

Centre d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences
avec la collaboration de l'Institut d'Archéologie de l'Université de Varsovie

STUDIES
ON OLD KINGDOM
POTTERY

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ZAŚ
PAN

Wydawnictwo Neriton
Warsaw 2009

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	<i>American Anthropologist</i> , Arlington, Virginia
AAMT	Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory, University of Arizona, Tuscon
AANT	<i>American Antiquity</i> , Washington, DC
ACE Reports	The Australian Centre for Egyptology Reports, Sydney
ADAIK	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo (Ägyptologische Reihe), Glückstadt, Hamburg, New York, Mainz am Rhein
Ä&L	<i>Ägypten und Levante</i> , Wien
<i>Archaeometry</i>	<i>Archaeometry</i> , Oxford
<i>Archeologia</i>	<i>Archeologia</i> , Warsaw
<i>Archeologia Geographica</i>	<i>Archeologia Geographica</i> , Hamburg
ARCUS	<i>Berichte aus Archäologie, Baugeschichte und Nachbargebieten</i> , Potsdam
ArOr	<i>Archiv Orientální, Quarterly Journal of African and Asian Studies</i> , Praha
ASAE	<i>Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte</i> , Le Caire
AV	<i>Archäologische Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo</i> , Berlin, Mainz am Rhein
ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen, Wiesbaden
ÄAT	<i>Studien zu Geschichte, Kultur und Religion Ägyptens und des Alten Testaments</i> , Wiesbaden
BAR	<i>British Archaeological Reports, International Series</i> , Oxford
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> , Ann Arbor
BÄ	Beiträge zur Ägyptologie, Wien
BÄBA	Beiträge zur ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde, Kairo
BCE	<i>Bulletin de liaison du groupe international d'étude de la céramique égyptienne</i> , Le Caire
BdÉ	<i>Bibliothèque d'Étude, Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i> , Le Caire
BES	<i>Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar</i> , New York
BIFAQ	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i> , Le Caire
BMFA	<i>Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts</i> , Boston
BP	<i>Biology and Philosophy</i> , Dordrecht
BSAK	Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur, Beihefte, Hamburg
BSFE	<i>Bulletin de la Société française d'égyptologie</i> , Paris
CA	<i>Current Anthropology</i> , University of Chicago, Chicago
CCE	<i>Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne</i> , Le Caire
CdE	<i>Chronique d'Égypte, Bulletin périodique de la Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth</i> , Bruxelles
CRAIBL	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i> , Paris
EA	<i>Egyptian Archaeology. Bulletin of the Egypt Exploration Society</i> , London

EEF	Egypt Exploration Fund, London
EES	Egypt Exploration Society, London
<i>ÉtTrav</i>	<i>Études et Travaux du Centre d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences</i> , Varsovie
FIFAO	Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Le Caire
<i>Genève</i>	<i>Bulletin du musée de Genève. Musée d'art et d'histoire</i> , Genève
<i>GM</i>	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i> , Göttingen
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden
<i>Hesperia</i>	<i>Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i> , Athens
<i>IBAES</i>	<i>Internet-Beiträge zur Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie</i>
<i>JAMT</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory</i> , Dordrecht
<i>JAR</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Research</i> , New York
<i>JARCE</i>	<i>Journal of American Research Center in Egypt</i> , Boston
<i>JAS</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science</i> , New York
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> , London
<i>JFA</i>	<i>Journal of Field Archaeology</i> , Boston University, Boston
<i>JSSEA</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</i> , Toronto
<i>LA</i>	<i>Louisiana Archaeology</i> , Springhill
<i>LÄ</i>	Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vols. I-VII, Wiesbaden
<i>MDAIK</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo</i> , Berlin, Wiesbaden, Mainz am Rhein
<i>MIFAO</i>	Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Le Caire
<i>OLA</i>	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Leuven
<i>OMRO</i>	<i>Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden</i> , Leiden
<i>OrAnt</i>	<i>Oriens Antiquus. Rivista del Centro per le antichità e la storia dell'arte del Vicino Oriente</i> , Roma
<i>OrMonsp</i>	Orientalia Monspeliensia, Montpellier
<i>PAM</i>	<i>Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean</i> , Warsaw
<i>Památky archeologické</i>	<i>Památky archeologické</i> , Praha
<i>PP</i>	<i>Perception and Psychophysics</i> , Austin
<i>PR</i>	<i>Psychological Review</i> , Washington, DC
<i>Radiocarbon</i>	<i>Radiocarbon</i> , Tucson
<i>SAAC</i>	Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization, Cracow
<i>SAGA</i>	Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens, Heidelberg
<i>SAK</i>	<i>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur</i> , Hamburg
<i>SAOC</i>	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, Chicago
<i>Science</i>	<i>Science</i> , Washington, DC
<i>SDAIK</i>	Sonderschriften des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo, Mainz am Rhein, Berlin
<i>TMO</i>	Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon
<i>WES</i>	Warsaw Egyptological Studies, Warsaw
<i>WB</i>	A. Erman, H. Grapow, Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache, vols. I-VI, Berlin und Leipzig
<i>ZÄS</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i> , Berlin, Leipzig

THE LATE OLD KINGDOM IN HERAKLEOPOLIS MAGNA? AN INTERIM INTERPRETATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

The ancient remains of Herakleopolis Magna lie within the town boundaries of modern day Ehnasa el-Medina, about 18 km west of Beni Suef, which in turn is situated about 120 km south of Cairo. The archaeological site of Herakleopolis Magna, which is located on protected land administered by the Supreme Council of Antiquities, has been under excavation by a Spanish team under the auspices of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional in Madrid, directed by Carmen Pérez-Die for more than 20 Years.¹

Whilst the site is hitherto most renowned for its Third Intermediate Period royal necropolis² that overlay and thus mostly destroyed a First Intermediate Period necropolis,³ the work from 2000 onwards has concentrated on another part of the necropolis that of the First Intermediate Period or the early Middle Kingdom, some distance to the East of the necropolis examined earlier.⁴ In this part the destruction of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom necropolis was not as severe as in the previous area, because another necropolis was not built on top of it in succeeding periods. Indeed the only later structure found in this area is a large wall that might be the surrounding wall of the Third Intermediate or Late Period temple precinct.

This is not to say that these burials were undisturbed, as indeed they were, as indicated by a deep destruction level. In the highest levels, where frequently mixed ceramic material from the Third Intermediate Period and a late phase of the Late Period up to early in the Ptolemaic period (late 4th to 3rd Century B.C.)⁵ was identified mixed together with material that can undoubtedly be assigned to the earlier period, somehow hauled to the top by post-depositional processes often hard to understand. Even in the topsoil a context would commonly consist of ceramics mostly in FIP/early MK style associated with a variable

¹ LÓPEZ 1974, LÓPEZ 1975; PADRÓ 1998; PÉREZ-DIE 2005a, *passim*.

² PÉREZ-DIE 1992, *passim*; PÉREZ-DIE and VERNUS 1992, *passim*.

³ For the report on pottery found in this part of the necropolis see LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, *passim*.

⁴ For relevant preliminary reports see PÉREZ-DIE 2001, pp. 6-25; PÉREZ-DIE 2004, pp. 21-24; PÉREZ-DIE 2005b, pp. 239-254; PÉREZ-DIE 2005a, *passim*.

⁵ D.A. Aston, personal communication.

amount of obviously “late” sherds and – rarely – whole pots.⁶ Third Intermediate Period surface burials have also been observed.⁷ There seem to be no other main periods of activity except the two already mentioned within this part of the necropolis as no ceramic material of any other date was recovered, neither Middle Kingdom “proper” (i.e. 12th Dynasty), Second Intermediate Period and only very few burials of the New Kingdom. However, activities during these periods may have taken place in other areas of the vast site.

Ubiquitous tunnels of tomb robbers burrowed into the tombs and spread the ceramic material, which is the main find group, so that most of the time no actual *in situ* bodies with associated grave goods could be recorded in controlled excavation. But the ceramic material found in the lower levels, whilst it was certainly thrown about, appears quite homogenous and can be dated by analogy best with Sedment and Harageh, Cemeteries C and D as well as the early Gurob material. The ceramic material will allow assumptions on what kind of vessels were buried with the deceased as well as on cult practices, particularly as it was possible to recover a sizeable amount of pottery closely associated with a stela in autumn 2006.

