitant of Ta-Sety/Lower Nubia), or whether it was part of this man's name. However, considering that sealings of *jmy-rꜣ ztj.w* were found in a late Middle Kingdom depot at Elephantine⁸⁵, the chance that the term *ztj* designated a member of some specific group is high. Importantly, the above-mentioned sealings were found in a depot right in front of the area of the earlier governor's palace⁸⁶. The word *ztj* is followed by the locally well-known name *Hkꜣ-jb* (S38-N29-F34-Y1, )⁸⁷ and by the signs *j-n-t* (M17-N35-X1)⁸⁸. Only after these last signs does the determinative of a divine being (A40) appear, referring to the deceased in his condition of Osiris.

47 Lastly, it is also possible that the coffin with high-quality decoration found in the northern part of the chapel (QH 35n_INV 23; see *in situ* remains in Fig. 9 d) might belong to this (Sety-)Hegaib(-Inet), as its short end was found right below his body and mummy mask (see Fig. 10 a), but the evidence is not conclusive.

48 (Sety-)Hegaib(-Inet) stands out from the above-mentioned individuals, mostly for his possession of a much higher quality mummy mask, suggesting he had a higher social status and/or acquisitive power, and also for his later burial date⁸⁹. It should be noted, however, that remains of other mummy masks were found dispersed throughout the deposit. These could not be associated with any deceased and they unfortunately do not preserve any name. At least one of them also shows a higher quality of work, as well as decoration with a *rishi*-motif, suggesting again a date around the mid-13th Dynasty⁹⁰. Other fragments, this time of lower quality and thus probably belonging to another mummy mask, then again display Mirgissa type 2 *wesekh*-collars.

49 The dates of the burials with mummy masks presented above broadly correspond to those of earlier analysed pottery pieces. Both demonstrate that a series of burials took place in QH 35n between the late 12th and in the course of the 13th Dynasty, possibly up to its second third. Two of the oldest burials appear to be those of two women (individuals 1 and 4) found in the south-eastern corner of the chapel (UE 27). At least two interments, one of a female (individual 6) and another of a male individual (individual 7), were found in the south-western corner of the chapel, in the upper part of shaft 2 (UE 31), then dated to the 13th Dynasty. We have no clue regarding the date of individuals deprived of mummy masks in both areas. In addition, fragments of mummy masks encountered suggest that at least two other individuals, but possibly more, whose identity remains unknown, were also buried in QH 35n in the course of the 13th Dynasty. The latter masks might or might not belong to one of the individualised bodies, e. g., to that of the male individual (individual 5) whose body was intertwined with that of the 13th Dynasty individual (individual 7).

50 Unfortunately, unlike in the case of pottery, no exact parallels of the best-preserved mummy masks have been identified so far. However, many smaller fragments, usually those of pendants and *wesekh*-collars, but also pieces with the *rishi*-motif

2003, 55), pushing the date later in the 13th Dynasty. In addition, the formula names Ptah-Sokar-Osiris which only became popular in the late 12th Dynasty (Amenemhat III); see, e. g., Smither 1939; Vernus 1991; Franke 2003.

85 Von Pilgrim 1996, 242 fig. 98, 5; 264 fig. 114; 308 no. SVK 53 a.

86 See the location of house 12 (find place) in relation to house 2 (palace) in von Pilgrim 1996, 258 fig. 111.

87 PN I, 256 no. 3.

88 The lack of phonograms or determinatives leaves open several possibilities for identifying the name. For some of the possibilities, see PN I, 33 nos. 3, 4; 38 no. 22.

89 Hegaib's burial will be the subject of a separate study.

90 For the closest parallel, see Rigault-Déon 2012, 96.

and other small details including the colours used, very much resemble material from Nubian Mirgissa⁹¹. An interesting and also important fact is that at least two of these masks were apparently purchased as finished work, and only then was the name of the deceased added. This practice is also attested at Mirgissa⁹², but unfortunately gives no clues regarding the place of production of these objects.

51 Another important question is, how and where were these burials originally located in the tomb? Were all these burials placed in the chapel, or were some of them dragged from the shafts? And were they the only late Middle Kingdom burials in the tomb or not? To answer these questions, we need to analyse also the material from the shafts.

Shaft 1

52 As has been stated above, the deposit with the contemporary material (UE 33) descended into shaft 1 approx. to the level of the last step and extended further west up to the middle part of the blocking wall. Only the easternmost part of the shaft, right below the staircase, preserved a few centimetres-thick layer of relatively clean sand (UE 41). It contained late Middle Kingdom material, among others, fragments of a hieratic tablet (QH 35n_INV 19), a substantial part of which was found in the southern wing of the chapel (UE 27), fragments of a carinated footed bowl (ChD_29; see § 26), a substantial part of which was found in UE 33, and fragments of a beer bottle (ChD_32; see § 29) whose remaining parts were again found in the contemporary deposit, but this time in UE 29.

53 Underneath UE 41 was a few centimetres-thick deposit of stone chips and sand sloping towards the west, but not extending further to the corridor (UE 42). This latter deposit contained much older pottery, including, e. g., non-diagnostic Nile C sherds most probably originating from the Old Kingdom to First Intermediate Period beer jars⁹³, which might represent remains of the original fill.

54 Near the centre, the corridor leading to the burial chamber was blocked with a stone wall. Interestingly, only a roughly rectangular space measuring approx. 50 × 60 cm was opened in its upper southern corner (see Fig. 11 a).

55 The funerary apartments behind this wall were almost free of fill, only the floor of the burial chamber was covered with a 5–10 cm thick layer of *tafl*-chips, sand, dust, and decayed wooden fragments. At the southern wall of the chamber were found human remains placed with the head towards the west (see Fig. 11 b). They belonged to a mature man, whose advanced age suggested generalised traces of osteoarthritis and notable osteoporosis in the lower extremities. Apart from this, his first lumbar vertebra had suffered a compression fracture, possibly as a consequence of a fall, which could be related to ankylosis detected on the first and the second vertebra.

56 Besides these human remains, the funerary chamber contained a substantially preserved (though unfortunately without rim) red-coated carinated cup/small bowl (UE 47_737_1; see Fig. 5)⁹⁴. Like the hemispheric cups mentioned earlier, this type of vessel was also very common during the Middle Kingdom. Close parallels to UE 47_737_1 were then found in the broader Aswan area, at Qubbet el-Hawa itself⁹⁵ and on Elephantine⁹⁶, dating to the late 12th Dynasty, but the form was still used well

91 Compare with Rigault-Déon 2012.

92 Rigault-Déon 2012, 28.

93 For the typology, see Rzeuska 2006, 382 tab. 1.

94 For the type, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 236 type I.F.4.c.

95 See Edel et al. 2008 I, 382 fig. 54; 384 fig. 74. These types of cups were found in tomb QH 30, where according to Edel the latest clearly dated Middle Kingdom burial (Senwosret III–Amenemhat III) took place; see Edel et al. 2008 I, 388.

