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## Kom Tuman (Memphis) 2020. Pottery report

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The paper is devoted to preliminary dating and assessment of pottery assemblages that were found during excavations of the Russian Archaeological Mission of the Centre for Egyptological Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Memphis in 2010–2018. The study is focused on Ptolemaic and Roman pottery from deposits discovered in 2010. They contained various Egyptian and import vessels. Several vessels of the Late Period are presented in this paper as well.

Keywords: Egypt, Memphis, pottery, Ptolemaic period, Roman period, Late period, god Bes.

Since 2001 the Russian Archaeological Mission of the Centre for Egyptological Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (CES RAS) conducts archaeological excavations in Memphis <sup>1</sup>. A study season was carried out in spring of 2020 to investigate various objects that had been found during archaeological seasons 2010–2018.

## Archaeological season 2010

In the end of archaeological season 2010 several deposits of Hellenistic and Roman pottery were found in two trenches<sup>2</sup>. They contained more than 50 vessels<sup>3</sup>. The trenches were documented and photographed in the field. Complex study of the vessels had been planned in next season, so the assemblages were put in the magazine in Mit-Rahina. However, pottery and other objects from these trenches were destroyed during the robbery

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Белова 2009; Иванов 2019; 2018; Ярмолович 2017(1); 2017(2); 2018; 2020(1); 2020(2); Belova 2004; 2005; 2012; 2018; Ivanov 2007; 2015; Belova, Ivanov 2016; Laemmel 2021(1); 2021(2); Yarmolovich, Chepel 2019; 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Belova 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Belova 2010.

of the magazine in 2011 <sup>4</sup>. Almost all vessels had been broken in small fragments, so it was impossible to reconstruct them. Small percentage of the assemblages was collected and kept.

During the study of these assemblages archives (field descriptions, photos and plans) of the CES RAS were used for reconstructing them since many vessels are fragmented.

## IX.N10/Dep1

Context: Trench 6.

Condition: destroyed in 2011 during robbery of the magazine in Mit-Rahina.

IX.N10/Dep1/007. Two non-joint fragments of this amphora are preserved (a rim (fig. 1) and body (fig. 2)). It has plain slightly squared rim, straight neck, sloping shoulder and tapering body, which ends with a solid spike. The bowed handles, ovoid in section, are attached to the neck. The rim and neck are uncoated, the body is covered with reddish brown slip.

*IX.M11/Dep1/001* (fig. 3). This amphora has sloping shoulders, tapering body with a solid spike. The body is covered with reddish brown slip and partly burnished. On the bottom there is red paint.

IX.N10/Dep1/005. The amphora is represented by two non-joint fragments (a neck (fig. 4) and body (fig. 5)). It has slightly relief concave neck and tapering body with a solid spike. The lower attachment is on the neck. The neck is covered with white wash, while the body — with brown slip.

*IX.N10/Dep1/003* (fig. 6). A solid spike has survived from this amphora. The lower part of the body resembles other amphorae from this deposit. According to photos from the field, it had same sloping shoulder and tapering body. The outer and inner surfaces of this amphora are uncoated.

The state of preservation of these amphorae hinders determination of their types. Same morphological features are characteristic for two most widespread types during Hellenistic times — *Amphore Égyptienne 2* (AÉ 2)<sup>5</sup> and *Amphore Égyptienne Bitronconique 3* (AÉ 3)<sup>6</sup>.

Amphorae of AÉ 2 type have collared rim, high cylindrical neck, curved or sharp shoulder, ovoid body with solid spike. Arched handles are long and attached to the neck and shoulder. Some examples, which are determined by A. K. Senol as AÉ 2D and AÉ 2-3 (transitional form), have slightly sloping shoulder and conical body. While AÉ 3 amphorae have various shapes of rim (triangular, thickened or beaded), their bodies are almost always tapering and end with a solid spike. The body could be plain or slightly ribbed. The handles are smaller than those of AÉ 2 amphorae and attach to the rim or under it, on the neck.

The amphorae from Memphis do not have handles on shoulders; it can be seen on the field photos as well as during the examination of amphorae. These features with other morphological characteristics let us attribute these amphorae as AÉ 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Иванов 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> AÉ 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> AÉ 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Senol 2018: 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Senol 2018: 32–33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Senol 2018: 61; Roman Amphorae: https://ar-chaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora

ahrb\_2005/details.cfm?id=318&CFID=ec92521a-2fc0-49a8-ae2c-5013c70b3249&CFTOKEN=0.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Roman Amphorae: https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora\_ahrb\_2005/details.cfm?id=318&CFID=ec92521a-2fc0-49a8-ae2c-5013c70b3249&CFTOKEN=0.

