

Marl A



Marl C



Nile B-2



Nile C



Nile E



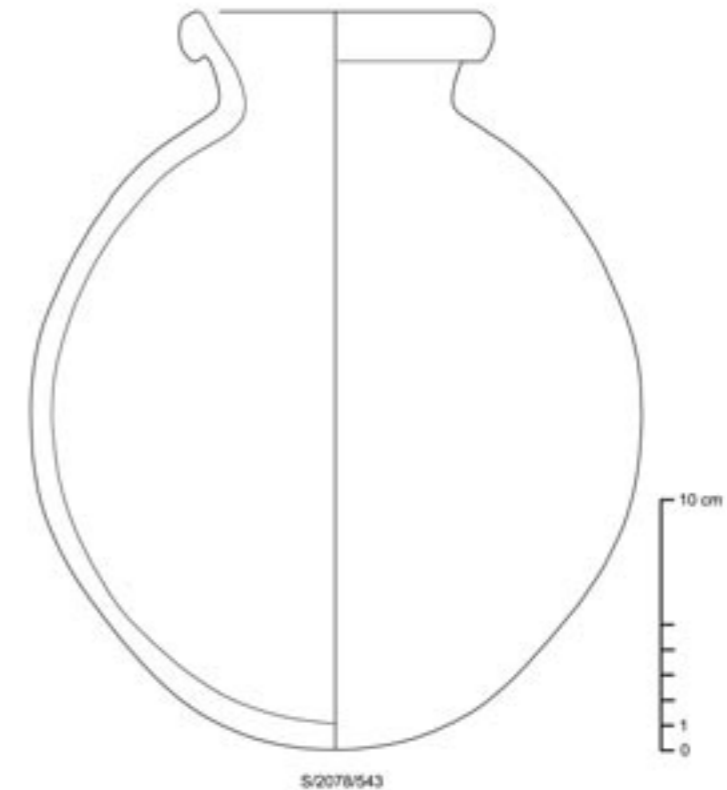
Sidon's College site yielded the largest collection so far of imported Egyptian pottery to the Levantine region during the Middle Bronze Age. The material comes from a cemetery area and covers the first half of the Middle Kingdom up until the early New Kingdom.

To date, the vessels found in MB layers were made of three fabric groups¹. The largest group consists of Marl C (fig. 1) the origin of which was most likely the Memphite-Fayum region² with its nearby production centres, possibly in the vicinity of the Middle Kingdom capital *Itj-twy* near modern Lisht. Vessels fabricated in these centres were distributed all over Egypt, Nubia and the Levant, thus making them ideal chronological tools. The second group were Marl A clays from Upper Egypt (fig. 1) where several clay sources existed. In the Levant, vessels of this fabric are very rare. So far, they have only been found in the first half of the MB IIA³. The third group consists of Nile clay vessels which came to Sidon at the very end of the MB II period (fig. 1).

Although the bulk of imported vessels consisted of containers there is also a surprisingly large amount of open shapes at Sidon. Only a few vessels were part of the actual burials, the rest of the material was found in the surrounding cemetery area.

Marl A jar (fig. 2)