However, in the autumn season of 2007 it was possible to recover ceramic material from several *in situ* burials with some associated pottery and whilst it is unclear if these burials date to the original phase when the tombs were built or to a slightly later secondary phase, it seems clear, from the pottery, that they should still be assigned to the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom phase of the necropolis.

The exact date for the foundation of the necropolis is not clear because, although a fair number of stelae and offering tables was found, the lack of king’s names or titularies gives no additional clues and thus, a supplementary, independent means for dating is missing. It is hoped that a thorough study of the epigraphy of these stelae will lead to a possible dating that helps in solving this question, and enables a synthesis with the data from the pottery studies. As for the names of the tomb owners, like Kheti, Hetep-Wadjet, Nenj and Ipepj they only give a general idea, and might even rather show a regional preference than a chronological one.⁸

The tombs in the necropolis were laid out in rows running in an East-West direction. The tombs are rectangular, but not of uniform shape. Some of them were built of stone, some of mud brick with vaults. The tombs showed a North-South orientation with the entrance in the North. To date there is evidence for at least two rows of tombs, and current work has ascertained that the necropolis spreads to the South and the North, even if perhaps not in rows. The necropolis also extends into the western and eastern baulks. While each tomb has some rooms attached to it, shafts do not seem to have existed. As the stelae were set up roughly on the same level as the ground level of the tombs, one might have to imagine that these rows of tombs were free standing in antiquity, otherwise the mourners could not have conducted the funerary cults for which there is evidence in the form of pottery laid down in front of, or around, the stelae.⁹ There was also no evidence for other superstructures such as additional tomb chapels.

⁶ At this point I would like to express my gratitude to D.A. Aston who confirmed the identification of ceramic material of such a late date on various site visits.

⁷ C. Pérez-Die, personal communication.

⁸ RANKE 1935, 24.6-7, 205.26-27, 277.26-29.

⁹ *E.g.* in area 14, PÉREZ-DIE 2005a, Fig. 30; *cf.* BADER forthcoming-b, ms 8-13.

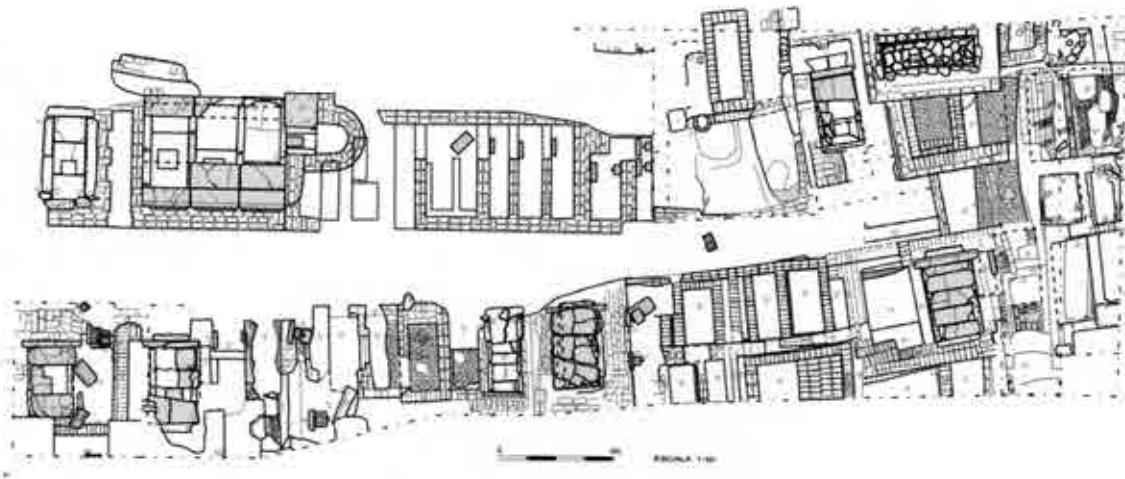


Fig. 1. Plan of the necropolis at Herakleopolis Magna, after PÉREZ-DIE 2005a, Fig. 20.

In the Autumn seasons of 2006 and 2007 it was possible to conduct some soundings underneath the ground level of the tombs of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom without being immediately flooded by ground water due to the rising of the ground level of the tombs from West towards the East (in areas 8 and 15). It has to be made clear that the nature of the contexts underneath those tombs must remain unknown for now, because the extensions are not yet large enough in order to have any certain knowledge if there were earlier tombs, a levelling layer for the erection of the tombs of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom, a settlement or something completely different.

It soon became obvious, though, that some of the ceramic material yielded by this lower level, under these tombs, looked quite different to the known corpus of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom from Herakleopolis Magna and had certain stylistic affinities to ceramic material from the late Old Kingdom, as it was unearthed in other parts of the Memphis–Fayum Region, particularly from West Saqqara.¹⁰

In order to highlight the differences between those two ceramic corpora a selection of the most ubiquitous and common shapes of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom is presented first (Fig. 2). These shapes have their closest parallels in the immediate vicinity of Herakleopolis Magna at the sites of Sedment, Harageh cemeteries C and D, and Gurob with a few shapes to be found farther away, mostly more simple shapes like dishes.¹¹ The regionalism of the pottery styles can be connected with political fragmentation in the First Intermediate Period.

¹⁰ RZEUSKA 2002, RZEUSKA 2003, RZEUSKA 2006, *passim*.

¹¹ BADER forthcoming-b.

II. THE POTTERY OF THE FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD/EARLY MIDDLE KINGDOM

A. FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD/EARLY MIDDLE KINGDOM – OPEN SHAPES

The open shapes are represented by various sizes of simple, relatively thin-walled, wide open plates/dishes with a thick dark red slip (Fig. 2.a-c), sometimes burnished. Those dishes are mostly handmade, coiled at first and then turned on a turning device or even only by the hands of potter, but very carefully smoothed, only the odd example was made with less care. The base was scraped with a tool on the outside in order to remove excess clay. This kind of dish generally shows a direct rim, the rim diameters range from 17.0 to 22.0cms. Large examples such as that shown in Fig. 2.a are quite rare. The fabric usually used is Nile B2 with a generous amount of quartz. Very rarely a finer fabric ranging towards Nile B1 is employed but this seems to be rather accidental than intentional. Parallels for this simple plate/dish type, at least the smaller sized ones, are abundantly found in F/I str. “e “ at Tell el-Dab^a,¹² at Abu Ghalib,¹³ and at Sedment.¹⁴

Recently another type of dish with direct rim, but slightly out-turned was also found sufficiently preserved to make some assumptions on its appearance (Fig. 2.d). The manufacturing technique is in keeping with the plates/dishes described above. The scraping of the base on the outside is very obvious and ends in an almost straight line halfway up the vessel height. The fabric used for this type is a slightly rougher version of Nile B2 that is designated Nile B2/C1, and a red slip inside and outside of the vessel was applied. The rim diameter is around 30.0cms. Similar shapes, but not exactly the same, are found at Tell el-Dab^a.¹⁵

The other, rougher kind of plate/dish making a relatively frequent appearance shows a thicker vessel wall, and very distinctive rope patterns around the rim and two more rows of rope impressions lower down the body (2.e-f). The rope holding the dishes together, probably to prevent collapsing outwards while drying, must have been quite thick and it seems to have been twined from two separate strings. The topmost rope was placed so high up that almost a kind of lip was formed. Rim diameters were recorded from about 30.0 to 50.0cms. Some examples were provided with a flat base, but the contours of others suggest a round base, thus both is possible. The fabric used for this type of plate/dish is Nile C1 and C2, sometimes with a considerable amount of limestone particles present in the paste. All examples hitherto examined show a dark red slip on the inside and the outside. Possible parallels are found at Abu Ghalib,¹⁶ Tell el Dab^a¹⁷ and Saqqara.¹⁸

Another type of open shape (Figs 2.g-j, 3.a-d) that occurs with less frequency in the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom necropolis at Herakleopolis Magna, but throughout, is made of fine to medium fine Nile clay fabrics (Nile B1 (rarely), B2 and

¹² CZERNY 1999, pp. 65-67, 136-139, Nf1-44a.