## XI.P15-Q15/0001 (tab. 1)

Context: Trench 5.

Condition: partly destroyed in 2011 during the robbery of the magazine in Mit-Rahina. Date: 1st-4th c. CE with some earlier and later intrusions.

This assemblage (35 sherds) contains Egyptian and imported pottery. Egyptian pottery is represented by transport amphorae, domestic and fine ware vessels. The amphorae belong to AÉ 3 type and its subtypes. The assemblage also comprises imported amphorae, perhaps from Cyprus or another Mediterranean region. All amphorae are dated to 1<sup>st</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> c. CE. Closed shapes are represented by jars, cauldrons, jugs of the 1<sup>st</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> c. CE. Open shapes include dished and bowls. Only few sherds could certainly be Roman, while others are dated from the 27<sup>th</sup> Dynasty to Ptolemaic period.

Amphorae. Most amphorae from this assemblage were produced in Egypt. Fragments XI.P15-Q15/0001/001 (fig. 7), XI.P15-Q15/0001/005, XI.P15-Q15/0001/033, XI.P15-Q15/0001/022 and XI.P15-Q15/0001/028 have morphological features characteristic for different variants of AÉ 3 amphora type. The fragment XI.P15-Q15/0001/001 has triangular rim, long ribbed neck and rounded shoulder. The handles were attached under the rim, on the neck. According to D. Dixneuf, same features are typical for AÉ 3-2 (variant A), which was produced in the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> — 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE <sup>11</sup>. However, A. K. Senol dated an amphora with same morphological features from the Graeco-Roman Museum of Alexandria to early 1<sup>st</sup> c. CE <sup>12</sup>. Presumably XI.P15-Q15/0001/005 could be attributed as same variant of the amphora. The long hollow base XI.P15-Q15/0001/022 can be attributed as AÉ 3-3.1 amphora type <sup>13</sup>. It is dated to *ca*. 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE <sup>14</sup>.

The rim XI.P15-Q15/0001/028 represents later stage of evolution of the AÉ 3 amphora type  $^{15}$ . It has ledged rim, triangular in section, and ribbed neck. The handles, which are round in section, are attached to the ledge. It is dated to the end of the  $1^{st}/2^{nd}-3^{rd}$  c. CE  $^{16}$ . The knobbed base XI.P15-Q15/0001/033 is dated to later times. D. Dixneuf suggested that amphorae  $^{17}$  with such bases had been produced in the second part of the  $3^{rd}$  —  $4^{th}$  c. CE  $^{18}$ . A. K. Senol dated the amphorae with the same shape of bases to the  $2^{nd}-3^{rd}$  c. CE  $^{19}$ .

The assemblage also contains an import amphora (XI.P15-Q15/0001/002; fig. 8). It corresponds to the Agora G199/Schoene-Mau XXVII/XXVIII <sup>20</sup> characterised by short angular handles attached to the neck and shoulder. The beaded rim with a handle is preserved from this amphora. Another handle of amphora of the same kind was also found in the assemblage. Generally, this shape is dated to the 1<sup>st</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> c. CE. Complete and fragmented amphorae were found in Marina el-Alamein <sup>21</sup>. These amphorae from Memphis demonstrate features typical for earlier versions of this shape <sup>22</sup> dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> — early 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE <sup>23</sup>. During this period it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Dixneuf 2011: 112 (variant A), fig. 97; 189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Senol 2018: 72 (45), 73 (fig. 45).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Dixneuf 2011: 117–188, fig. 102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Dixneuf 2011: 117–118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> AÉ 3-4. See Dixneuf 2011: 120, fig. 103–105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Senol 2018: 123 (100), fig. 100; Dixneuf 2011: 120, fig. 103–105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> AE 3T-1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Dixneuf 2011: 138-139, fig. 120-121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Senol 2018: 114–115 (92), fig. 92 (a, b); 116–117 (93), fig. 93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Majcherek 2007: 22, fig. 5 (32–33), 6 (34); Bourriau, French 2007: 127, fig. 3 (4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Majcherek 2007: 22, fig. 5 (32–33), 6 (34).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Majcherek 2007: 22–23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Majcherek 2007: 22–23.

was widespread in the Mediterranean region <sup>24</sup>. Probably, it is an import from Cyprus or Eastern Mediterranean <sup>25</sup>

#### Surface finds

During the season 2020 several vessels that had been found out of their archaeological context were also studied.

