

Report on the
17th Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission
in Syene / Old Aswan (2016/2017)

by

Cornelius von Pilgrim, Mariola Hepa, Wolfgang Müller, Jan Nováček, Kristina Scheelen- Nováček

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1. Introduction and Overview

The 17th season of the joint archaeological project of the Swiss Institute of Architectural and Archaeological Research Cairo and the Aswan Inspectorate of the Ministry of State for Antiquities in Syene/Old Aswan was carried out between November 11th, 2016 and April 15th, 2017¹.

Besides our programme of systematic rescue excavations in the modern city, the sustainable development and protection of the few registered antiquities zones is a major task of the joint mission.

¹ We are grateful to the Ministry of State for Antiquities and the members of the Permanent Committee for granting permission to undertake the Joint Mission in Aswan. We appreciate very much the fruitful cooperation with our colleagues of the Aswan Inspectorate in this joint mission. The mission was directed by CORNELIUS VON PILGRIM, in close cooperation with NASR SALAMA. The fieldwork was directed by WOLFGANG MÜLLER. Team members were the Egyptologists M. MAREE, U. MATIC and MARCUS MÜLLER, the archaeologists M. HEPA, T. JÜRGENS and G. WILLIAMS, the paleo-zoologist U. MUTZE, the anthropologists J. NOVACEK and K. SCHEELLEN and the epigraphers S. TORALLAS TOVAR and A. ZOMENO. Assigned inspectors and further member of the mission were TAISSIR BADR MOHAMED, MAGDI MOHAMED, ASMAA SADIG, MANAL MOHAMED, and AMIRA MOHAMED SADIQ GAD EL-RAB. - We are much indebted to PAMELA ROSE for correcting the English of this report. All Web-Addresses mentioned in the report were last accessed in June 2017.

The current work focuses on the area of the so-called temple of Domitian (Area 3), a small temple dedicated to the triad of the First Cataract (Fig. 1).² After a thorough cleaning of the site and the stabilisation of the site's eastern edge with a massive retaining wall in earlier years, an investigation of the strata pre-dating the temple was started in Season 16. The excavation was restricted to a trench in the south-eastern corner of the site and revealed a sequence of occupational strata from the Ptolemaic Period down to the Persian Period. This season, the trench was extended to the north along the western side of the temple and helped to put the previous results into a broader framework. Special attention was given to an impressive layer of burnt debris, which indicates major industrial facilities in the vicinity in the Ptolemaic Period, and to the houses of the Persian Period. An assemblage of sealings including Achaemenid seal impressions in one of the houses may derive from a disintegrated archive of papyri and connects this quarter with the Persian garrison of Syene. Moreover, the excavation revealed further clues to the reconstruction of the ancient topography and changes to it over time. The site was located very close to the ancient riverbank and repeatedly flooded before the level was artificially raised by substantial constructions in the Ptolemaic Period.

Due to modern destruction the excavation started well below the floor level of the temple, of which the foundations have also been seriously affected by illicit digging. The excavated area offers thus the opportunity not only to consolidate the site of the temple proper but also to use the cleared

² Cf. for publications on earlier seasons: C. VON PILGRIM ET AL., 'The Town of Syene. Preliminary Report on the 1st and 2nd Season in Aswan', *MDAIK* 60 (2004), pp. 119-148 (henceforth quoted as: *1st Report*). *Idem*, 'The Town of Syene. Preliminary Report on the 3rd and 4th Season in Aswan', *MDAIK* 62 (2006), pp. 215-277 (henceforth quoted as: *2nd Report*). *Idem*, 'The Town of Syene. Report on the 5th and 6th Season in Aswan', *MDAIK* 64 (2008), pp. 305-356 (henceforth quoted as: *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*). *Idem*, 'The Town of Syene. Report on the 7th Season in Aswan', *MDAIK* 66 (2010), pp. 179-223 (henceforth quoted as: *Report on the 7th Season*). C. VON PILGRIM ET AL., 'The Town of Syene. Report on the 8th Season in Aswan', *MDAIK* 67 (2011), p. 157-161 (henceforth quoted as *Report on the 8th Season*). C. VON PILGRIM/W. MÜLLER, 'Report on the Ninth Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2008/2009)', *ASAE*, forthcoming (http://www.swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_9th_Season_2008-2009.pdf) (henceforth quoted as: *9th Season*). *Idem*, 'Report on the Tenth Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan', *ASAE*, forthcoming ([http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_on_the_Tenth_Season_of_the_Joint_Swiss_Egyptian_Mission_in_Syene_Old_Aswan_\(2009_2010\).pdf](http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_on_the_Tenth_Season_of_the_Joint_Swiss_Egyptian_Mission_in_Syene_Old_Aswan_(2009_2010).pdf)) (henceforth quoted as: *Tenth Season*). *Idem*, 'Report on the Eleventh Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2010/2011)', *ASAE*, forthcoming ([http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_on_the_Eleventh_Season_of_the_Joint_Swiss_Egyptian_Mission_in_Syene_Old_Aswan_\(2010_2011\).pdf](http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_on_the_Eleventh_Season_of_the_Joint_Swiss_Egyptian_Mission_in_Syene_Old_Aswan_(2010_2011).pdf)) (henceforth quoted as: *Eleventh Season*). C. VON PILGRIM ET AL., 'Report on the Twelfth Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2011/2012)', *ASAE*, forthcoming (http://www.swissinst.ch/downloads/SwissInst_Report_Aswan_2012.pdf) (henceforth quoted as: *Twelfth Season*). C. VON PILGRIM/W. MÜLLER, 'Report on the 13th Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2012/2013)', *ASAE*, forthcoming (http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Swissinst_Report_Aswan_2013.pdf) (henceforth quoted as *Thirteenth Season*), *idem*, 'Report on the 14th Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2013/2014)', *ASAE*, forthcoming (http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_2014th_Season_2013_2014.pdf) (henceforth quoted as *Fourteenth Season*). C. VON PILGRIM ET AL., 'Report on the Fifteenth Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2014/2015)', *ASAE*, forthcoming (http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Swiss_Institute_2014_2015.pdf) (henceforth quoted as *Fifteenth Season*). C. VON PILGRIM ET AL., 'Report on the 16th Season of the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan (2015/2016)', *ASAE*, forthcoming (http://swissinst.ch/downloads/Report_16th_season_2015_16.pdf) (henceforth quoted as *Sixteenth Season*).

space for the construction of a subterranean storage facility in order to replace the inappropriate use of the Isis Temple for this purpose.

In the framework of the archaeological surveillance of the town, the mission continued the monitoring of vacant properties and inspected several construction pits. One area offered the opportunity for a thorough investigation (Area 93). It is located at the southern limit of el-Koka, a quarter of particular interest since it is situated between the Isis Temple and the former Nile riverbank. However, although many properties have fallen into ruin or are abandoned, the southern part of the district of Koka remains a blank area archaeologically. The excavation was organised as a field school for a group of inspectors of the local Inspectorate of Antiquities who joined the mission for the first time. Although the work was seriously hindered by a huge modern circular structure in the middle of the area, a sector of well-preserved late-Roman houses was uncovered. An investigation of earlier layers and of the full stratigraphy of the site was not possible for safety reasons. The results of the work, however, provide a first impression of the character and the date, as well as the state of preservation of the occupation to be expected in the quarter to the west of the temple.

Besides the fieldwork, the study of pottery and finds from earlier seasons was intensified. Pottery studies focused particularly on the medieval period (G. WILLIAMS) as well as on selected areas with sequences of Roman occupation (M. HEPA). The analysis of the skeletons from the animal cemetery in Area 2 was continued by the palaeo-zoologists U. MUTZE, and the analysis of human skeletal remains from Roman tomb contexts was carried on by J. NOVACEK and K. SCHEELEN-NOVACEK.

SOFÍA TORALLAS TOVAR and AMALIA ZOMEÑO RODRÍGUEZ continued the inventory of the ostraca and registered a total of 103 new pieces from the seasons 15 until 17. The vast majority of ostraca are written in Greek. The largest collection originates from (the rather small) Area 88 and includes a small archive. This comprises at least seven letters all addressed to Chairas and written in the same hand by a certain Akkas.

Though comparably small in number, the Arabic ostraca double the quantity of ostraca from this period and form a very coherent and exceptional collection of texts. Even if most of pieces are rather fragmentary, their comparative study will provide an important addition to Arabic and Islamic texts from the early medieval period. Preliminary studies of the Arabic ostraca by area suggest that the northernmost areas of Aswan were particularly active in using ostraca as a major instrument in informal exchange.

(C. von Pilgrim)

2. The development of a Late Period and Ptolemaic town quarter of Syene (Area 3)

The preparations for the construction of an urgently-required subterranean storeroom for the storage of pottery, bones and soil samples reached their final and decisive stage as the northern sector (Fig. 2) of the foundation pit for the planned storage facility was archaeologically investigated.³ The northern sector excavated during this season measured 90.5sqm and was thus significantly smaller than the southern sector, investigated in Season 16. The complete ground area of the planned storage facility will cover ca. 250sqm. The excavated area of this season was situated immediately to the west of the "Temple of Domitian" (Figs. 1, 2 and 3).

The modern surface in the western part of Area 3 was at a very low level due to the fact that up to 8m of ancient and medieval layers were removed up to the beginning of the 20th century.⁴

The area was heavily affected not only by the construction work for the Grand Hotel and Germania Hospital at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, but also by several illicit diggings excavations that had taken place around the Temple of Domitian (Fig. 4). Three huge pits were observed in the eastern section. The southernmost resembled a sondage dug along the foundations of the temple and partly under them. Here treasure hunters were looking for precious items in the vicinity of the Temple. Finds from these pits, namely fragments of china and whiskey bottles could be dated to the end of the 19th century. The illicit excavations seem thus to be somehow connected with the construction and operation of the Grand Hotel, as a huge quantity of china belonging to the same service that most probably was in use in the Hotel at the time was found. As a result of the robbers' activities, the eastern section of the northern sector was very unstable and had to be supported with massive retaining walls.

Besides the former excavations in Area 3, the findings in Area 52 during Season 9 are crucial for any interpretation of the recent excavations.⁵ There the pre-modern bank of the Nile was encountered just 30m to the west of the western limit of Area 3 (Figs. 1 and 2).

Strata O-N⁶

In order to verify observations concerning the earliest traces of human activity in the southern sector, made during Season 16,⁷ the last remains of structures and stratigraphy there were archaeologically

³ For convenience the foundation pit of the planned storeroom is subdivided into a *northern* (the area predominantly investigated during Season 17) and *southern sector* (the area investigated during Season 16). The sectors are marked on Fig. 2.

⁴ W. MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, pp. 3-4.

⁵ *Idem*, in *Report on the 9th Season*, pp. 20-23. W. MÜLLER/M. DE DAPPER, 'The Urban Landscape of Aswan (Egypt) since the Predynastic Period: a Geoarchaeological Approach', in Y. TRISTANT/M. GILARDI (eds.), *Landscape Archaeology. Egypt and the Mediterranean World*, *BiEt* 69, Cairo 2017, p. 23-24.

⁶ *Cf.* for the use of the term "Stratum" W. MÜLLER, in *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, p. 314 n. 25. The excavations of Season 16 and 14 have produced a relative stratigraphic sequence that has been organized into Strata O – A. The absolute dates given to these Strata are of course of a preliminary nature.

investigated. In a limited area under Rooms 2 and 3 of House 14,⁸ a stratified sequence of layers of granite chips and fluvial sediments was found under several granite boulders. These boulders were first transported to and then left in the area, as they were deemed neither fit for further processing nor transport.⁹ Pottery from the uppermost layer of quarry debris was dated to the Ramesside period. This layer covered layers dating to the Middle Kingdom and, on top of the bed-rock, saprolithic material with some Old Kingdom sherds was present.¹⁰ Both the chronological scope and the overall character of activities during the Old and Middle Kingdom resemble the situation in the western¹¹ and eastern¹² littoral zones of ancient Aswan. Unlike the areas in the southern part of the urban river bank, though, no architectural structures of even a temporary nature were found in Area 3.

While the earlier Pharaonic layers and Houses 14 and 15 on top of them were not completely destroyed by the flood in the south,¹³ the destruction by the river was comprehensive in the northern sector. In test sondages to the immediate south and in the northern part of the northern sector, no traces of Strata N or O were found as the – mostly sandy – fluvial sediment reached down to the bedrock. The retaining wall of the bank in Stratum M met the western section of the foundation trench to the south of the northern sector.¹⁴

Stratum L

The buildings of Stratum L were constructed on top of the fluvial sediment covering the earlier strata. While all buildings dating to Strata N and M were destroyed by floods, the development of Stratum L was not interrupted by any natural disasters. According to the findings from Season 16, Stratum L lasted from the second half of the 5th century BC well into Dynasty 30.¹⁵

Stratum L/4b

⁷ MÜLLER, *Sixteenth Season*, pp. 4-5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Fig. 4.

⁹ Cf. C. VON PILGRIM, in *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, pp. 307-311 for a similar situation in Area 23.

¹⁰ For the dating of the Pharaonic Pottery I thank IRENE FORSTNER-MÜLLER.

¹¹ Cf. W. MÜLLER, in *9th Season*, p. 8 for Area 45, above, n. 5 for Area 23, C. VON PILGRIM/W. MÜLLER, in *Twelfth Season*, pp. 17-21 for Areas 72, 73 and 74.

¹² Cf. W. MÜLLER, in *Report on the 7th Season*, pp. 182-183 for Area 31 and for Area 2 cf. *Idem*, in *Eleventh Season*, p. 5 and MÜLLER/DE DAPPER, in TRISTANT/GILARDI (eds.), *Landscape Archaeology*, p. 30 and pp. 32-33.

¹³ MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Fig. 4.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

During early Stratum L/4, Houses 9, 21 and 22 were constructed. The north-eastern corner of House 9 was situated at the south-western limit of the northern sector. The rest of the building was investigated during Season 16 (Figs. 5-6).¹⁶

Houses 21 and 22 were situated at the eastern limit of the site. The southern part of the buildings was already observed during Season 16.¹⁷ As only parts of the western walls of the houses were within the investigated area, very little can be said about their architectural details. House 21 was situated to the north of House 22 (Figs. 5-7). Its western wall had a curved corner at its northern end. It was constructed of sandy mud-bricks and sat on top of a massive construction made of granite boulders covered in a thick layer of mud-plaster. The western wall of House 22 was made of stone (mostly roughly-dressed sandstone blocks) and later protected on the side facing Street 2 by a *glacis*-like construction. Granite and sandstone slabs were put against the stone wall in such a way as to form a steeply-banking wall (Figs. 8 and 9). Similar but more modest constructions were often put against walls that bordered streets in order to protect them from damage from the traffic passing by on the road.¹⁸ This special construction was probably an additional support that became necessary as the house was built against a slope to the east of the site. Houses 21 and 22 met near the northern limit of the southern sector. The stone wall contained a door at its southern end with stepping stones to the west of it. Houses 21 and 22 constituted the eastern limit of the north-south road labelled "Street 2" in Season 16. The western wall of house 21 marks a clear bend in this road towards the east.

Stratum L/4a

House 18

House 18 was situated at the northern limit of the site (Figs. 5-6). It was constructed towards the end of Stratum L/4. The building ground of the house was at a significantly deeper level than was the case with House 9. The earliest floor levels inside the house were, at ca. 91.5m asl¹⁹, slightly deeper than those of House 14, dating to Stratum N (91.8m asl). Only 9sqm and a portion of its southern facade were within the excavated area. Only the socle of the southern wall constructed of sandstone and granite rubble and the foundation of a narrow north-south wall abutting its northern face were excavated, as the earliest phase of the house was completely covered by later constructions that could not be removed for safety reasons. The north-south wall, 1.5m to the east of the staircase of Stratum L/3 would have blocked any entrance into the house in the same location as the later door connecting House 18 to the courtyard to the south of it. The spatial organisation of the interior of House 18 during

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7, 9-11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁸ Cf. F. ARNOLD, *Elephantine XXX. Die Nachnutzung des Chnumtempelbezirks. Wohnbebauung der Spätantike und des Frühmittelalters*, AV 116 (Mainz 2003), p. 152.

¹⁹ Above sea level.

Stratum L/4 differed significantly from the later phases of the house. The orientation of House 18 diverged from the orientation of Houses 9 and 13 in the southern sector.

Stratum L/3b

House 23

In Stratum L/3, House 23 was constructed in the centre of the northern sector (Figs. 10 and 3). The house was built against a sandy slope that followed more or less the contour of the granite. The floors of Rooms 1a and 1b were at significantly lower levels than those in the southern part of the house. The ground-plan of the house was slightly irregular in shape as it compensated for the different orientations and levels of Houses 18 and 9.