96 Von Pilgrim 1996, 347 fig. 154 e.

into the 13th Dynasty. Besides the cup, only fragments of inscribed stucco once covering a box or coffin (QH 35n/18/C1/745) were found in the burial chamber. These latter have close parallels among the late Middle Kingdom material from the Mirgissa fortress⁹⁷.

57 The only datable material in the burial chamber itself was, therefore, clearly of the late Middle Kingdom, while remains of much older material fitting with the suggested date for the tomb construction were found in a small deposit right below the staircase descending to the shaft. These may very well represent the last remains of the original owner's burial goods. Shaft 1 was, thus, reused during the late Middle Kingdom. The questions are why it was chosen and how and by whom it was used. Did the displaced human remains encountered in the burial chamber belong to the re-occupants (or one of them), or were they of the original owner? And what fragments found in the chapel belonged to the person interred in shaft 1 during the Middle Kingdom? Did the fragments found in UE 41 belong to him, or did they accidentally fall into the shaft during the looting? All of these questions are difficult to answer before all of the material encountered is fully analysed.

Shaft 2

58 The neighbouring shaft 2 was completely filled with the deposit containing the looted burials described above. None of these looted interments was, however, originally located in the burial chamber of this shaft, as the bodies buried there (UEs 39 and 40; see Fig. 10 d) had never been removed.

59 The first and most probably also the original interment (UE 40) was placed on the floor in a single rectangular, heavily decayed wooden coffin. Inside the coffin were found well-preserved human remains belonging to a young man with an estimated height of about 167 cm. Various markers like porotic hyperostosis on the skull or *cribra femoralis* point out his difficult life conditions. In addition, at some point in his life, both his nasal bones were fractured and then healed completely.

60 Decayed wooden object(s) and a complete bowl (QH 35n_INV 29), most probably belonging to a later burial, were found pushed towards the western wall of the chamber. The bowl is very typical of the First Intermediate Period, and of the very same date, there is also a globular jar (QH 35n_INV 28) found in the upper part of the chamber's fill⁹⁸. Both pieces thus probably represent what was left of the man's burial goods.

61 The second interment (UE 39), laid in two heavily decayed rectangular coffins, was placed right on the coffin of UE 40. The lid of one of these coffins, possibly of the inner one, was found next to it. The remains of white stucco suggest that the outer coffin was minimally painted. Unfortunately, no remains of inscriptions were detected on these stucco fragments. Decayed wooden remains found at the lintel of the burial chamber might be from the lid of the second coffin.

62 The human remains inside these two coffins also belonged to a young man. His body was found to be incomplete, most notably his skull was missing. Next to his coffin was found a hemispherical cup (QH 35n_INV 27; see Fig. 5) with a red-decorated rim and a practically identical vessel index to that of the cup found in the chapel, i. e., index 161, suggesting a similar date to the late 12th or 13th Dynasty (see discussion above).

63 The context of this vessel, unfortunately, does not allow us to clearly state whether it belonged to burial goods of the earlier interment (UE 39) or whether it accidentally got into the chamber when it was looted. But the first option seems slightly more possible. In addition, uninscribed, stuccoed, and white-painted wooden coffins

97 Rigault-Déon 2012, 245.

98 For the dating, see Seidlmayer 2005, 282. 294 fig. 2, 97-2A/4. 103-B/S. 109/3. 111-2A/4. 111-2A/5.

were found, e. g., in the late Middle Kingdom cemetery MX TC at Mirgissa. The latter was in use between the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties⁹⁹.

64 Like shaft 1, shaft 2 also then seems to have been reused during the late Middle Kingdom, though in a slightly particular way, by placing the new burial right over the ancient one. Why this solution was preferred is currently unclear.

Shaft 3

65 The last shaft, number 3, represents an exception in so far as its burial chamber was found intact (see Fig. 11 c. d), and the fill of the shaft also looked original. The objects encountered then rather speak of an earlier date between the First Intermediate Period and the early Middle Kingdom.

66 The important question is, why would this space be the only one in the tomb left intact? It is difficult to accept that those who reused the funerary complex during the late Middle Kingdom would not notice the presence of this third shaft. As has been stated earlier, as well as the fact that they had to fully clean shafts 1 and 2 in order to place the interments there, the coffin on the northern side of the chapel was laid directly on the chapel's floor. It is, therefore, logical to think that the whole chapel was cleaned when the tomb started to be reused.

67 We might suggest two plausible explanations: first, the late Middle Kingdom people in fact cleaned shaft 3, or at least the upper part of the fill consisting of the loose sand. Once the sand was removed, they would find the very compact layer of *tafl*-chips on the northern side of the shaft, which they could consider a floor, while in the southern part of the shaft, they would see something resembling a dead end, giving the impression that the shaft had been left unfinished. The second possibility is that the late Middle Kingdom people found shafts 1 and 2 opened (i. e., with at least part of their fill gone) and looted. As they had been looted, these spaces might have been, for nowadays unknown reasons, considered acceptable for reuse, while the intact shaft 3 was not. Be that as it may, the reluctance to use shaft 3 can provide us with important information regarding the possible mindset of late Middle Kingdom Egyptians.

The Courtyard

68 The last set of information on late Middle Kingdom burials comes from the courtyard. Except for the area right in front of the tomb entrance and the north-western corner, the majority of the QH 35n courtyard was filled with wind-blown sand (see Fig. 8 a. c). In the latter area were found two, respectively three, deposits (see, e. g., Fig. 8 d) containing a large amount of the material from the tomb's interior. These are related to the existence of three blocking and/or retaining walls in the tomb entrance (see, e. g., Fig. 8 e. f). Thus, the latest of these walls rested on an approx. 20 cm thick, greyish sandy layer containing fragments of looted burials, as well as contemporary material like newspapers (UE 24). Below it was a deposit sloping towards the east and towards the north-western corner of the courtyard. It again consisted of greyish sand in addition to smaller to middle-size stones, scarce mud brick fragments, and again remains of spoiled burials (UE 25). The same smaller-sized stones were then found forming a kind of retention wall in the westernmost part of the entrance. The remains of the earliest blocking wall were again situated in the tomb entrance itself (i. e., east of the latter retaining wall) and reposed on a 10 cm thick sandy layer (identified as part of UE 29).

