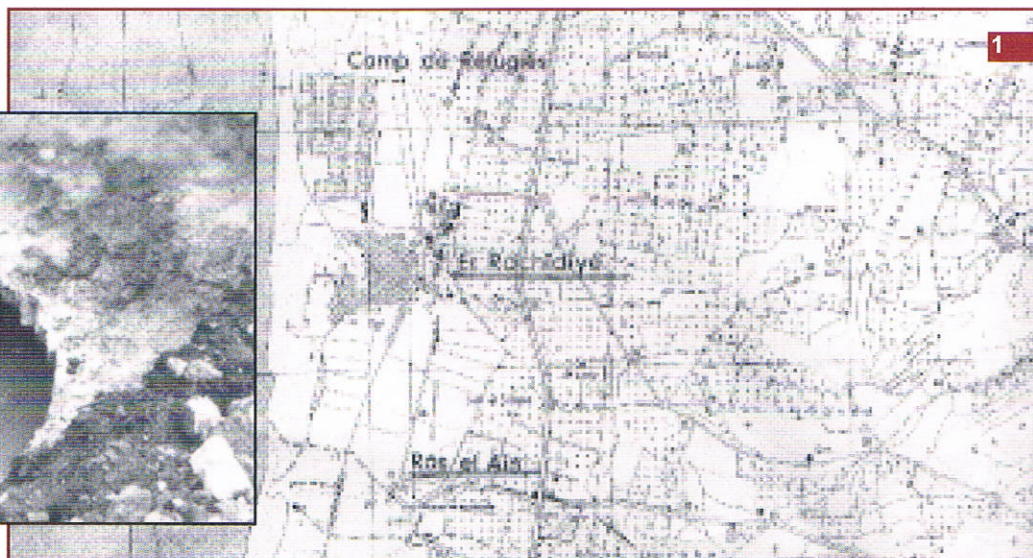


Claude Doumet-Serhal

42

JARS FROM THE FIRST MILLENNIUM BC AT TELL EL RACHIDIEH (SOUTH OF TYRE): PHOENICIAN CINERARY URNS AND GRAVE GOODS



In ancient and classical sources Tyre originally consisted of an island fortress a slight distance from the mainland and the continental city called Ushu in cuneiform texts, and later referred to as Palaetyrus by Strabo.

“Although Tyre,” writes Guillaume of Tyre, “is situated in the middle of the sea it has outside on the mainland a rich and fertile plain”. Of Palaetyrus little is known. Its position was more or less opposite the island and in early times it must have been strongly fortified like other coastal cities. It was considered to be a second Tyre on the mainland. It is said, moreover, that the first human settlement on the island, during the Bronze Age, came from Palaetyrus on the mainland.

To an overpopulated island, its mainland territory was a vital necessity, supplying it with agricultural products, drinking water, wood and murex. In isolation the island city was nothing. Thus in order to secure its lifeline, Palaetyrus was forced to submit to Nebuchadnezzar (587-574 BC). Later its walls do not seem to have been restored and it became an open straggling city extending along the shore from the river Leontes (today called the Litani) to Ras el Ain, a distance of seven miles or more. Continental Tyre situated on a fertile plain at the foot of the southwestern ridge of the Lebanon mountains and near the gorge of the Litani river

presented a panorama of great beauty. Nonnos, author of the *Dyonisiaca* (XL. 338) was impressed by Palaetyrus:

How's this-how do I see an island on the mainland? If I may say so, never have I beheld such beauty. Lofty trees rustle beside the waves...A delicate breeze of the south breathes from Lebanon upon Tyrian seas and seaside plowland, pouring a breath of wind which fosters the corn and speeds the ships at once, cools the husbandman and draws the seaman to his voyage...”.

LOCATION OF PALAETYRUS

In 1921 Denyse Lelasseur, at the head of a French archaeological mission, excavated tell Maachouq meaning the tell of “the beloved one” facing Tyre. Because of its name, various legendary traditions record that the most ancient temple of Melqart was not on Tyre “the island” but on this tell. This assumption was unfounded as the excavation undertaken in 1921 touched bedrock and revealed only potsherds, mosaic, glass and coins ranging from the sixth to the fourth centuries B.C.