Room 1a measured 4 x 2m and most probably was used as a courtyard. While the eastern limit of the courtyard, a narrow north-south wall, could be established, the western limit was not excavated due to safety concerns. Most probably, though, a north-south wall, situated next to the western section that was later overbuilt and partly destroyed by House 19, constituted the western wall of Room 1. Most of Room 1b was outside the excavated area. Room 2 in the southern part of the house measured ca. 3 x 2.5m. It was separated from Room 3 by a narrow north-south wall of which only the foundation made of granite and sandstone rubble was preserved. The eastern wall of Room 3 was not within the excavated area. Room 5 was mostly covered by the western section. It constituted a courtyard that was entered from Street 2 via a door between the south-western corner of House 23 and the north-eastern corner of House 9, and was used for cooking and baking as a series of ovens was found there. In the earliest phase, a large bread oven was situated at the western limit of the trench, set against the northern wall of House 9 (Fig. 11). While there was no direct evidence found for a door leading from House 23 into this courtyard, the fact that the threshold of the door into the courtyard from Street 2 rested on top of the foundation of the southern wall of the house hints at some kind of connection.

The construction of the walls of the house differed according to their function and the static stress to which they were exposed. The northern and southern outer walls rested on massive socles made of granite and sandstone rubble. The northern wall of House 23 was renewed several times, probably due to the fact that it was located at the deepest spot of the house and was built on loose sand with a narrow foundation trench. Only the foundation of reused sandstone blocks and large-sized granite rubble of the southern wall was preserved. The interior walls had foundations made of sandstone and granite but, where preserved, their above-ground portion was exclusively made of mud-bricks of very bad quality.

With the construction of House 23, the area to the south of House 18 was no longer a public space, street or small square but became a courtyard, probably used by both houses. Due to the difference in orientation between Houses 18 and 9 mentioned above, this courtyard was not rectangular as its width

was 1.40m at the east end and 2.5m at the west. Its eastern limit was a narrow north-south wall that abutted both the northern wall of House 23 and the stone socle of the southern wall of House 18. Several ovens of different sizes for the baking of bread were found in this area. The ovens were grouped along the northern wall of House 23. The standard battery of three ovens as attested in Aswan and on Elephantine was not observed here (Fig. 12). A broken mortar made of sandstone was located next to a bread oven set against the northern wall of House 23.

Stratum L/3a

House 24

During later Stratum L/3, a complete refurbishment of House 23 took place (Figs. 10 and 13). While the northern part of the house remained unchanged, the southern part became a living-unit in its own right. New walls were built against the western and northern walls of former Rooms 2 and 3. Former Room 3 was now subdivided into the two smaller Rooms 3a and b. Rooms 2 and 3a were completely within the excavated area, with Room 2 measuring 2 x 2.50m (the north-south wall separating Rooms 2 and 3a was now significantly wider) and Room 3a ca. 1.70 x 1.10m. Most probably these three rooms were parts of a new house that had no access to the former courtyard Room 5. The entrance into this courtyard from Street 2 was renewed several times as the threshold had to be raised. Now a small *mastaba* made of stone was constructed against the northern wall of House 9 with a small oven on top of it (Fig. 14). As was the case with House 23, no doors could be observed due to the bad state of preservation and the fact that the house was completely overbuilt by House 19. On floors in Rooms 1 and 2 small fireplaces provided evidence of cooking activities.

House 18

The interior organisation of House 18 (Figs. 10, 3, 15 and 16) changed completely when the north-south wall dating to Stratum L/4 was abandoned and a staircase was constructed in the eastern part of the excavated part of the house. The western wall of the small vestibule lay just to the west of the door. A small room under the southern flight of the double-flight staircase was entered via a narrow door with a wooden threshold. The first step of the staircase was preserved. It was renewed several times. A door into House 18 was constructed ca 1m from the western limit of the excavated area. The door was in use for a very long time. It was constructed when the area to the south became a courtyard. No evidence of an earlier door was observed in the stone socle of the wall. At least five thresholds were recorded as the level of the door had to be raised due to the constant accumulation of settlement debris and other material outside the house (Fig. 17). Soon after the earliest threshold was abandoned, a *mastaba* was constructed of mud-bricks to the west of the door. A small sandstone basin, measuring 1.90m x 44cm and 14cm high, was put east of the *mastaba*. The basin was clearly reused as the small

original hole for draining was blocked by the *mastaba*. For draining two notches were cut roughly into the rim of the basin near its north-eastern and south-western corners. To the east of the basin, exactly below the door, was a stepping-stone. The basin was connected to the *mastaba* and the southern wall of House 18 by a thick layer of mud-plaster (Fig. 18). The earlier threshold was replaced by a sandstone slab at a higher level. The *mastaba* and basin, stepping stone and threshold were in use at the same time. Most probably, a visitor to the house had the opportunity to sit on the bench and clean his feet in the basin before entering the house. Evidence of such a practice is rare in ancient Egypt, probably due to the fact that basins made of stone were durable and could be used for different functions over long periods of time, and were thus often removed from their original location. In the case of House 18, the basin made of local sandstone was completely broken and impossible to move without destroying it.

In Tell el-Herr, a construction consisting of a pavement of limestone slabs with two parallel sandstone lintels on top of it, was recorded next to the entrance of a house dating to the Persian Period.²⁰ A very similar construction in Aswan, in Area 15, was interpreted as the support and substructure of a basin probably used for cleaning.²¹ The construction from Tell el-Herr, tentatively interpreted by the excavators as some kind of pot stand, may well constitute indirect evidence of an installation for washing and cleaning at the entrance of a house. While such an elaborate construction is missing at the entrance of House 18, the reused basin was simply put on top of the mud surface of the courtyard; the location next to an entrance is a clear parallel to Tell el-Herr. Pharaonic sources state the necessity of being clean before entering a temple or a house.²² "Bathrooms" next to entrances dating to the Second Intermediate Period and the New Kingdom were observed in Tell el-Dab'a.²³ The feature observed in House 18 was not a common one and may be an indicator of a special function or status of the building.

Stratum L/2 (Fig. 19)

²⁰ S. MARCHI, *L'habitat dans les forteresses de Migdol (Tell el-Herr) durant les V^e et IV^e siècles avant J. C.. Étude archéologique* (Paris 2014), p. 57-58, fig. 84.

²¹ W. MÜLLER, 'Domestic Structures in Graeco-Roman Syene (Modern Aswan)', in S. LADSTÄTTER/V. SCHEIBLREITER (eds.), *Städtisches Wohnen im östlichen Mittelmeerraum 4. Jh. v. Chr. – 1. Jh. n. Chr.*, DÖWW 397 = Archäologische Forschungen 18 (Wien 2010), p. 432, fig. 4.

²² Cf. H. BRUNNER, *LÄ VI*, 1986, col. 782, s. v. "Tür und Tor" for doors of temples.

²³ Cf. M. BIETAK/I. FORSTNER-MÜLLER, 'Ausgrabung eines Palastbezirkes der Thutmosidenzeit bei 'Ezbet Helmi/Tell el-Dab'a. Vorbericht für Herbst 2004 und Frühjahr 2005', *ÄgLev XV* (2005), pp. 73-76 and p. 93 for an example from Tell el-Dab'a where the visitors to a palace of the early New Kingdom had to pass bathrooms situated inside each entrance before entering the staircases leading up to the platform with the palace proper on top of it. I. FORSTNER-MÜLLER, 'Vorbericht der Grabung im Areal A/II in Tell el-Dab'a', *ÄgLev XI* (2001), p. 204, fig. 6 (plan 11, O/14) for a house dating to the Second Intermediate Period from Tell el-Dab'a with a bathing installation outside the entrance.

At the beginning of Stratum L/2, prior to the construction of House 19, the lower northern part of House 23 was filled in with mud-brick and settlement debris. Among this material a complete jar was found. It was decorated with horizontal black and red stripes on a white slip (Fig. 20). Its mud stopper was still partly preserved. Inside the vessel, a number of seal-impressions on mud were found. The documents written on papyrus to which these sealings had belonged had completely vanished. In total 12 seal-impressions were found. Among them three were of an Egyptian type, and the remainder were impressions of Near-Eastern - most probably Achaemenid - style. Four of them were impressions of stamp-seals, one of a cylinder-seal (Fig. 21).²⁴

House 19

House 19 (Fig. 22) was constructed on top of Houses 23 and 24. The division that had taken place at the end of Stratum L/3 was given up and, as had been the case with House 23, the new house covered an area of ca. 32 (+x)sqm. The western, northern and southern limits were within the investigated area (Fig. 6). The southern wall of the house was renewed with a much wider stone foundation. The walls of House 19 were made of bricks of very bad quality resting on socles made of sandstone and granite rubble. The northern and southern walls were mostly made of stone and were much wider than the interior walls. Both stone socles and mud-brick walls were coated in thick layers of mud-plaster. This feature is typical of the architecture of the Persian Period in Aswan. Examples showing this method of construction were found in Areas 2 and 15.²⁵

Near the south-western corner of the house, a small platform abutted its southern face. The platform measured 2.50 x 1m and probably constituted the foundation of a staircase leading up to the door into the house. The platform showed several phases. Little was preserved of the first phase, which was constructed of mud-bricks. The second phase was at least in the preserved lower part made of granite and sandstone rubble. The small staircase could be reconstructed as leading up from east to west. The reconstructed door would then have been located near the south-western corner of the house. In this phase a small oven was situated at the western limit of the top of the platform.

The house was entered from the west via a door near the south-western corner of Room 1. The imprint of the threshold and its bedding of mud-mortar were visible. The entrance led over the remains of a building to the west of House 19 dating to Stratum L/3, mostly covered by the western section. The door was 75-80cm wide and thus larger than the other doors of this Stratum (which measure only 60cm in width).

A small mud-brick podium measuring 75x75cm was constructed against the western wall of Room 1 just to the north of the door. To the south of this small *mastaba*, the mud-mortar bedding of a threshold

²⁴ Cf. W. MÜLLER, in *Fourteenth Season*, p. 7 for a find of papyri with seal impressions inside a jar.

²⁵ *Idem*, in *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, p. 317 (Area 15) and *idem*, in *Fourteenth Season*, p. 7 (Area 2).

was still visible. A large fireplace was situated to the east of the platform. The installation was most probably used for cooking or other household activities (Fig. 23).

The southern part of the house consisted of two rooms (Fig. 24). While Room 3 was used as a staircase, Room 2 showed little traces of use. A fireplace was situated at its western wall. A door with a well-preserved limestone threshold led into Room 1. The door showed traces of at least three consecutive thresholds. The first step of the staircase to the east of it was also preserved in several phases. The house was thus in use over a very long period of time.

The door into the courtyard to the west of House 19 (former Room 5) from Street 2 was renewed and equipped with a massive threshold the bedding of which was preserved. With the construction of the platform at the southern-eastern corner of House 19, the door into the courtyard was now situated at the northern end of a 2m long and 1m wide doorway. On top of a mud floor that ran against the western face of the western wall of House 19 and covered the remains of the eastern wall of the courtyard dating to Stratum L/3, a small fireplace was the only indicator of use observed here, as this area was damaged by constructions dating to Stratum L/1.

Houses 21 and 22

To the east of the site, a new building was erected on top of Houses 21 and 22 (Fig. 25). The former curved corner that marked a bend in the street was now replaced by a corner further to the south. Probably the small platform at the south-western corner of House 19 made a new course of Street 2 necessary (Figs. 6 and 23).

House 18

When the northern wall of House 19 was renewed, the old north-south wall that had limited the courtyard to the east was replaced with a massive staircase mostly made of reused sandstone blocks. Two steps of this staircase were preserved. In the course of Stratum L/2 more and more material accumulated outside the house. The threshold of the door was renewed and the basin was given up and abandoned. Numerous ovens were evidence that the function of the courtyard did not change.

Stratum L/1

As was the case in the southern part of the trench, during Stratum L/1, foundations of broken granite and sandstone were put on top of the earlier walls of House 9. The former courtyard to the north of the house was now given up and completely overbuilt with the massive stone walls of a building lying completely outside the excavated area.

In House 18, the staircase was given up and the door received its fifth and last-preserved threshold. As ovens were constructed and used in the courtyard between Houses 19 und 18 until the end of Stratum L, it was still used for the preparation of food.

House 19 also remained operational with minor changes to the ground plan (Fig. 27). The door connecting Rooms 1 and 2 was renewed with a new threshold consisting of a reused column broken in half. The staircase in Room 3 was already in use with the mud-brick substructure for the first step still visible. The north-south wall that separated Rooms 2 and 3 during the earlier Stratum L was no longer in use. A narrow east-west wall abutting the beginning of the steps separated the room under the second flight of the two-flight staircase from the first flight of stairs to the north of it. The walls were given a massive coating of mud-plaster and were reinforced with wooden planks (one was preserved next to the door mentioned above) and sandy mud-bricks. With a width of 80cm the southern wall of the house was now 20cm wider than previously.

Concluding Remarks on Stratum L

The results of the previous season's work were expanded and can now be put into a wider context. The chronological framework established for the southern sector was confirmed and could thus be applied to Stratum L in the northern sector.²⁶ The relative chronology reflects the gradual development of the town quarter on top of the ruins of earlier Strata and the sediments left by a succession of floods. As was the case with Houses 11 and 12 in the southern part, House 23 was built on sloping sandy ground. Unlike Houses 11 and 12 however, no elaborate measures were taken in order to stabilise the embankment or flatten the ground prior to construction. While Houses 11 and 12 were constructed on top of stable platforms made of stone rubble, House 19 was built on sand with shallow foundations. Therefore its southern wall had to be renewed several times. The spatial organisation that started at the beginning of Stratum L/3 remained the same throughout Stratum L. House 23 was constructed only a short time after House 18.

The nearly complete ground-plan of House 19 closely resembles examples of houses from the same period found in Aswan,²⁷ on Elephantine²⁸ and elsewhere.²⁹ The internal organisation of House 19, with a broad rectangular room that covers one half of the area of the house and two to three rooms in

²⁶ *Idem*, in *Sixteenth Season*, pp. 11-12. Stratum L comprises Strata J to H in Area 15 and Strata G to F in Area 2.

²⁷ *Idem*, in *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, pp. 318-320.

²⁸ A. KREKELER, 'Stadtgrabung am Westkom von Elephantine / Wohnbauten des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.' in M. BIETAK (ed.), *Haus und Palast im Alten Ägypten*, UZK XIV = DÖAWW XIV (Vienna 1996), p. 111.

²⁹ Cf. MARCHI, *L'habitat dans les forteresses de Migdol (Tell el-Herr)*, p. 172 for examples from Tell el-Herr and *ibid.*, pp. 197-203 for a discussion of the architectural type.

the second half with one room serving as a staircase, is typical for buildings of a domestic nature, as is a courtyard serving as an area for cooking, food preparation and other household activities.³⁰

The entrance situation of house 18 with facilities for cleaning the feet looks more like the main entrance into the house than a simple door leading into a courtyard belonging to it. Probably, the area allotted to the house was entered via the courtyard to the south, and the door with the basin beside it was the entrance into the more private area of the building.

Although only House 19 comprised a nearly complete ground-plan, features such as ovens and fireplaces in other houses, for example Houses 10 and 13 in the southern part,³¹ are sufficient evidence to interpret the whole area as a living quarter of the town of the Late Period. The ground plan of House 9 from Stratum L/3 onwards is slightly different from the other houses and lacks any areas for food-preparation. It has to be pointed out however that it is not completely clear to which house the courtyard to the north of House 9 belonged. The entrance into the courtyard was next to the reconstructed entrance into House 9.³² Probably House 9 was not only the oldest but also a special building with a non-domestic function that later became the nucleus of the quarter around it.

As has been pointed out already, the part of the Late Period town excavated in Area 3 shows a more domestic character than the quarters of the town observed in Areas 2 and 15, where the ground plans of houses were similar but always embedded in a system of courtyards and open-air areas used as workshops, stables or for cooking. These houses were the nuclei for activities going on around them and neither bordered directly on streets nor on neighbouring houses.³³ The quarter encountered in Area 3 is much more densely built up and resembles the situation on Elephantine.³⁴ A clear break between Dynasties 27 and 30 as observed on Elephantine and to some extent also evident in Area 15³⁵ was not apparent in Area 3, as hardly any new constructions took place and the houses remained in use from the second half of the 5th century BC until the complete remodelling of the area in the Ptolemaic Period.

Stratum K/1 (Fig. 28)

Some time after the buildings of Stratum L had been abandoned, a huge layer of mud mortar and broken mud bricks covered the area. With the exception of several small post holes no functional

³⁰ A. KREKELER, 'Stadtgrabung am Westkom von Elephantine' in C.MECKSEPER et al. (eds.), *KGB 37* (Bonn 1994), p. 31.

³¹ MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, pp. 7-8 and 11.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

³⁴ KREKELER, in BIETAK, *Haus und Palast im alten Ägypten*, pp. 110-111.

³⁵ MÜLLER, in LADSTÄTTER/SCHIEBLREITER (eds.), *Städtisches Wohnen im östlichen Mittelmeerraum 4. Jh. v. Chr. – 1. Jh. n. Chr.*, p. 432.

indicators were found. The layer most probably constitutes evidence of large scale building activity in the vicinity of the investigated area.

