

Introduction

The hieroglyphic archive at Petras was discovered during an archaeological excavation; the finds made during this excavation are archaeological artefacts and they will be treated as such in this book.

Cataloguing system

In order to make the following catalogues easy to use for reference, the method of the collection and recording at the time of the excavation, as well as that of the study of the Petras pottery and small finds, are explained below. All sherds from each locus of the excavation were collected and put in bags labelled with a "Pottery Bag" number, which also included the year of the excavation (for example P96/0220). The pottery bag numbers were entered in the catalogue of pottery bags, which is created on an annual basis, and comprises all bags from all excavated areas of the site.

Vases with full profile, or sherds of particular interest due to their decoration or rarity of shape, or even clearly intrusive sherds, are given an ME number (*mikra evrimata* in Greek = "small finds"). The 3-D coordinates for each ME are measured and recorded in the excavation notebook, as well as on the locus 1:20 drawings (plans). The catalogue of the small finds contains objects from all excavated areas of the site, and is also created on an annual basis.

After the pottery is washed, all bags and MEs are laid out and examined by the conservator. When joins are found, and they result in a full profile, a new ME number is assigned and added to the catalogue. After the completion of the conservation work, each ME and each bag of pottery is studied by an archaeologist, and the data are recorded on special forms. Forms with space for a photograph were created for the MEs from the Petras excavation, as were forms for the study of the contents of the pottery bags. On the latter are recorded the pottery bag number, locus number, date of excavation, initials of the excavator, number of sherds, number of diagnostic sherds, weight of sherds, and shapes of the vases, types of clay, types of decoration, dating, and initials of the person who completed the form. Following this, during the next and final stage of the study, several sherds are selected from each pottery bag on the bases of interesting shapes/fabrics/decoration, and are described, photographed and drawn. These sherds are assigned numbers indicating the year, the pottery bag and their particular number (for example P96/0120/3). This information is also entered in the pottery bag study forms. All pottery from the Petras excavation is retained, and stored in the Siteia Museum storerooms by pottery bag, according to each bag's provenance (area of the excavation, room, and deposit).

Catalogue

Where possible, all catalogue entries include information on context, *i.e.* Square and Pass so that the reader can easily find further details on the context in the chapter “Context”. In some entries there is a number behind a slash, for example /37.68. This indicates the absolute altitude of the find. The pottery, plaster and other small finds have simply been given in sequential order, while the archival documents have been recorded according to type. Within each type-category the order is somewhat arbitrary. According to the system, types which have been identified with reasonable certainty are recorded first, followed by those which are uncertain. Within these sub-groups the order has been determined by the presence of inscriptions and seals and degree of completeness. Within each catalogue, publication numbers have been added in sequential order preceded by one or two letters to designate the category. These publication numbers are always given in bold font. The following designations have been used:

B	Bones
CB	Clay bars
Co	Combination nodules
Cr	Crescents
Cw	Carbonised wood
D	Direct sealings
I	Irregular string nodules
L	Lumps
M	Metal
Mb	Mud-brick
Me	Medallions
Mi	Miscellaneous
N	<i>Noduli</i>
O	Obsidian
P	Pottery
Pl	Plaster
R	Roundels
S	Stones

In spite of a very thorough search in four storerooms of the 24th Ephorate, a limited number of finds from the archive seem to have been temporarily misplaced with the result that a few detailed descriptions and/or photographs and drawings are missing from the catalogues. We have, however, decided to proceed without the missing material in order to avoid further delay of the publication.