¹³ BAGH 2002, Figs. 4a, 4e, 4f.

¹⁴ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 29. 16g, 16k.

¹⁵ CZERNY 1999, pp. 68, 141, Nf 64, Nile C1.

¹⁶ BAGH 2002, Fig. 5.a-b.

¹⁷ CZERNY 1999, pp. 82-83, 167-168, Ng 50, 56-58.

¹⁸ ARNOLD 2005, Fig. 18.5; QUIBELL 1908, Pl. 12, in the tomb of Karenen; QUIBELL and HAYTER 1927, p. 15.

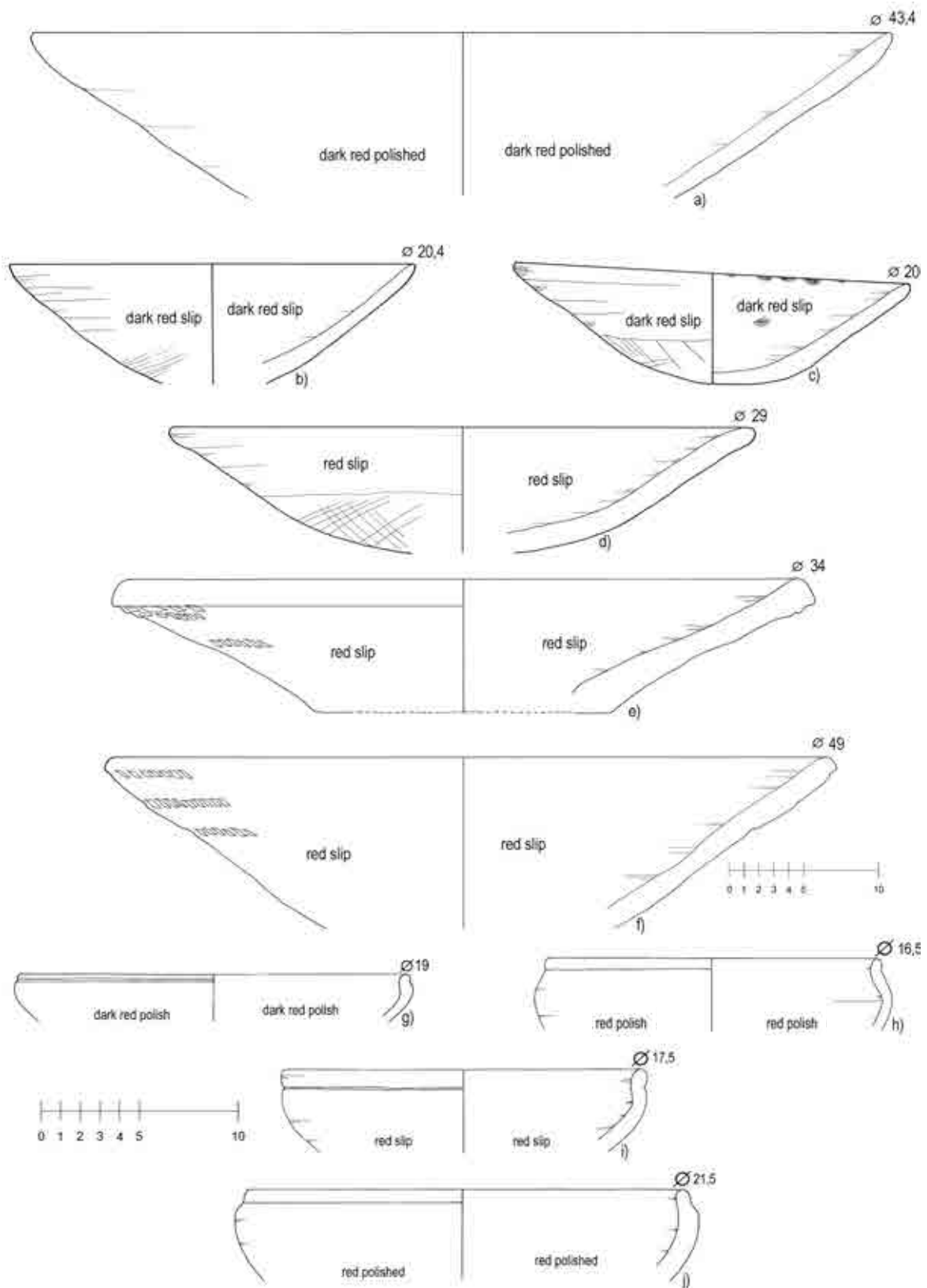


Fig. 2. Open shapes from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

a slightly rougher variant called Nile B2/C1 here).¹⁹ This type shows a carinated contour, is invariably dark red slipped inside and outside and often polished, but usually not very well. The position of the carination is subject to endless variations as is the exact lay-out of the form of the rim proper. Many of the examples presented here, are derived from a part of the excavation (area 20), that was found largely *in situ*. Some of these examples belong to L. Op de Beeck's types B1b and B2a, that continue into the First Intermediate Period.²⁰ But other areas also yielded this kind of pottery, so that it may genuinely belong to this phase of the necropolis. Comparing these dish/bowl fragments to the known pottery, parallels can be cited from Abu Ghalib,²¹ Harageh,²² Sedment,²³ Ashmunein²⁴ and Denderah²⁵ that date to a period between the end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the Middle Kingdom, and with a view towards Abu Ghalib and Tell el-Dab'a²⁶ even on into the Middle Kingdom.²⁷ Unfortunately the sites of Sedment, Harageh and Gurob are not very helpful here for the analysis because for hardly any of the open shapes was the surface treatment stated in the relevant publications of these sites. Similar shapes, however, are also known from contexts belonging definitely to the late 6th Dynasty²⁸ and even earlier.²⁹

Another type of dish or bowl occurs in this period of the necropolis, albeit not very frequently. It shows a vertical rim which then goes into a sharp carination (Fig. 3.f, g). Such bowls rather hint at a period towards the beginning of the early Middle Kingdom or even later and were found at Tell el-Dab'a,³⁰ perhaps at Saqqara,³¹ Sedment,³² and Ashmunein.³³

B. FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD/EARLY MIDDLE KINGDOM – RESTRICTED SHAPES

Whilst the list of types above is not exhaustive, they are certainly those that occur most frequently up until now. There are a number of restricted vessel types, which can also be connected rather with early Middle Kingdom sites than with Old Kingdom ones, namely restricted bowls with spouts in at least two variations, one with a vertical neck with a number of grooves (one to three) and the other with a folded outer lip.

Restricted bowls with grooves around the rim and most probably spouts are also found in the Sector 20, so that it can be tied to the First Intermediate Period/early Middle

¹⁹ For more variants see LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, Pl. XIII.

²⁰ OP DE BEECK 2004, Fig. 10.

²¹ BAGH 2002, Fig. 4j.

²² ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 31.24, found in another place than cemeteries C or D.

²³ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 29: a rim variant from tomb 2002, which could not be used in the recent seriation undertaken by the present author.

²⁴ SPENCER 1993, Pls. 102.35, 103.54.

²⁵ MARCHAND 2004, Fig. 18, red polished, Figs. 87-88.

²⁶ CZERNY 1999, p. 144, Nf 119-118, in small quantity with less variation.

²⁷ This period starts here with the re-unification under Nebhepet-Re Mentuhotep II.

²⁸ RZEUSKA 2002, Fig. 13; RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 95, to a lesser degree Pls. 130-134.

²⁹ D. Raue personal communication.

³⁰ CZERNY 1999, p. 142, Nf 91-93, Ib, red polished.

³¹ ARNOLD 2005, Fig. 18.7-8; QUIBELL 1908, Pl. 49/1 upper row, middle.

³² PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 29 k and d, with a slightly smaller rim diameter.

³³ SPENCER 1993, Pls. 101 (type 1.3), 102; 103.44-64.