After some debris and a layer of windblown sand accumulated on top of this layer, a massive stone wall was erected in the northern part of the site (Figs. 29 and 30). The east-west wall was 1.15m wide and preserved to a height of 1.80m. No other walls of the same date have been encountered in the southern or northern parts of the excavated area. Immediately after the construction of the wall, the whole area was covered with a massive layer of material mostly consisting of debris of burnt mud-bricks (Figs. 30 and 31). The layer covered the complete northern and most of the southern sector. Among the burnt material were numerous small fragments of sandstone blocks. The blocks, some of them decorated and thus most probably originally belonging to a temple, were sawn into small slabs of unknown function. As the slabs had also been exposed to fire, they were probably part of the same industrial installation as the bricks, presumably some kind of kiln.

The wall was probably part of a huge terracing project that was undertaken in order to remodel the area of the riverbank of Syene. The area was infilled in order to level the building ground and thus compensate for the different levels of the ruins of Stratum L and the hill sloping up from north to south. The infill started in the southern part of the investigated area next to the high-standing remains of Houses 11 and 12 and was thickest at the northern limit of the site.

Stratum K/2 (Fig. 28)

Soon after the infill had been completed, several foundations consisting of granite rubble were dug into the layer of burnt material. A massive north-south foundation of the same width as the stone wall was abutted against the southern face of the stone wall. It also abutted the east-west wall at the southern limit of the northern sector. A smaller east – west foundation ran into the eastern section just 1m to the south of the large stone wall. A massive north-south foundation ran at the eastern limit of the excavated area, mostly located under the eastern section. Most probably this foundation constituted the eastern limit of the building of Stratum K. The east-west extension would then measure 8.2(+ x) m, the north-south extension ca. 11.5m (Fig. 29).

From Stratum K onwards the orientation of Stratum L was given up and the architecture follows the system established in Stratum N. The orientation remained the same until the medieval period. It seems that the foundations of Stratum K did not immediately carry a proper building. Only the southern east-west foundation was used when House 20 was constructed during Stratum J. Before these activities, a layer of windblown sand had accumulated on the filling layer, evidence of some period of abandonment.

The structures were very similar to those of Stratum G in Area 15, where a casemate and terracing construction of considerable size was also situated near the bank of the River Nile. This construction is

exactly aligned to the walls of Stratum K in Area 3. The construction was tentatively dated to the middle Ptolemaic Period.³⁶ In both cases the terracing operation resulted in a significant elevation of the building ground. The new level at ca. 93.4m asl was safely out of the reach of the Nile flood.

Stratum J (Fig. 28)

The only building belonging to this Stratum in the northern sector of the trench was House 20. The house was severely damaged by modern construction activities and *sebakh*-pits. Only the southern part of the building was preserved. It seems likely that it covered a similar area to the building of Stratum K.

The southern part of the house consisted of three rooms (Fig. 32). Each of the rooms showed a carefully-laid mud-brick pavement. In the central room a layer of white lime-plaster was put on top of the pavement (Fig. 33). The walls of all three rooms were plastered in the same way. The reason for the special floor in the central room is unclear. It seems too feeble to be the floor of a room used for bathing or any other activities connected with water. With a reconstructed size of ca. 4.80sqm it is slightly larger than the eastern room, at 4.50sqm. Only a small portion of the western room was situated within the excavated area. The later phases of House 20 and its immediate successors were completely destroyed and could only partly be observed in the eastern and northern sections. The southern wall of the house showed three clear building phases and constituted the northern limit of Street I from Stratum J/1 onwards.

Most remarkable among the remains of Stratum J/1 is a well-preserved staircase in the north-eastern corner of the site (Figs. 34 and 35). The lowest flight of the triple-flight staircase was completely preserved. It consisted of five mud brick steps with sandstone slabs as the treads. The second flight of stairs leading up from east to west was destroyed by a modern pit except for one preserved brick of the mud-brick vault supporting it. The staircase was situated in the north-eastern corner of the house. Remains of the northern wall of the building were observed in the northern section. They were preserved to a height of 1.80m.

The Ptolemaic domestic structures started in the first half of the second century BC and were in use until the end of the first century BC. Stratum J is thus contemporary Strata E and D in Area 15.³⁷

Conclusion and Outlook

³⁶ *Idem*, in *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, pp. 327-330 and *idem*, 'Hellenistic Aswan', in D. RAUE, S. J. SEIDLMAYER, P. SPEISER (eds.), *The First Cataract of the Nile. One Region – Diverse Perspectives*, SDAIK 36 (Berlin/Boston 2013), pp. 125-129.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130-133 and *idem*, in *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, p. 333-336. Stratum E marks the beginning of the "Urban Phase" of Syene with a significant growth of the population, and can be dated to the first half of the 2nd century BC.

The excavations undertaken during Seasons 16 and 17 in Area 3 have brought new insights into the history and development of an important part of Late Period and Graeco-Roman Syene, especially concerning the interaction between its population and the Nile, the fabric of the Late Period town and the ancient topography.

The landscape, shaped by granite and the Nile was the natural framework for the beginnings of human activity everywhere in Aswan. The granite surface gradually sloped down from the southern limit (ca. 91.6m asl) to 89.60m asl at the northern limit of the trench. The granite drops down steeply towards the west to ca. 87.2m asl in Area 52 at the ancient bank of the Nile.

The significant differences in the orientations of the houses in the northern and southern parts of the investigated area, together with the peculiar bend in Street 2 and the staircase at the eastern end of the courtyard between Houses 19 and 18, are evidence of the fact that a hill or granite massif is situated to the east of the site. It is thus highly probable that the "Temple of Domitian" was constructed on top of an elevated plateau and stood in isolation until the settlement around it had risen to its level in the medieval period.³⁸ This hill sloped up steeply from west to east and more smoothly from south to north, as becomes evident from the difference in floor levels between the temple (ca. 98.3m asl) and Late Antique House 8³⁹ (93.7m asl) at the southern limit of the foundation trench.

Looking at Area 3 in the context of surrounding areas and their archaeology, its special location becomes apparent. During the Pharaonic period, in the late Middle Kingdom, rock inscriptions were found to the north, in Area 79,⁴⁰ and to the east, in Areas 61, 71, 46 and 16.⁴¹ High up the hill to the east of the area burials took place at the same time.⁴² Area 3 was only the third area in Aswan where a representative part of the town of the Late Period was encountered. Similarities to and differences from the other areas were observed and contribute significantly to the overall image of Late Period Syene. During the Ptolemaic period, the site was part of a large-scale refurbishment of the river bank. To the east of it, on top of the Middle Kingdom burials, a huge temple-terrace was constructed and a prestigious living area of the town came into existence at a lower level to the west of it.⁴³ This development reached a first peak with the construction of the so-called "Temple of Domitian" in the early Roman Period. Shortly after, the area was a direct neighbour of the political centre of the Roman town, situated in the area of the German Hospital and to the south of it.⁴⁴

(W. Müller)

³⁸ K.-C. BRUHN, in *2nd Report*, p. 251.

³⁹ MÜLLER, *Sixteenth Season*, p. 16.

⁴⁰ M. MAREE, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 26-27.

⁴¹ MÜLLER, in *Twelfth Season*, p. 17, ns 34 – 37.

⁴² *Idem*, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 10-11.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 11-12.

⁴⁴ *Idem*, 'Syene (Ancient Aswan) in the First Millennium AD', in E. R. O'CONNELL (ed.), *Egypt in the First Millennium AD. Perspectives from new Fieldwork, BMPES 2* (Leuven – Paris – Walpole 2014), pp. 66-67.

3. A late antique tower-house (Area 93)

Area 93 is situated at the Sh. Abu l' Ela just 60m to the south-west of the Temple of Isis and ca. 13m to the north of the projected course of the Late Period Town wall (Fig. 1).⁴⁵ The excavation covered an area of 80sqm. A modern circular shaft of unknown purpose with a diameter of 2.7m was situated at the centre of the excavation. As the wall of the shaft was made of fired bricks and concrete it could not be removed, and constituted an obstacle to the archaeological work (Fig. 36). The archaeological findings consisted of several phases of a spacious Late Roman house.

Stratum E

During the earliest phase, six rooms of the house lay within the excavated area. The central Room 3 was surrounded by Rooms 5 and 6/7 in the south, Room 4 in the west and Rooms 1a and b to the north. While it was not possible to reach the floor levels dating to this phase in Rooms 4, 6/7 and 5, Rooms 3, 1a and b were excavated to the floor level of the earliest phase and beneath. Thus it became evident that the house was preserved at least up to the second floor, as the floor of Room 3 rested on top of the vault of the lower room. In Room 1a, under the remains of the roof construction of the lower level of the house, two door lintels were found. A 60cm-wide door that led towards the north was covered with a roughly dressed sandstone block (Fig. 37). Another 80cm-wide door led towards the west and was covered with a reused cornice also made of sandstone (Fig. 38). The cornice was covered with numerous grooves and was badly damaged. The level of the cornice was significantly higher than was the case with the lintel of the northern door.

In Room 3 the remains of the barrel-vaulted roof of the house's upper floor were found (Fig. 39). The reconstructed ceiling was at a level of ca. 2.50m above floor level. Finds from the floor level of Room 3, such as fragments of terracotta figurines in the *orans* position give a *terminus post quem* for the infill of the room to the 6th-7th century AD. A pillar made of sandstone blocks in the centre of Room 6/7 can be interpreted as the remains of a staircase.

Stratum D

During Stratum D, Room 6/7 was divided into a western Room 6 and an eastern Room 7. The walls and floor of Room 7 were covered with very hard white lime plaster. In the northern part of the house

⁴⁵ Work started on November 9th 2016 and lasted until January 7th 2017. The excavation was conducted by ABED AHMED ALI, TAISSEER BADR MOHAMED AMR, MAGDI MOHAMED ABDOU ALMAGD ABDOU, ASMAA SADIQ KHALIL BESHIR and MANAL MOHAMED MAHAGER HUSSEIN.

a major refurbishment took place. On top of Room 1b, a room covering ca. 5sqm came into existence. It showed a carefully-set pavement mostly consisting of sandstone slabs (Fig. 40). Traces of a door were preserved at the south-western corner of the room. While its southern wall was constructed of mud-bricks, all other walls were made of reused sandstone blocks. At a later phase of use, after the pavement had already been covered with debris and several mud surfaces, an elaborate pot-stand made of sandstone was put against the southern wall. Its surface showed a large central indentation with four smaller and shallower circular indentations grouped around it (Fig. 41). The smaller troughs were connected to the central one by small channels. At the site facing the room, in the centre of the surface, besides the deep indentation, a stylised Coptic cross was incised into the sandstone. As only the upper part of the stand, originally a small table, was preserved, it was reused in its current location.

Strata C–A

The post-Roman strata were almost completely destroyed by the modern building. The only remnant of Stratum B was a circular shaft with a casing of fired bricks (Fig. 40). This shaft, with an outer diameter of 1.1m and an inner diameter of ca. 60cm, is of a type often found in Aswan. Examples are similar shafts in Area 1, Area 3 and Area 50.⁴⁶ They are commonly dated to the Fatimid Period and are interpreted as septic tanks. The aforementioned modern shaft seems to predate the modern house at the site.

Conclusion

The findings in Area 93 are comparable to those in Area 1.⁴⁷ There, House 5, originally constructed in the Ptolemaic or Early Roman period was in use over a long period of time. Only the second floor was excavated and also showed an infill dating to the late antique period. The original date of the house in Area 93 could not be established as its lower parts could not be excavated due to security reasons (the excavation had already reached a level of 8m below street level). The area is situated in an important part of Roman Syene, the only quarter that was protected by a wall throughout the Roman Period as the Late Period town wall was only preserved in the vicinity of the Temple of Isis.⁴⁸ With Areas 1, 2, 5, 50,⁴⁹ 84,⁵⁰ 88,⁵¹ 92⁵² and 93 excavated, it is now possible to get a clearer image of this part of

⁴⁶ MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, p. 16, ns. 29-31.

⁴⁷ T. KOCH/W. MÜLLER, 'Antike Wohnkultur in Syene (Assuan) am Beispiel der Areale 1 und 2', *Archäologie Österreichs (AÖ)* 25/1 (2014), pp. 41-42.

⁴⁸ MÜLLER, in E. R. O'CONNELL (ed.), *Egypt in the First Millennium AD. Perspectives from new Fieldwork*, pp. 64-66.

⁴⁹ *Idem*, in *9th Season*, pp. 16-19

⁵⁰ *Idem*, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 13-14.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-19

Roman Aswan. The lack of early medieval architecture (with the exception of the Fatimid shaft) is probably due to destruction connected with the modern construction work or *sebakh* digging as has been documented in nearby Area 13 and is clearly visible on historical photographs.⁵³

(W. Müller)

4. Studies on pottery from Areas 50, 84, 88 and 92 in the centre of Graeco-Roman Aswan

The focus of the mission during recent years has been on studying the massive amount of material excavated in the 93 areas investigated so far. Below, some of the preliminary results from this ongoing research are presented.

All selected sites are located in the vicinity of the Temple of Isis (Area 1) and the “Roman Shrine” (Area 5). The investigated areas (Fig. 1)⁵⁴ produced large amounts of pottery⁵⁵ and other finds such as coins, faience objects, ostraca and metal and stone objects, which will be presented elsewhere.

The aim of the study is to establish the pottery and absolute chronological sequence both with respect to the specific areas and the city quarter in which they are situated. The study is based on the fine stratigraphy and constructional sequence of the excavated architecture already established. This is a necessary prerequisite for a contextualization of each site within its neighbourhood.

Besides the chronological dimension, differences in quality and overall character of the material give hints to functional and social interpretations of a given area.

Area 50⁵⁶

Three stratigraphic units from the site were investigated. The latest was part of an accumulation of settlement debris and windblown sand that covered the remains of the late antique Houses 5 and 6.

The second unit contained street layers contemporary with the use of House 6. The north-south street was in use for a long time and separated Houses 5 and 6. Layers contemporary to the beginnings of this street and of the occupation of House 6 could not be excavated due to safety reasons.

The third context was material from the last phase of use of House 6.⁵⁷

Context 1

⁵² *Idem*, in *Sixteenth Season*, p. 23-26.

⁵³ K.-C. BRUHN, in *2nd Report*, p. 265.

⁵⁴ MÜLLER, in *Report on the 9th Season*, pp. 16-18; *Idem*, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 12-19; *Idem*, in *Report on the 16th Season*, pp. 23-26.

⁵⁵ The selected material was drawn by two inspectors: ASMAA SADIQ KHALIL BESHIR, MANAL MOHAMED MAHAGER HUSSEIN and the archeologist THERESA JÜRGENS. The digital preparation of the drawings was done by T. JÜRGENS.

⁵⁶ MÜLLER, in *Report on the 9th Season*, pp. 16-18.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Context 1 comprised material from layers covering the remains of the latest-preserved Roman architecture at the site (Stratum D-E). During the earliest Islamic stratum (Stratum D), the north-south street came into existence again at the same location and orientation as its predecessor.

The material shows a wide spectrum of shapes, ranging from table wares (Egyptian Red slip A, Fine Ware without slip and Painted Ware⁵⁸) (Fig. 43, 1-6) to domestic wares (Fig. 43, 7), cooking vessels (Fig. 43, 8) and amphorae (Fig. 43, 9-10). The large majority of pottery is made of local Aswan Pink Clay.⁵⁹ Some amphorae of Nile clay and cooking pots of hard-fired pinkish Marl clay (mixed Pink Clay fabric)⁶⁰ were also part of the material. The spectrum of the pottery indicates a late antique date.⁶¹ The Roman ERS A material is composed of a variety of shapes, mostly flat plates with vertical rims without decoration and short base rings⁶² (Fig. 43, 1), plates with vertical wall, thickened rims and painting with black and white marks⁶³ (Fig. 43, 2) and shallow bowls with black and white painted rims⁶⁴ (Fig. 43, 3). The table ware dates to the 5th – 6th centuries AD.

Residual material of the 2nd to 4th centuries AD such as rounded Fine Ware cups without slip⁶⁵ (Fig. 43, 4-5), and occasional cups with an upright rims and painted with black and white stripes⁶⁶ (Fig. 43, 6) were also found in these layers.

The domestic wares comprised among other types cooking pots (Fig. 43, 8), which are similar to GEMPELER type K 463/464 and are dated to the 5th–7th century AD⁶⁷, and amphora fragments of type AE 7-1.1⁶⁸ (Fig. 43, 9-10) of similar date.

⁵⁸ For a definition of categories of pottery cf. R. D. GEMPELER, *Elephantine X. Die Keramik römischer und früh-arabischer Zeit*, AV 43 (Mainz 1992), pp. 21-23 and J. WININGER, in *Report on the 3rd and 4th Season*, p. 275.

⁵⁹ P. BALLETT/F. MAHMOUD/M. VICHY/M. PICON, *Artisanat de la céramique dans l'Égypte Romaine tardive et Byzantine. Prospections d'ateliers de potiers de Minia à Assuan*, in: *CCE 2*, 1991, pp. 129-143; Cf. PELOSCHKE'S fabric ASW-PC_01 (L. PELOSCHKE, *Cultural Transfers in Aswan (Upper Egypt). Petrographic Evidence for Ceramic Production and Exchange from the Ptolemaic to the Late Antique Period* (Vienna 2015, unpublished Dissertation), pp. 100-103; D. KATZJÄGER/L. PELOSCHKE/L. REMBART, 'The Multiplicity of Aswan Pink Clay pottery (Roman Times to Late Antiquity). Synchronising shape repertoire, clay pastes and firing properties', *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta* 44 (2016), p. 733, Fig. 2.