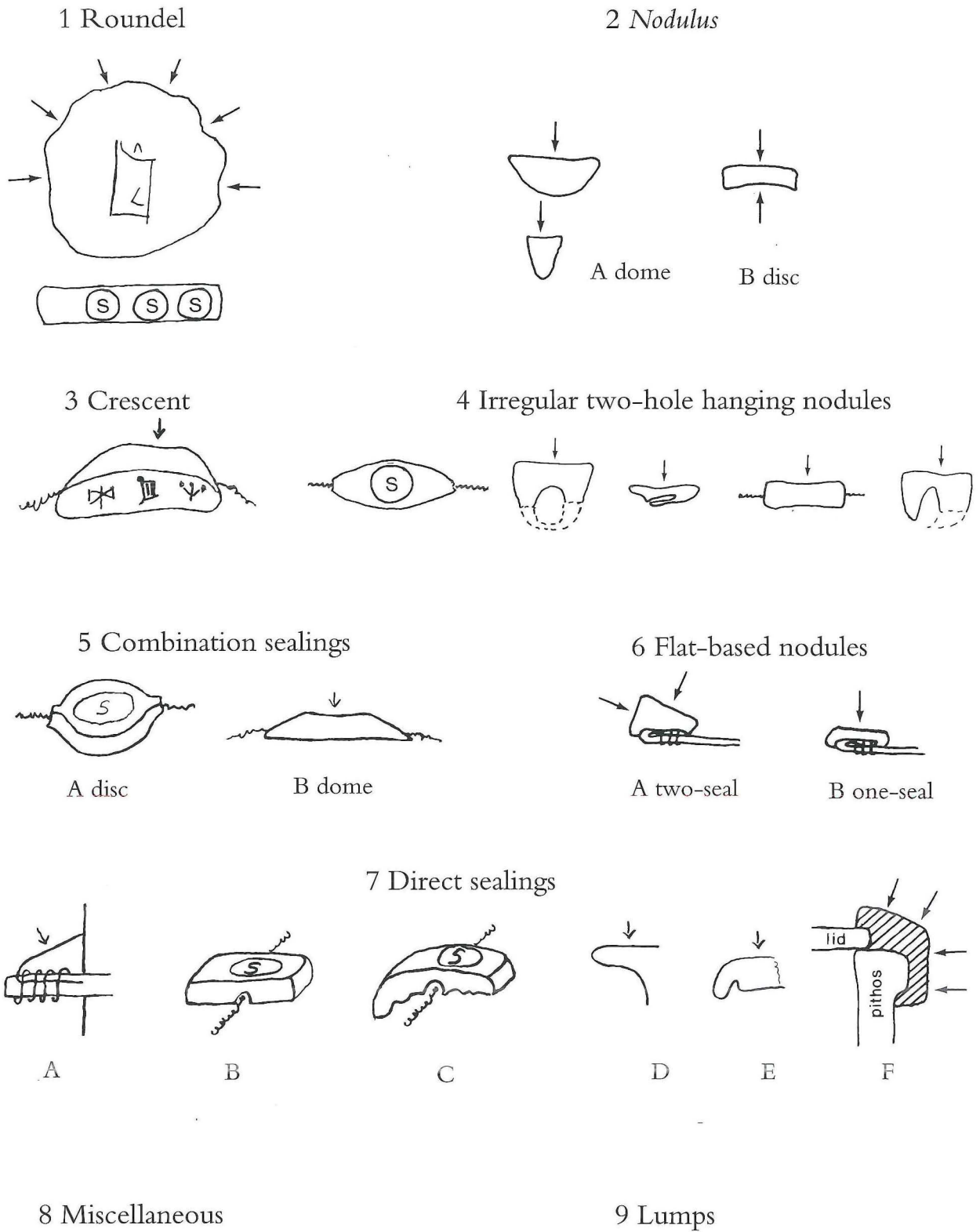


Fig. 1. Document types with seal impressions in hieroglyphic deposits.

Categories/types of documents (Fig. 1)

The archival documents from Petras – some definitions

The word “nodule” signifies a piece of clay which had surrounded a string
The phrase “direct sealing” signifies a solid piece of clay pressed against an object.

Type 1. The roundel

The roundel is a clay disc with one or more seal impressions along the edge.
Prototype: **R1**

Type 2. The nodulus

The *nodulus* is a clay lump which had not been fastened to anything and which according to type carries one or two seal impressions. In Linear A and Linear B Type 2A, the dome-*nodulus* may be inscribed.