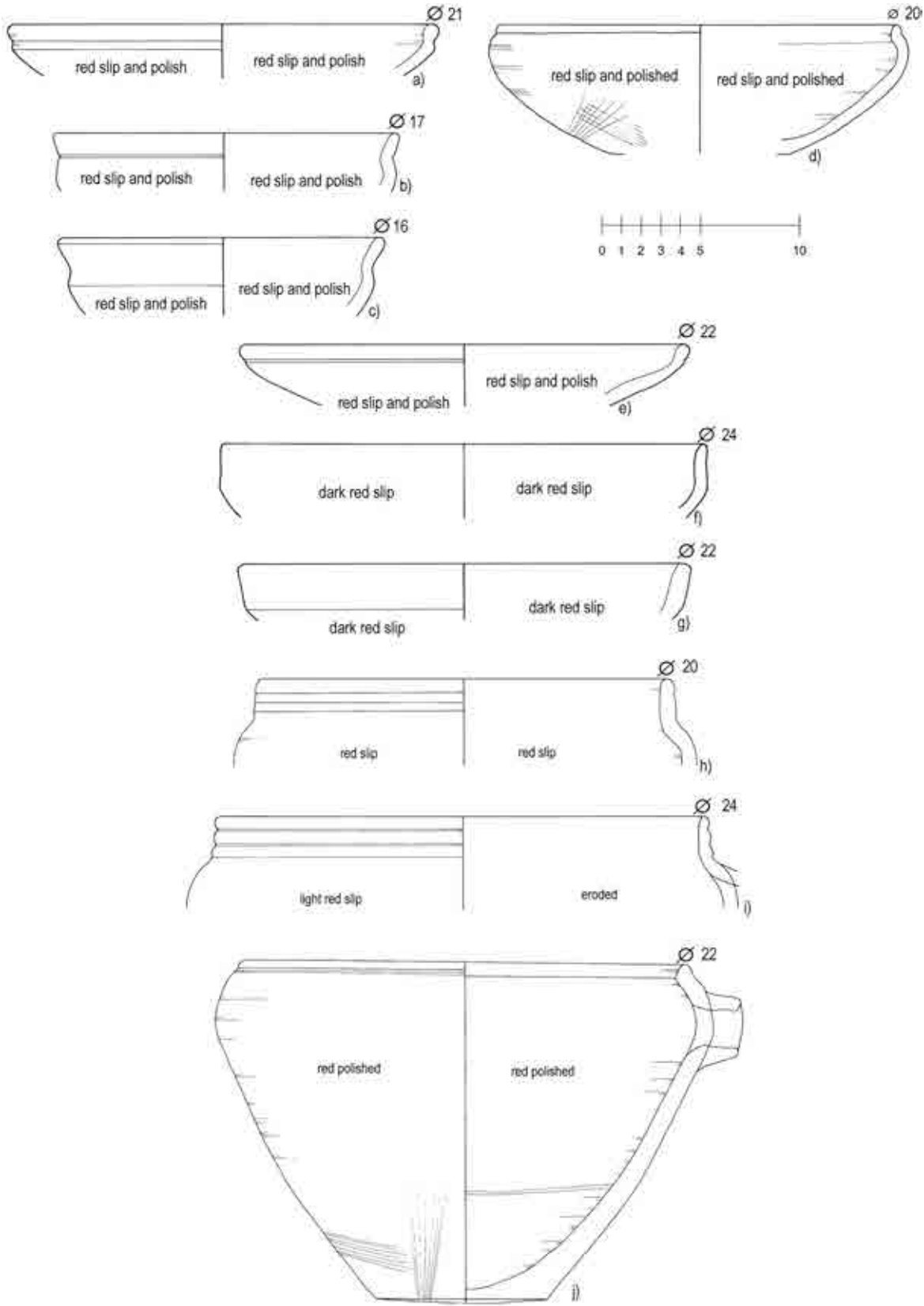


Fig. 3. Open and restricted shapes from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

Kingdom phase of the necropolis of Herakleopolis Magna (Fig. 3.h-i) with some confidence. These bowls were made from either Nile B2 or C1 fabrics and a red slip was applied. Exact parallels are rare but the most similar kind of pottery can be seen at Abu Ghalib, where they have a flat base.³⁴ Such a reconstruction is very well possible for the examples from Herakleopolis Magna as flat bases are quite well represented there.³⁵ General similarities can be traced to a red polished type of vessel found in F/I str. “e” at Tell el-Dab^a,³⁶ as well as to a “Knickwandnapf” (EF 125-2A/8) from Elephantine of the mid 11th Dynasty. The design of the rim is very similar, even if the carination looks different.³⁷

The restricted bowl with spout (Fig. 3.j), while generally of the same type as the more massive example shown as Fig. 4.a, may reflect a development of such ceramic vessels, although both of them seem to have their roots in Old Kingdom traditions.³⁸ The first spouted bowl from Herakleopolis Magna (Fig. 3.j) was very well made. Similar pottery was found at Harageh, even if the latter is much smaller and without a spout (cemetery C),³⁹ Denderah⁴⁰ and in the Dakhla oasis.⁴¹ The second restricted bowl with spout was also very carefully made and very well smoothed, but exact parallels for the more massive and straighter form of different proportions than before are not readily available.

C. FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD/EARLY MIDDLE KINGDOM – CLOSED SHAPES

The larger group of closed vessels can be closely, albeit not exclusively, compared to the ceramic material from the nearby site of Sedment. By recording sherd material as well the range of vessel shapes is larger at Herakleopolis Magna, particularly since the last season, with the possibility of recording a large *in situ* deposit in Sector 20.

A very common type of closed vessel is embodied by beaker jars with handmade bases and wheel-made upper parts. These vessels were most frequently made from Nile B2 and C1 and often a red slip was applied on the outside of the vessel and inside on the upper part. Size as well as width of these jars are subject of a great variability, and overall this type is very comparable to type family 36 from Sedment as well as to parallels from Harageh⁴² and Saqqara.⁴³ In spite of being able to re-analyse a great number of pots from Sedment, it was so far not possible to trace enough examples of type 36 and 35 in order to be sure if the main difference between those two types distinguished by Petrie was in fact the manufacturing technique.

³⁴ LARSEN 1936, Abb. 13; LARSEN 1941, Abb. 16. 1937:143; BAGH 2002, Fig. 3.c-d. T. Bagh’s new drawings show three grooves on the rim like our example here.

³⁵ BADER forthcoming-b, cat. nr. 13, 29.

³⁶ CZERNY 1999, pp. 73-74, 153, Nf 227, Ib, rim slightly everted, rim diam. c. 19.3cm.

³⁷ SEIDLMEYER 2005, Figs. 2, and 285-286.

³⁸ BALCZ 1932, pp. 89-114, Fig. 13; FALTINGS 1998, Fig. 26.1-8.

³⁹ BRUNTON and ENGELBACH 1927, Pl. 33.117.

⁴⁰ MARCHAND 2004, Fig. 53 upper part, Fig. 56 with slightly different proportions, dated to phases 2-3, FIP to 11th Dynasty; SLATER 1974, p. 487, C7c.

⁴¹ SOUKIASSIAN, WUTTMANN, and PANTALACCI 2002, p. 238, Fig. 207, Nr. 919/2, Maison 3, phase 2, dating: end of the Old Kingdom or some time after.

⁴² ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 31.16, 18; PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 30.

⁴³ QUIBELL 1908, Pl. 49/1, lower row, second from right, tomb of Karenen; cf. ARNOLD 2005, *passim*.