⁶⁰ KATZJÄGER/PELOSCHKE/REMBART, *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta* 44, pp. 734-735, Fig. 5.

⁶¹ The Islamic pottery is studied by GREGORY WILLIAMS (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Institut für Orient- und Asienwissenschaften, Abteilung für Islamwissenschaft) and will be presented elsewhere.

⁶² GEMPELER, *Elephantine X.*, Abb. 5, 1 = Form T 106a; Cf. GEMPELER'S Form T 103 as comparison for a possible variant.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Abb. 4, 1-3 = Form T 103.

⁶⁴ J.W. HAYES, *Late Roman Pottery* (London 1972), p. 28; GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 10, 9 = Form T 210c. D.M. BAILEY, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein V. Pottery, lamps and glass of the Late Roman and Early Arab periods* (London 1998), pl. 13, C470.

⁶⁵ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 70, 18 = Form T 605b; Abb. 70, 15 = Form 604c; R. TOMBER, *Survey and Excavation. Mons Claudianus 1987-1993. Volume III Ceramic Vessels and Related Objects* (Cairo 2006), p. 37, Fig. 1.10 = Type 33.

⁶⁶ Similar to TOMBER'S type 18 (*eadem*, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 103, Fig. 1.39) and P. BALLETT/A. POLUDNIKIEWICZ, *Tebtynis V. La céramique des époques Hellénistique et Impériale. Campagnes 1988-1993. Production, consommation et réception dans le Fayoum méridional* (Cairo 2012), p. 295, pl. 57, 532.

⁶⁷ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 109, 10 = Form K 463; T. BECKH, *Zeitzeugen aus Ton. Die Gebrauchskeramik der Klosteranlage Deir el-Bachît in Theben-West (Oberägypten)*. *SDAIK* 37 (2013), Taf. 34, Typ 109a.

Context 2

This context, consisting of layers of the north-south street was contemporary with the Roman occupation phase (Stratum E).

Again, the selection shows a huge variety of different types from table ware to domestic ware (Fig. 44, 11-13 and 15-17). Some fragments of imported Eastern Sigillata B⁶⁹ (Fig. 44, 11) can probably be interpreted as residual material. The table wares consists of deep bowls with straight rims⁷⁰ (Fig. 44, 13) and large carinated bowls with vertical rims edged with a flange (Fig. 44, 12).⁷¹ Among the Fine Wares, the cups of GEMPELER type 605b⁷² were represented in this context in greater numbers than in the layers of Context 1. Among the domestic wares were pots with vertical rims and lines on the rim (Fig. 44, 16).⁷³ The storage jars, usually decorated with floral paintings, were in use from the 1st century BC until the 4th century AD or later (Fig. 44, 17).⁷⁴ The complete assemblage can be dated to the end of the 4th century AD.

Context 3

Only a large bowl with⁷⁵ (Fig. 44, 14) a ledge rim is significant for the last occupation of House 6 (late Stratum E)⁷⁶ and provides a *terminus* at the beginning of the 4th century AD.

Area 84⁷⁷

Here, pottery from the occupation of Houses 4 and 6, the infill of Houses 4 and 5 after their abandonment and material from the north-south street between Houses 4 and 5 was studied.

Context 4

The earliest material from the occupation phase of House 6 (Stratum E) dates to the Ptolemaic period (Fig. 45, 18-22). The end of occupation and the abandonment of the building can be dated to the 1st

⁶⁸ M. EGLOFF, *Kellia, La poterie copte. Quatre siècles d'artisanat et d'échanges en Basse-Égypte, RSAD 3* (1977), p. 116; D. DIXNEUF, *Amphores égyptiennes. Production, typologie, contenu at diffusion (IIIe siècle avant J.-C. - IXe siècle après J.-C.). Études Alexandrines 22* (Alexandria 2011), p. 366, Fig. 152.

⁶⁹ Atlante II,4 in J.W. HAYES, 'Sigillate orientali', in *Atlante delle forme ceramiche II: ceramica fine romana nel bacino mediterraneo (tardo ellenismo e primo impero)*, *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica* (Rome 1985), pp. 1-95; E. ETTLINGER et al. (eds.), *Conspectus Formarum Terrae Sigillatae Italico Modo Confectae, Materialien zur Römisch-Germanischen Keramik Heft 10* (Bonn, 1990), Taf. 16, Form 18.

⁷⁰ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 33, 13 = Form T 303b.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Abb. 33, 13 = Form T 607a.

⁷² Cf. *supra* no. 64.

⁷³ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 102, 4 = Form K 411b.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Abb. 100, 6 = Form K 401; TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 91, Fig. 1.34 = Type 79.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Abb. 33, 13 = Form T 312b.

⁷⁶ MÜLLER, in *Report on the 9th Season*, p. 18.

⁷⁷ *Idem*, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 12-19.

century BC. Characteristic shapes in this stratum are *echinus* bowls and bowls with black painted stripes and floral decoration, made of marl fabric (Fig. 45, 18-19).⁷⁸ The domestic wares were represented by marl fabric neckless storage jars with modelled flat rim⁷⁹ (Fig. 45, 20) and occasional fragments of kegs (Fig. 45, 21). The cooking pots are made of Nile clay and show an angled rim, which is the earliest type of the Ptolemaic period.⁸⁰ The illustrated example (Fig. 45, 22) has a pronounced ridge below the rim as well as a strongly angled shoulder, typical of the late Ptolemaic period.⁸¹

Context 5

House 4 was built against House 5 of Stratum D and sat on top of House 6. This context comprises material from the last occupation phase of House 4.⁸² Most of the pottery dates to the 2nd and 3rd century AD (Fig. 46, 23-25). The cooking pots are characterized by a globular form and lid recesses (Fig. 46, 23). Similar vessels from Tebtynis and Mons Claudianus were dated to the 2nd to the beginning of the 3rd century AD.⁸³ A vessel with a triangular rim, short, curved neck and strongly angled shoulder (Fig. 46, 24) with parallels from Elephantine and Mons Claudianus dates to the same period.⁸⁴ The sporadically-occurring amphora sherds belong to plain amphorae of Type AE 3-5.2, similar to DIXNEUF's variant B (Fig. 46, 25).⁸⁵ According to the material it can be assumed that House 4 was abandoned and filled in at the beginning of the 3rd century AD.

Context 6

After their abandonment (Stratum D), the ruins of Houses 4 and 5 were used as dumps for settlement debris until further construction took place during the early Islamic period.⁸⁶

The material from the two infills is very homogeneous and shows similarities in the composition of shapes with Context 1 in Area 50 (Fig. 47, 26-31; Fig. 48, 32-36). The flat plates of GEMPELER type T

⁷⁸ Cf. PELOSCHKE's fabric ASW-MARL_05 (PELOSCHKE, *Cultural Transfers in Aswan*, p. 128).

⁷⁹ S. C. HERBERT/A. BERLIN, *Excavations at Coptos (Qift) in Upper Egypt 1987-1992*, *JRA-Suppl.* 53 (Dexter 2003), Fig. 67, H3.22; S. LAEMMEL/A.SIMONY, 'Early Ptolemaic and Ptolemaic Pottery from the Tomb of Harwa (TT 37)', in R. DAVID (ed.), *Céramiques ptolémaïques de la région Thébaine. Actes de la table ronde de Karnak les 28 et 29 September 2014*, *CCE 10* (Cairo 2016), p. 261, Fig. 28.

⁸⁰ A.M. BERLIN, 'Naukratis/Kom Hadid: A Ceramic Typology for the Hellenistic Lower Egypt', in A. LEONARD JR. (ed.), *Ancient Naukratis, Excavations at a Greek Emporium in Egypt. Part II. The Excavations of Kom Hadid*, *AASOR 55* (University of Arizona 2001), p. 81, Fig. 2.6, 7.

⁸¹ M. BORAİK/M. NAGUIB, *Ceramic Material from the Area of the Ptolemaic Baths Excavations in front of Karnak Temples (Op. 176)*, *CahKarn 14* (2013), p. 100, KB 80; M. NAGUIB REDA 'A Ptolemaic Kitchen in Front of the Temples of Karnak', in: R. DAVID (ed.), *Céramiques ptolémaïques de la région Thébaine. Actes de la table ronde de Karnak les 28 et 29 September 2014*, *CCE 10* (Cairo 2016), p. 187, Fig. 8, PI-69.

⁸² MÜLLER, in *Fifteenth Season*, p. 14.

⁸³ TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 81, Fig. 1.30 = Type 37; BALLETT/POLUDNIKIEWICZ, *Tebtynis V*, p. 258, pl. 20, 232.

⁸⁴ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 101, 7 = Form K 407; TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 89, Fig. 1.33 = Type 67.

⁸⁵ DIXNEUX, *Amphores égyptiennes*, p. 339, Fig. 109.

⁸⁶ MÜLLER, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 14-15.

106a (Fig. 49) are found in both contexts⁸⁷ (Fig. 47, 26; Fig. 7, 33) as are fragments of the amphora type AE 7-1.1 (Fig. 47, 31).⁸⁸ Another type of plate with a ledge rim, found in the infill of House 5 (Fig. 7, 32), could be associated with GEMPELER type T 104, which is represented in the Elephantine material at the end of the 3rd century AD.⁸⁹ White slip bowls, one example decorated on the inner surface with brown stripes, appear from the 4th century AD (Fig. 48, 34).⁹⁰ The domestic ware comprises a huge variety of shapes, including jugs with flaring mouths, made of mixed fabric and with a white slipped outer surface (Fig. 47, 27).⁹¹ The cooking ware consists of the usual pots with an inside ribbed rim and ribbed surface, which are characteristic of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD (Fig. 47, 30⁹²; Fig. 48, 36⁹³). This date is also supported by cooking bowls with painted ledge rims (Fig. 47, 28-29).⁹⁴ A fragment (Fig. 48, 35) from the infill of House 5 made of local pink clay with a wavy rim and two black painted stripes on the inside of the rim probably belongs to a casserole. Examples from El-Ashmunein dating to the 7th century AD or later combine two characteristics of the fragment, the wavy rim⁹⁵ and the external, grooved rim.⁹⁶ The material of both fillings (Houses 4 and 5) gives a *terminus* for the start of the dumping at the beginning of the 3rd century AD and shows a continuous use for waste disposal until new buildings were constructed in this area during the early Islamic Period.

Area 88⁹⁷

Area 88 is situated to the north-west of the Isis temple (Area 1) and to the immediate south of Area 84. Two consecutive buildings were excavated. A large amount of material from the 2nd until the 6th centuries AD could be attributed to the architectural phases. The material studied comes from the occupation level of Building 2, which is stratigraphically the earliest excavated architecture in the area. After the abandonment of Building 2, it was filled with waste material and a new house, Building 1, was built on top of it.⁹⁸

⁸⁷ Cf. *supra* no. 61.

⁸⁸ Similar to DIXNEUX'S type AE 7-1.1, variant B (*eadem*, *Amphores égyptiennes*, p. 367, Fig. 153).

⁸⁹ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 4, 6 = Form T 104.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Abb. 35, 12 = Form T 316a; D. KATZJÄGER, Late Antiquity on Elephantine Island, Upper Egypt. Pottery as mirror of Roman Society, *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta* 43 (2014), p. 599.

⁹¹ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 118, 10 = Form K 623; BECKH, *Klosteranlage Deir el-Bachât in Theben-West (Oberägypten)*, Taf. 44, Typ 134/135.

⁹² Similar to GEMPELER'S type K 414a (*idem*, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 102, 10). A similar shape is dated to the mid-fifth century AD in El-Ashmunein (BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 40, E353).

⁹³ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 103, 3 = Form K 415b; Similar to BAILEY'S type E358 (*idem*, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 40, E358).

⁹⁴ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 89, 2 = Form K 305; Abb. 113, 3 = Form K502.

⁹⁵ BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 43, E457.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pl. 43, E458.

⁹⁷ MÜLLER, in *Fifteenth Season*, pp. 12-19.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p 18.

Context 7

The few fragments from the occupation layers (Stratum B/2) of Building 2 can be dated to the 2nd century AD (Fig. 50, 37-40).⁹⁹ Characteristic are bowls with slightly incurved rims with two incised lines on the exterior surface (Fig. 50, 37), which give a *terminus* in the first half of 2nd century AD.¹⁰⁰ The domestic ware comprises among other shapes fragments of jugs with a vertical necks (Fig. 50, 38), which are found in Tebtynis in contexts dating to the 1st century AD.¹⁰¹ Large storage jars with wide, approximately flat rims and flaring walls (Fig. 50, 39) also point to the early Imperial period.¹⁰² A completely-preserved wheel-made lamp was found together with the pottery (Fig. 50, 40). The lamp has a small plain discus around the central filling hole; it does not show a handle and has a short base ring. The burnt nozzle is located directly on the edge of the rim and did not protrude. Comparable objects are dated to the first half or middle of the 2nd century AD.¹⁰³ Thus the analysis of the material gives a *terminus ante quem* for the use of Building 2 in the first half on 2nd century AD.

Context 8

The character of the dump that accumulated inside Building 2 after its abandonment (Stratum B/2) (Fig. 51, 41-44) is similar to that of the last occupation phase of House 6 in area 50 (Context 3) (Fig. 51, 41; 44).¹⁰⁴ It seems thus that the houses in Areas 50 and 88 were abandoned at the same time. The material in the dump dates to the 3rd century AD or later. There are many fragments of cups without slip with incurved rims which show decoration with two black spots (Fig. 51, 42).¹⁰⁵ Earlier pottery such as the completely-preserved spouted vessel¹⁰⁶ (Fig. 51, 43; Fig. 55), which probably belonged to the household inventory of Building 2, was also found in the filling material.

Context 9

Around the 3rd century AD, the new Building 1 was constructed on top of the remains of House 2 (Stratum B/1). Material deposited after the abandonment of this house has been dated to the 6th or 7th century AD. The selection features a wide spectrum of types, especially the table ware ERSW A, which is represented by various plates and bowls (Fig. 52, 45-48). Here, in addition to the already-

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p 17, no. 40. This observation was already made during the excavation.

¹⁰⁰ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 65, 4 = Form T 501b; TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 103, Fig. 1.39 = Type 16.

¹⁰¹ BALLETT/POLUDNIKIEWICZ, *Tebtynis V*, p. 290, pl. 52, 465.

¹⁰² TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 91, Fig. 1.34 = Type 80.

¹⁰³ S. LOESCHCKE, *Lampen aus Vindonissa, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte von Vindonissa und des antiken Beleuchtungswesens* (Zürich 1919), p. 239, Type VIII; L. A. SHIER, *Terracotta lamps from Karanis, Egypt. Excavations of the University of Michigan. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology Studies 3* (University of Michigan 1978), pl. 39, 363; TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p.420, Fig. 5.14, 155.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. GEMPELER type T 411b (cf. *supra* no. 74) and type T 605b (cf. *supra* no. 64).

¹⁰⁵ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 70, 9 = Form T 602.

¹⁰⁶ TOMBER, *Mons Claudianus*, p. 66, Fig. 1.24 = Type 63-66.

mentioned bowls from Area 50 (Fig. 52, 45),¹⁰⁷ examples of deep bowls with ridged rims and with a band of rouletting on the exterior¹⁰⁸ (Fig. 52, 46-47) are characteristic of this context. Together with these forms, small bowls were found (Fig. 52, 48). The bowls show a slightly incurved rim, a flange around the body and directly above the flange a band of rouletting.¹⁰⁹ The form can be compared to an example from the last phase of the infill of House 9/Room b in Area 1 that was dated to the first half of the 7th century AD.¹¹⁰

Additionally, several shapes in painted ware, such as bowls and cups with strong incurved rims, several grooves on the exterior and black and white/yellow painted spots on the exterior surface (Fig. 52, 49) were found in this context. This pottery is made of Nile clay and appears in Elephantine at the end of the 6th and beginning of 7th century AD.¹¹¹ A completely-preserved coarse jug with a characteristic bevelled mouth and white wavy decoration painted on the surface (Fig. 52, 50; Fig. 56) also dates to late antiquity.¹¹² There was a wide variety of cooking bowl/casserole shapes with wavy rims and ribbed surfaces made of Nile clay.¹¹³ According to the analysis of the pottery assemblage, the dumping process within the remains of Building 1 finished in the first half of the 7th century AD. Other than in Areas 50 and 84, no Islamic material was encountered in the area, probably due to the fact that medieval and early Islamic architecture was completely destroyed by modern construction activities.

Area 92¹¹⁴

The material studied belongs to the occupation levels of House 2 and to the refilling material that was deposited in the house after its abandonment.¹¹⁵

Context 10

The material from the occupation phase during Stratum C/2 shows typical shapes of the 1st century AD (Fig. 53, 52-55): imported Eastern Sigillata B¹¹⁶ (Fig. 53, 52), local ERSW plates¹¹⁷ and bowls¹¹⁸ (Fig.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. GEMPELER type T 210b (*idem*, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 10, 7).