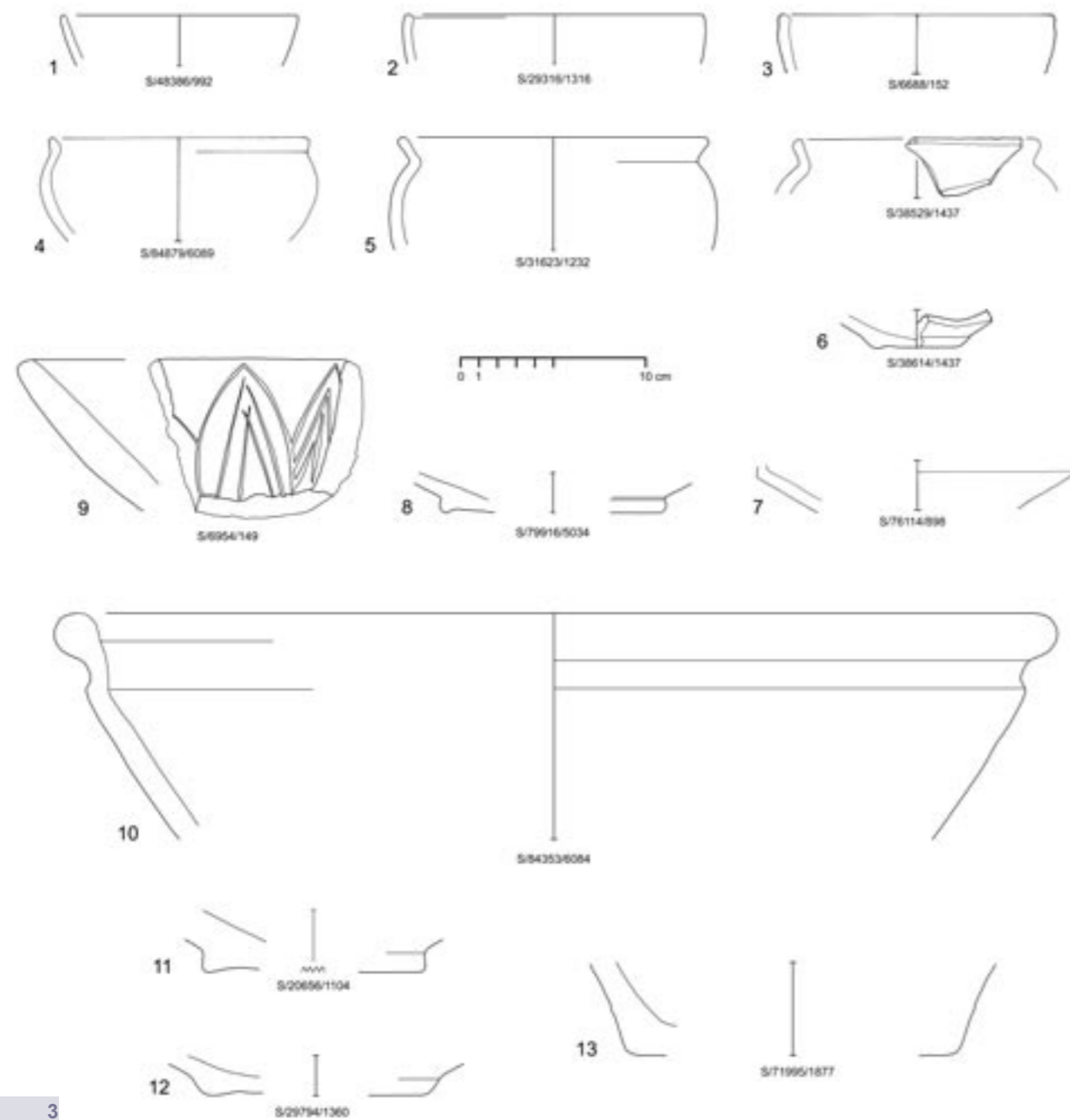
A burnished globular jar with an everted rim was found above a warrior burial of the early MB IIA⁴. Its best parallels come mainly from Middle Kingdom sites in Upper Egypt such as Elephantine⁵, El Kab⁶ or Tell Edfu⁷ and Kerma⁸ in Nubia. At Delta sites such as Kom el-Hisn⁹ and Ezbet Rushdi¹⁰ they are also considered as import goods from Upper Egypt.



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Marl C vessels
Open vessels

During the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period vessels made of Marl C fabric were very popular. One of the advantages of this clay is the fact that it becomes very dense during the firing process and is thus ideal for storing liquids. Therefore jars and large storage vessels were made of this fabric. Although open vessels are not overly common a considerable variety of shapes exist. The rim fragments of *hemispherical bowls* (fig. 3. 1) are not very common. B. Bader dated similar pieces to between the end of the MB IIA and the first half of the MB IIB period¹¹. *Globular bowls* (figs. 3. 2 and 3. 3) are known from the first half of the 12th Dynasty until the middle of the 13th Dynasty¹². *Restricted bowls with everted rims* (fig. 3. 4) are known from Tell el-Dab'a in Egypt, where they appear during the middle of the 13th Dynasty¹³. Similar but with a slightly longer and trimmed rim are globular bowls (figs. 3. 5 and 3. 6) with a ring base. The best parallel for the Sidon carinated bowl (fig. 3. 9) fragment comes from a late MB IIA context in Tell el-Dab'a and is equipped with a spout¹⁴. *Carinated bowls* (fig. 3. 7), made of this fabric appear during the Middle Kingdom until the 13th Dynasty¹⁵. The best parallel for the Sidon carinated bowl (fig. 3. 9) fragment comes from Complex 6 at Dashur¹⁶, at the end of the 12th Dynasty. Unfortunately the fish bowl fragment (fig. 3. 9) comes from a disturbed context. It is decorated on the inside with an incised lotus flower, a motif which is quite common for these bowls. This type of vessel is known in Egypt throughout the 13th Dynasty¹⁷ where it is restricted to settlement areas. It features scenes of a Nilotic landscape on the inside. Very often a fish is depicted in the