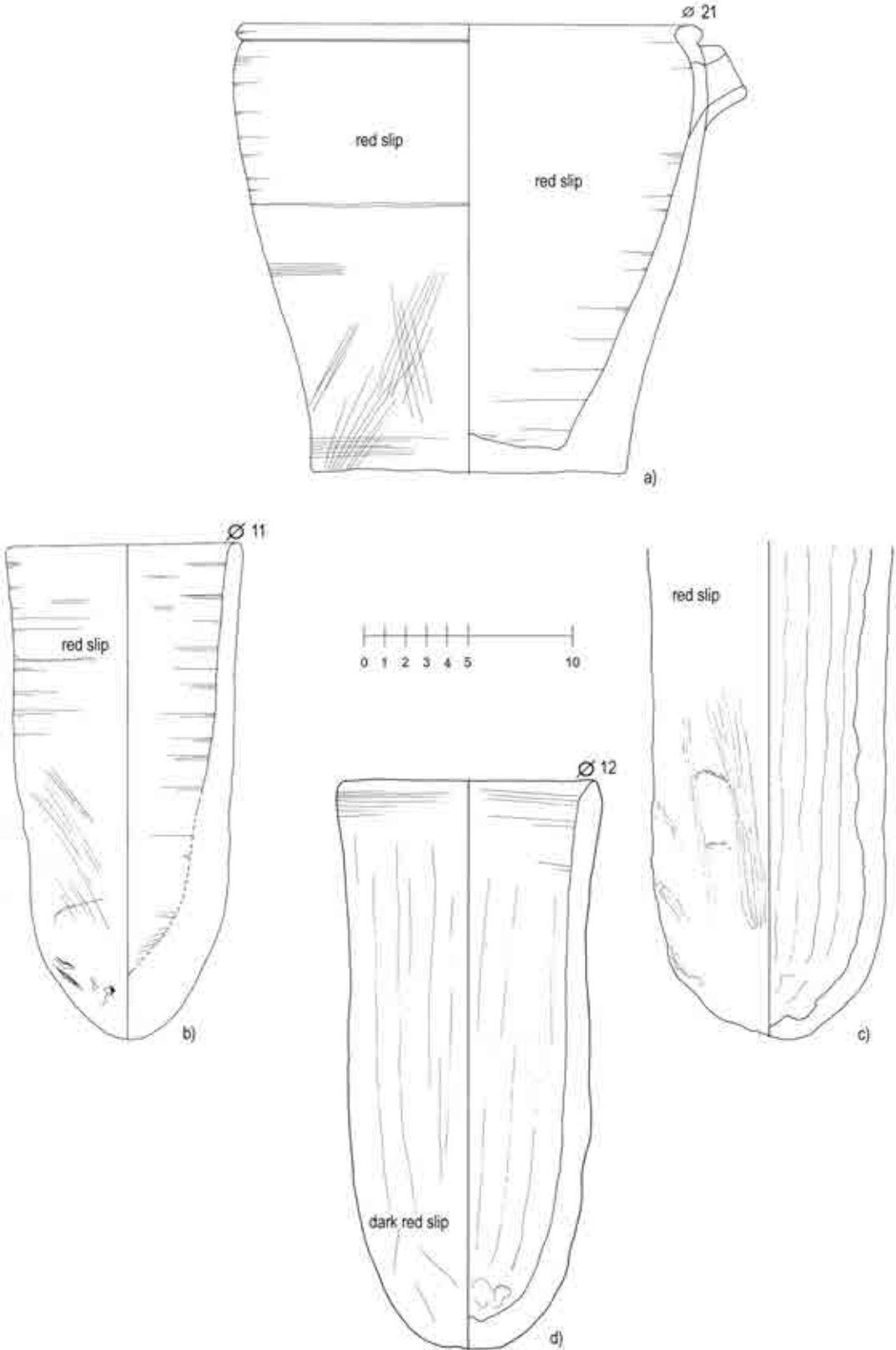


Fig. 4. Restricted and closed shapes from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

The entirely hand made version of the same ceramic vessel shape does also exist and in a great variety of sizes as well. These beaker jars are very roughly made, scraped vertically with the fingers on the interior and smoothed vertically on the exterior. They consist mainly of Nile C1 or Nile C2, but some examples made from Nile B2 are known.⁴⁴ Parallels can be found in Sedment, Type family 35 and in Harageh.⁴⁵ It is noteworthy that pottery of similar manufacturing technique and shape to these beakers was discovered amongst ceramic material of Old Kingdom date in West Saqqara, where it represents a form of beer jars. This may mean that the roots of these beaker jars could perhaps be traced back into the Old Kingdom, although the manufacturing technique shows slight differences.⁴⁶

A great variety of different slender jars are likewise found on the site. Without going too much into detail (Fig. 5.a-d),⁴⁷ they are very roughly made partly by hand partly on a wheel/turning device, are often red slipped on the exterior and are made of fabrics Nile B2 and C1. These bottles find counterparts in the nearby cemeteries of Saqqara,⁴⁸ Harageh, Gurob and Sedment, where various members of Sedment type families and 86 or 89 provide good parallels.⁴⁹ Also at Beni Hassan that is farther away, similar pottery can be found.⁵⁰ Slightly different in terms of quality, smoothing as well as manufacture and shape in general, two jars (Fig. 5.e-f) represent a ceramic type at Herakleopolis Magna that is comparable to Sedment⁵¹ and Harageh, Cemeteries C and D⁵² as well. Most of these jars show a red slip on the exterior. The rims of such slender jars show some variation: direct rims, rims with flattened outer lip or slightly turned inwards or outwards are common variations. Due to sloppy workmanship the lip sometimes does not go all around the rim.⁵³

A large ovoid vessel with long neck and knob, made in three parts (Fig. 6.a), also has a parallel at Sedment, Type 87q and p.⁵⁴ The jar is again partly made by hand and on a wheel/turning device, the fabric used is Nile C1. A red slip was applied on the outside. This vessel shape with its asymmetrical knob is peculiar to the area around Sedment, which seems to hint at a definite regional development in this part of Egypt. One other example, taller and with a dark red slip and polish was found in another part of the necropolis.⁵⁵ Rim fragments with knobs occur more frequently also in other parts of the necropolis, most noticeably in area 20.

⁴⁴ LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, Pl. X.a-b.

⁴⁵ ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 31.19-20; PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 30.

⁴⁶ RZEUSKA 2006, p. 382, Form 5 and 6, Pls. 18-20. The handmade beaker jars at Herakleopolis Magna show invariably vertical scraping marks inside and rather vertical smoothing marks on the outside except at the rim, unlike some of the examples at Saqqara, that show horizontal finger marks presumably where the joins were made: e.g. Pls. 18.39, 19.42, 19.44.

⁴⁷ LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, Pls. II-III.

⁴⁸ QUIBELL 1908, Fig. 49.1, lower row, first from left. Pl. 49.3-4.

⁴⁹ ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 33.96; PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 34.

⁵⁰ GARNSTANG 1907, Pl. XIII.22, 28-29.

⁵¹ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 35.89d, g.

⁵² ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 33.99, corresponds approx. 89d.

⁵³ BADER forthcoming-b, cat. nr. 8, 23-25.

⁵⁴ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 34.

⁵⁵ LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, pp. 44 and 138, Lám. 4.a.