¹⁰⁸ For the forms imitating HAYES 82/83 cf. HAYES, *Late Roman Pottery*, pp. 128-130; GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 13, 1 = Form T 218b; Abb. 43, 6 = Form T 344a; BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 8, C145.

¹⁰⁹ M. RODZIEWICZ, *La céramique romaine tardive d'Alexandrie. Alexandrie I* (Varsovie 1976), pl.26, O24; GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 38, 13 = Form T 323b; BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 12, C361.

¹¹⁰ WININGER, in *Report on the 3rd and 4th Season*, pp. 274-275, Fig. 25; S. MARTIN-KILCHER/J. WININGER, *Assuan-Syene (Ägypten). Archäologie der Römischen Provinzen im Spiegel der südlichsten Stadt des Imperium Romanum*, in *SLSA Jahresbericht 2006*, pp. 227-235.

¹¹¹ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 42, 10 = Form T 342a; G. PIERRAT, *Essai de classification de la céramique de Tôd de la fin du VII^e siècle au début du XIII^e siècle ap. J.-C.* CCE 2 (Cairo 1991), p. 182, Fig. 54, h.

¹¹² GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 118, 15 = Form K 628a/b; PIERRAT, *Céramique de Tôd*, p. 175, Fig. 43, f.

¹¹³ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 86, 5 = Form K 222a; BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 43, E443.

¹¹⁴ MÜLLER, in *Report on the 16th Season*, pp. 23-26.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹¹⁶ HAYES, *Atlante II,4*; ETTLINGER, *Conspetus Formarum*, Taf. 16, Form 18.

¹¹⁷ Similar to GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 3, 2, type T 100a.

53, 53-54) and earlier types of cooking pots made of Nile clay with slightly angled rims that were common from the Middle Ptolemaic period onwards (Fig. 53, 55).¹¹⁹ The composition of the material is comparable to the closed complex in the infill of a cellar in Area 13 dating to the 1st century AD¹²⁰ and gives a *terminus* for the occupation of House 2 in Area 92.

Context 11

As was the case with the pottery from Contexts 1, 6 and 9, the material that accumulated after the abandonment of House 2 (Stratum B-C) was composed of late antique shapes that are dated to the 6th-7th century AD (Fig. 54, 56-63). The African Red Slip is represented by only one fragment of a deep dish with a triangular projecting rim and a body decorated with feather-rouletting (Fig. 54, 56), a type that was common during the 5th century AD.¹²¹ Again, most of the table ware belongs to the local ERSW and other late antique forms. The dumping material includes both flat bowls with knobbed rims and bands of rouletting on the exterior¹²² (Fig. 54, 57) and bowls with ridged rim, just as was the case in Area 88¹²³ (Fig. 54, 58). Besides the domestic and painted wares, the material comprises large vessels, such as possible storage jars (Fig. 54, 59) made of Pink Clay with incurved walls.¹²⁴ Similar vessels were found in House 9 in Area 1¹²⁵ and give a *terminus* for the filling of Area 92 in the 7th century AD. Among the painted ware were deep bowls, probably used for cooking, with a ledge rims with three or more white painted dots (Fig. 54, 60). This form is similar to GEMPELER's casserole type K 207¹²⁶ with decoration typical of the 4th-5th century AD. As to domestic ware, fragments of *sākiya* pots such as the example with a triangular rim and ribbed body (Fig. 54, 61) were identified. In El-Ashmunein such vessels were dated to the 6th-7th century AD.¹²⁷ Among shapes of earlier date were large storage jars with curved and strongly ribbed bodies¹²⁸ (Fig. 54, 62). Very few amphorae were found in this context. The fragments were made of Nile clay and showed similarities to the amphora

¹¹⁸ Similar to GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 7, 5-6 type T 201 and BALLETT/POLUDNIKIEWICZ, *Tebtynis V*. p. 290, pl. 12, 153.

¹¹⁹ BERLIN, *Naukratis/Kom Hadid*, p. 85, Fig. 2.18, 16; BALLETT/POLUDNIKIEWICZ, *Tebtynis V*. p. 261, pl. 23, 257.

¹²⁰ S. MARTIN-KILCHER, in: *Report on the 5th and 6th Season*, pp. 305-356; MARTIN-KILCHER/WININGER, *Assuan-Syene (Ägypten)*, pp. 223-225.

¹²¹ HAYES, *Late Roman Pottery*, pp. 132-133, form 84; GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 2, 5; M. MACKENSEN 'African Red Slip Ware', in M. MACKENSEN et al., 'The Late Roman Fort at Nag el-Hagar near Kom Ombo in the Province of Thebaïs (Upper Egypt). Report on the first season of the Egyptian-Swiss Joint Mission', *MDAIK* 62 (2006), p. 174, Fig. 6, 5-8.

¹²² GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 11, 4 = Form T 211b; Similar to BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 27, D446; BECKH, *Klosteranlage Deir el-Bachît in Theben-West (Oberägypten)*, Taf. 12, Typ 12.

¹²³ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 18, 3-4 = Form T 228. Similar to BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 8, C203.

¹²⁴ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 87, 12-13 = Form T 233a. Similar to BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 66, N208.

¹²⁵ WININGER, in *Report on the 3rd and 4th Season*, p. 276, Fig. 26, 10.

¹²⁶ GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 85, 5 = Form K 207.

¹²⁷ BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein V*, pl. 46, H42.

¹²⁸ Similar to GEMPELER, *Elephantine X*, Abb. 104, 4-5 (type K 426) and BAILEY, *El-Ashmunein*, pl. 40, E351.

type AE 3-4 of slightly earlier date (Fig. 54, 63).¹²⁹ The dumping activity lasted until the first half of 7th century AD. As in Area 88, no activities dating to the Islamic period could be identified.

Conclusion

The material presented here sheds new light on the chronology of the end of Roman occupation in Syene. In some areas earlier phases of the history of Graeco-Roman Syene could be identified. The presented material shows a varied repertoire of pottery from the 1st until the 7th century AD from well-stratified contexts that compliments the results from other research both in Aswan and all over Egypt.

(M. Hepa)

5. Report on the anthropological investigation of human skeletal remains from late antique tombs (Areas 45, 58 and 89)

In February 2017, during the 17th excavation season, an anthropological investigation of the human skeletal remains from Syene/Aswan was conducted. It included the morphological estimation of age-at-death, sex¹³⁰ and stature¹³¹, as well as morphometric measurements¹³² and the evaluation of individual skeletal traits.¹³³ Furthermore, possible pathological changes were observed and interpreted following the recommendations of SCHULTZ,¹³⁴ in consideration of current research.¹³⁵ Altogether, a total of 23 individuals were investigated. From the six individuals from Area 45, two were children and four were adults; among them two males and two individuals of indeterminable sex. The

¹²⁹ DIXNEUX, *Amphores égyptiennes*, p. 335, Fig. 103, 184.

¹³⁰ D. FEREMBACH/I. SCHWIDETZKY/M. STLOUKAL, Recommendations for Age and Sex Diagnoses of Skeletons, *Journal of Human Evolution* 9 (1980), p. 517–549. F. RÖSING/ M. GRAW/ M. MARRÉ/ S. RITZ-TIMME/ MA. ROTHSCHILD/K. ROETZSCHER/A. SCHMELING/ I. SCHROEDER/G. GESERICK, Recommendations for the forensic diagnosis from sex and age from skeletons. *Homo - Journal of Comparative Human Biology* 58 (2007), p. 75-89.

¹³¹ M. TROTTER/GC. GLESER, Estimation of stature from long bones of American Whites and Negroes. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 10 (1952), p. 463-514. M. TROTTER/GC. GLESER, Corrigenda to „Estimation of stature from long bones of American Whites and Negroes“. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 47 (1977), p.355-356. MH. RAXTE, CB. RUFF, A. AZAB, M. ERFAN, M. SOLIMAN, A. EL-SAWAF, Stature estimation in ancient Egyptians: A new technique based on anatomical reconstruction of stature. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 136 (2008), p. 147-155.

¹³² R. MARTIN/K. SALLER, *Lehrbuch der Anthropologie in systemischer Darstellung*, 3rd Edition (Stuttgart 1957). SD. OUSLEY/RL. JANTZ, "Ch. 15: Fordisc 3 and Statistical Methods for Estimating Sex and Ancestry". In DC. DIRKMAAT (ed), *A Companion to Forensic Anthropology* (Chichester 2015), p. 311–329.

¹³³ RW. MANN/DR. HUNT/S. LOZANOFF, *Photographic Regional Atlas of Non-Metric Traits and Anatomical Variants in the Human Skeleton* (Springfield/Illinois 2016).

¹³⁴ M. SCHULTZ, Paläopathologische Diagnostik. In R. KNUSSMANN (ed), *Anthropologie: Handbuch der vergleichenden Biologie des Menschen*. Vol. 1.1. Stuttgart (1988), p. 480–496.

¹³⁵ AC. AUFDERHEIDE/ C. RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Human Paleopathology* (Cambridge 1998). DJ. ORTNER, *Identification of Pathological Conditions in Human Skeletal Remains*, 2nd Edition (San Diego 2003). CS. LARSEN, *Bioarchaeology. Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge 2015).

investigation of the individuals from this large, late antique cemetery will continue during the next season.

Of the two individuals from Area 58, one was a small child (3-6 years) and the other an adult of 20-40 years.

In Area 89,¹³⁶ which was situated on the northern edge of the modern *suq*, at least 15 individuals were buried during the Roman Imperial and late antique periods. Five of the interred were children; only two of them were older than six years. Five of the adult individuals were probably males and five females. Their ages-at-death vary from late juvenile to more than 60 years. Since the area was situated under a modern sewer pit, the bone preservation was poor, with a softened inner matrix and peeling surface.

One of the individuals (16-89-14-8/1), a small child between 4 and 5 years, was found in a terracotta coffin buried in a simple pit-grave (Tomb 11).¹³⁷ The burial was among the earliest in the area dating to the Roman Imperial period (Stratum C). The body must have been at least partly mummified.¹³⁸ On the leg bones and the vertebral bodies of the skeleton, residue of a black, tar-like substance was preserved, probably remnants of the embalming resins (cf. Fig. 57).

On the occiput and the right femur of an early mature male (16-89-26-5/3) traces of red pigment could be observed, possibly indicating a wooden stretcher or body bag with painted decoration. The man was buried in Tomb 7 (Stratum C). Possible remnants of such a wooden stretcher, on which the body was placed, were also found with the skeletal remains of one of the individuals (8-45-43-3/2) from a late antique collective grave from Area 45. In addition, both shinbones of the late adult male showed vestiges of gnaw marks from rodents (e.g. rats). Probably the animals used the anterior margin of the already-skeletonised bones to sharpen their teeth, which can be frequently observed in exposed human skeletal remains, for example from forensic contexts or battle fields.¹³⁹

During the investigation, a variety of pathological conditions could be diagnosed. Besides caries and periodontal diseases, osteoarthritis of the spine and the joints, as well as traces of pulled or ruptured muscle attachments were commonly diagnosed in adult individuals, indicating a high physical strain on the people.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, chronic inflammations of the paranasal sinuses and the scalp, as well as meningeal reactions were frequently observed. Two adults and two children demonstrated skeletal vestiges of anaemia. This either indicates nutritional deficiencies (e.g. lack of iron or protein), or, for

¹³⁶ MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, pp. 17-20.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19 fig. 41.

¹³⁸ cf. A. WIECZOREK/W. ROSENDAHL, *Mummies of the world* (Munich 2010).

¹³⁹ EH. KIMMERLE/JP. BARAYBAR, *Skeletal trauma. Identification of injuries resulting from human rights abuse and armed conflict* (Boca Raton 2008).

¹⁴⁰ cf. M. SCHULTZ, Paläopathologische Diagnostik. In R. KNUSSMANN (ed), *Anthropologie: Handbuch der vergleichenden Biologie des Menschen*. Vol. 1.1. Stuttgart (1988), p. 480–496. CS. LARSEN, *Bioarchaeology. Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge 2015).

example, chronic parasite infestations (e.g. malaria, intestinal parasites).¹⁴¹ Furthermore, a possible case of tuberculosis was observed.¹⁴² One man had sustained a fracture of the mandible, which was properly healed (cf. Fig. 58). Probably, it was professionally treated by a physician.

Another man (16-89-13-1/1) - one of the primary interments of Tomb 3¹⁴³ dating to late antique Stratum B/2 – had suffered a green-stick fracture of his right tibia when he was a child. Two individuals showed healed rib fractures. In the vertebral bodies and ribs of one of them, an elderly woman from Area 89 (16-89-12-4/4), also from Tomb 3 from a secondary, later burial (Stratum B/1), probable vestiges of cancer metastases were observed.¹⁴⁴

Two individuals from Area 89, a juvenile woman (16-89-32-3/1) and a man in his late 40s (16-89-12-4/6), suffered from severely dysplastic hips. This generally rather rare skeletal malformation is known often to occur in families, due to an inherited, genetic defect.¹⁴⁵ These circumstances might point to the fact that both individuals belonged to the same family. This fact is especially interesting as the male individual was among the secondary burials from Tomb 3 (Stratum B/1) while the female was from Tomb 10, a simple pit burial covered with stones dating to Stratum C.¹⁴⁶ The later chamber tomb was constructed in the close vicinity of and partly on top of the earlier burial.¹⁴⁷

(J. Nováček¹⁴⁸, K. Scheelen-Nováček^{149, 150})

¹⁴¹ PL. STUART-MACADAM, Nutritional Deficiency Disease. A Survey on Scurvy, Rickets and Iron-Deficiency Anemia. In MY. İŞCAN/KAR. KENNEDY (eds), *Reconstruction of Life from the Skeleton* (New York 1991), p. 201-222. PL. STUART-MACADAM, Anemia in Past Human Populations. Diet Demography and Disease. In PL. STUART-MACADAM/S. KENT (eds), *Changing Perspectives on Anemia* (New York 1992), 151-170. M. SCHULTZ/TH. SCHMIDT-SCHULTZ, Health and disease of infants and children in Byzantine Anatolia between AD 600 and 1350. In JR. BRANDT/E. HAGELBERG/G. BJØRNSTAD/S. AHRENDTS (eds.), *Life and death in Asia Minor in Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine times*. Studies in Funerary Archaeology 10 (Oxford, Philadelphia 2017), p. 286-305.

¹⁴² CA. ROBERTS, Rib lesions and tuberculosis: the current state of play. In G. PÁLFI/O. DUTOUR/J. DEÁK/I. HUTÁS (eds), *Tuberculosis: Past and Present* (Budapest, Szeged 1999), p. 311-316. CA. ROBERTS/JE. BUIKSTRA, *The Bioarchaeology of Tuberculosis* (Gainesville/Florida 2003). J. NOVÁČEK/K. SCHEELEN/M. SCHULTZ, The wrestler from Ephesus: Osteobiography of a man from the Roman period based on his anthropological and palaeopathological record. In JR. BRANDT/E. HAGELBERG/G. BJØRNSTAD/S. AHRENDTS (eds), *Life and death in Asia Minor in Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine times*. Studies in Funerary Archaeology 10 (Oxford, Philadelphia 2017), p. 318-338.

¹⁴³ MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, p. 19-20, figs. 40, 42 and 43.

¹⁴⁴ cf. M. SCHULTZ/H. PARZINGER/DV. POZDNJAKOV/TA. CHIKISHEVA/TH. SCHMIDT-SCHULTZ, Oldest known case of metastasizing prostate carcinoma diagnosed in the skeleton of a 2,700-year old Scythian king of Arzhan (Siberia, Russia). *International Journal of Cancer* 121 (2007), 2591-2595.

¹⁴⁵ cf. AC. AUFDERHEIDE/ C. RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍN, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Human Paleopathology* (Cambridge 1998). DJ. ORTNER, *Identification of Pathological Conditions in Human Skeletal Remains*, 2nd Edition (San Diego 2003).

¹⁴⁶ MÜLLER, in *Sixteenth Season*, p. 19.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, fig. 40.

¹⁴⁸ Department of Anthropology, Thuringia State Service for Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, Weimar.

¹⁴⁹ Institute of Anatomy and Embryology, University Medical Centre Göttingen

¹⁵⁰ Department of Biology, University of Hildesheim.