#### IX/0013

One of the fragments (IX/0013/001; fig. 9) could be attributed as belonging to a Bes vessel of the Late period (perhaps, the 5<sup>th</sup> c. BCE, with possible extension of the date to late 6<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> c. BCE). The second one (IX/0013/002; fig. 10) is a handle-spout, which could be a part of a table amphora (imitation of the Achaemenid shape)<sup>26</sup>. This shape has rarely been found in Egypt so far. One such vessel was found in Saqqara (dated to no earlier than the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> c. BC), the second one comes from Kom Tuman (the 4<sup>th</sup> c. BC)<sup>27</sup>.

## 13/S/028

A small bowl with relief decoration (fig. 11). Very fine dense Nile silt fabric, which contains very common fine mica. Sandy texture. The break colour is homogeneous brown (7.5YR 4/6).

Analogies: Edgar 1911: inv. № 26.282 (p. 57, pl. XXII; same depiction, probably, these two vessels were made in same mould); inv. № 26.281 (p. 56–57, pl. XXI); inv. № 26.283 (p. 57, pl. XXII); inv. № 26.284 (p. 58, pl. XXII); inv. № 32.379 (p. 85, pl. XXII; relief vessels of same tradition); Ballet, Południkiewicz 2012: inv. № 606 (p. 138, pl. 62).

Preliminary this vessel could be dated to Hellenistic or Roman period.

Ptolemaic and Roman pottery discovered during archaeological excavations of the CES RAS is a significant source. It expands our knowledge about the life of inhabitants of Memphis in these periods as well as their trade relations and cultural contacts.

## Selected clay fabrics from Memphis 28

#### Egyptian fabrics. Amphorae

R-amp-1 — fine dense Nile silt fabric, which contains rare to common medium round sand quartz, rare to common fine and medium mica, rare fine to medium black mineral particles, and rare fine vegetable temper. Some examples contain occasional medium and coarse vegetable temper. The break is zoned (core is 5YR 4/1, outer zones are 5YR 5/6; core is 2.5YR 5/8, outer zones are 5YR 5/6; core is 10YR 6/3, outer zones are 5YR 5/6), bipartite (2.5YR 5/6 and 5YR 5/6) or homogeneous (5YR 5/6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Majcherek 2007: 22, fig. 5 (32–33), 6 (34); Bourriau, French 2007: 127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Majcherek 2007: 22, fig. 5 (32–33), 6 (34); Bourriau, French 2007: 127, fig. 3 (4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Yarmolovich 2019; Yarmolovich, Chepel 2019: 7, 9 (fig. 6).

 $<sup>^{27}</sup>$  Yarmolovich, Chepel 2019: 7, 9 (fig. 6), table 1 (No 51).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Fabric descriptions are based on the visual analysis using ×10 magnifying glass. The *Munsell Soil Colour Chart. Year 2018* was used for description of fresh breaks of the yessels

R-amp-1a<sup>29</sup> — medium fine and medium dense Nile silt fabric, which contains very common fine sand quartz, common medium vegetable temper. Mica and black mineral particles are fine and rare. It has homogeneous break (5YR 5/6 (yellowish red)).

R-amp-2 — fine and dense or medium fine and medium dense Nile silt fabric with rare or common fine mica, rare to common fine to coarse vegetable temper; some samples contain rare fine black mineral particles. The break is homogeneous (5YR 5/6 (yellowish red)) or fair zoned (the core is 7.5YR 6/4 (light brown), the outer zones are 2.5YR 5/6 (red)).

R-amp-3 — fine dense Nile silt fabric, which contains rare fine vegetable temper and mica. It has zoned break (core is 10R 5/6 (red), outer zones are 5YR 5/6 (yellowish red)).

R-amp-4 — fine dense Nile silt fabric with common fine black mineral particles, common medium sand quartz and rare fine mica. The colour of the break is homogeneous 2.5YR 5/6 (red).

## Import fabrics. Amphorae

R1-Imp — hard fine dense import fabric with rare fine and medium limestone, rare fine ochre, and occasional coarse sand quartz. The break fires to homogeneous 5YR 6/6 (reddish yellow).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Presumably, this is a later version of R-amp-1.