99 Rigault-Déon 2012, 21.

69 However, several (not only) late Middle Kingdom pieces were also found in the wind-blown sand filling in the courtyard. In comparison to the material from the above-mentioned deposits, the provenance of the material from the sand fill material is less certain. However, it is clear that at least some fragments manifestly originated from the tomb's interior (e. g., fragments of stucco from coffin QH 35n_INV 23). Therefore, it was decided to analyse this material as well.

70 Only the pottery, representing the most significant material finds from this area, and more specifically the ceramic fragments recovered during the 2018 season closest to the tomb façade were analysed for the purpose of this study. Overall, the majority of the pottery, 83 %, was found in the wind-blown sand, and only 17 % came from UE 25, probably related to the tomb's earlier survey. In addition, the majority of the material recovered from the wind-blown sand, including the pottery, was found in the uppermost 60 cm of the fill (between 132.52 m ASL and 131.90 m ASL), i. e., higher than UE 25.

71 Similarly to the tomb's chapel, the preliminary pottery assessment revealed that these deposits contained ceramics from four, potentially five different eras (see Fig. 4), albeit in slightly different proportion¹⁰⁰. Also here, just like in the tomb's interior, the late Middle Kingdom pottery fragments prevailed. Importantly, nine out of eleven diagnostic fragments/pieces belonged to late Middle Kingdom pottery. One diagnostic fragment then belonged to a First Intermediate Period bowl, comparable to the material from shaft 2. The dating of the beaker (QH 35n_INV 18; see Fig. 7), found overturned but still with pieces of charcoal inside in the south-western corner of the courtyard approx. 20 cm above floor level (UE 23), is unclear to the authors. It is made of soft and coarser Nile clay (hue 7.5 YR 6/4), measures 13.8 cm in rim diameter and 5 cm in base diameter and is 9.5 cm high. The surface is uncoated and its flat base displays a finger imprint just like bases of New Kingdom beer jars. Its form then roughly resembles some late Middle Kingdom pieces¹⁰¹, and the firing and use of coarser clay could also indicate this date. But a similar form is also attested in the New Kingdom¹⁰².

72 As well as the diagnostic pieces, one non-diagnostic fragment clearly belonged to a late Old Kingdom beer jar, while several non-diagnostic Late Antiquity fragments were clearly identified. A relatively large proportion of the recovered fragments could not be dated with more precision than to the First Intermediate Period to late Middle Kingdom. Nevertheless, considering the First Intermediate Period to early Middle Kingdom forms attested so far in the QH 35n area, the vast majority of pieces in this group originated rather from the late Middle Kingdom.

73 The vast majority of late Middle Kingdom pottery, eight fragments, again belonged to open forms: four belonged to cups, two to bowls/cooking pots, and two to footed bowls used as incense burners. None of the so-called drinking cups (UE 1_407 + 459_1–4) was reconstructed into a complete profile. Nevertheless, the rim diameters (approx. 10 cm) and a red band on the rim broadly correspond to material found inside QH 35n. Contrary to drinking cups, the deep hemispherical bowl decorated with incised lines and reddish-brown slip (UE 1_427_1)¹⁰³ and a cooking pot¹⁰⁴ represent forms so far unattested in the tomb's interior, although their suggested date, the late 12th–13th Dynasty, again coincides with material found inside the tomb.

100 The present account concerning the date of the pottery is based on material recovered during the 2018 season (in total 79 fragments, of which ten were diagnostic) and on 13 documented diagnostic pieces from the 2016 and 2017 seasons.

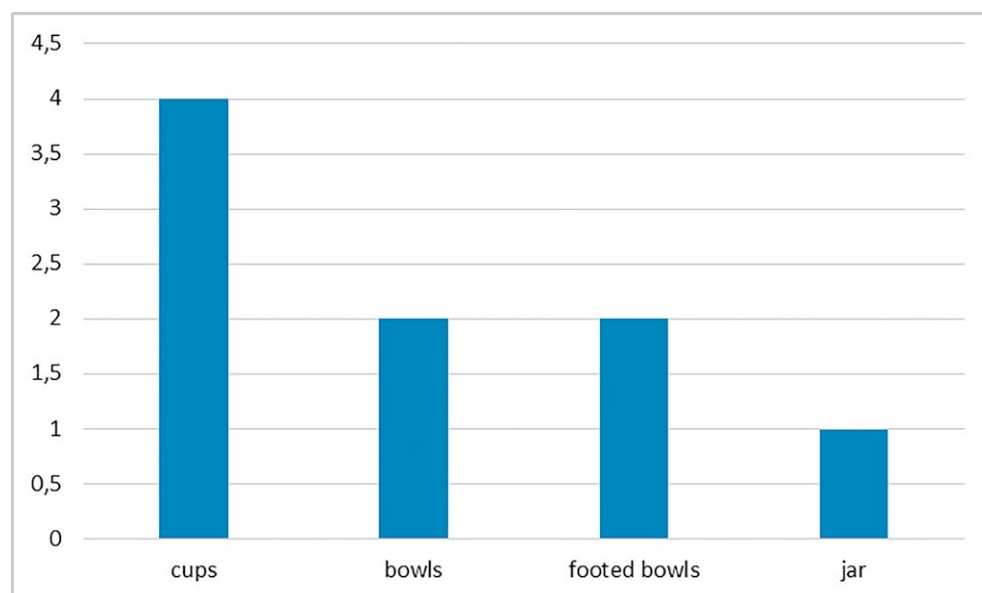
101 See, e. g., Smith 2012, 383 fig. 3, 8.

102 See, e. g., Bourriau 1981, 34 fig. 1, 2; Aston 1999, 146 f. fig. 326. Note that Robert Kuhn, in personal communication, is more inclined to consider this piece Ramesside.

103 For the form, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 64 type I.A.3; for parallels, see, e. g., Rzeuska 2012, 350 no. 53; Ayers 2016, 31 fig. 2 f.

104 For the form, see Rzeuska 2012, 350 no. 51.

Fig. 4: Attested types of late Middle Kingdom pottery found in the western half of the courtyard during the 2018 season



4

74 Similarly, the fully reconstructed whitewashed footed hemispherical bowl (QH 35n_INV 12; see Fig. 7), used as an incense burner and found in the sand fill, does not have any direct parallel inside the tomb¹⁰⁵. Incense burners similar to QH 35n_INV 12 were found in Nubia¹⁰⁶ and even in the Memphite necropolis¹⁰⁷. These again date around the break of the 13th Dynasty. The second footed bowl (UE 25_436_1) originated from UE 25 and is not fully preserved. Its carinated shape corresponds roughly to the form encountered inside QH 35n (ChD_29).

