

**Minault-Gout, Anne: 2019 *La vaisselle en pierre des reines de Pépy I<sup>er</sup>*, Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 352 pp. [Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 141; Mission archéologique franco-suisse de Saqqara 7].**

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The pyramids of the queens (wives or descendants) of Pepy I began to be excavated in 1988 and since that time eight monuments have been uncovered and studied (Labrousse 2005 and 2010). These are the so-called “Western pyramid”, the pyramid of Inenek-Inti, Nubunet, Mehaa, Ankhnespepy II, Ankhnespepy III, Behenu and that of Meretites II. The publication also includes the tombs of Ankhnespepy, called Ankhnen, the priestess of Hathor, Prince Netjerikhethor, son of Pepy I and the Queen Mehaa, and Reherishefnakht, the chief of seal bearers; the last one being built between the end of the Eleventh and the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasties. Apart from the stone vessels, which are the main target of the publication, it also focuses on seven sacred oil tablets, headrests, inlays and metal vessels. Most of the finds were collected in secondary positions due to the severe plundering of the monuments in the past. However, it was possible to reconstruct the original assemblages. Those that were stored and used in the mortuary temple were mostly bowls, libation vessels and containers of oils. The burial chambers should have contained large-size jars inscribed with royal titlature, cylindrical jars, jars containing oils, model vessels and cases for meat and bread.

The so far published corpus of stone vessels dating to the Sixth Dynasty is still rather limited for the Memphite area. It is represented mainly by Gustave Jéquier's (1928, 1929, 1933, 1936) excavations in South Saqqara and Cecil Mallaby Firth and Battiscombe George Gunn's (1926), as well as recent excavations of the Australian team at the Teti cemetery (e.g. Kanawati – Hassan 1996; Kanawati – Abder-Raziq 1999 and 2000; Kanawati 2006). Individual tombs from Giza cemeteries were published mostly by Hermann Junker (e.g. 1953) and Selim Hassan (e.g. 1941), lately also by the Giza Mastabas series (Brovarski 2000). In this respect, the publication of Anne Minault-Gout brings new evidence on the history of the production and distribution of stone vessels in the Old Kingdom. Since the work focuses on royal queens and other members of the court and royal family, it should be compared with similar royal assemblages, rather than non-royal “private” burial contexts.

The book is divided into seven chapters. The first one presents the burial monuments of the queens and other members of the royal court. Chapter two introduces the reader to the appropriate assemblages and kinds of stones used for their production. The next chapter is devoted to the typology and morphology of individual vessels, except for the model and symbolic pieces that are treated in chapter four. Part five discusses the stone cases used for food storage and six other pieces of burial equipment collected in the tombs. The last chapter deals with inscriptions appearing on the vessels.

The introductory part is quite short and only briefly sets the reader into the area and corpus, mostly referring to the previously published articles. The greater part of the book is naturally devoted to the finds themselves. They are classified according to their forms into open and closed vessels. The closed ones are cylindrical jars, shouldered jars, globular jars, shouldered jars with a straight neck and flat horizontal rim and flat base, elongated jars and ovoid jars. The open forms are represented by bowls with restricted rims, the so-called Meidum-bowl types, bowls with spouts, bowls with wavy rims, sieve-bowls, bowls with the falcon motif, bowls with a flat base and flaring straight rim, bent-side bowls, bowls with a straight flaring rim and beakers with a flat base and concave sides. Added are lids and specific younger forms, such as a goblet and a kohl pot.

All the vessels and their fragments are treated in all details in the catalogue, which is organised according to the above stated typology. This is followed by a comprehensive and well-structured table, which gives a general overview of the types and number of vessels collected in each context/tomb.

Model vessels are treated separately, since they represent a specific kind of stone vessel with their own typology (cf. Jirásková 2017). The author discusses here the contexts of models and their number in particular cases, as well as their material. She also pays attention to the relation between the large-size vessels and the small-size models. The catalogue recognizes 11 types – cylindrical jars, jars with a flat base, elongated jars with a narrow base, wine jars, jars with wavy rims, *hes*-jars, ovoid jars, one-handed jugs, globular jars

with horizontal handles, bowls and beakers. In this case, individual vessels are presented only in the table following the catalogue. The table gives information on their provenience and material; however, information on sizes is lacking. It is provided only in scale from the smallest to the largest in the catalogue. One thus has to measure the sizes of individual vessels in the drawings, if these are needed for a particular study.

The cases supposed to hold various kinds of meat or bread are discussed from the point of view of their contexts, number and kind. Based on the pieces found in the tombs of Ankhnespepy II and III and Meretites II, the author reconstructed the complete assemblage, which was supposed to contain 2 bread cases, 5 meat cases (ribs, hind legs or shoulders) and 5 poultry cases. Three types of cases appearing in the Sixth Dynasty tombs were recognized – small models of case, large-models of case and real size cases. The catalogue is in this respect based on assemblages coming from particular tombs. In addition, a table gives once again a general overview at the end of the chapter.

The last set of finds comprises a catalogue of miniature copper vessels, pieces of the opening of the mouth ritual set, seven sacred oil tablets, headrests, plaques, inlays and game stones.

The catalogue of inscriptions includes the titlature and royal inscriptions and the name of Queen Ankhnespepy II, followed again by a table with structured basic information.

The figures are introduced with a set of architectural plans presenting the position of particular finds in the burial complexes of the queens. The last part of the publication is devoted to the drawings and photographs of all objects in  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  scale in 78 figures.

The book by Anne Minault-Gout is an important contribution to the corpus of stone vessels coming from the Old Kingdom monuments. Above all, it brings to light and enables a broader study of several assemblages from the Sixth Dynasty royal tombs. The stone vessels of the Old Kingdom have a specific history. Not only the typology and morphology underwent changes during the four dynasties (not including the Seventh and Eighth Dynasties). The scale and number of vessels, as well as their meaning in the burial contexts was not homogeneous. In this respect, it is necessary to study them not just from the point of view of their form, but also their original position in the tomb, as well as in the context of the burial equipment as a whole. The Old Kingdom corpus is also necessary to be divided between the royal and non-royal context, since they were of different traditions. Last but not least, the centre and the provinces had their particular habits in the production and distribution of stone vessels, which should be taken into consideration. When this is done, the diachronic perspective can be then more distinct.

The publication is well structured, dealing separately with particular parts of the burial equipment. It presents comprehensive drawings and photographs of all the finds. However, one may miss a detailed focus on individual complexes. All the finds are treated more

from the point of view of morphology, rather neglecting the contexts. Some chapters, such as those on limestone cases or model vessels discuss the matter; others, such as large-size jars do not. They provide the reader only with tables at the end of the chapter, again based on the typology. This is a pity since a different point of view may give the reader another kind of information on the distribution. The author is without any doubt familiar with it, but she does not discuss such a matter with the reader. When compared with the publication of the royal assemblage of stone vessels coming from the pyramid of Raneferef by Petra Vlčková (2006), one misses in the book of Minault-Gout a broader discussion on the finds when compared with other royal or non-royal contexts, to identify particular trends.

Despite these issues, the work of Anne Minault-Gout on the stone vessels from the tombs of royal queens and other members of the court of Pepy I is a valuable contribution to the corpus of stone vessels brought to light from the Old Kingdom tombs, and it involves new questions and direction of research in this area.

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