Because of its position, the modern village of tell Rachidieh, the most important tell lying 4 km south of Tyre, is identified with Palaetyrus. From this city and its surroundings came the supply of drinking water for the island. Water was supplied

- 1 Map showing the location of Tell el Rachidieh
- 2 Tomb IV at Tell el Rachidieh
- 3 Tyre, Palaetyrus and Tell Maachouq (Plan Georges Sabbagh)
- 4 The jar standing on three loop handles from Rachidieh belongs to a type already found in the Middle and in the Late Bronze Ages. Private collection S. B.

by small boats until Hiram I built cisterns and other engineering works on the island. Seventeenth and eighteenth century travelers to Tyre have described the nearby springs at Ras el Ain as the "cisterns of Salomon". They are said to have been made by him at the time when he cultivated an alliance with Hiram, King of Tyre, to facilitate the building of the temple of Jerusalem. Water in abundance from the copious springs of Ras el Ain was received during the Roman period in large reservoirs and then conveyed northward to the city of Tyre by an aqueduct. The springs of Ras el Ain still supply modern Tyre with water.

In 1974 in Palaetyrus, Ushu, Continental Tyre or Tell el Rachidieh, a rescue excavation was undertaken by the Department of Antiquities of Lebanon. The Tell, known as Tell Habish after Rachid Pasha acquired it in 1856 to build a farm, was known at an earlier stage as Sinda according to Evagre the Scholastic. A place where a hermit called Zozyma used to dwell.

Originally more than 100 urns containing calcina-

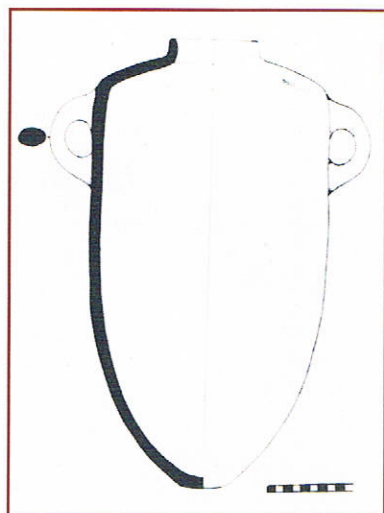


ted bones and cremated ashes were found at Tell el Rachidieh, first in 1903 by Macridy Bey, Curator of the Imperial Museum in

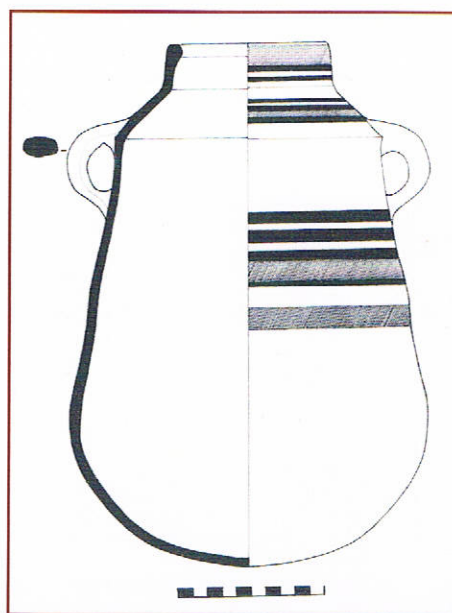
Constantinople and secondly in 1942 by Maurice Chéhab. However, no proper publication of this material was undertaken. Pottery from Macridy's excavation of Tombs A, B & C was all published in a group and it is now difficult to catalogue it. The Chehab material has never been published. In 1974 five Iron age tombs were discovered while a mechanical digger was used by the Palestinians to built a shelter for their camp which nowadays occupies the ancient Tell.

The 1974 rescue excavation was subsequently undertaken by Hafez Chehab and Ibrahim Kawkabani from the Department of Antiquities of Lebanon. Whereas the material from burials 4 and 5 (Hafez Chehab's excavation) has been published (Doumet-Serhal 1982, 89-148; Doumet & Kawkabani 1995, 299-395) the material from burials 1, 2 (1), 2 (2) and 3 remained unpublished due to the difficulties in accessing the Beirut National Museum's store-rooms during the recent war. Special thanks are due to Ibrahim Kawkabani who