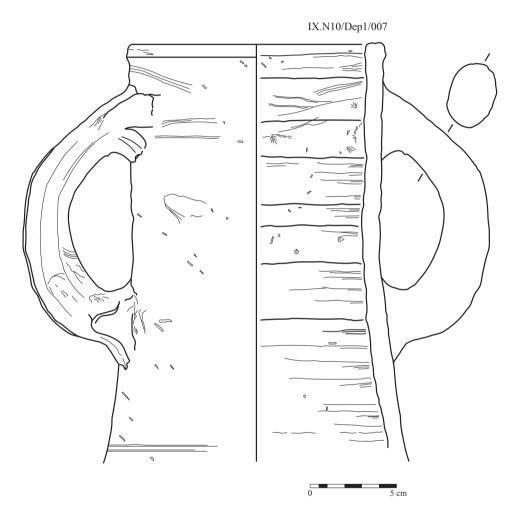


Fig. 1. A rim of amphora IX.N10/Dep1/007. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

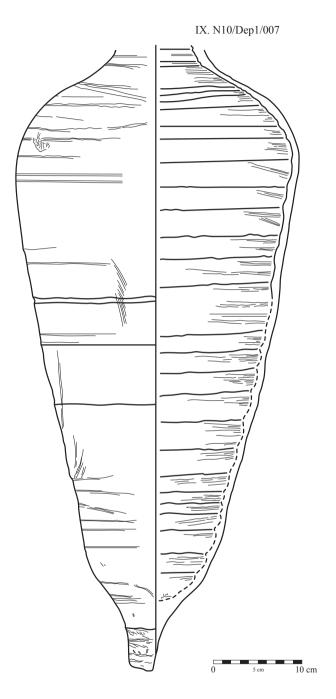


Fig. 2. A body of amphora IX.N10/Dep1/007. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

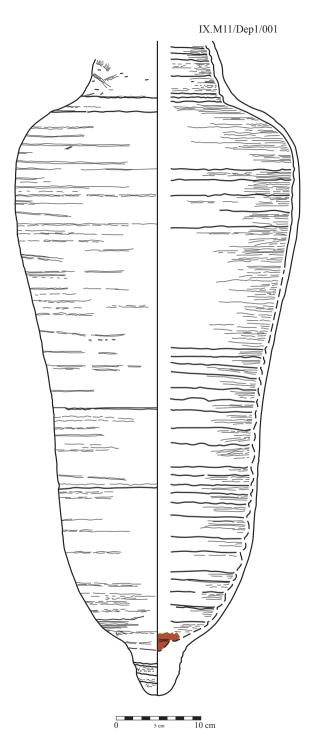


Fig. 3. A body of amphora IX.M11/Dep1/001.

Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

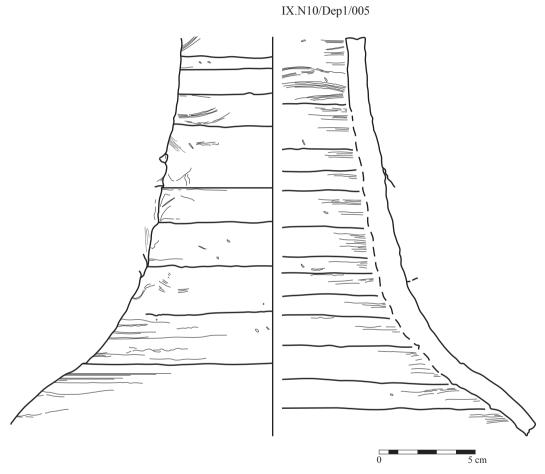


Fig. 4. A neck of amphora IX.N10/Dep1/005. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

# IX. N10/Dep1/005

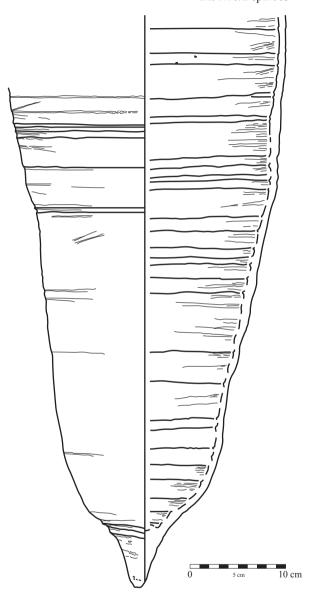


Fig. 5. A body of amphora IX.N10/Dep1/005. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