75 Even though the provenance of the late Middle Kingdom finds from the QH 35n courtyard cannot be determined with absolute certainty, their closeness to the QH 35n entrance as well as their resemblance to the material encountered in the tomb's interior suggest that the finds, or at least a significant part of them, could originate from the interments in QH 35n and/or be related to its use during the late Middle Kingdom. It is nevertheless interesting that they were found in the uppermost parts of the fill. It is clear that the deposits were formed posterior to Late Antiquity. In the case of UE 25, it has been stated that it is probably a result of a relatively recent tomb survey or that it was at least disturbed at that time. Also, in the wind-blown sand was found a fragment of contemporary material, so it thus seems that the material recovered from the tomb during the 2018 season was deposited in its finding place in a relatively recent era.

Summary

76 In the previous parts, we have described a series of late Middle Kingdom burials placed in the reused late Old Kingdom to First Intermediate Period tomb QH 35n. The exact number of the interments is currently unclear. Based on mummy masks and their fragments, we can at present estimate that a minimum of five/six burials took place in this era. However, further evidence suggests that this number was probably higher (seven–nine). Four of the examined interments, which were potentially of late Middle

105 For the type, see Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 350 type I.H.1.

106 See, e. g., Schiestl – Seiler 2012, 351 fig. 3; Smith 2012, 396 fig. 15 c.

107 Kawai et al. 2012, 157 fig. 8, 5.

Kingdom date, belonged to male individuals, four were females, and one interment belonged to a child. Interestingly, regarding age, all of the female individuals but one were mature or even elderly, while the interred men except one, whose date is unclear, were younger individuals. All bodies show the same traces of having been exposed to environmental stress. Two potentially suffered from serious diseases, tuberculosis and brucellosis respectively. Some individuals also display traces of injuries like the healed subperiosteal contusion on the skull of young (Sety-)Heqaib(-Inet), the healed broken nasal bones and rib in the case of lady Senbet, or a vertebra fracture in the case of an elderly individual from the burial chamber of shaft 1. These findings give us further information regarding the difficult life of these individuals.

77 Despite the fact that all of the interred bodies show imprints of difficult life conditions, the interred persons did not belong to the lowest social strata. The richest burials like that of (Sety-)Heqaib(-Inet) are, e. g., comparable to the richest late Middle Kingdom burials encountered at Lisht or Mirgissa. Janine D. Bourriau stated that the former did not belong to the highest elite, as the latter moved out to be buried near the king¹⁰⁸. They, however, still belonged to inhabitants of the royal capital who potentially served the king, albeit in lower positions.

78 In addition, the individuals interred in QH 35n probably did not have the same acquisitive power. The question is, why? Were these differences noted mostly between male and female individuals? Were they based on a particular social status/place within a household, irrespectively of their gender, or did females more regularly have less acquisitive power than men in the same group, or were they equipped by relatives to do less quality work than their male companions?

79 A specific grouping of interments of a particular date was discerned. The female burials encountered in UE 27 seem to be slightly older, from the late 12th–early 13th Dynasty, than the bodies (male and female) found in the fill of shaft 2 and dated to the 13th Dynasty. To the earlier group then probably also belonged the male individual found in the burial chamber of shaft 2. We have absolutely no clue regarding the situation in the main shaft 1, but it is logical to suppose that this space at least began to be used during the late 12th–early 13th Dynasty.

80 It is almost impossible to state where the displaced bodies in UEs 27 and 31 were originally buried. The 13th Dynasty bodies in the fill of shaft 2 had to be dragged there after the latter had already been looted and was still mostly empty, but none of them could be buried there as there was no more space left. We should also consider that the later 13th Dynasty interments were probably easier to reach than the earlier late 12th/early 13th Dynasty bodies. Lastly, the tomb robbers would have had to deal first with the interments in the chapel and only then with those in the shafts. The main shaft 1 would probably be more appealing regarding expected loot than the smaller shaft 2, and thus, it is logical that it would be entered first or simultaneously with the latter.

81 It has already been stated that none of the displaced bodies could originate from shaft 2. The burial chamber of shaft 1 would be able to accommodate two interments, three if the coffins were less than 50 cm wide and practically touching one another. Another one or two interments, again depending on the size of coffins (if they were used), would enter the corridor behind the blocking wall. We should, however, consider the question of how feasible it would be to place a larger number of bodies into this space, blocked with the thick stone wall, which would have to be reopened with any new burial taking place, unless they would all have died at the same time. The remaining individuals, i. e. approx. four–six bodies, would have had to be interred in the chapel. At the same time, placing more than one interment in the chapel would require

108 Bourriau 2003, 56–58.

the shafts to be filled. These latter chapel burials could be classified, if our supposition is correct, as ›sequential (?) multiple burials«.

82 The finding places of particular groupings of looted interments are difficult to explain. As has been stated, part of the coffin found on the floor in the northern wing of the chapel was found dragged into the middle of shaft 2, together with three 13th Dynasty interments. This means that the coffin was dragged there only after the shaft was looted. It is nevertheless possible that the tomb robbers, acting in a relatively confined space, had to move some interments or their already looted parts more than once. Lastly, as has been stated, a possibility exists that (a) further burial(s) was/were interred in the tomb later, during the New Kingdom. It is not clear whether this/these would have been laid on the sand fill containing the looted earlier burials or whether the space would have been somehow tidied, e. g., partially cleaned, levelled, etc.

83 Those who buried the late Middle Kingdom individuals in QH 35n made use of an already existing monument which was not empty at that time. The first period of QH 35n's use probably corresponds to the late 6th Dynasty/early First Intermediate Period and should be related to the rise of Heqaib's funerary cult. Further burial apartments and interments were added between the Heracleopolitan Period and early Middle Kingdom. In at least one instance, the late Middle Kingdom burial was placed right over the pre-existing First Intermediate Period interment, without displacing the original occupant. Whether similar cases also occurred in shaft 1 is unclear, but possible, while shaft 3 surprisingly stayed intact and unused by late Middle Kingdom re-occupants. Lastly, while we can somewhat reconstruct what preceded the late Middle Kingdom interments, it is difficult to state in which way the tomb was used during later periods (e. g., the late New Kingdom).