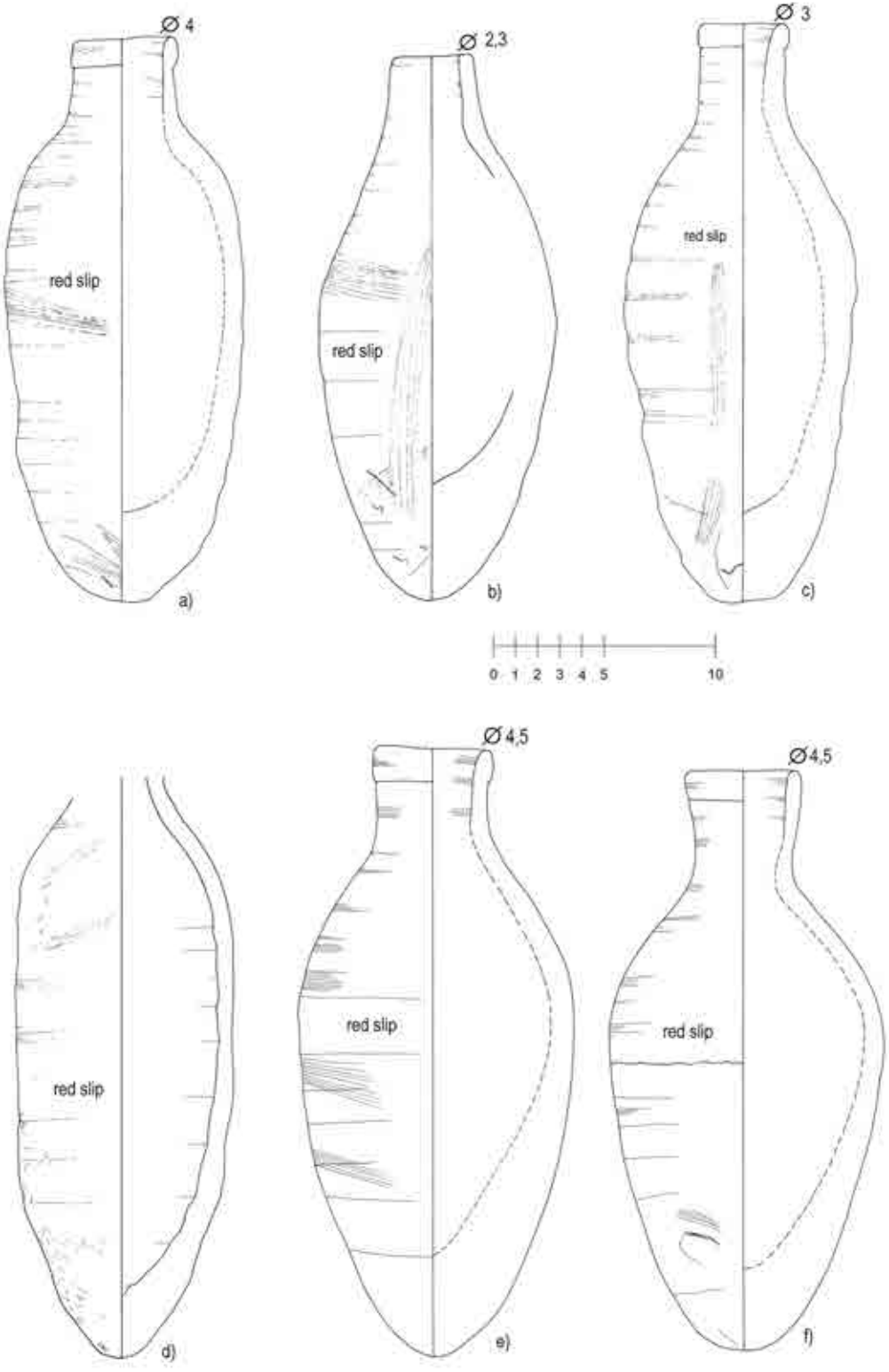


Fig. 5. Closed forms from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

A jar type with a long use life that occurs up into the 12th Dynasty is the more or less ovoid jar with funnel neck.⁵⁶ The funnel necks can vary in length and angle and in the presence or absence of a lip. In contrary to the rough bottles shown above, the manufacture of this kind of vessel was very careful and shows high quality. This type is equivalent to type family 64 in Sedment, where it is very common and varies a lot. One of these vessels (Fig. 6.b) is an almost exact parallel to type 64g as it is given in the corpus of Sedment.⁵⁷ As more finds indicate (Fig. 6.c-d), there is considerable variability also in the body shapes of this type, from very ovoid to rather globular. Parallels to the ovoid body shape are known from Saqqara,⁵⁸ Harageh, Cemeteries C and D,⁵⁹ Gurob⁶⁰ and from Abu Ghalib,⁶¹ whilst at Tell el-Dab⁶² a vessel from F/I str. “e” of similar shape was reconstructed.⁶² At Qau such vessels were not very frequent.⁶³ It is clear from the distribution of the parallels that this type of vessel was quite popular in contrast to the other, not so well known closed vessel types. The funnel necked vessel with globular body (Fig. 6.c), however, does not find such wide spread comparanda, even in Sedment, the closest comparable site in this area does not have an exactly matching parallel, all of type 64’s subtypes being rather more ovoid than globular. Type 64w is the closest available.⁶⁴

A vessel shape almost exclusively occurring in the region around Herakleopolis Magna is the Marl C1 and C2 vessel type with funnel neck and very pointed base (Fig. 7.a-b), that finds parallels in Sedment,⁶⁵ Harageh⁶⁶ and Gurob.⁶⁷ At Herakleopolis vessels of this type consist, so far, exclusively of Marl Clay: Marl C1 and C2 as well as Marl A2 (Fig. 7.c).

Another common Marl clay jar type is much larger and shows a different kind of rim and body shape. The rim can be shaped like a “gutter”, but there are other variants, too. Most probably it is ovoid, as unfortunately no complete vessel has yet been found (Fig. 7.e-f).⁶⁸

Various size classes are very well possible. Generally the bases were mould made, the bodies coiled and smoothed on the wheel/turning device. The fabrics used for this vessel type vary from Marl A2 or A4 to Marl C1 and C2. Another very sandy Marl, as yet unidentified, also occurred. As before, Sedment, Harageh and Gurob are not of great help in the question of whether this is a contemporaneous ceramic type that may have developed out of an Old Kingdom ceramic style. Possible parallels can be cited from Old Kingdom

⁵⁶ LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, Pl. I.a-f.

⁵⁷ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 32.

⁵⁸ ARNOLD 2005, Pl. 18.9; FIRTH and GUNN 1926, Fig. 50.4; QUIBELL and HAYTER 1927, p. 15.

⁵⁹ ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 33.113.

⁶⁰ BRUNTON and ENGELBACH 1927, Pls. IX, XI.

⁶¹ BAGH 2002, Fig. 3a, no. 1937: 745; LARSEN 1941, Abb. 13.1973:745-746.

⁶² CZERNY 1999, p. 154, Nf 247; pp. 155-156, Nf 247-248, 349 – Nile C1, red slip out, rd 8.5cm, Nf 255, 351, Nf 267 – Nile C1, red slip out.

⁶³ BRUNTON 1928, Pl. 90.66f.

⁶⁴ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 32.

⁶⁵ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 35.

⁶⁶ ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pls. 32.86-89, 33.90-91.

⁶⁷ BRUNTON and ENGELBACH 1927, Pl. XI.26.

⁶⁸ BADER forthcoming-a, Fig. 7, a reconstruction based on a large shoulder, body and base fragment; cf. LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, p. 47, Fig. 5a-c, tipo BD. 51410, with parallels from Ayn Asil and Dahshur.