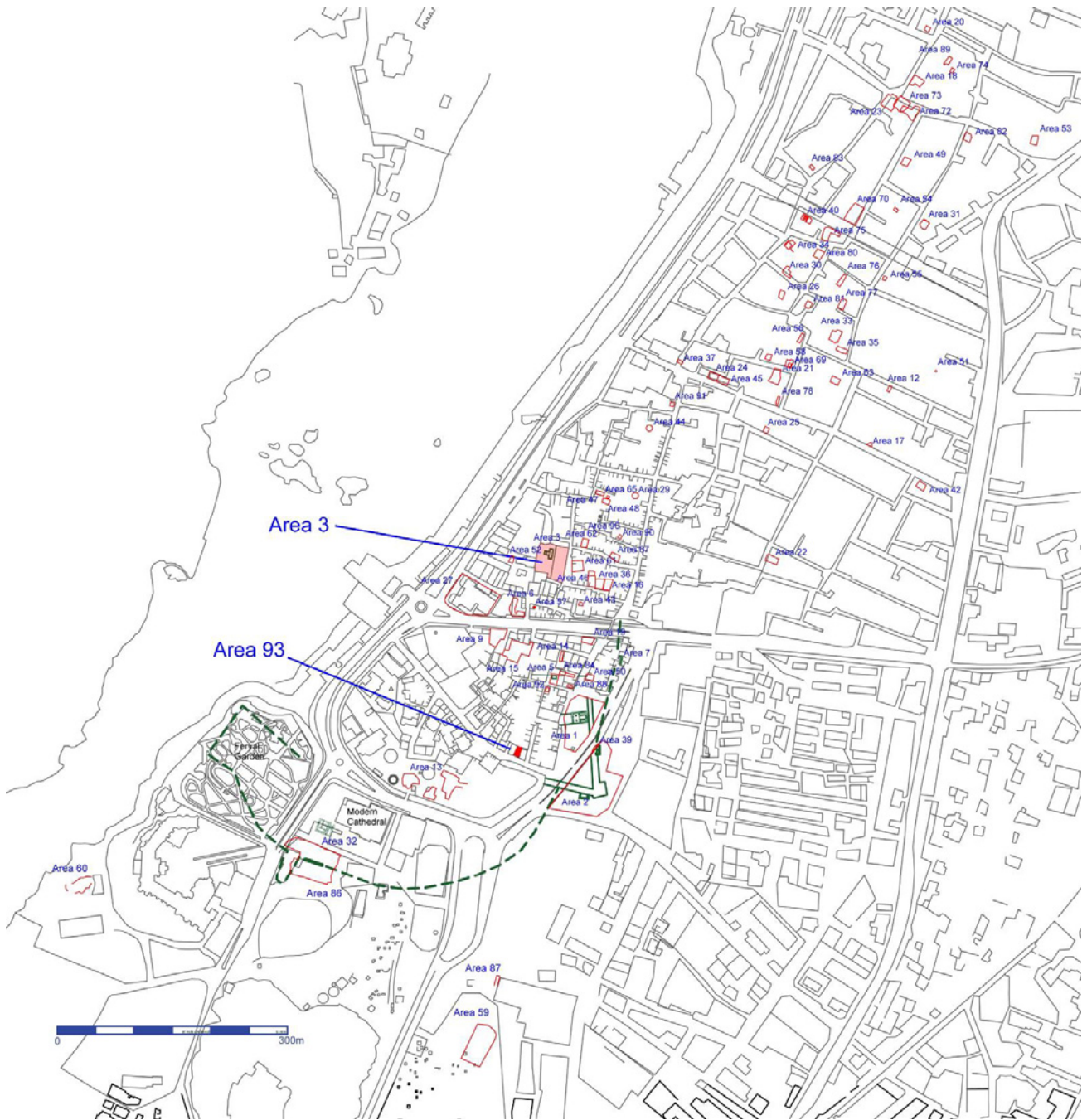


Fig. 1: Map of Aswan with excavated areas.

¹⁵¹ All figures except for figs. 57 and 58 Copyright by Swiss Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research on Ancient Egypt in Cairo.



Fig. 2: Plan of Area 3.



Fig. 3: Area 3: Overview of the area from the south-west.



Fig. 4: Area 3/Northern Sector: Eastern Section.



Fig. 6: Area 3/Northern Sector: overview of Stratum L/4 from the south-west

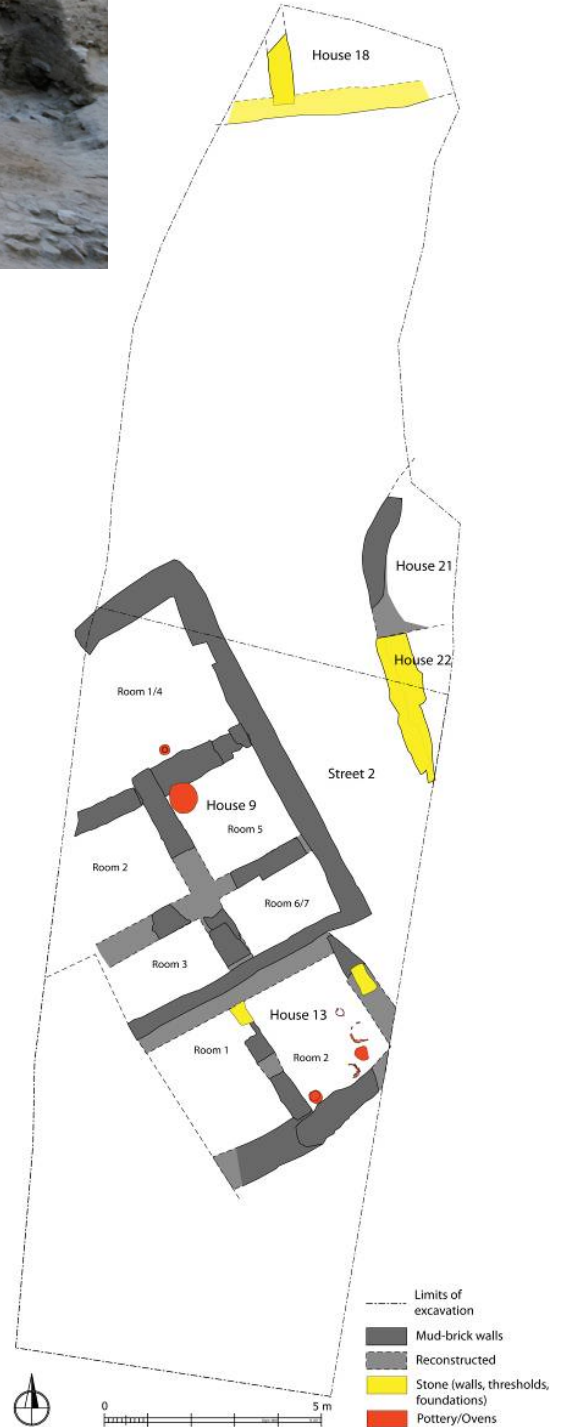


Fig. 5: Area 3: Plan of Stratum L/4



Fig. 7: Area 3/Northern Sector: Western face of the western walls of Houses 21 and 22.



Fig. 8: Area 3/Northern Sector: View of House 22 from the west.



Fig. 9: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of the western wall of House 22.

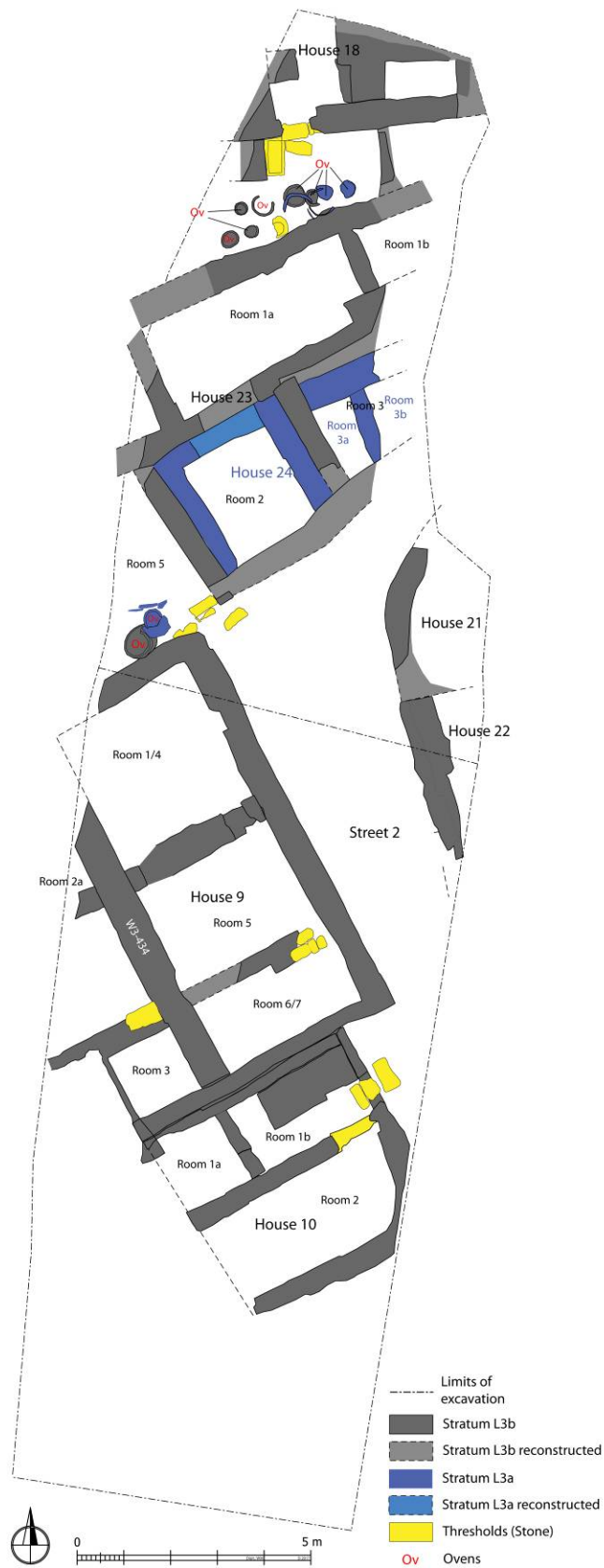


Fig. 10: Area 3: Plan of Stratum L/3.



Fig. 11: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of bread oven in House 23/Room 5.



Fig. 12: Area 3/Northern Sector: Details of ovens in the courtyard between Houses 23 and 18.



Fig. 13: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of Houses 24 and 23.



Fig. 14: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of cooking installation.



Fig. 15: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of House 18 from the east.



Fig. 16: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of Strata L/3-4 from the south- west.



Fig. 17: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of the walled-up door into House 18.



Fig. 18: Area 3/Northern Sector: House 18: Detail of door with basin.

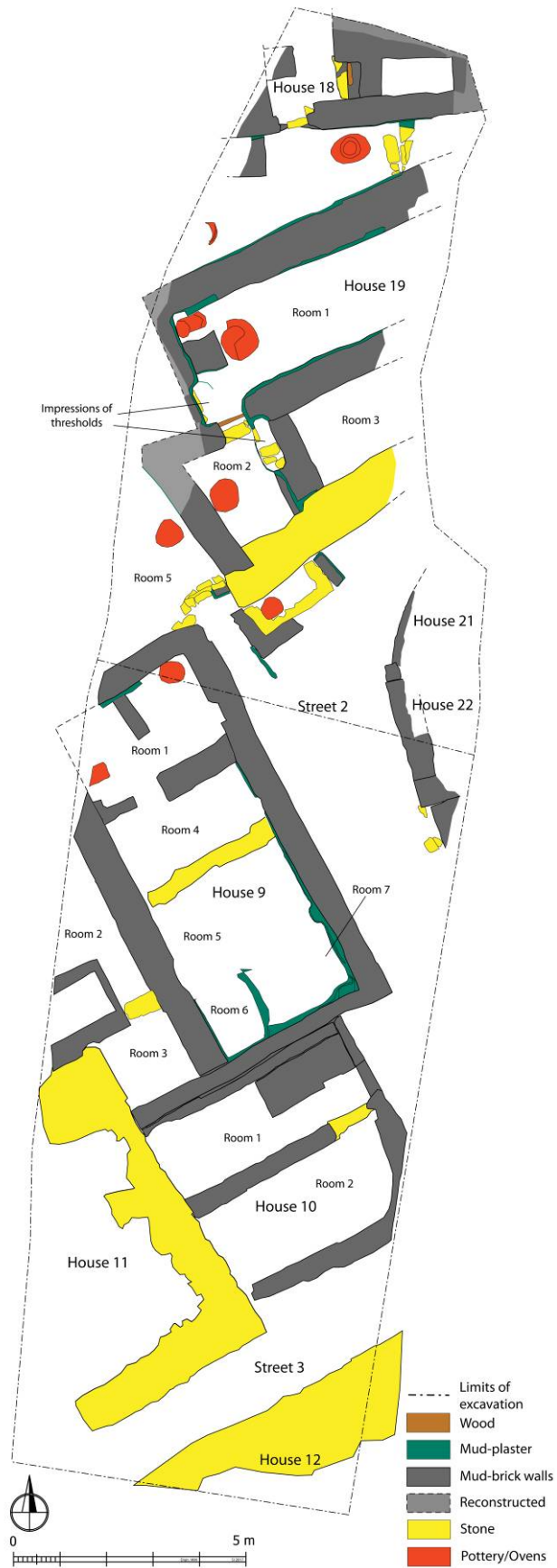


Fig. 19: Area 3: Plan of Stratum L/2.



Fig. 20: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of jar containing seal-impressions *in situ*.



Fig. 21: Area 3: Detail of seal-impression.



Fig. 22: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of Stratum L/2 from the south-west.



Fig. 23: Area 3/Northern Sector: House 19/Room 1: Detail of mud-brick installation.



Fig. 24: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of House 19/Rooms 2 and 3.



Fig. 25: Area 3: Detail of the eastern section:
View of Houses 21 and 22 during Strata L/2-1.



Fig. 26: Area 3: Plan of Stratum L/1.



Fig. 27: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of Stratum L/1.



Fig. 28: Area 3: Plan of Strata K-J.



Fig. 29: Area 3/Northern Sector: Overview of Stratum K.



Fig. 30: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of the wall of Stratum K and the infill Stratum K-L.



Fig. 31: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of the layer (infill) of burnt bricks Stratum K-L.



Fig. 32: Area 3/Northern Sector: House 20: Overview from the north-east.



Fig. 33: Area 3/Northern Sector: House 20/Room 2:
Detail of plastered floor and walls.

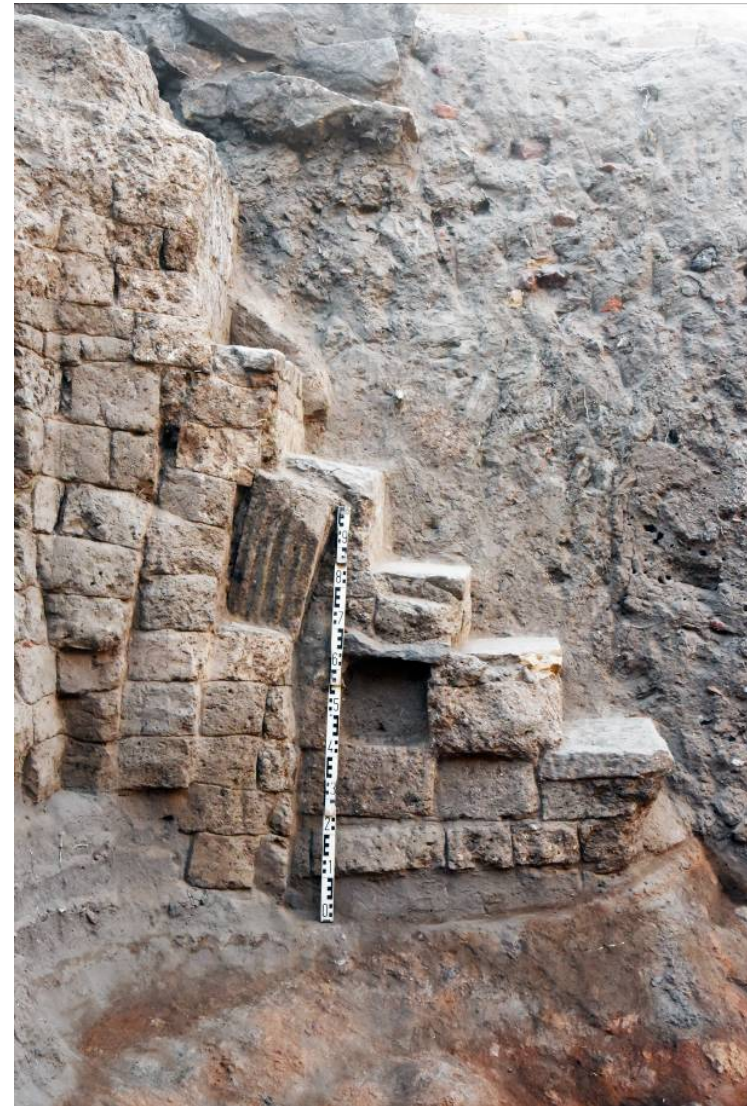


Fig. 34: Area 3/Northern Sector: Detail of the staircase dating to Stratum J/1.



Fig. 35: Area 3/Northern Sector: North-eastern corner with structures dating to Stratum J/1.



Fig. 36: Area 93: Overview from the east.