84 To lay new interments right next to/over (probably) looted burials from an earlier era was probably not an important problem for ancient Egyptians. Intrusive burials and tomb reuses are nothing exceptional, esp. in places where, like at Qubbet el-Hawa, the space was limited¹⁰⁹. An interesting testimony on how a person could deal with the issue of tomb reuse at Qubbet el-Hawa may be offered by an early Middle Kingdom document found in tomb QH 30b¹¹⁰. The latter records a payment for the burial of the payer's father in the given monument, which might potentially be understood as a payment to an already dead owner¹¹¹. This document is nevertheless earlier than the evidence from QH 35n, thus, another set of ideas could be in play there behind the specific attitude toward earlier tomb occupants. As has been stated above, QH 35n probably hosted late Middle Kingdom ›sequential multiple burials«, a type of interment which became relatively popular precisely during the late Middle Kingdom era. These were related to specific socio-economic developments, particularly those related to the contemporary roles of households¹¹². Gianluca Miniaci also suggested that the bodies in multiple burials could actually be objectified and become constituents of a »burial equipment communication program«¹¹³.

85 As seen in an earlier late Middle Kingdom tomb (QH 34aa)¹¹⁴, multiple burials at Qubbet el-Hawa were not uncommon for the local elite. These burials represent the social differences among the members of the upper segments of society. Thus, single burials belonging to the closest circle of governors occurred in the grand funerary complexes, while multiple burials would be occupied by other members of the ruling house-

109 Compare with data in Edel et al. 2008 I–III.

110 Edel et al. 2008 I, 404. 407 no. 30b/16.

111 Seidlmayer 2006.

112 For more see, e. g., Grajetzki 2007, 24 f.; Miniaci 2019, 122 f. 131–137. 145 f.

113 Miniaci 2019, 148.

114 For a short introduction of this tomb, see Jiménez Serrano et al. 2017.

hold. Furthermore, in the case of QH 35n, it seems likely that this late Old Kingdom to First Intermediate Period tomb might be understood as part of the original cemetery of those who were contemporaries to the (later) deified governor Heqaib due to the relative proximity of this tomb to his original burial. Therefore, QH 35n would be related in certain ways to the local divinity.

86 Regarding the broader spatial context, no close parallels of the better-preserved mummy masks have been identified so far. However, as has been stated, numerous small fragments and details correspond very well with the late Middle Kingdom material from Mirgissa¹¹⁵. The recovered pottery then has close parallels not only on the island of Elephantine (i. e., in the local centre) but also in the broader area of Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia and, in certain cases, seemingly as far as the Memphite-Fayum area.

87 This picture might, however, be slightly biased by the fact that the Upper Egyptian 13th Dynasty pottery assemblages of a funerary context from Theban tombs and Nubian fortresses are better published than those from elsewhere. Similarly, the contemporary mummy masks from Mirgissa are better-known than those from other localities. However, despite the publication bias, connections between the QH 35n material and the Theban area, but also Nubian fortresses and Edfu, would, in fact, be feasible, even if it would only concern the circulation of ideas. During the late Middle Kingdom, this area formed one administrative unit: *wꜣrt tp-rsj*, which was directed precisely from Thebes¹¹⁶. The nature and intensity of mutual contacts among various localities and esp. between particular localities and Thebes is unclear and most probably varied in time. But we do know, e. g., that in the 13th Dynasty an official reporting to the vizier (*wꜣm.w*) resided in Elephantine and regularly communicated with Thebes¹¹⁷. But in order to further develop what forms similar contacts could have had, we will need to await the full analysis of the material.

88 While the last large ›governoral‹ funerary complex at Qubbet el-Hawa, QH 33, was constructed during the first half of the reign of Amenemhat III, as the present paper demonstrates, at least part of the lower elites continued to use this burial ground even after this moment. This brings up the question as to where Heqaib III's successors, local governors Ameny-Seneb, Khakaure-Seneb, and their followers, were buried¹¹⁸. Franke suggested that the provincial governors of the very late 12th Dynasty and the first half of the 13th Dynasty constructed their tombs around the royal cemeteries¹¹⁹. However, there still exists the possibility that the governors of Elephantine during these decades opened a new cemetery, which has not yet been located.

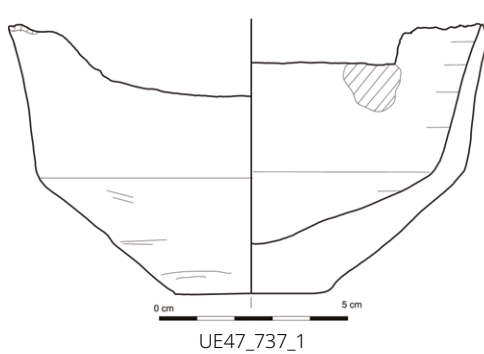
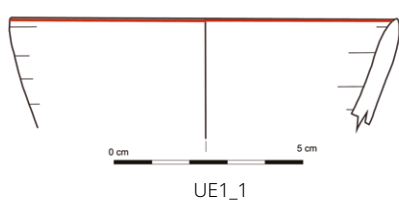
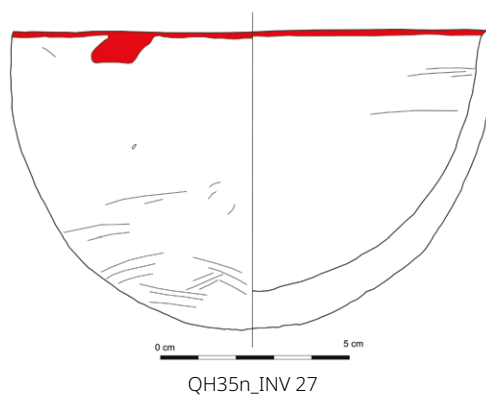
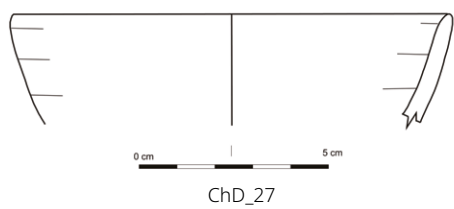
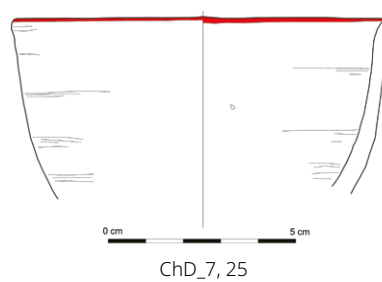
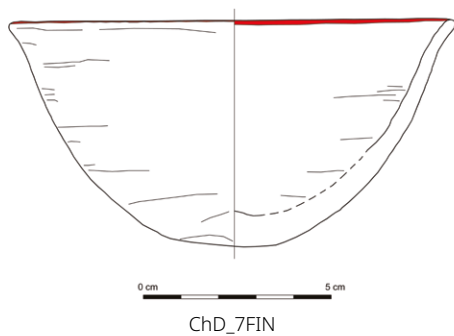
115 See § 34–56 and Rigault-Déon 2012.

