

Zeichen aus dem Sand

Streiflichter aus Ägyptens Geschichte
zu Ehren von Günter Dreyer

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TWO POTTERY JARS INCISED WITH THE NAME OF IRY-HOR FROM TOMB B1 AT UMM EL-GA'AB, ABYDOS

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This note is offered in appreciation of Günter Dreyer's many years of hard and fruitful labor in the royal necropolis at Umm el-Ga'ab, Abydos, and of his outstanding scholarship. It concerns supplementary details on two elongated storage jars inscribed with the name of Iry-Hor found in Tomb B1 at Umm el-Ga'ab. It is with great pleasure that detailed illustrations of them are made available here to scholars for the first time. I am indebted to Dr. H. Whitehouse, curator of the Egyptian collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, for providing me with accurate illustrations of these objects¹.

The jars (reg. nos. E. 847 and E. 4078; see Table 1) were originally only cursorily published by W.M.F. Petrie over a century ago². E. 847, of a pinky-brown colored ware (possibly Nile silt) and with a smooth red-brown surface, has been restored but is a complete form. It is a respectable 105cm high with a maximum diameter of 37.8cm (Fig. 1)³. E. 4078, of a drab greyish colored ware (possibly Marl A1), is incomplete; it lacks neck and rim. The extant portion of the vessel is 99.5cm high with a maximum diameter of 44.2cm (Fig. 2). Both jars have continuous, horizontal clay bands of finger-impressed decoration applied to their exterior surfaces above and below their shoulders and above their bases⁴. As such they belong to Petrie's Type 76A/B⁵ and to van den Brink's Group IVa⁶.

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- 1 As I was unable to examine the two jars myself, Dr. H. Whitehouse kindly provided me with a description and photographs of both vessels (Figs. 1-2) as well as with facsimiles of the inscriptions on them (Figs. 3-4). The drawings were made by Keith Bennett and are published here by courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. R. Avner, who with the kind assistance of Dr. Whitehouse, provided me with photographs of these jars. The jars are kept at present in the study room of the Ashmolean Museum.
 - 2 See PETRIE, *Royal Tombs I*, 29-30, Pl. XLIV, 2, 5. They are listed as Group 9.a.1 [Iry-hor], Nos. 25 and 26 in VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 46.
 - 3 For the calculated index of completely preserved, elongated storage jars incised with royal names, and how they can function as chronological pegs for dating similar, but un-inscribed jars derived from other contexts of less certain date, cf. KÖHLER/SMYTHE, *Early Dynastic Pottery from Helwan*.
 - 4 It has been suggested that such applied bands of clay imitate rope supports that were necessary in the construction of such large vessels, and that „they may actually cover the joins between sections“ (BOURRIAU, *Umm el-Ga'ab*, 50, note 81). Although this functional/decorative explanation of covering joins could very well apply to the upper two bands of the jar type discussed here, the application of a third band around the solid base of these jars is certainly not similarly functional, but merely an aesthetic embellishment, perhaps intended as balance to the bands on the upper part of the vessels.

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Reg. No.	E. 847	E. 4078
here Fig.	1, 3	2, 4
Site	Umm el-Ga'ab	Umm el-Ga'ab
Tomb	B1	B1
VAN DEN BRINK, <i>The incised serekh-signs of Dynasties 0-1</i> jar type	IVa	IVa
VAN DEN BRINK, <i>The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1</i> group no.	9.a.1.25	9.a.1.26
Jar measurements	H 105.0cm W. (mouth) 21.7cm W. (max) 37.8cm	H. 99.5cm W. (max) 44.2cm
Additional mark/sign	+	+

Table 1.

According to Köhler⁷ at least twenty-five specimens of this very type derive from tomb chambers B1 and B2 and their immediate surroundings, while two additional jar bases of the same type were found still *in situ* in the more recently excavated storage pit B0 adjoining the tomb⁸. This type first appears in the reign of Iry-Hor and lasts apparently at least until the reign of Horus Djed⁹.

These two jars bear the incised name of Iry-Hor on their shoulders delineated by the horizontal bands. The inscribed area on jar E. 847 measures ca. 16.5x12cm (Fig. 3); on E. 4078 the inscribed area is somewhat smaller, measuring ca. 12.5x7.5cm (Fig. 4)¹⁰. In both instances the name is accompanied by an additional mark or sign, something common to most *serekh*-incised pottery jars¹¹.

5 PETRIE, *Corpus of Proto-Dynastic Pottery*.

6 VAN DEN BRINK, *The incised serekh-signs of Dynasties 0-1*. In VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 46, No. 26 I erroneously attributed E. 4078 to Type IVc due to misinterpretation of a description provided to me by Dr. H. Whitehouse (cf. VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 46, note 60). I then believed it not to have a band above the base as does E. 847 (cf. VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 46, note 59). However, receipt of illustrations of these vessels prompts me to reassign E. 4078 to Type IVa.

7 KÖHLER, *Zu den sog. Weinkrügen*, 52.

8 For information on the additional (storage) pit (Grube B0) associated with Iry-Hor's tomb chambers B1 and B2, see DREYER et al., 7./8. *Vorbericht*, 49.