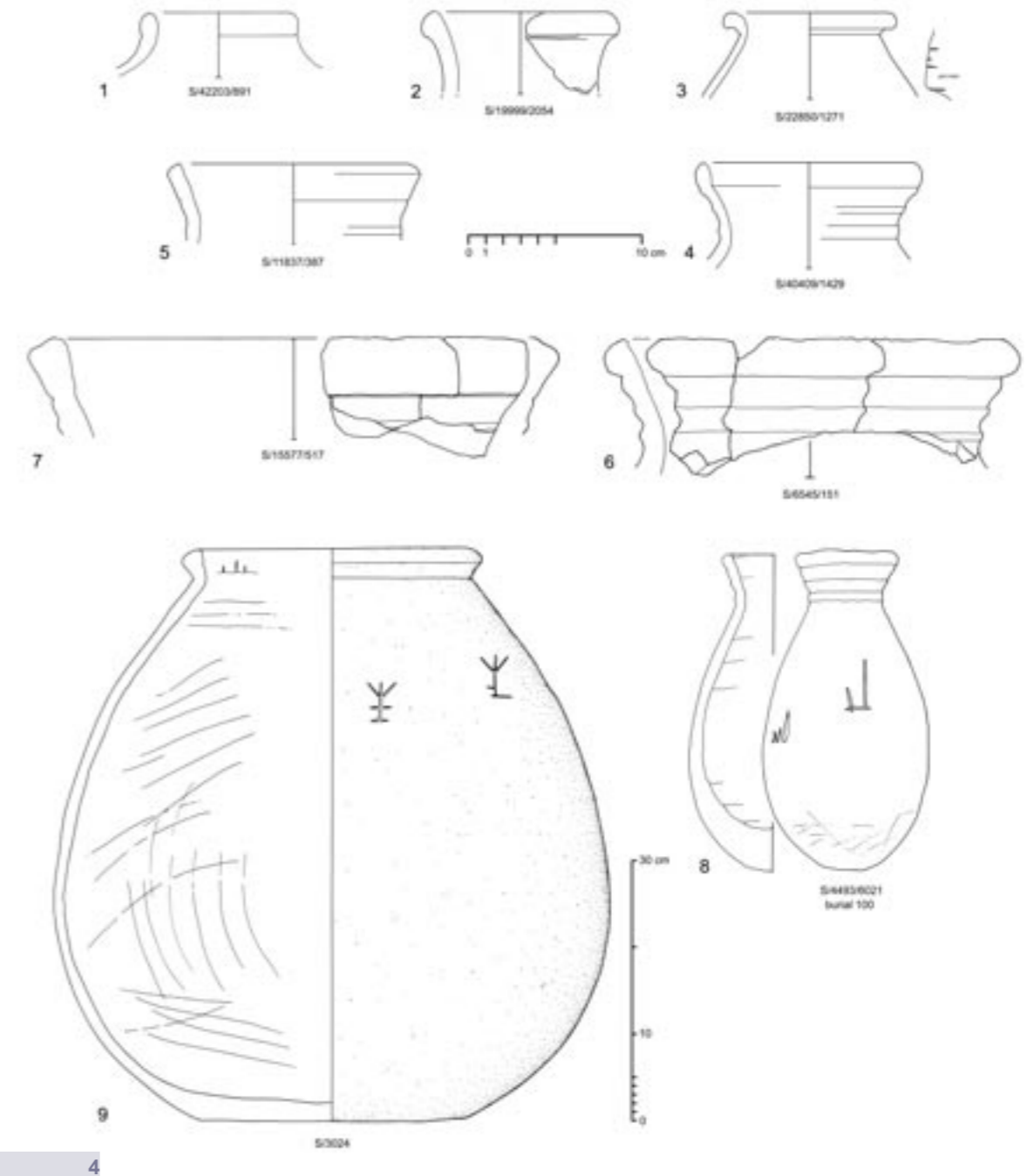
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Closed vessels

Most of the closed Marl C vessels were handmade with rims shaped separately on a turnable device and later added to the vessel.