116 E. g., Grajetzki 2006; Quirke 1990.

117 Note, e. g., the 13th Dynasty communication between the vizier and the vizier's bureau in Thebes and the *wꜣm.w n 3bw* (an official cooperating in localities with the vizier's bureau[x]), Heqaib, in Elephantine (papyrus Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung Berlin, P. 10470); see Quirke 1990, 203–205.

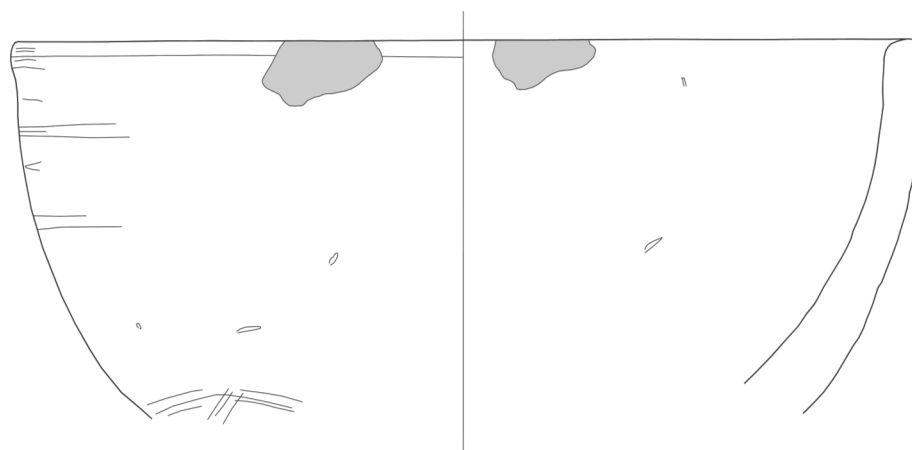
118 About the succession order of the late 12th Dynasty governors of Elephantine, see Franke 1994, 42–48 tab. 1.

119 Franke 1991.



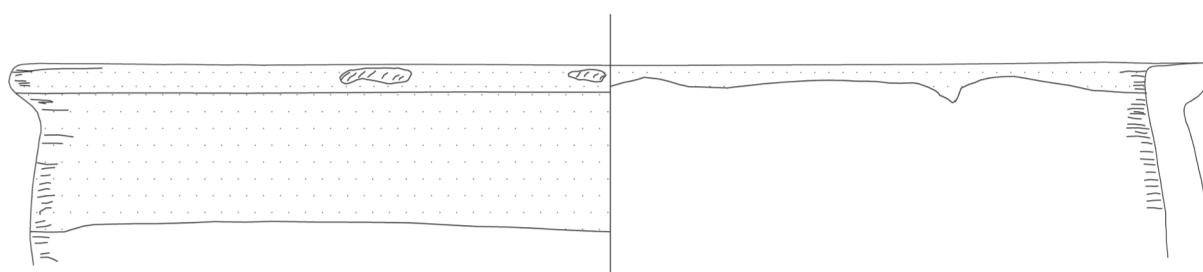
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Fig. 5: Examples of drinking cups encountered in QH 35n (scale 1 : 2)