9 Cf. HENDRICKX, *The Relative Chronology of the Naqada Culture*, 62, Table 8 (Emery's type A6, which equals Petrie's type 76A/B).

10 A comparison of a new rendering of the incisions (Fig. 4) with PETRIE's (*Royal Tombs I*, Pl. XLIV, 5) original drawing of Iry-Hor's name (see also KAISER/DREYER, 2. *Vorbericht*, Abb. 14: 20, evidently based on Petrie's original illustration), makes it clear that a fragment of Iry-Hor's name is now missing. Breakage of this fragment most probably occurred before shipment to the



Fig. 1: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford,
Jar E. 847.



Fig. 2: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford,
Jar E. 4078.

Ashmolean Museum, since no such fragment was recorded by former curator J.C. Payne during the reassembling of the jar (H. Whitehouse, pers. comm. 2006).

11 Cf. VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 26.

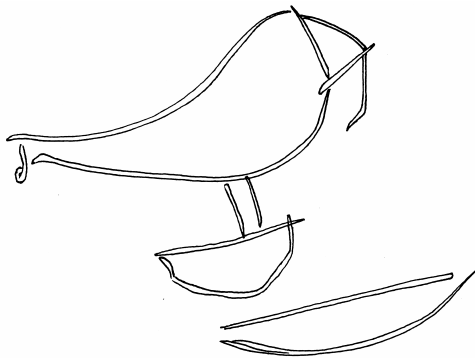


Fig. 3: Detail of E. 847.

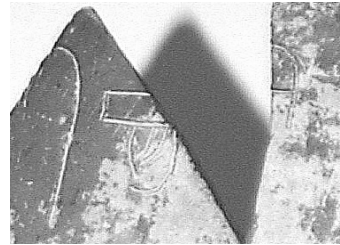
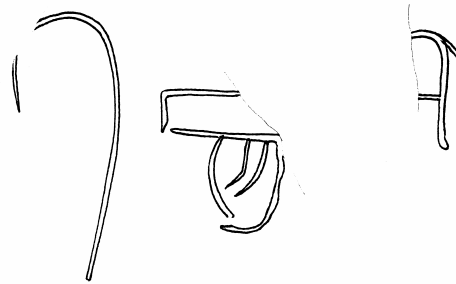


Fig. 4: Detail of E. 4078.

Two additional, complete jars, also inscribed with the name of Iry-Hor derive from Tomb B1. One of them is an example of Petrie's (*Corpus of Proto-Dynastic Pottery*) Type 76A/B, the other of Petrie's (*Corpus of Proto-Dynastic Pottery*) Type 74B and 75Q-S and of van den Brink's (*The incised serekh-signs of Dynasties 0-1*) Group III¹².

These four jars are amongst at least eleven pottery jars or fragments thereof, incised before firing with the name of Iry-Hor, that were recovered with certainty from Tomb B1¹³, that king's final resting place¹⁴. Some of the fragments were retrieved by G. Dreyer, during re-excavation of this tomb and its surroundings and have been noted elsewhere with his kind permission¹⁵. Four additional jar fragments

12 They are illustrated in PETRIE, *Royal Tombs I*, Pls. XXXIX, 2 and XL, 8 respectively. For the distribution of both jar types III and IVa according to chronology and frequency, that do occur together in some of the royal tombs, see KÖHLER, *Zu den sog. Weinkrügen*, 53-54, Abb. 16. There seems to be an increase of type III jars during the reign of Horus Aha, while at the same time the number of type IVa jars notably declines.

13 See VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 46-51, Nos. 23-26, 30-36. Of these, only inscriptions Nos. 23-24 were published together with the complete jars by PETRIE (*Royal Tombs I*, Pl. XXXIX, 2 [type IVa] and Pl. XL, 8 [type III]).

14 Cf. KAISER/DREYER, 2. *Vorbericht*, 235.

15 Cf. DREYER, *B1/2* and VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 49-51, Figs. 30-32, 39, 45.

inscribed with the name of Iry-Hor most likely derive from the same tomb B1¹⁶, while five additional incised jars or fragments thereof were found *ex situ*, but in the immediate environs of this tomb¹⁷. Together with two additional pottery fragments incised with the name of the same king, found outside and far away from the Umm el-Ga'ab necropolis¹⁸, they bring the total number of pottery jars inscribed with the name of Iry-Hor to twenty-two to date¹⁹.

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16 See VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 47, Nos. 40-43.

17 See VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 47, Nos. 37-39, 44-45.

18 They derive from Tomb Z486 in the cemetery at Zawiyet el-Aryan, Lower Egypt, and from Tomb L2 in the elite cemetery at Qustul, Lower Nubia, respectively; cf. VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, 48, Fig. 29, and 51, Fig. 46.

19 In addition to these incised objects, the name of Iry-Hor is preserved on at least five ink-inscribed fragments of cylindrical jars from Umm el-Ga'ab, as well as on three cylinder impressions found at Zawiyet el-Aryan and Abydos (VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1*, note 56).

VAN DEN BRINK, *The Pottery-Incised Serekh-Signs of Dynasties 0-1.*

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