Jars with rolled rims (figs. 4. 1 and 4. 2) are not so common in the Marl C repertoire. Examples are known from a late 12th to early 13th Dynasty

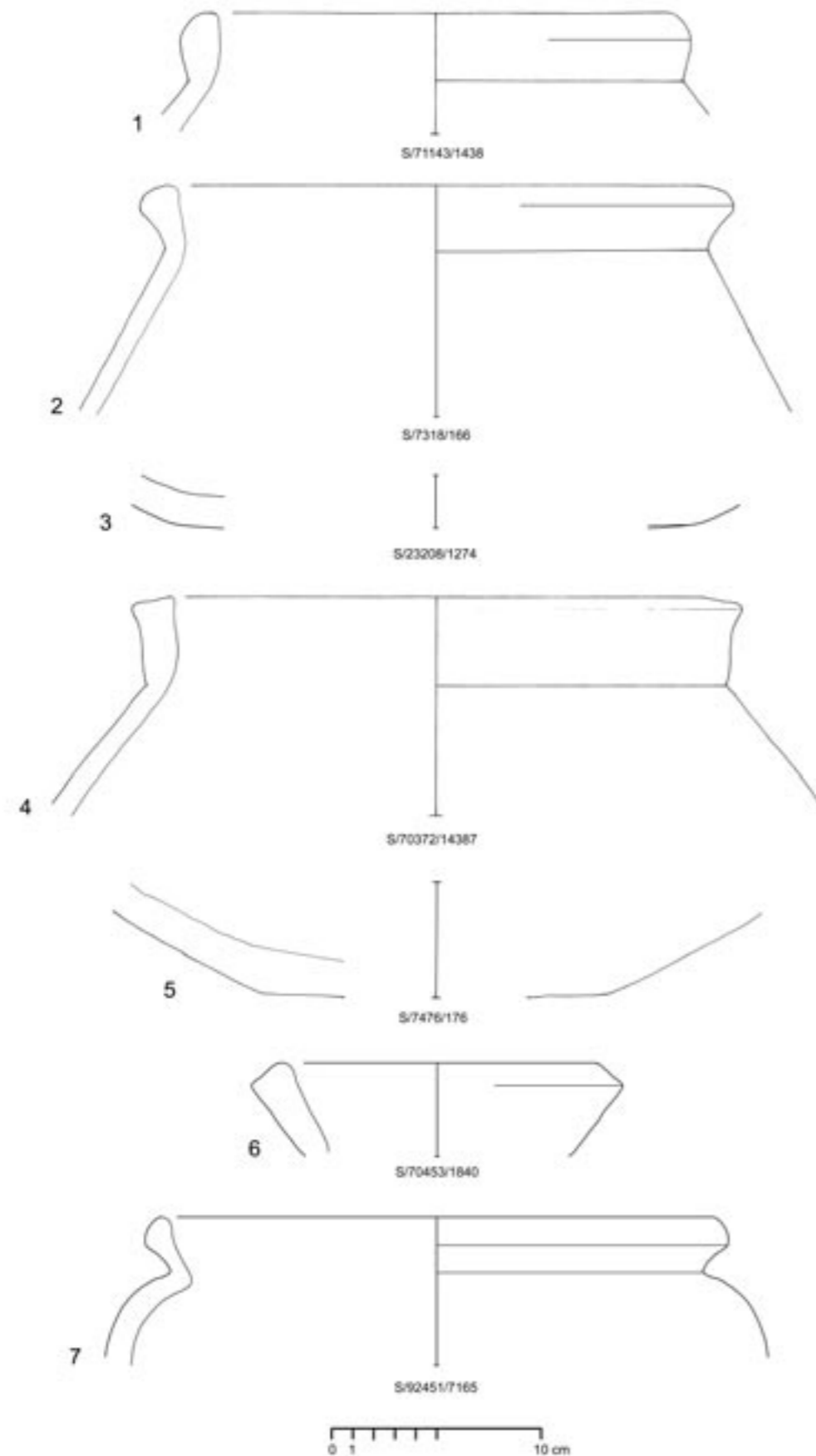
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middle of the bowl, which is how this vessel acquired its name. Interpretation of their function varies from being used as a vessel to scale fish to one for grinding wheat. *Large carinated bowls* (fig. 3. 10) with spouts date to between the end of the 12th until the end of the 13th Dynasty with their appearance peaking in the first half of the 13th Dynasty¹⁸. Some of the larger ring bases (figs. 3. 11 and 3. 12) found at Sidon could belong to these large carinated bowls, while the smaller examples (fig. 3. 8) probably belong to smaller bowls. A fragment of a flat handmade base (fig. 3.1 1) could belong to a *high footed bowl*, a model which appears in Egypt from the late 12th Dynasty until the beginning of the Hyksos period¹⁹.