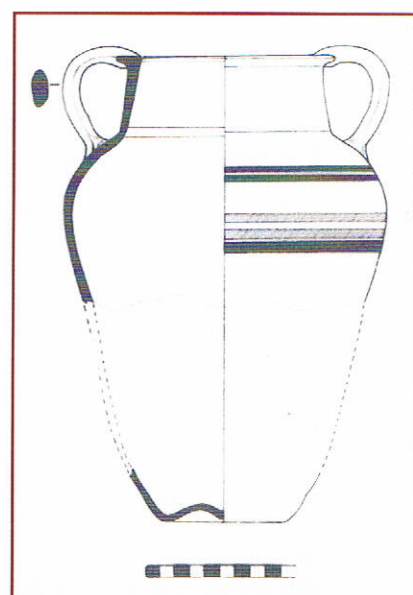
PHOENICIAN WARES



5 Jar Rach 26524 tomb 2



6 Jar Rach 26388 tomb 1



7 Jar Rach 26351 tomb 1

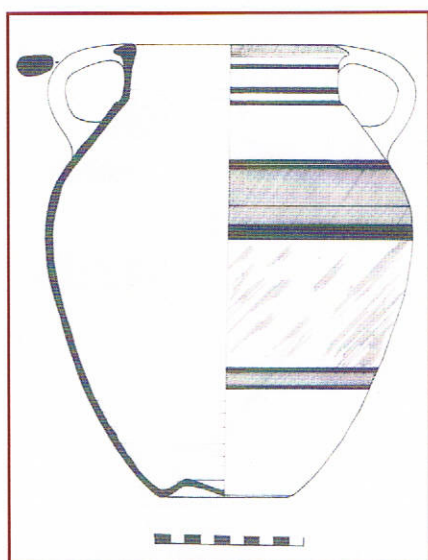
very kindly gave me permission to complete the Rachidieh study by adding the material from these unpublished burials (this material as well as a discussion on Palaetyrus will be published in full in due time).

In addition to the 1974 excavation, large amount of cinerary jars from Rachidieh were found during the war as the result of clandestine excavations that had been undertaken on the site. We therefore find a large amount of these jars in private collections, some of which have been included here as they provide additional information to the study of shape and decoration.

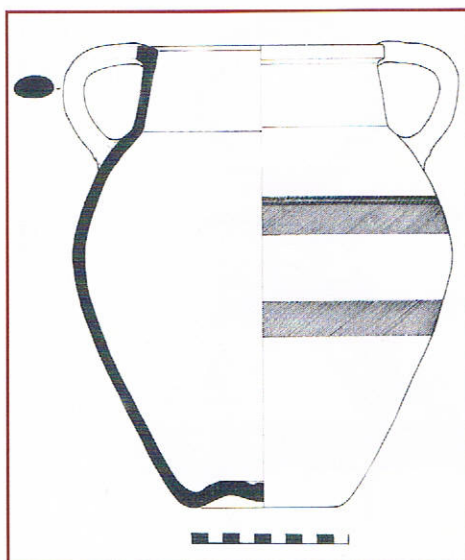
Cremation was the rule at Rachidieh and the material uncovered consisted essentially of jars containing the remains of the deceased (Doumet, 1992, 457-459). In Syria-Palestine, cremation is documented for the first time in the 11th century BC in Carchemish, Hama, Tell Halaf, Hazor and at a few sites in Cyprus. From the middle of the 9th century onwards cremation appears to take root chiefly in southern Lebanon, and in particular in the territory of Tyre and Sidon. Cremation is predominant in the Phoenician necropoli of the 9th to the 7th century like Tambourit, Khirbet Silm, Joya, Qasmieh and Akhziv although occasionally it coexists with a few inhumations. This contrasts with other territories further north, where inhumation continues to be absolutely dominant. Khaldeh yielded only two cremations, both in jars covered by a flat dish, one together with a skeleton covered

by stones, the other in a constructed inhumation tomb. A few cremations dated to the end of the 8th century and start of the seventh century have been discovered at tell Arqa, north of Tripoli. It is necessary to bear in mind the traditional explanations for the introduction of cremation in the Levant namely the invasion by the Sea-Peoples in the 12th century, as well as foreign residents – but at the same time it is important to bear in mind the arguments of many scholars that it is much too simplistic to always equate a change in burial practices with the arrival of a newcomer when other ethnographical explanations, for example different sections of the same population, or even economy of space and hygienic reasons, should also be taken into consideration.

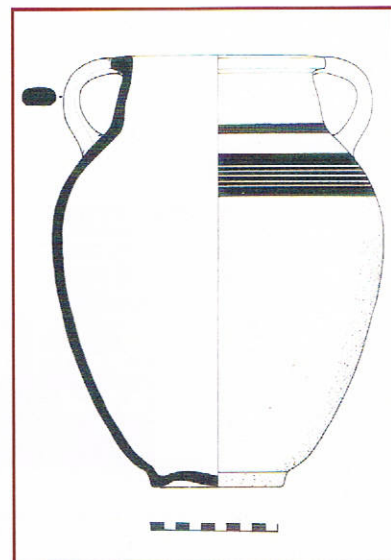
Three major categories are differentiated in this article. The main diagnostic variations are based on shape but also on the fabric, firing and technical skills that set the Phoenician types apart from the Cypriote types. A third type is a category of jars manufactured in Phoenicia replicating the Cypriote production but with a much simpler style of decoration. Only the fabric analysis (some of which is published in this volume p. 58-59) of clay can eventually tell us the originals from the copies. Many variations occur in each category. Four jars, two from the Rachidieh tomb IV and three belonging to a private collection (see Bordreuil in this issue p. 52-57) bear inscriptions which are epigraphically datable.