Type 2A. The dome-*nodulus* is roughly dome-shaped and never carries more than one seal impression. An unfinished example from the archive: **N2**.

Type 2B. The disc-*nodulus* is a small clay disc with a seal impression on each of the flat sides. None have been identified at Petras, although one piece of clay may have been prepared for such a type: **N4**.

Type 3. The crescent

The crescent is a crescent-shaped nodule with a gable-shaped section and flat bottom, which had a string running through its long axis. It is usually inscribed with hieroglyphs and usually carries at least one seal impression.
Prototype: **Cr1**.

Type 4. The irregular string nodule

The irregular string nodule is a piece of clay formed around one or more strings, bearing at least one seal impression. No complete examples were found in Petras and there is therefore no prototype.

Type 5. Combination nodule

The combination sealing is a nodule where the clay had been both formed around a string and also pressed against an object. At Petras the object in question always had a flat surface.

Type 5A. The disc-shaped combination nodule has two parallel sides, one pressed against a flat surface, the other carrying a seal impression. The sides of this type are upright in contrast to Type 5B (see below). Prototype: **Co2**.

Type 5B. The dome-shaped combination nodule has been pressed against a flat surface, and is in the form of a flat-topped dome with a single seal impression. No edge. Prototype: **Co18**.

Type 6. Flat-based nodules

Flat-based nodules are lumps of clay pressed over a folded piece of parchment wound around with a thin string which is also wound into the clay. In hieroglyphic deposits only the recumbent type is known and it exists in two variants:

Type 6A. Recumbent flat-based nodule with one seal impression.

Type 6B. Recumbent flat-based nodule with two seal impressions.

This type is not found at Petras (known only from Knossos).

Type 7. Direct sealings

Direct sealings are lumps of clay which have been pressed over an object, but where no string marks are visible within the clay.

Type 7A. Peg sealing pressed against a flat surface and a peg (or pommel) wound around with a string. There are probably several sub-types. Prototype: **D1**.

Type 7B. Flat object pressed against a flat surface with one or more strings. Prototype: **D10**.

Type 7C. Object pressed onto uneven object(s) sometimes also with strings. Prototypes: **D16**; **D22**.

Type 7D. Pressed, with a characteristic concave, circular, smoothed edge. Prototype: **D31**.

Type 7E. Stopper(?) with the impression of a rim from a vase. Prototype: **D37**.

Type 8. Miscellaneous

These are types, usually bearing string marks, which cannot be fitted into the above types. They are the indeterminable – usually very small – fragments.

Type 9. Lumps

Small lumps of clay which were in the process of being formed.

Measurements

All measurements from the excavation are given in metres, while measurements of finds are given in centimetres. In the catalogue of documents square brackets indicate the preserved size of a fragmentary document.

Drawings and photographs

Drawings of pottery are always shown at a scale of 1:3 while the seal impressions are shown at a scale of 3:1 and small finds – unless otherwise stated – at a scale of 1:1.

Photographs of the documents in the catalogue are shown at a scale of *c.* 1:1, while the photographs of the seal impressions are shown at a scale of 3:1. All the remaining photographs of pottery and small finds are provided with a scale indicating centimetres.

All photographs and basic drawings of the archival documents are by Erik Hallager (EH), while the photographs of the pottery and excavation were produced by Metaxia Tsipopoulou. The ground plan of the palatial building has been done by Ms Maria Klountza and Dr. Michael Wedde, while the area around the archive has been partly re-drawn by Erik Hallager and added to the original plan. The excavation sections have been done by M. Wedde and Ms. Claudia Fugalli. Distribution maps and the reconstruction of the archive were produced by EH.

In this publication we have chosen not to give figure numbers to pottery and archival documents in the catalogues (pp. 49–132) while all other illustrations are given fig. numbers in sequential order.

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