context in Elephantine²⁰ and Tell el-Dab'a²¹. Quite common amongst the Egyptian imports in Sidon are *medium-sized jars with shaped rims* (fig. 4. 3). They are either, as mentioned above, handmade or completely thrown on a slow wheel. Do. Arnold recognized during her studies of the Dahshur material that an older globular and a more recent bag-shape type exist²². Both were found at Sidon²³. While the earlier ones date from post Senwosret I to the middle of the 13th Dynasty, the later examples fall into the time span between the end of

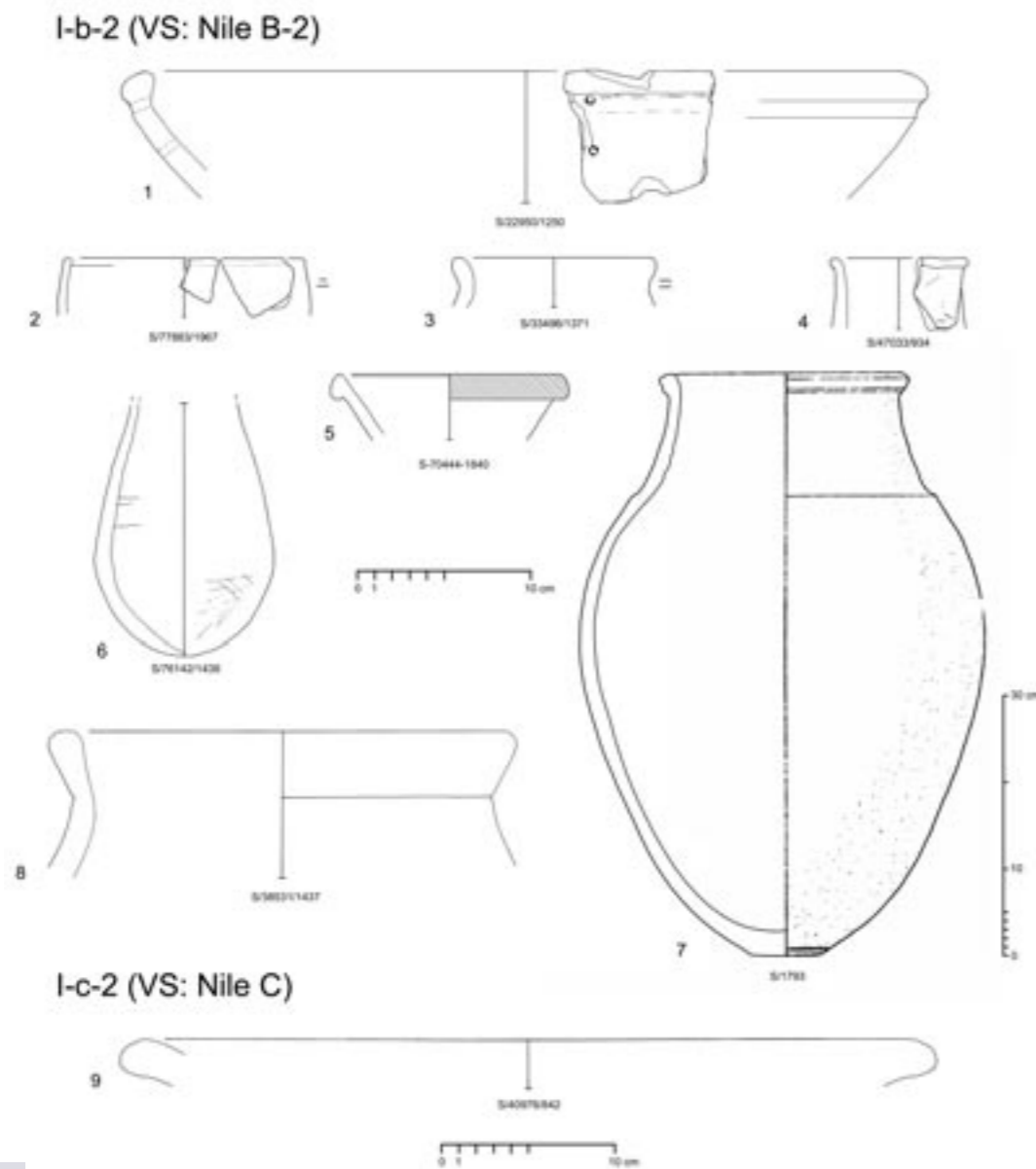


the 12th Dynasty and the middle of the Hyksos period²⁴. Another type of vessel, which was exported to various places along the Levantine coast was the large *ovoid jar with corrugated neck* (figs. 4. 4 and 4. 5). Outside of Egypt these jars were found at Sidon²⁵ and Tell Arqa. There again two different rim types are distinguishable. An earlier shape (fig. 4. 4) which is common from Senwosret III to the middle of the 13th Dynasty, and a later one (fig. 4. 5) which is present from the middle of the 13th Dynasty until the first half of the Hyksos period²⁶. The rim diameters of both vessel types vary between 10. 0 and 16. 0 cm²⁷. Larger types of these *jars with corrugated necks* (figs. 4. 6 and 4. 7) are very unusual. Only in Tell el-Dab'a and Helwan²⁸ were fragments of such vessels found. Clearly an import from Egypt, one could imagine that these larger versions of the well-known ovoid jars with corrugated necks were produced especially for export. The fact that they mainly exist in two significant places closely connected with a seagoing trade supports the theory that they were specially produced to contain larger amounts of a commodity usually transported in the 'normal-sized' ovoid jars with corrugated necks. A body sherd from a 'normal-sized' jar of this type was found at Lisht²⁹ with a partial inscription of "rmnn" usually translated to mean "Lebanon"³⁰. This inscription means that either the commodity in the vessels was destined to be shipped to Lebanon or that its contents came from Lebanon and that it was refilled