8 Jar Rach 26390 tomb 1



9 Jar Rach 26450 tomb 2



10 Jar Rach 26593 tomb 2

PHOENICIAN WARES

THREE TYPES OF WARES WERE DEFINED:

PLAIN WARE (FIG. 5)

An ordinary jar of soft brown ware was placed in the grave. It had rounded shoulders (Bikai 1983, 396) (50.5 cm high), a straight short rim, a pointed base and a capacity of approximately 18 litres. This Canaanite type of jar found in the Late Bronze Age at both Sarepta and Tyre (Sagona 1982, 75) is also present in the Early Iron Age.

BICHROME WARE (FIG. 6-9)

Manufactured from a clay with large calcareous inclusions and fired within a temperature probably not exceeding 750°. Any firing above this temperature would start decomposing the calcium carbonate contained in the clay which produces slight quantities of quick lime. This lime, with the absorption of humidity from the air, produces much more voluminous calcium hydroxide resulting in the cracking of the jar.

The clay is buff with the typical decoration of black and red horizontal simple bands on shoulder and body.

- A bag-shaped jar (35.7 cm high) (fig 6) with a high, straight rim, rounded base and a capacity of approximately 14 litres. The long narrow jar and the bag-shaped jar are known from

Megiddo (Lamon & Shipton 1939, pl. 13, 69) Hazor (Yadin 1960, pl. LIX, 3, 5) and Hurbat Rosh Zayit (Gal 1992, fig. 3, 2, 3 mid-tenth to mid-ninth-centuries BC). The Rachidieh jar is very similar to a painted storage jar from Larnaca belonging to the Kition horizon (Bikai 1987, 56; see also Hadjisavvas, 2000, Larnaka 1989/6, inv. no 2, p. 1032 early Archaic I period).

- The jars with handles from rim to shoulder (fig. 7-9) are by far the most common type of Phoenician jar. The average height is 35 cm, with straight necks and an out-turned flat rim with bulging or ovoid body. These jars have a ring or round base and a capacity of approximately 4 to 9 litres.

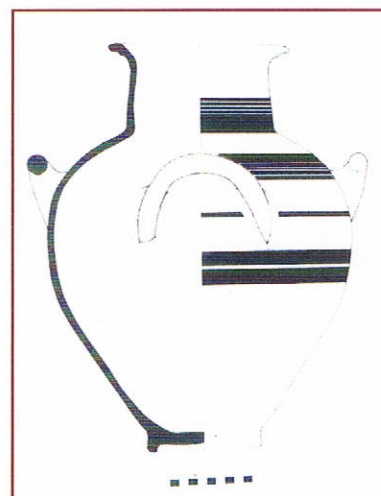
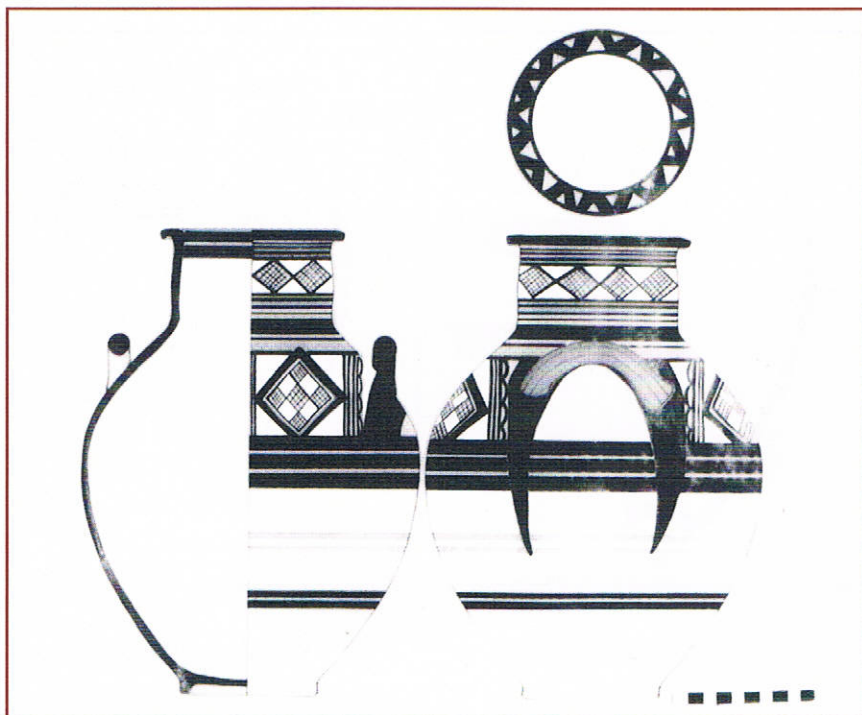
MONOCHROME RED OR BLACK WARE (FIG. 10-11)