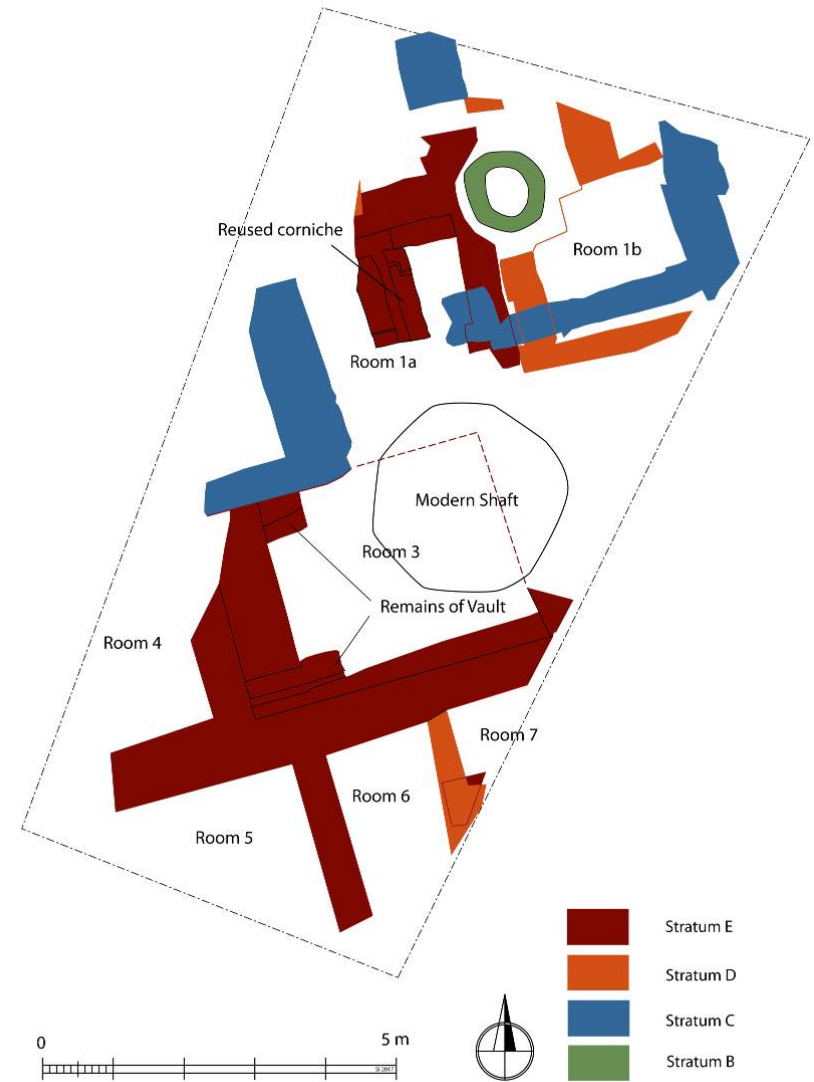


Fig. 37: Plan of Area 93.



Fig. 38: Area 93: Detail of door lintel.



Fig. 39: Area 93: Detail of corniche reused as a door lintel.



Fig. 40: Area 93: Detail of vaulted Room 3.



Fig. 41: Area 93: Overview of Room 1b from the east.



Fig. 42: Area 93: Detail of pot-stand.

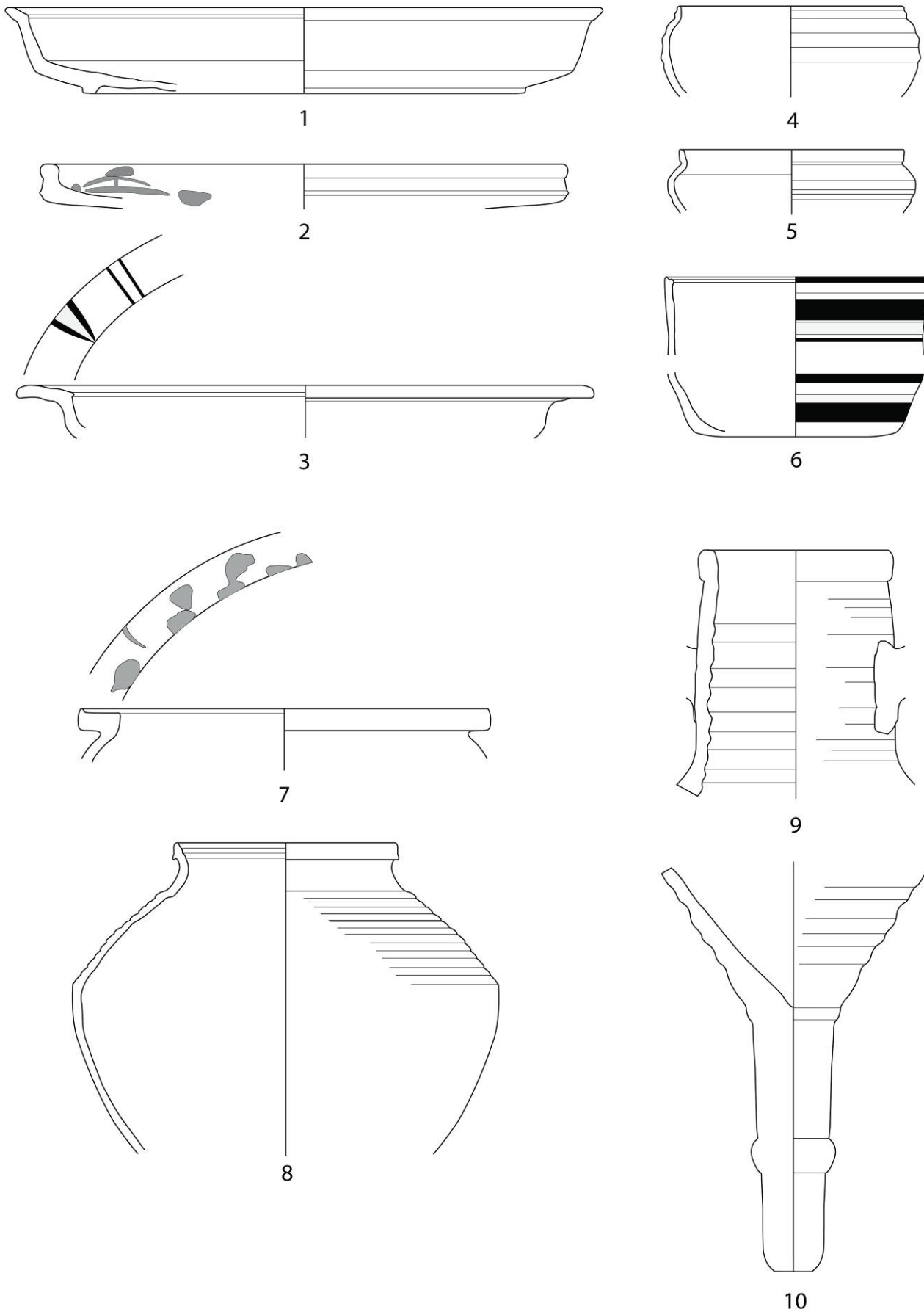


Fig. 43: Area 50: Context 1: Selection of material from Stratum D-E

1-3 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 4-5 Aswan Fine Ware without slip, 6 Painted Ware (Aswan Pink Clay), 7 Domestic Ware (Aswan Pink Clay), 8 Cooking Ware (Marl Clay), 9-10 Amphorae (Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

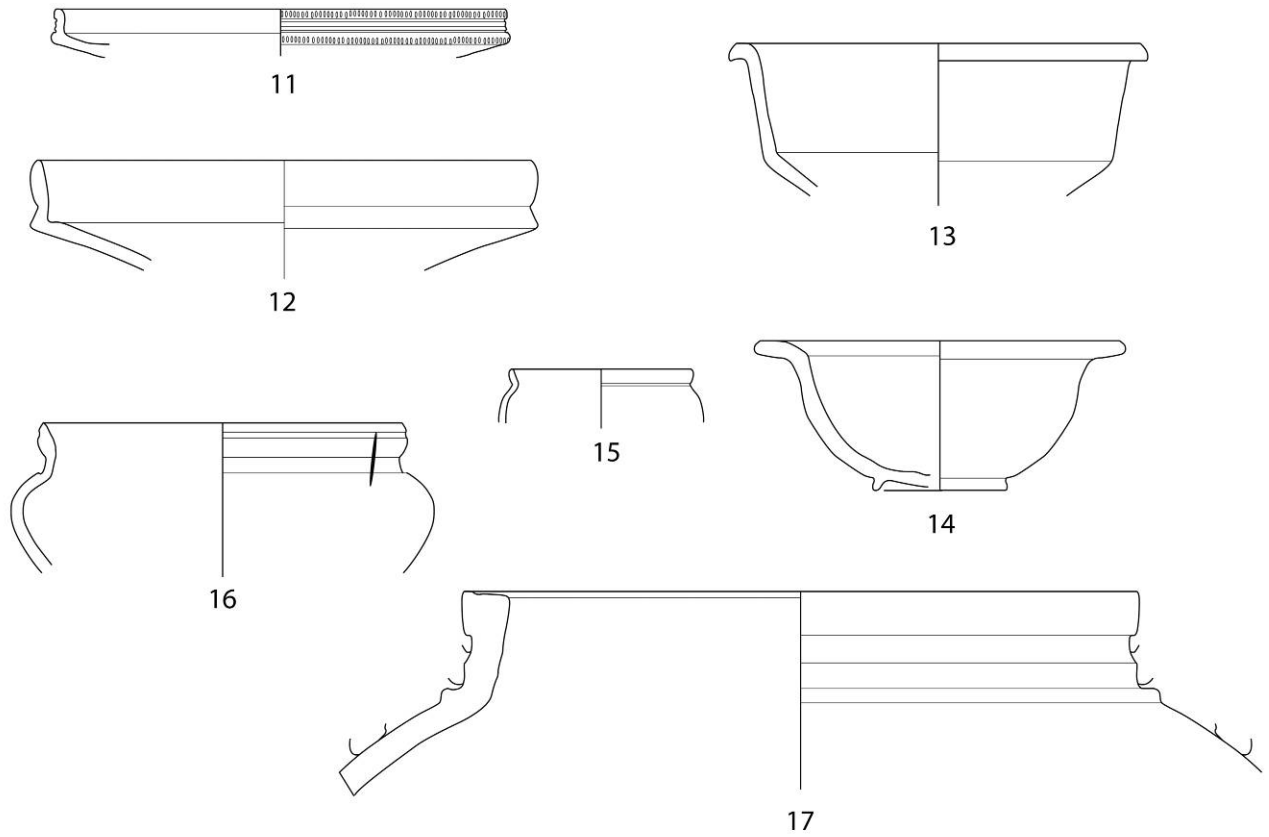


Fig. 44: Area 50: Context 2 and 3: Selection of material from last occupation phase of Building 6 and the north-south street / Stratum E
 11 Import: Eastern Sigillata B, 12-14 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 15-16 Aswan Fine Ware without slip, 17 Domestic Ware (Marl Clay)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

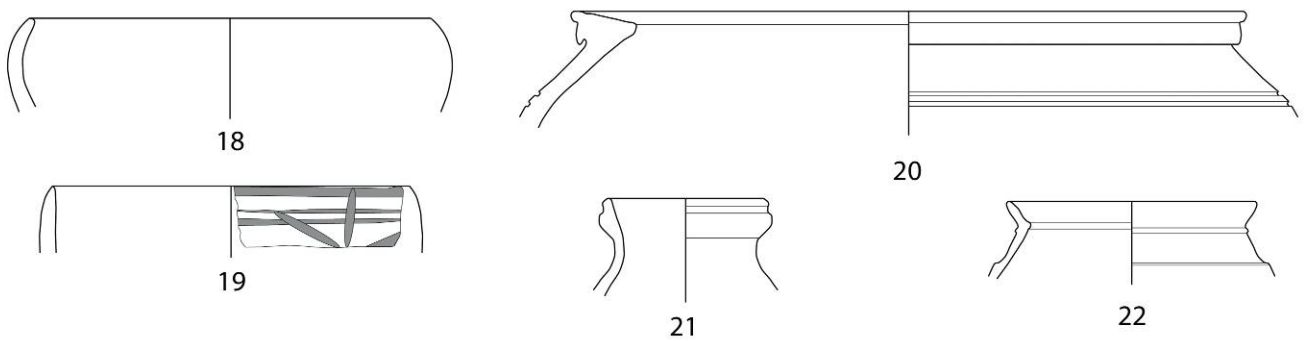


Fig. 45: Area 84: Context 4: Selection of material from occupation of Building 6 / Stratum E/1-2
 18 Table Ware (Marl Clay), 19 Painted Ware (Marl Clay), 20-21 Domestic Ware (Marl Clay), 22 Cooking Ware (Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

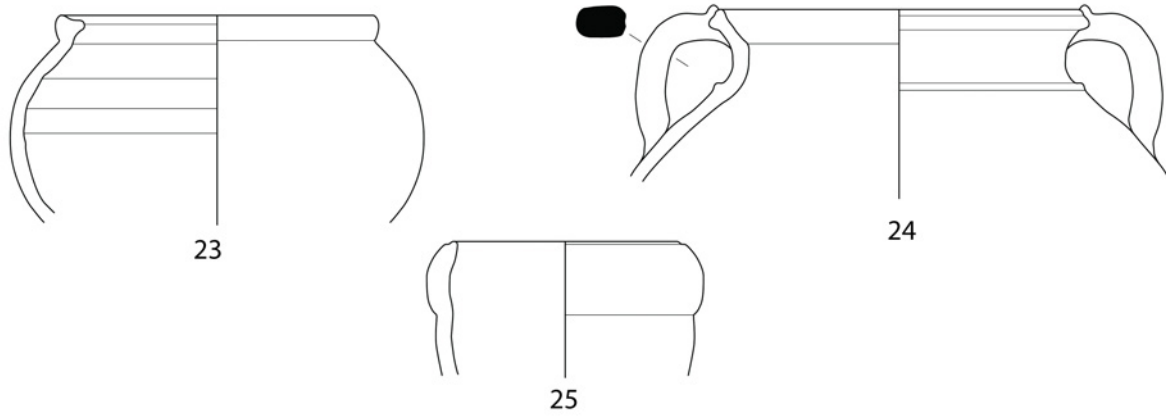


Fig. 46: Area 84: Context 5: Selection of material from last occupation phase of Building 4 / Stratum D
23-24 Cooking Ware (Aswan Pink Clay), 25 Amphora (Nile silt)

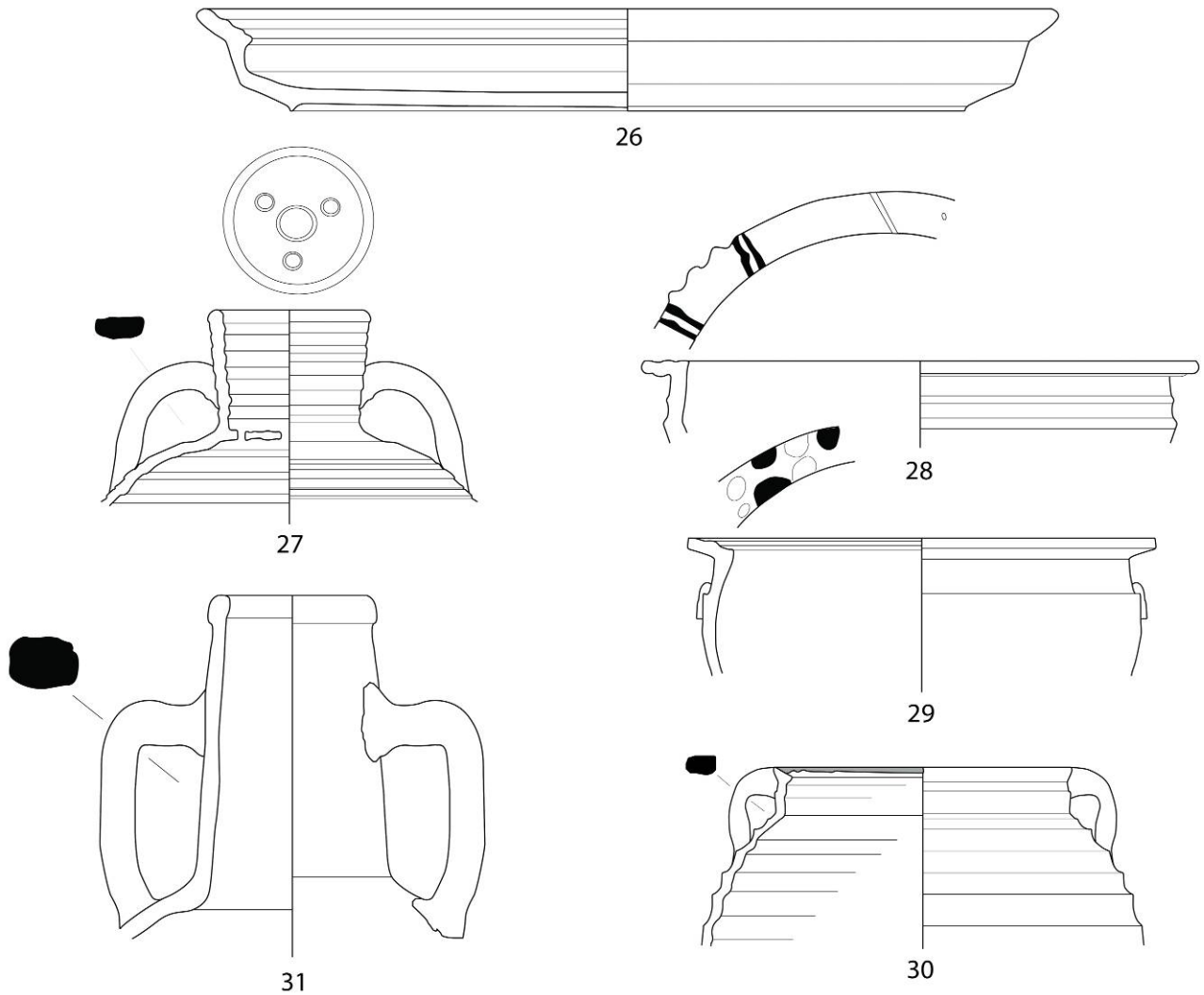


Fig. 47: Area 84: Context 6: Selection of filling material of Building 4 and the north-south street / Stratum D
26 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 27 Domestic Ware (Aswan Pink Clay), 28-30 Cooking Ware (Nile silt),
31 Amphora (Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