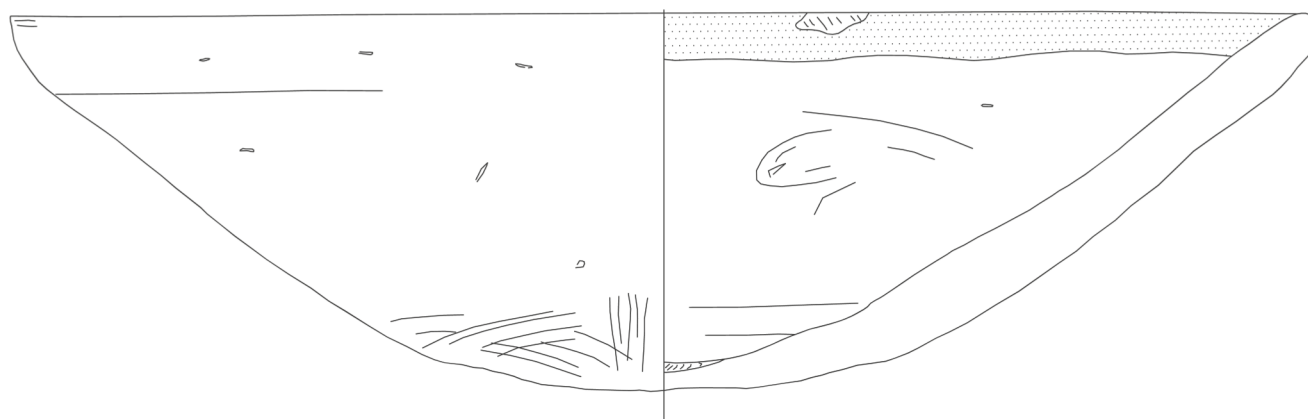
0 cm 5 cm 10 cm

ChD_4



0 cm 5 cm 10 cm

ChD_13

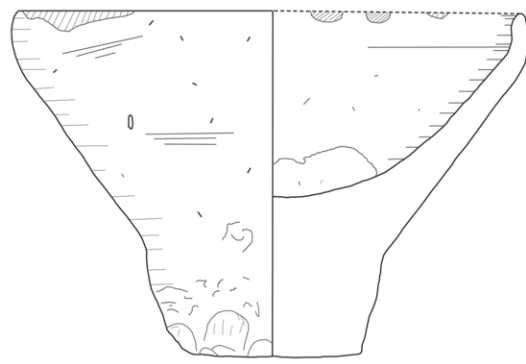


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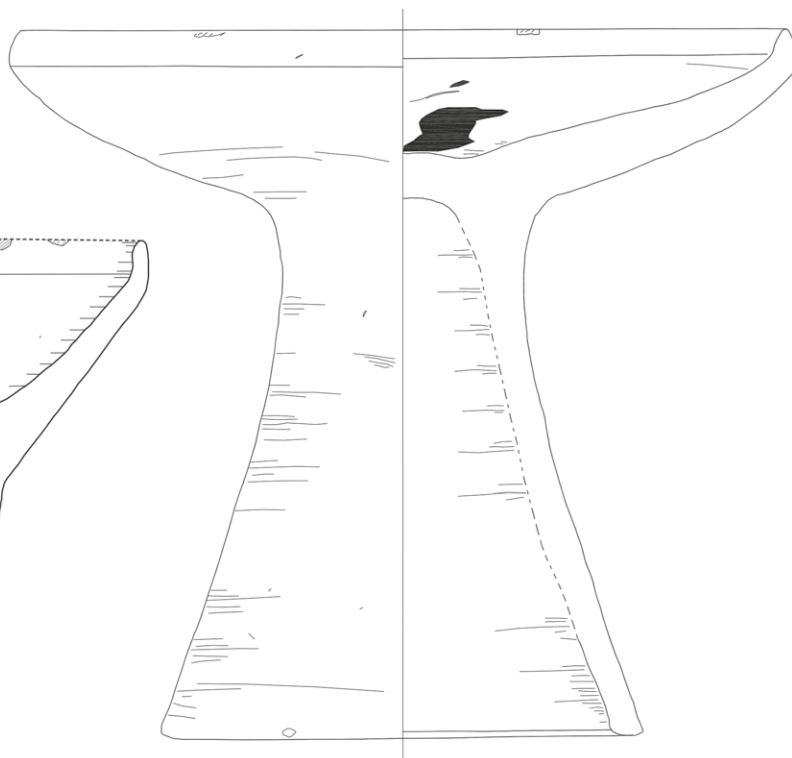
ChD_16

6

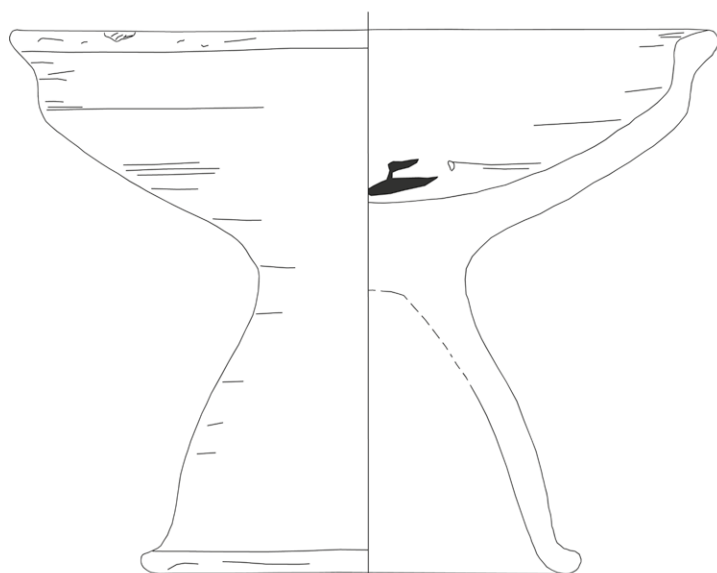
Fig. 6: Examples of bowls/dishes encountered in QH 35n (scale 1 : 2)