Some of these jars painted either with black or red



11 Jar from Rachidieh with the palm tree motif. Private collection.

IMPORTED CYPRIOTE WARES



12 Jar Rach 26452 tomb 1
13 Jar Rach 26587 tomb 2

horizontal bands on the shoulders are manufactured in the same ware and style as the bichrome ware. One jar from a private collection is decorated with a Late Bronze Age motif (fig. 11), namely the palm tree which has evolved into the simpler triangle made by five strokes (Maynor-Bikai 1983, 398, see p. 48).

Alongside the local wares appear the following imported Cypriot wares.

CYPRIOTE WARES

Cypriote wares are harder with less porosity, have a better “ring” and are fired at a higher temperature, around 800-850°. Fabric colours vary from white to greenish. The typological classification established by Gjerstadt in the *Swedish Cyprus Expedition* and which is still in use today divides the Cypriote Iron Age into periods, of which the earlier is termed Cypro-Geometric and the later Cypro-Archaic. The Cypro-Geometric is further subdivided into three phases (CG I, II & III) and the Cypro-Archaic into two (CA I & II). The main ceramic ware found at Rachidieh is the White Painted Ware found from CG II throughout the Cypro-Archaic, the Bichrome Ware found from CG III throughout the Cypro-Archaic. A few jars belong to the Black-on-red Ware found in Cyprus towards the end of CG II.

WHITE PAINTED WARE (FIG. 12-13)

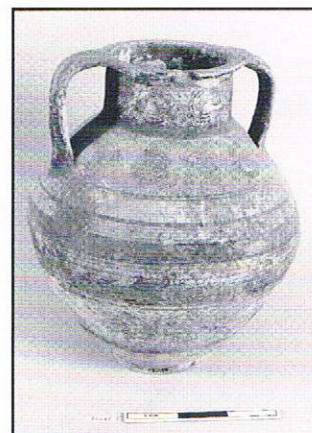
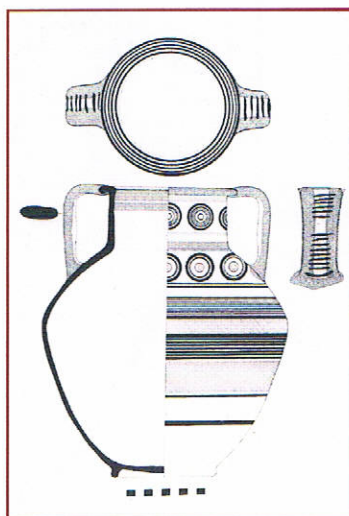
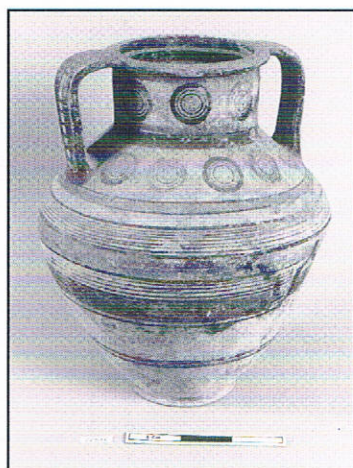
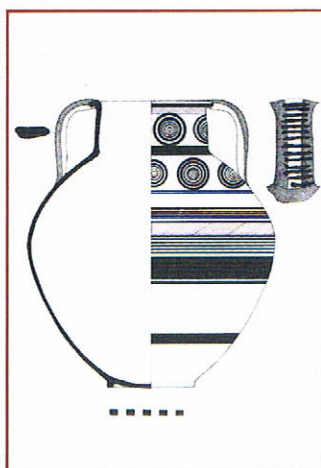
This ware has a characteristic decoration of black bands on a white painted surface. The jars with handles from rim to shoulder and those with horizontal handles are higher than the Phoenician jars with an average height of 35 cm to 44 cm and a capacity of 6 to 30 litres. Jars with horizontal handles are similar in shape to corresponding types of jars with vertical handles (fig. 13).

- JARS BELONGING TO WHITE PAINTED II.