# IX.N10/Dep1/003

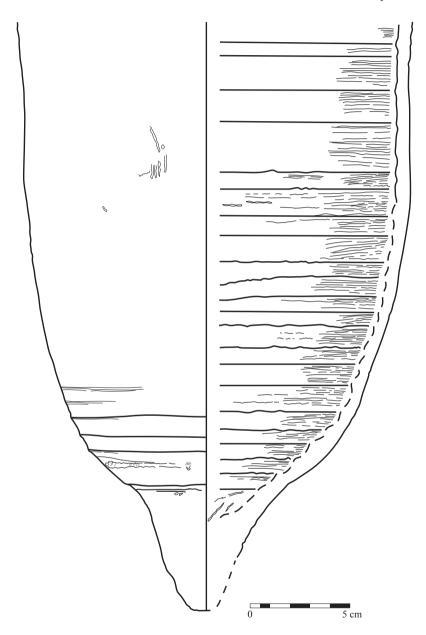


Fig. 6. A base of amphora IX.N10/Dep1/003. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

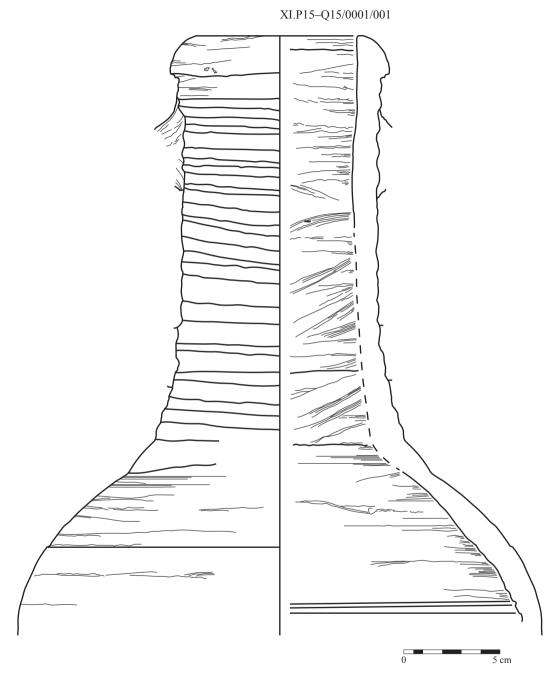


Fig. 7. A fragment of amphora XI.P15–Q15/0001/001. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

# XI.P15-Q15/0001/002

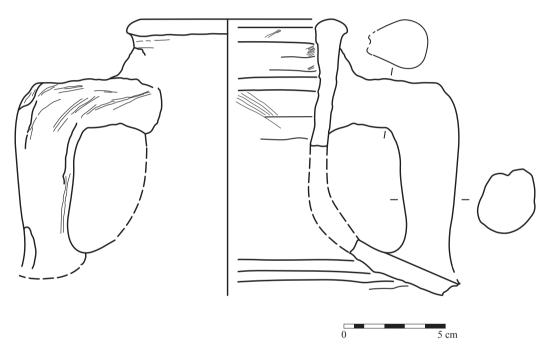


Fig. 8. A fragment of amphora XI.P15–Q15/0001/002. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