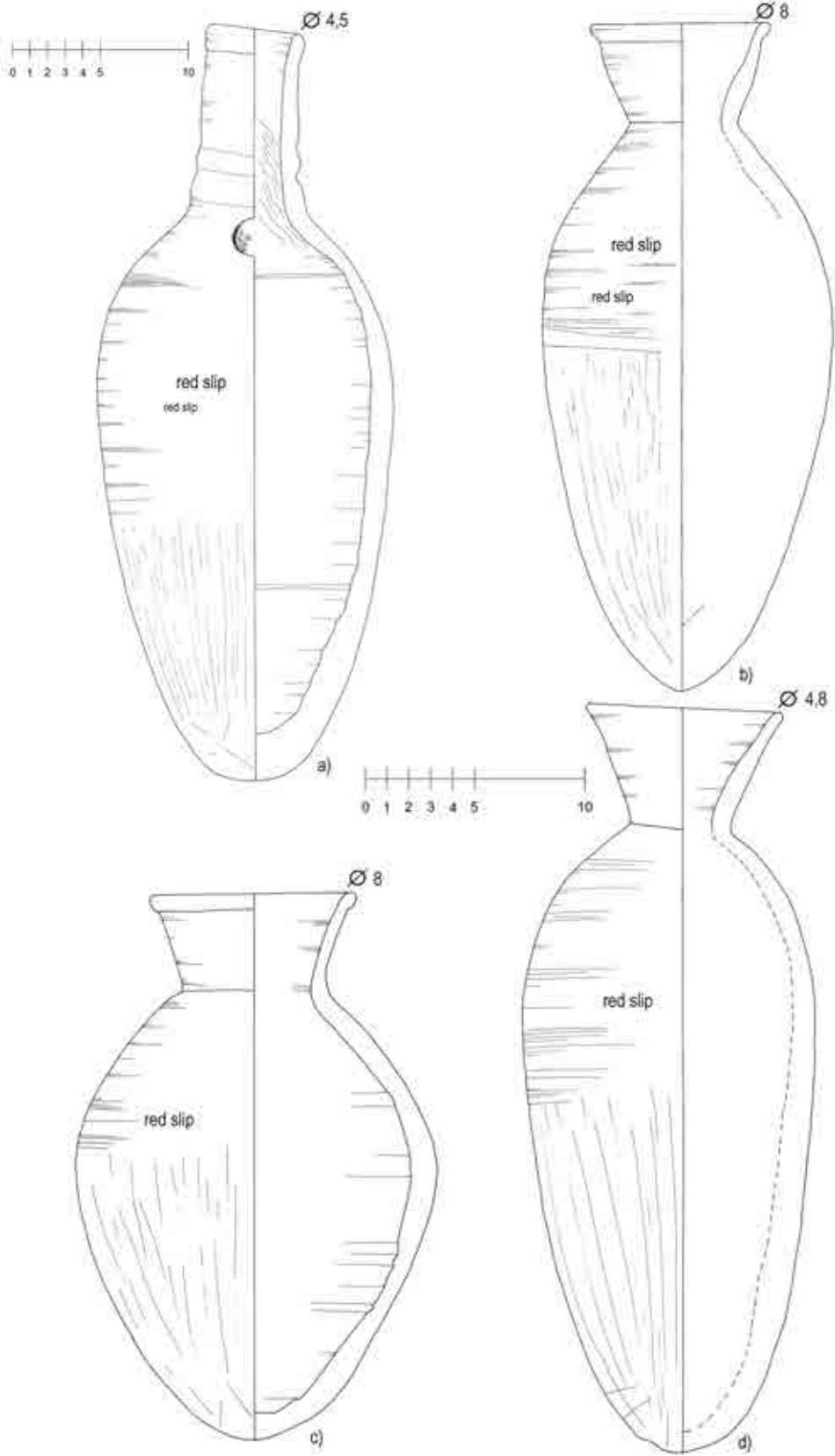


Fig. 6. Closed forms from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

sites⁶⁹ as well as from early Middle Kingdom sites.⁷⁰ This type was predominantly found in one part of the site, in area 15/16, to the East of the trench, where a large amount of Marl clay sherds of relatively large vessels, probably for storage, came to light. These levels also date to the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom.

D. FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD/EARLY MIDDLE KINGDOM – BREAD MOULDS AND BREAD PLATES

Tubular bread moulds of Nile C2 fabric were found at the site, but whilst the “normal Middle Kingdom type” with an average base diameter of 3.5 to 4.0cms was recorded (Fig. 8.a)⁷¹ (e.g. in Sector 20 and in 15⁷²), an additional probably tubular type with an average base diameter of 6.0-8.0cms of a much more massive appearance could be identified (Fig. 8.b-c).⁷³ Parallels to the thin tubular bread mould are ubiquitous all over Egypt and are known from Sedment (type 34) as well as Tell el-Dab^a⁷⁴ and other sites. Parallels to the broader kind of tubular bread mould, which may mark an intermediate form between the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom proper, are not readily available. Possibly types 33e, f or p from Sedment can be identified as of similar shape, especially as one example of type 33f in the Petrie Museum (U.C. 17987) could be re-analysed and it was found to consist of the typical sandy Nile C “bread mould-fabric”⁷⁵ with whitish outer surface. More such bread moulds were found at Abu Ghalib,⁷⁶ and Denderah.⁷⁷ It is noteworthy that the examples from Denderah are also lower than the average Middle Kingdom bread mould.⁷⁸ More examples are known from earlier excavations at Denderah.⁷⁹ At the same time it may be possible that the Herakleopolis examples belong to a larger type of bread mould altogether, since one example is known from the 12th Dynasty.⁸⁰

Some bread trays made of a Nile C2 fabric with ample quartz grains present were also discovered (Fig. 8.d). The bases were roughly made on the ground and the side walls well smoothed. This basic type seems to exist from the Old Kingdom⁸¹ on into the Third

⁶⁹ Similar findings also in Dahshur, but made of Marl A3 *cf.* ALEXANIAN 1999, Fig. 57, M70, M90. The examples at Ehnasya did not include Marl A3. Similar also in Giza *cf.* WODZIŃSKA 2003, Pl. 40, Fig. 45.

⁷⁰ BAGH 2002, Fig. 9.a, Marl A3; CZERNY 1999, pp. 98, 195, Mc 138-139.

⁷¹ JACQUET-GORDON 1981, pp. 16-19, Type C, Fig. 4.3-14.

⁷² In Sector 15 the base of a thin tubular bread mould was used for a burial, where it was found in the pubic region of the skeleton. C. Pérez-Die, personal communication.

⁷³ LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, Pl. X.c-e.

⁷⁴ CZERNY 1999, p. 198, F 14-28, no tubular examples with wider bases are found there.

⁷⁵ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 30. I would like to thank Steven Quirke and all the Museum staff from Petrie Museum for their help and forthcoming reception in studying the Sedment material.

⁷⁶ LARSEN 1936, Abb. (number to fill) 1933:498, is more everted and wider at the bottom, than known MK bread moulds.

⁷⁷ MARCHAND 2004, Figs. 74, 76-79. These pieces belong to phases 2 to 3, which are dated from the First Intermediate Period to the 11th Dynasty.

⁷⁸ JACQUET-GORDON 1981, pp. 11-24.

⁷⁹ SLATER 1974, p. 489, E1b middle, brown ware, phases AB-M.

⁸⁰ A very large example was found in a foundation deposit of Senwosret II. at Illahun that is now in Manchester, MM 296, *cf.* PETRIE 1890, Pl. XIII.14.

⁸¹ RZEUSKA 2006, Pls. 60-62.