In this type triangles and lozenges filled with smaller triangles are introduced. Jars still have an ascending shape with bulging shoulders, a straighter neck and a less flaring rim than in type I.

- JARS BELONGING TO WHITE PAINTED III

A distinctive new type of decoration namely the concentric circles, is introduced although the triangle and lozenge decoration is still found (fig. 12). Jars have a less concave, sometimes nearly straight neck with the width of the body located either towards the center of the belly or towards the shoulder or even with an oval body. The handles, with a horizontal striped decoration, are usually placed more upright and higher up on the shoulder. Jar fig.12 with cylindrical neck, oval body and erect horizontal handles belongs to type III.

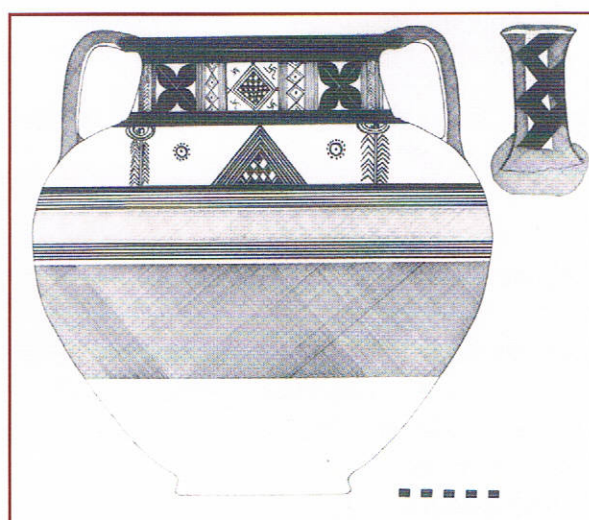


14-15 Jar Rach 26488 tomb 2
16-17 Jar Rach 26506 tomb 1

CYPRIOTE BICHROME WARE (FIG. 14-19)

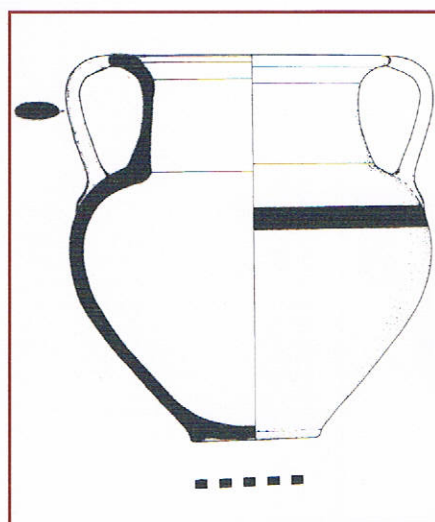
The concentric circle decoration which was originally connected with the Black-on-Red ware and which was also found on White painted ware is predominant on the Rachidieh bichrome jars (Gjerstadt 1960, 109). The neck or shoulder zones of jars are decorated with two to six concentric circles. The outer circle is sometimes drawn with a thicker brush than the inner ones. The concentric circle ornament was introduced into Cyprus at the beginning of Cypro-Geometric III and in Cypro-Archaic I (Gjerstadt 1948, 288, 301) (further clay analysis is being processed to distinguish the local productions).

One jar belonging to the Cypro-Archaic period has a neck decorated on either side with four petalled-rosettes (fig. 18-19). These have vertical chevrons, groups of vertical parallel lines, dotted triangles and a chequered lozange. The shoulder zone between handles on both sides is decorated with a chequered triangle flanked by vertical chevrons and dotted circles. Horizontal bichrome black and red bands are applied on the body. The jar has a neck tapering upwards with a flat out-turned rim with bulging shoulders.

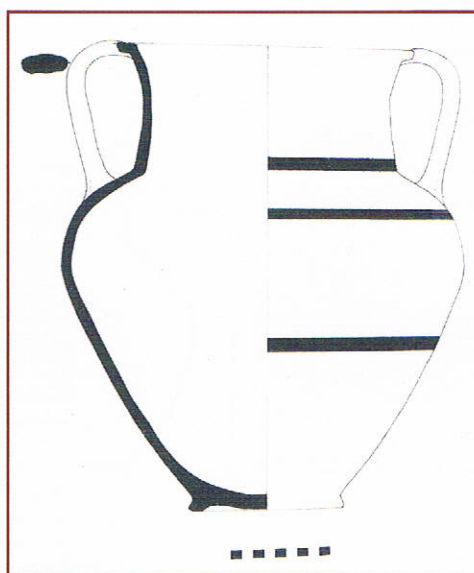


18-19 Jar Rach 26687 tomb 2

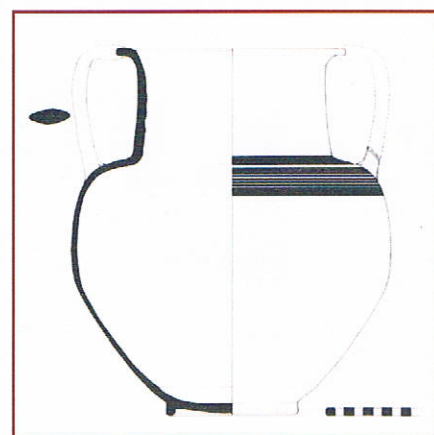
PHOENICIAN REPLICATES OF CYPRIOTE MODELS