in Egypt. A substantial number of rims of this vessel type found at Sidon support the idea that an intensive trade existed between this harbour town and Egypt. Since Tell el-Dab'a was one, if not *the* most important harbour of Egypt during the MBA due to the fact that seagoing ships could sail up the Nile river, it is not surprising that at precisely these two places such "magnum-sized" versions of these jars exist. Furthermore, a smaller, *model-sized* version of this *ovoid jar with corrugated neck* was found at Sidon. This intact example (fig. 4. 8) was excavated in a burial of the MB IIB. While smaller versions made of stone are distributed all over Egypt, Nubia and the Levant during the MBA, pottery examples are – even in Egypt – very rare. One parallel exists in Kom Rabia/Memphis from the middle of the 13th Dynasty³¹. Huge storage containers called *zirs* appear in Egypt from the early 12th Dynasty until the first half of the New Kingdom³². They show significant shape and rim developments throughout this period³³. At Sidon almost the entire repertoire of these vessels is present. The earliest found (fig. 5. 1) dates to the post-Senwosret I period until the end of the 12th Dynasty. This was followed by another type (fig. 5. 2 and 5. 3) known from the reign of Senwosret III. till the middle of the 13th Dynasty, of which a complete example (fig. 4. 9) was found on site and which was reused as a burial container during Phase 2³⁴. While these early *zirs* have a bag-shaped body with their rims more or less as big as their bases, the more recent model belonging to the 13th Dynasty (fig. 5. 4 and 5. 5) has a rather ovoid shape with its base smaller than its rim. The most recent rim (fig. 5. 6) found at Sidon belongs to a type which appears occasionally at the very end of the Hyksos period and becomes common during the early 18th Dynasty. Similar to the earlier *zirs* in size and shape, but equipped with a spout

and a rim which is concave inside and trimmed at the top (fig. 5. 7), are storage vessels which were found throughout the period of Senwosret II/III until the early Hyksos phases ³⁵.