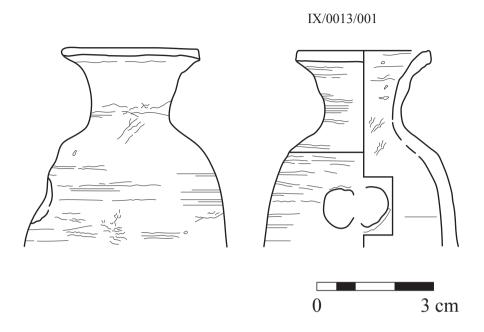


Fig. 9. Bes vessel. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

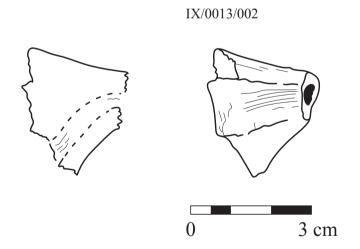


Fig. 10. A spout of a table amphora. Drawn by V. I. Yarmolovich

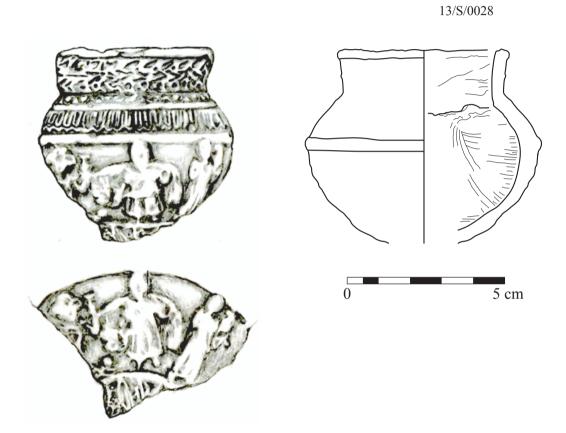


Fig. 11. A bowl. Drawn by S. I. Selezneva

# Table 1 (beginning). XI.P15-Q15/0001

| Type of shape   | Quantity       | Fabric                         | Date  |
|---|----------------|--------------------------------|---|
|   | O <sub>I</sub> | pen shapes                     |   |
|   | Egyptian       | domestic pottery               |   |
| Red or reddish-brown<br>slipped dish with direct<br>rim and low carination                  | 2              | Nile silt                      | 27 <sup>th</sup> Dynasty — late<br>Dynastic period  |
| Uncoated dish with direct rim and low carination  | 1              | Nile silt                      | Late Dynastic period  |
| White slipped dish with everted rim and ring base. The surface is burnished                 | 1              | Egyptian marl/<br>mixed fabric | 5 <sup>th</sup> –2 <sup>nd</sup> c. BC  |
| Red slipped dish with incurved rim and flat base  | 2              | Nile silt                      | Roman period. Probably, the end of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> — beginning of the 4 <sup>th</sup> c. AD |
|   | Egyptian       | fine ware pottery              |   |
| Red glazed dish with overhang rim   | 1              | Nile silt                      | Late Roman — early<br>Byzantine period  |
| White slipped (rim)<br>bowl with direct rim<br>and low carination                           | 1              | Nile silt                      | 27 <sup>th</sup> Dynasty/Late<br>Dynastic period  |
| Reddish orange slipped<br>bowl with plain direct<br>rim, carination and<br>ring base (ERSA) | 1              | Aswan marl                     | 1st_5th c. AD   |
|   | Cle            | osed shapes                    |   |
|   | Imported       | fine ware pottery              |   |
| Lekythoi  | 2              | Import                         | 5 <sup>th</sup> c. BC   |
|   | Egyp           | tian amphorae                  |   |
| Amphorae AE 3   | 4              | Nile silt                      | 1st-2nd c. AD   |
| Amphora AE 3-4  | 1              | Nile silt                      | The end of the 1st — 3rd c. AD  |
| Amphora AE 3T-1   | 1              | Nile silt                      | 2 <sup>nd</sup> –4 <sup>th</sup> c. AD  |
|   | Impo           | rted amphorae                  |   |
| Amphora Agora<br>G199 / Schoene-Mau<br>XXVII/XXVIII   | 1              | R1-Imp                         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> — early 3 <sup>rd</sup> c. AD   |
|   | Egyptian       | domestic pottery               |   |
| Red slipped neckless jar  | 1              | Nile silt                      | Middle of the 1st — 2nd c. AD   |
| Reddish brown slipped<br>neckless cauldron<br>with incurved rim<br>and ribbed body          | 1              | Nile silt                      | 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> c. AD  |

Belova 2004

## Table 1 (end). XI.P15-Q15/0001

| Type of shape  | Quantity | Fabric     | Date  |
|--|----------|------------|---|
| Uncoated cauldron<br>with everted rim, low<br>neck and ribbed body | 1        | Nile silt  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> –3 <sup>rd</sup> c. AD                                    |
| White slipped strainer jug with a spout                            | 1        | Nile silt  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> part of the 1 <sup>st</sup> — early 3 <sup>rd</sup> c. AD |
| Red slipped or reddish-<br>brown slipped jugs<br>with trifoil rim  | 1        | Aswan ware | 1 st_2nd c. AD/1 st_4th c. AD   |
| Uncoated jug with ovoid body                                       | 1        | Nile silt  | Roman period  |

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## Ком-Туман (Мемфис) 2020. Керамологический отчет

# В. И. Ярмолович

Статья посвящена предварительным результатам изучения керамических комплексов, которые были обнаружены во время раскопок Российской археологической экспедиции Центра египтологических исследований РАН в Мемфисе в 2010–2018 гг. Основной изучаемый материал — керамика птолемеевского и римского периодов из двух траншей, открытых в 2010 г. В них были найдены египетские и импортные сосуды. Также в статье представлено несколько сосудов Позднего периода.

*Ключевые слова*: Египет, Мемфис, керамика, птолемеевский период, римский период, Поздний период, бог Бэс.

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