20 Jar Rach 26685 tomb 2



21 Jar Rach 26512 tomb 2



22 Jar Rach 26533 tomb 2

THE PHOENICIAN REPLICATES

WHITE PAINTED WARE (FIG 20-22)

All shapes belonging to this category are identical to the ones described above albeit in a higher quality clay than the Phoenician style jars described earlier. In the Lebanese Low Cretaceous (Low Aptian) sources, layers of clay can be found without calcium carbonate. This results in jars fired at a higher temperature which are harder and more or less resemble the Cypriote production (further clay analysis is being processed). The decoration of plain horizontal black bands is however much simpler than the Cypriote counterparts.

BLACK-ON-RED WARE

This ware has a characteristic decoration of black paint on a red-slip background which appears according to Nicola Schreibe in the Cypriot ceramic repertoire around 950 BC (Cypro-Geometric II). P. Maynor-Bikai (Bikai 1978, 67; 1988, 37) assumed that because of the scarcity of the production in Tyre this ware originated in Cyprus (Culican 1982; 46). This has been confirmed by the analysis of the composition of samples undertaken by Brodie and Steel (Brodie & Steel, 276). The production of this ware, that was inspired by early Phoenician pottery, was reserved in Cyprus for the decoration of a high quality and mass-produced neck-ridged juglet and gradually adapted for

a variety of different vessel forms.

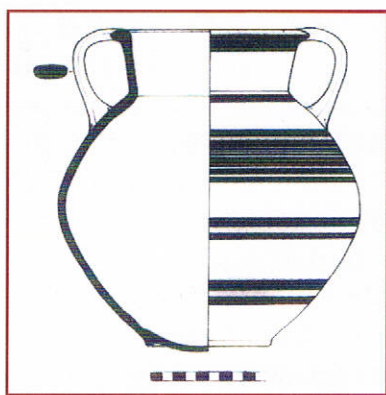
THE INITIAL EARLY MAINLAND STIMULUS

A production of pottery with red slip and black concentric circles is found in Palestine around the 11th-10th century BC and has evolved differently within each region. This technique was found in Palestine at Tell Qasile (Mazar 1980, 105; 1985, 33) Ashdod (Dothan & Freedman 1967, 110-113) and Tell er Reqeish (Culican 1973, 102, footnote 23). Another was applied on shapes imitating the Phoenician bichrome technique jugs and jars (Culican 1982, 55-58). The latter was given a variety of names: Black-on-Red-local, (Chapman 1972, 140-141), Proto Black-on-Red (Prausnitz 1969, 156) or Red Ware at Palaepaphos-Skales (Bikai 1983, 400, & footnote 2). Ch. Briesse (1985, 40) divided the Phoenician production from the mainland in three phases suggesting the date of 800 BC as a terminus post quem for the production of this technique.

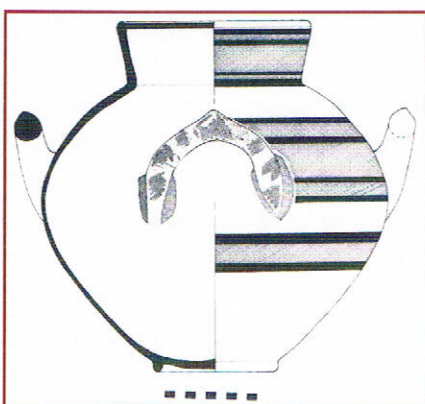
Rachidieh produced two vessels belonging to the local early variety of the ware, a beer jug and a trefoil mouth jug with a palm tree motif (see Doumet-Serhal 2003, in press).