Nile clay vessels

For the time being it seems that Nile clay vessels do not appear in Sidon before the very late MB IIC period. Most of them are made of the very common Nile B-2 fabric which gets sandier in the New Kingdom. In contrast with the Marl C vessels where only reference pieces are shown on the plates, the Nile clay vessels are depicted in their entirety thus showing their scarcity in the Sidon corpus where only two



bowls were found. One is a *large bowl with a rolled rim* (fig. 6. 1) of a type which exists at Tell el-Dab'a from the most recent Hyksos phase (Ph. D/2) onwards ³⁶. The Sidon piece has two significant holes, one below the other just under the rim. These are signs of an attempt to repair a broken vessel where the damaged parts were fixed to each other by means of a string. The other open form consists of a *shallow*

platter bowl made of Nile C fabric (fig. 1), a shape that existed throughout the Middle and New Kingdom (fig. 6. 9). The tiny pot (fig. 6. 2) with its slightly thickened rim and a red wash on the outer surface, continues in the tradition of the Second Intermediate Period pottery from the Eastern Nile Delta, but has no exact parallel.

Jars made up the main group amongst the Nile clay vessels. The *flaring rim* of a Nile B-2 *jar* was coated by a white wash (fig. 6. 3). A good parallel in shape and fabric is found at an early New Kingdom level in Kom Rabia/Memphis ³⁷. From the same level in Memphis comes a piece ³⁸ similar to the *straight necked jar with a small rolled rim* (fig. 6. 4) from Sidon. Both examples are uncoated. *Jars with triangular rims* and a red coating on the rim (fig. 6. 5) are known from the early New Kingdom layers in Ezbet Helmi. Their predecessors were found in the more recent Hyksos phase ³⁹. An uncoated *bag-shaped jar* (fig. 6. 6) was already fabricated in the sandy New Kingdom version of the Nile B-2 clay. Furthermore, *large storage jars with cylindrical necks* (fig. 6. 7) are very common at Tell el-Dab'a during the Hyksos period and the early New Kingdom ⁴⁰. The elongated and folded rim of a large jar made of a rougher Nile B-2 fabric was coated with a white wash on the outside (fig. 6. 8). These types of jars are known from Tell el-Dab'a as Nile clay *imitations of Marl C zirs* ⁴¹. The type itself imitates a Hyksos to an early New Kingdom model.

Only one Nile clay vessel, a *cooking pot* (fig. 7) made of the sandy Nile E (fig. 1) was actually found in earlier MB layers. It was discovered in a disturbed context and dates to the later 12th and early 13th Dynasty, a period when its globular body was handmade and the rim shaped separately on a turnable device. Similar pieces came from MB contexts at Tell Fadous/Kfarabida⁴² and Ashkelon ⁴³.

The similarities between Egyptian material⁴⁴ and the locally produced pottery of Sidon with the material culture of Tell el-Dab'a in Egypt ⁴⁵ leads to the conclusion that these two sites were wellconnected via the sea. Sidon is a harbour town on the shore of the Mediterranean and

Tell el-Dab'a was the nearest Egyptian inland town reachable by ships trading in the eastern parts of the Mediterranean world. The latter was also where traded goods had to be reloaded onto smaller vessels bound further inland up the Nile. We know from the Mit Rahina Inscription of Amenemhet II ⁴⁶, at least from his reign onwards, that the Egyptian crown was interested in

intensifying the trade between its country and the Lebanese region. As a result the Egyptians were increasingly exposed to and absorbed Asiatic goods, culture and religion. That the reciprocal contact with Egypt influenced the Asiatic population is known from excavations such as Byblos. How far Egyptian culture, religion and customs were assimilated by the Asiatics and in which way they adapted them remains to be discovered and further more intensive investigation of Sidon is recommended.