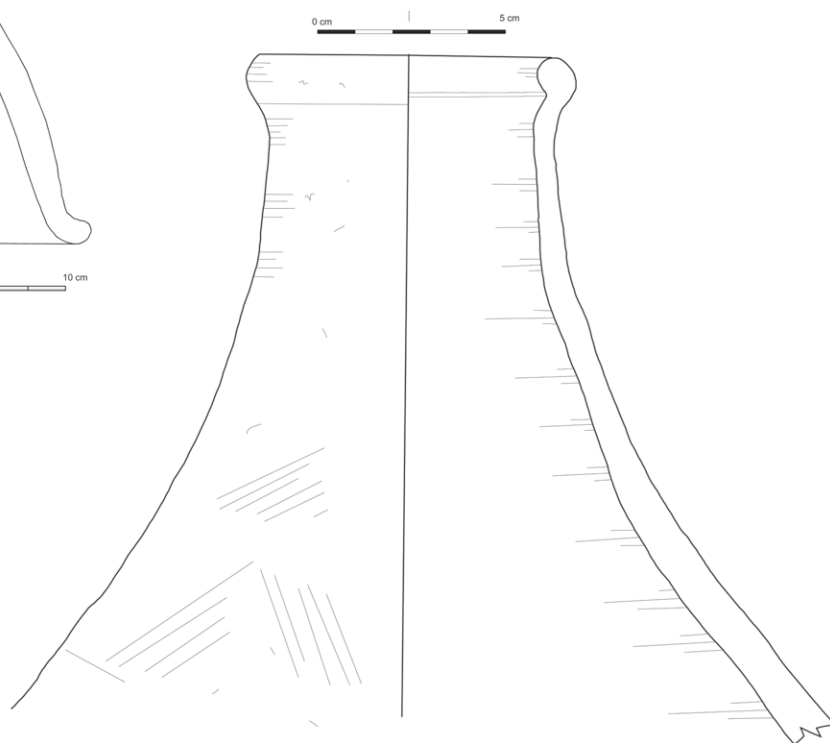
QH35n_INV 18



QH35n_INV 12

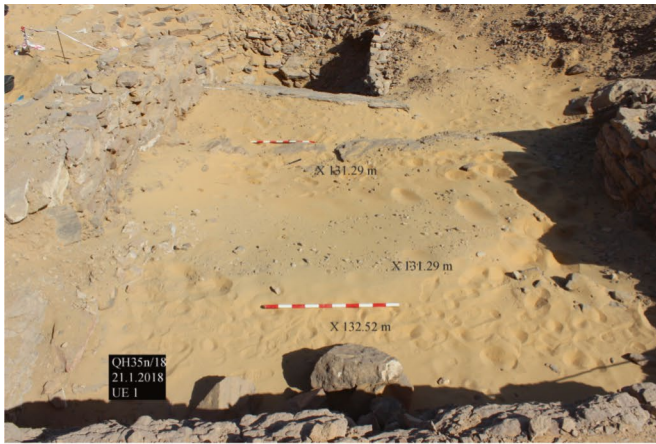


ChD_29

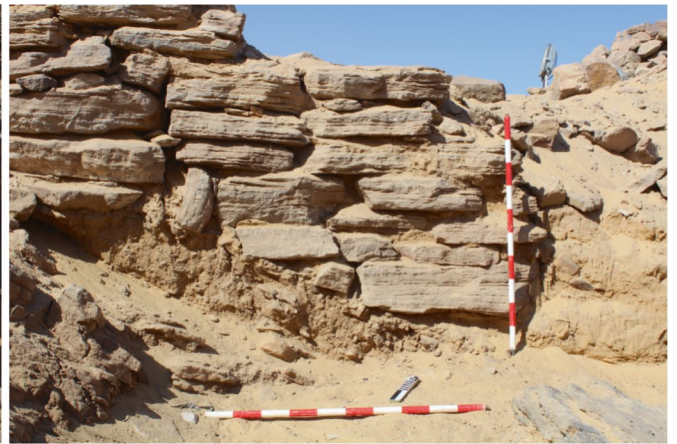


ChD_32

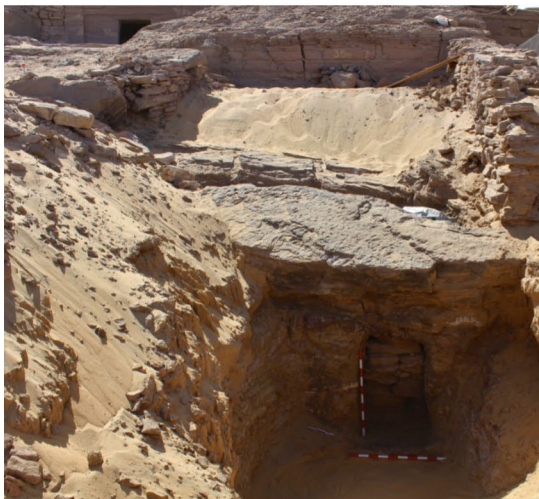
Fig. 7: Examples of bowls used as incense burners in and at QH 35n and an example of a late Middle Kingdom beer bottle encountered in the same monument (scale 1 : 2)



a



b



c



d



e

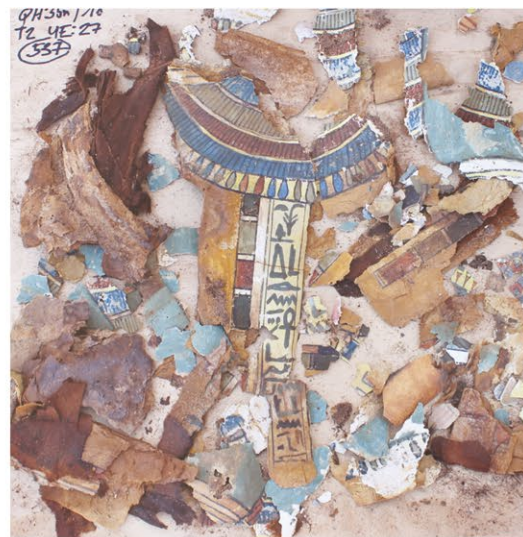


f

Fig. 8: a) View on the QH 35n courtyard at the start of the 2018 excavations; b) the eastern extension of the northern wall of the QH 35n courtyard; c) the façade of QH 35n seen from QH 122 in the year 2017; d) view on UE 24 in the entrance area of QH 35n; e) the QH 35n entrance with the remains of UE 24, remains of a blocking wall from large stones, and the underlying UE 29; f) the QH 35n entrance with the remains of the retaining wall made of small stones in UE 24



a



b



c



d



e



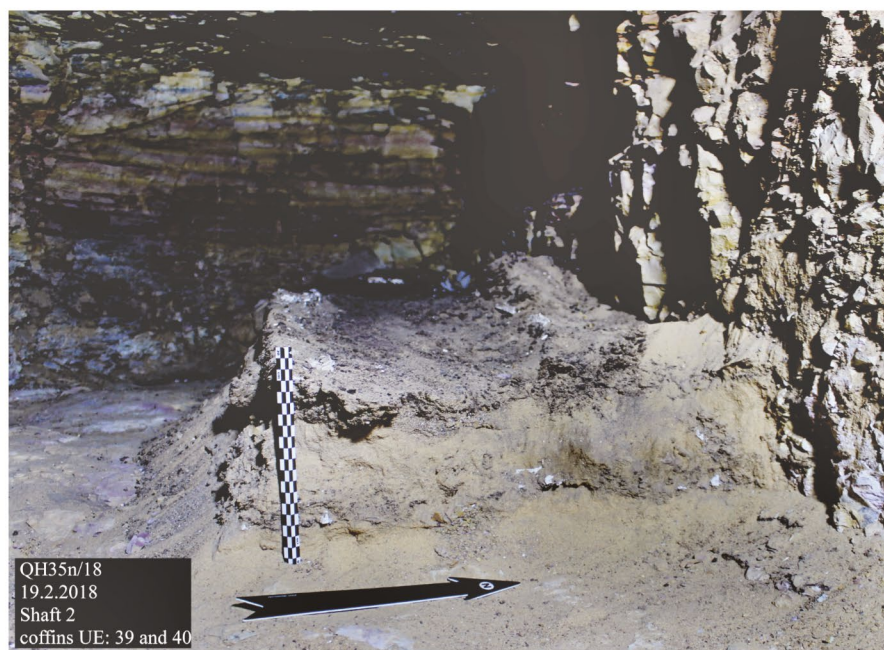
a



b



c



d

10

Fig. 10: a) Human remains in shaft 2 next to which the mummy mask of Heqaib (individual 7) was found; b) mummy mask (INV 26) of Heqaib; c) fragment of Gaut-Anuket's (individual 6) mummy mask (INV UE 31_604); d) detail of the two coffins (UEs 39 and 40) found in the burial chamber of shaft 2



a



b



c



d

Fig. 11: a) Remains of the blocking wall in the corridor of shaft 1; b) human remains at the southern wall of the burial chamber of shaft 1; c) intact blocking wall in shaft 3; d) intact burial found in shaft 3 after the cleaning of the collapsed ceiling

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Late Middle Kingdom at Qubbet el-Hawa

The Case of QH 35n

Martina Bardoňová – Rosario Guimarey
Duarte – Inmaculada Alemán Aguilera – Ángel
Rubio Salvador – Miguel Cecilio Botella López –
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يتناول هذا المقال استخدام الجبنة الشهيرة لحكام الأقليم، وهي جبنة قبة الهوا، التي تقع غرب اسوان الحديثة، خلال الفترة الأقل استكشافاً محلّياً التي تعود إلى أواخر عصر الدولة الوسطى، بعد حكم الملك أمنمحات الثالث. يقدم هذا المقال تحليلاً متعدد التخصصات لمجموعة من المدافن التي يرجع تاريخها إلى أواخر الأسرة الثانية عشرة ومنتصف الأسرة الثالثة عشرة، التي تم اكتشافها مؤخراً في مقبرة قبة الهوا رقم QH 35n، والتي أعيد استخدامها في العصور القديمة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى عرض هذه المكتشفات الجديدة في سياقاتها الأثرية والمكانية والزمانية، للكشف عن هوية مستخدمي هذه الجبنة القديمة وكيفية استخدامها وإعادة استخدامها في أواخر عصر الدولة الوسطى.

الكلمات المفتاحية

قبة الهوا، مدافن، إعادة استخدام المقابر، أواخر عصر الدولة الوسطى

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