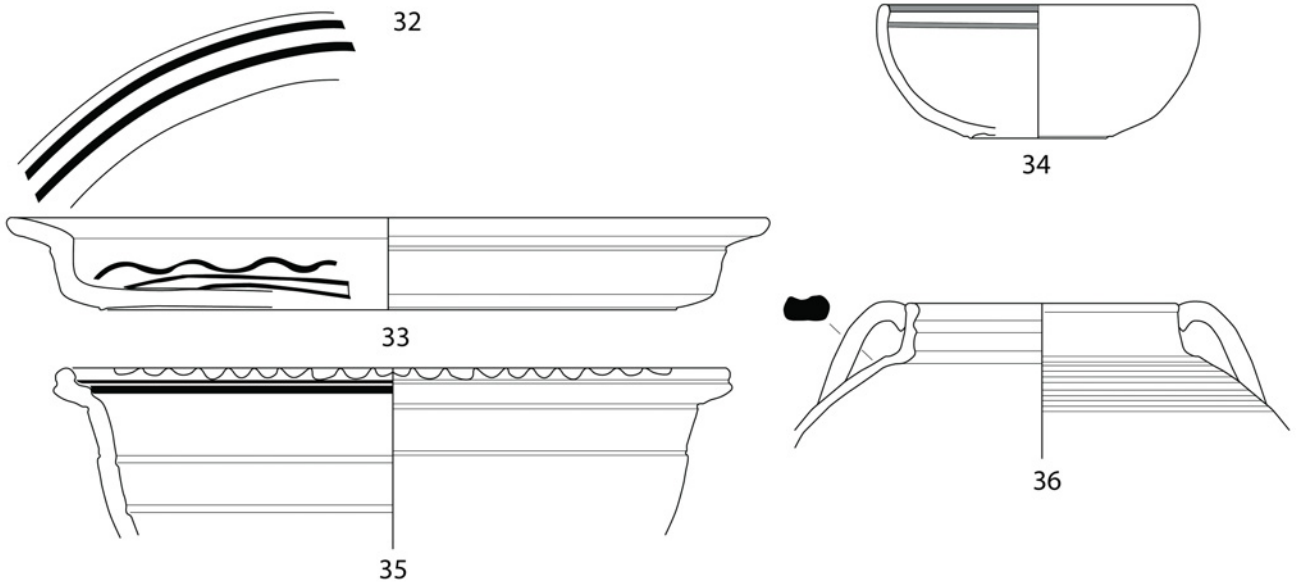


Fig. 48: Area 84: Context 6: Selection of filling material of Building 5 / Stratum D
32-33 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 34 White slip Ware (Aswan Pink Clay), 35-36 Cooking Ware (Pink Clay and Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens



Fig. 49: ERSW plate from Context 6.

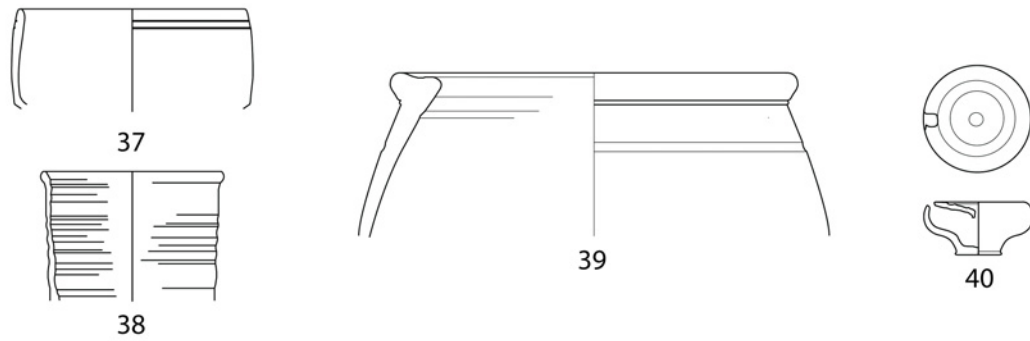


Fig. 50: Area 88: Context 7: Selection of material from occupation of Building 2 / Stratum B/2
37-38 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 39 Domestic Ware (Aswan Pink Clay), 40 Lamp (Aswan Pink Clay)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

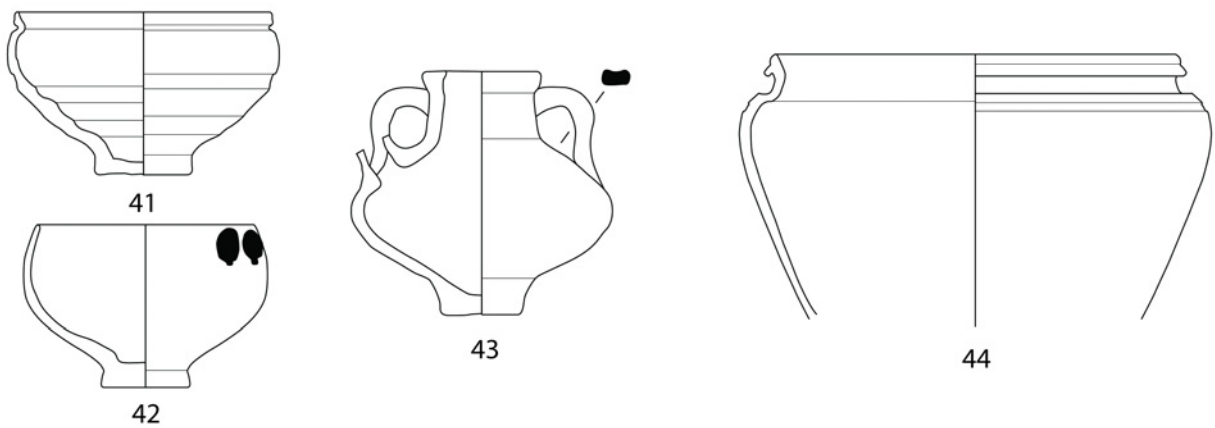


Fig. 51: Area 88: Context 8: Selection of filling material from Building 2 / Stratum B/2
41-42 Aswan Fine Ware without slip, 43-44 Domestic Ware (Aswan Pink Clay)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

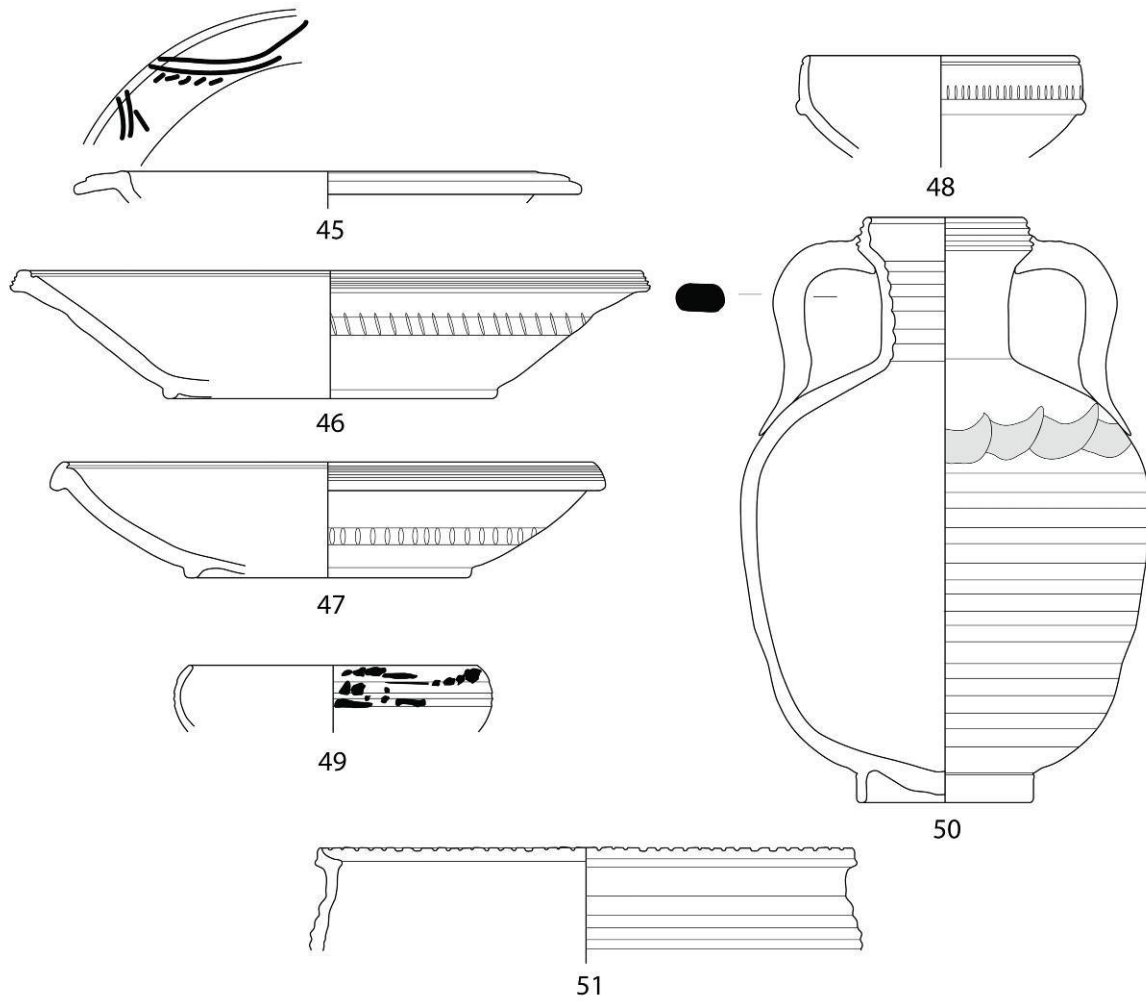


Fig. 52: Area 88: Context 9: Selection of material from occupation and filling of Building 1 / Stratum B/1
 45-48 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 49 Painted Ware (Nile silt), 50 Domestic Ware (Aswan Pink Clay),
 51 Cooking Ware (Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

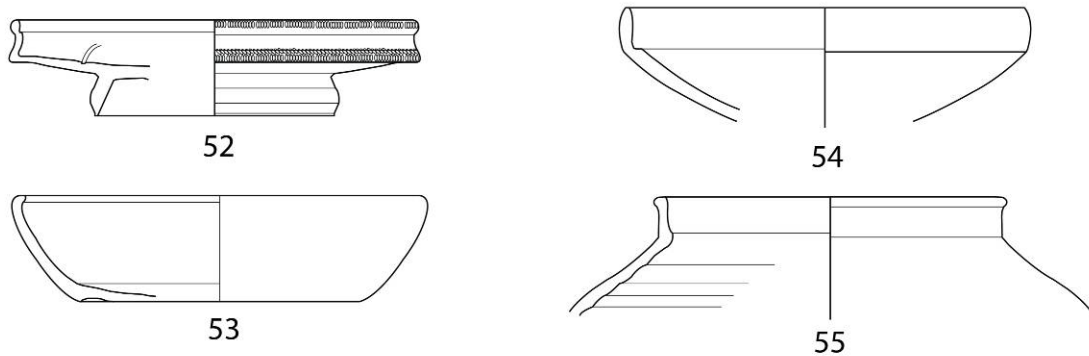


Fig. 53: Area 92: Context 10: Selection of material from occupation and abandonment from Building 2 / Stratum C/2
 52 Import: Eastern Sigillata B, 53-54 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 55 Cooking Ware (Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens

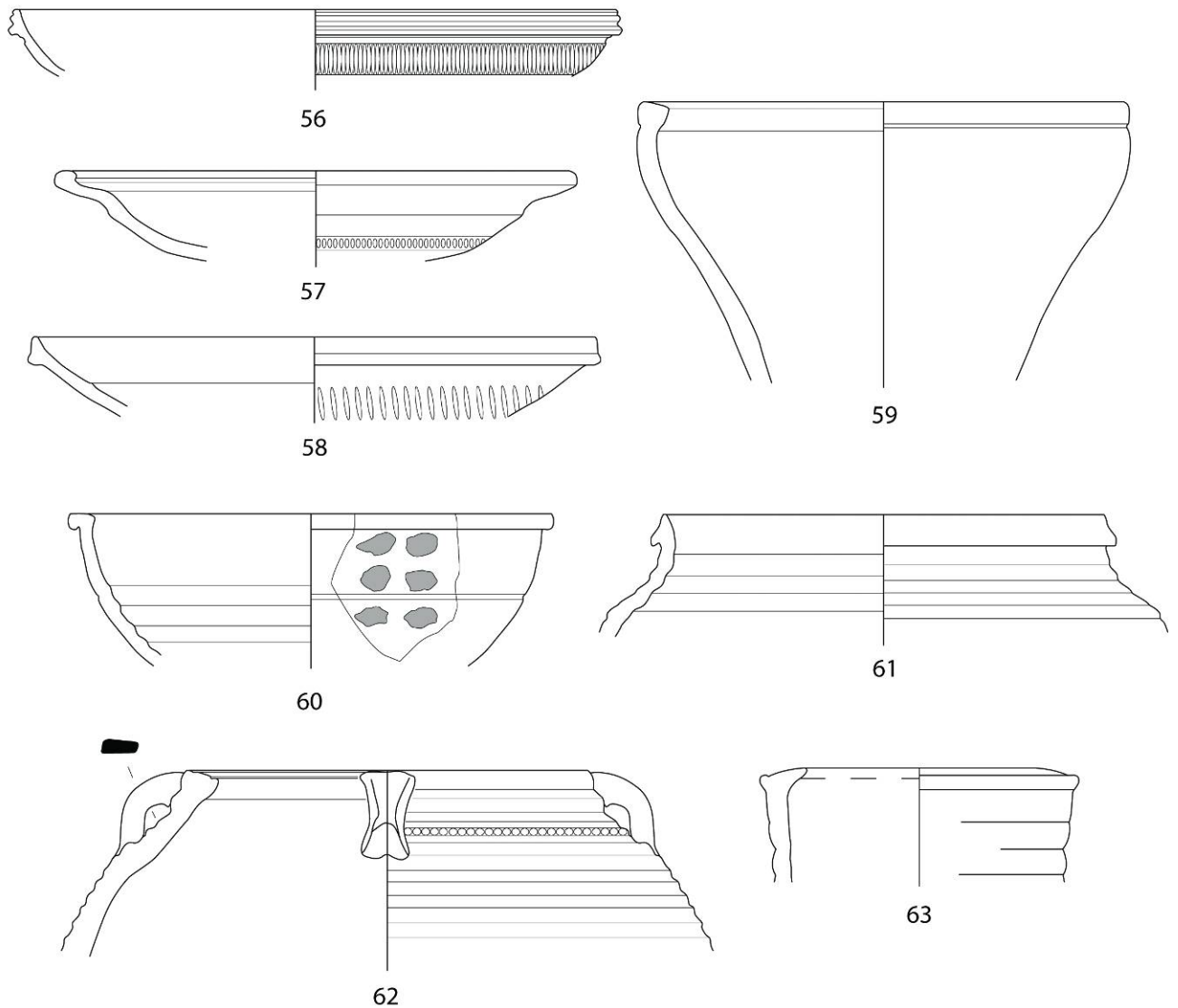


Fig. 54: Area 92: Context 11: Selection of material from filling of House 2 and 1 / Stratum B-C
56 African Red slip Ware, 57-59 Egyptian Red slip Ware A (Aswan Pink Clay), 60 Painted Ware (Aswan Pink Clay),
61-62 Domestic Ware (Nile silt and Aswan Pink Clay), 63 Amphora (Nile silt)

scale 1:3 Drawings.: T. Jürgens



Fig. 55: Jug from Context 8.



Fig. 56: Jug from Context 9.



Fig. 57: Right distal femur of a 4-5-year-old child (16-89-14-8/1) from Area 89. On the anterior surface, probable remnants of embalming resins are visible (Photo J. Nováček).



Fig. 58: Right mandible of a 35-50-year-old man (16-89-26-5/3) from Area 89. A well-healed fracture line is visible under the first premolar (44). Despite of the strong pull of the mastication muscles, the fracture healed in an only-slightly-shifted position. Probably, it was professionally treated by a physician (Photo J. Nováček).