NOTES

- 1 For Egyptian fabric classifications see the 'Vienna System' H.-Å. Nordström und J. Bourriau, 1993, p. 143-190. For correlations between the 'Vienna System' and the Tell el-Dab'a fabric classifications see K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 35-47.
- 2 Do. Arnold, 1981.
- 3 For the Sidon example, see I. Forstner-Müller and K. Kopetzky, 2006, fig. 4, and for the Tel Ifshar example see E. Marcus *et al.*, 2008, fig. 3. 1.
- 4 I. Forstner-Müller and K. Kopetzky, 2006.
- 5 C. v. Pilgrim, 1996, fig. 161a.
- 6 J. E. Quibell, 1897, pl. XVI/62.
- 7 J. de Linage, 1950, pl. XXXV, top row, 9th vessel from the left.
- 8 J. Bourriau, 2004, figs. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11.
- 9 A. Hamada and S. Farid, 1947, pl. LIII/19.
- 10 E. Czerny, 1998, fig. 18.
- 11 B. Bader, 2001, p. 48.
- 12 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 154; B. Bader, 2009, fig. 124; *idem*, 2001, p. 43 f- Typ 6.
- 13 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 157; B. Bader, 2001, fig. 41 c and d.
- 14 B. Bader, 2001, fig. 42 c.
- 15 B. Bader, 2001, fig. 5 h, j.
- 16 Do. Arnold, 1982, fig. 8. 4.
- 17 For this type, see B. Bader, 2001, p. 85-98.
- 18 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 156 f; B. Bader, fig. 13 b.
- 19 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 155; B. Bader, 2001, fig. 9 b.
- 20 I. Forstner-Müller, K. Kopetzky and C. Doumet-Serhal, 2006, fig. 4.
- 21 B. Bader, 2001, fig. 22 h and i.
- 22 Do. Arnold, 1982, p. 63-64, fig. 19.
- 23 I. Forstner-Müller, K. Kopetzky and C. Doumet-Serhal,

- 2006, fig. 2.
- 24 K. Kopetzky, 2010, fig. 47.
- 25 I. Forstner-Müller, K. Kopetzky and C. Doumet-Serhal, 2006, fig. 3.
- 26 K. Kopetzky, 2010, fig. 45.
- 27 B. Bader, 2009, p. 445.
- 28 This rim fragment comes from a disturbed context. I would like to thank R. Schiestl for this information.
- 29 B. Bader, 2001, p. 130.
- 30 I. Forstner-Müller, K. Kopetzky and C. Doumet-Serhal, 2006, p. 54.
- 31 B. Bader, 2009, fig. 248, type 140 a [5582].
- 32 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 161-171.
- 33 See K. Kopetzky and I. Forstner-Müller, 2009, fig. 5.
- 34 See B. Bader *et al.*, 2009.
- 35 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 161; B. Bader, 2001, figs. 41 j and k.
- 36 D. Aston, 2004, pl. 216.849; K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 85 f; J. Bourriau, 2010, fig. 25/4.14.5.
- 37 J. Bourriau, 2010, fig. 27/11.8.5.
- 38 J. Bourriau, 2010, fig. 27/10.10.9.
- 39 K. Kopetzky, 2010, Abb. 315. (87) K3490-25.
- 40 I. Forstner-Müller and K. Kopetzky, 2009, fig. 10.
- 41 K. Kopetzky, 2010, p. 106 f.
- 42 I thank Hermann Genz for this information.
- 43 I would like to thank Lawrence E. Stager and R. Voss for this information.
- 44 During the later 13th Dynasty until the period of Thutmosis III the pottery develops very differently in the various regions of Egypt.
- 45 See in this volume: C. Doumet-Serhal and K. Kopetzky, "Sidon and Tell el-Dab'a: Two cities - one story. A highlight on metal artefacts from the Middle Bronze Age graves", p. 9.

- 46 H. Altenmüller and A. M. Moussa, 1991.

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II. Forstner-Müller & K. Kopetzky, 2006, "An Upper Egyptian Import at Sidon", *AHL*, 24, p. 60-62.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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- AHL* *Archaeology and History in the Lebanon*.
- Ä&L* *Ägypten und Levante*, Vienna.
- ASAE* *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*, Cairo.
- BAAL* *Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises*, Beirut.
- EES* *Egypt Exploration Society*, London.
- FIFAO* *Fouilles de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire*, Kairo.
- MDAIK* *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, Cairo, Berlin, since 1970: Mainz.
- SAK* *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur*, Hamburg
- UZK* *Untersuchungen der Zweigstelle Kairo des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes*, Vienna.