THE LATE PHOENICIAN REPLICATES (FIG. 23-27)

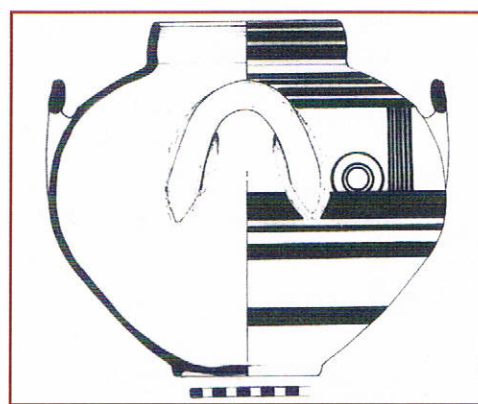
Jars found in burials 1 & 2 are replicates in local fabric of Cypriote models and are found in Rachidieh tombs 1 and 2 for the first time. One jar has vertical handles from rim to shoulder, another has handles applied on the shoulder. These



23 Jar Rach 26588 tomb 1



24 Jar Rach 26590 tomb 1



25 Jar Rach 26689 tomb 1

belong to Gjerstadt's Cypro-Geometric III/Cypro-Archaic I for the following reasons:

- Necks of jars are straight or slightly flaring with a flat rim.
- The ovoid shape of the body widest in the middle or slightly higher.
- The "buckle"-shape of the handles (fig. 26).

Two jars (fig. 24-25) have horizontal handles with a plain rim suited to receive a cover. Jar fig. 25 with short straight neck, simple rounded rim, ridge on the shoulder, globular body, handles placed vertically on the body and with a ring base, belongs to Cypro-Archaic I. The shoulder is divided into a decorated panel of vertical and horizontal lines with concentric circles. The decoration shows the same characteristic as that of White Painted Ware: the concentric circles introduced by type III of Black-on-Red does not become dominant before type IV (Gjerstadt 1948, 2, 288).

Jar in fig. 24 has handles with a characteristic pointed upper angle that imitates metal prototypes (Prausnitz 1966 178-182 for other examples of amphorae with impressions imitating the rivets used to fix the metal handles). This jar, with its accentuated shoulders and short flaring neck differs from the earlier narrower and taller types (Gjerstad, 1960, 112). The handles placed obliquely on the body indicate a later date than jar in fig. 25. These jars have a capacity of approximately 6 to 15 litres.



26 Jar Rach.26534 tomb 2

PLAIN WARE (FIG. 28)

One plain ware jar with a capacity of approximately 13 litres with depressed ovoid body, flat everted rim and base ring with three handles on the shoulder was found in tomb 1. A comparison is found in Palaepaphos (CG III) but with a handleless jar imitating metal prototypes (Karageorghis 1983, fig. CCI, T. 93, 57).

CONCLUSION

Rachidieh tomb IV dated between 775-750 BC (Doumet-Serhal 1982, 133) was attributed by P. Maynor-Bikai to the Salamis horizon (Maynor-Bikai 1987; 65) (850? to 750?).

A Greek pendant semi-circle plate of the subprotogeometric type was found in this tomb as well as in Salamis tomb 1, Tyre and Ras el Bassit.

A full study of the pottery found in tombs 1 and 2 will be necessary for a closer dating. However an initial approach underlines the fact that Tomb 1 yielded two new subproto-geometric plates as well as mushroom-lipped jugs found in the Salamis horizon but classified according to Bikai (1987, 65) to the very last use of this tomb or as being

intrusive. However tomb 1 has in addition yielded red slip plates with reserve and incised decoration, ledge-rimmed plates and carinated plates belonging to Bikai's later Kition Horizon (750? to after 700) (Bikai 1987, 5). The Rachidieh tomb IV might have ended around the middle of the 8th century whereas Rachidieh tomb 1 had a longer time span probably ending before the end of the 8th century BC. From tomb 2 came a large quantity of bichrome jars belonging to Cypro-Geometric III and Cypro-Achaic I. A further study of the material is however required for a full dating of this tomb.

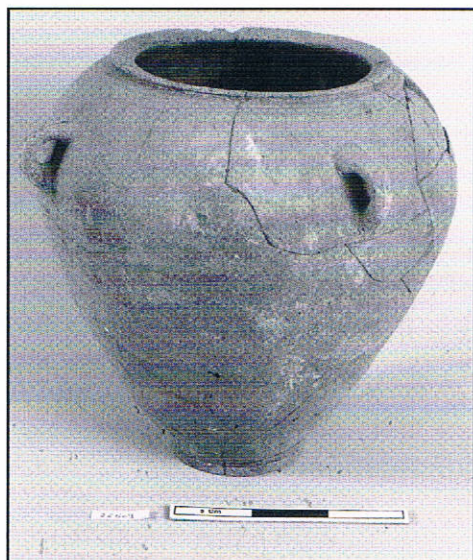


27

Jar Rach.26352, tomb 1

28

Jar Rach.26509, tomb 1



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