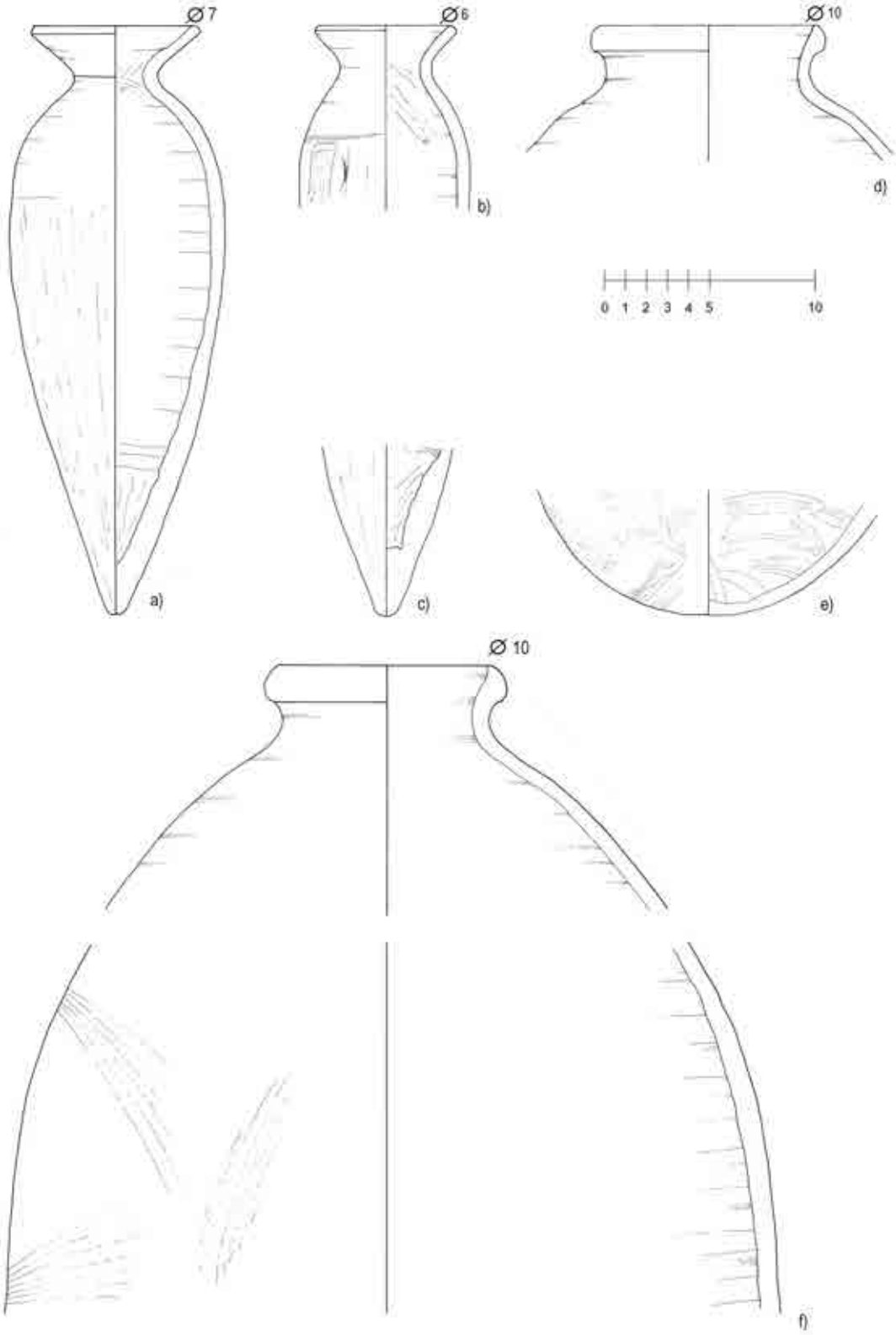


Fig. 7. Marl Clay vessel shapes from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

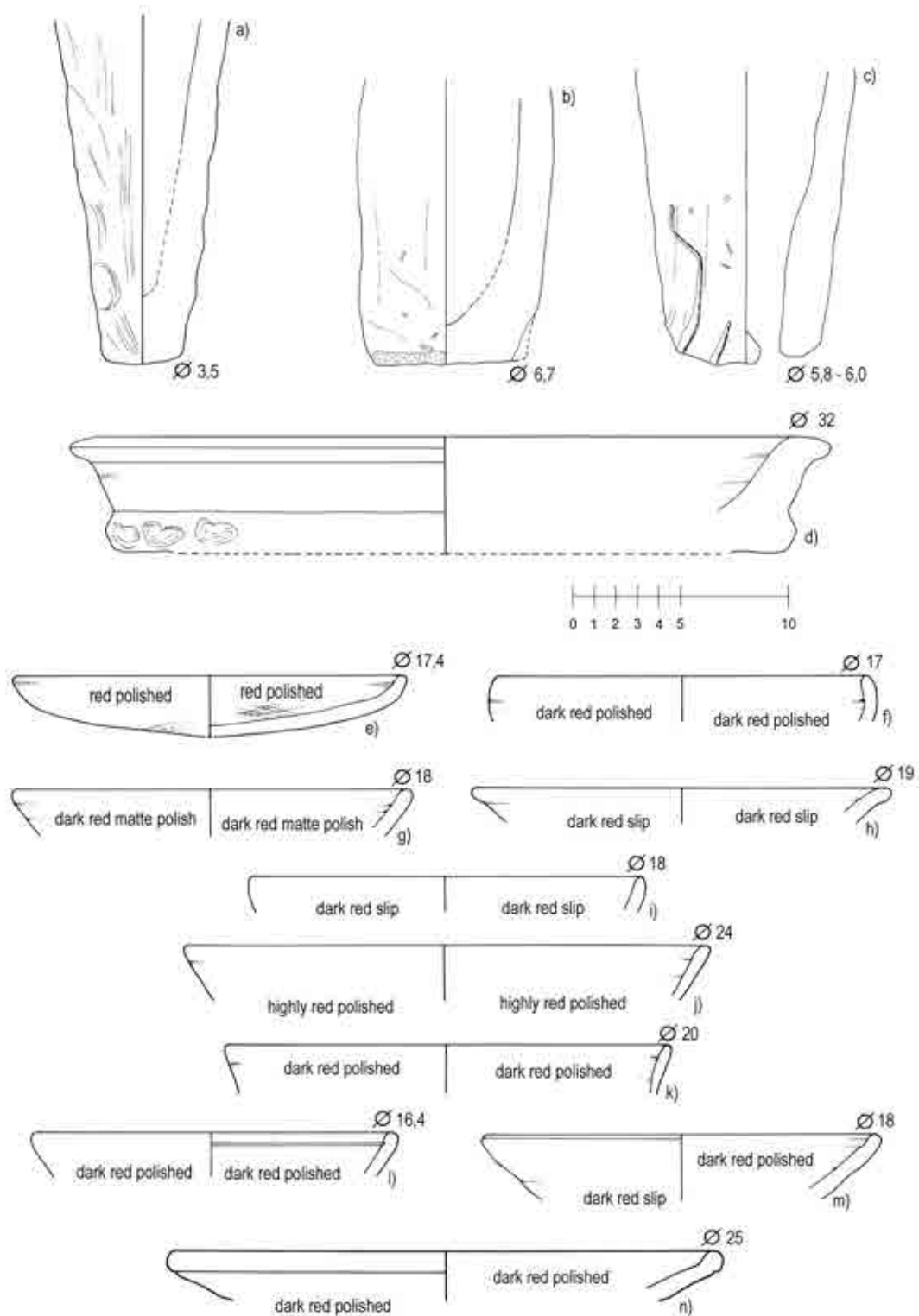


Fig. 8.a-d. Bread moulds and bread trays from First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels at Herakleopolis Magna; **e-n.** Open shapes from “Late Old Kingdom/early First Intermediate Period” levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

Intermediate/Late Period,⁸² and it seems to be quite difficult to pinpoint any dating criteria for them at present. More work on the ceramic assemblage from Herakleopolis Magna is necessary to find out if such criteria can be refined for the site.

III. POTTERY OF AN EARLIER PHASE AT HERAKLEOPOLIS MAGNA (LATE OLD KINGDOM/EARLY FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD?)

Whilst excavating the level underneath the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom tombs, a noticeable difference in the pottery recovered became more and more obvious as the quality changed. The most striking difference was exemplified by the increasing presence of more fine, hard fired, well made, orange/red coloured and highly polished carinated bowls, that strikingly resemble the well known Old Kingdom type fossil “Meidum bowls” as exhibited in the Museums of the world in their Old Kingdom Sections.

Previously the odd sherd of such ware was found within the contexts of the known repertoire of Herakleopolis Magna, but from this point onwards it became a more frequent part of the assemblage. Much of the other material recovered related to the known corpus of the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom as still many of the ubiquitous handmade more or less pointed bases appeared, that are by now so well known and recorded. They consisted of the same fabrics Nile B2, C1 and C2 for larger jars. Another factor worth noting is that increasingly very rough Nile C2 pottery of hitherto unfamiliar shape came to light (see below, Fig. 11).

Also associated with this kind of material were fragments of plates, dishes and bowls – open as well as restricted - with a very thick and often dark red slip, sometimes with matte or very badly executed polishing, mostly manufactured from Nile B2 with rarer occurrences of Nile B1. Their shape shows various carinations and sometimes grooves around the rims similar to material unearthed in the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom levels (*cf.* Figs. 2.g-j; 3.a-e). Many of these shapes lack exact parallels, while comparable material was found at other sites (see discussion above).

Thus, the question has to be asked, if this pottery is derived from Old Kingdom shapes and developed into the First Intermediate Period and the early Middle Kingdom, or if these ceramic fragments do indeed derive from Old Kingdom structures, having been transported upwards by secondary activity at some point and deposited in the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom Level?

A. LATE OLD KINGDOM(?)/EARLY FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD – OPEN SHAPES

A great variety of different shapes of dishes and bowls with direct rims, carinations, grooves and partly turned over lips will be shown here (Fig. 8.e-10.d) in order to illustrate the kind of material being currently uncovered in this earlier level. Whilst it is, as yet, not possible to produce a straightforward typology of those open shapes, it was decided to concentrate on ceramic material from three contexts which can be considered representa-

⁸² ASTON 1996, Figs. 6, Ks. 35-38; 28.5; 40.3; 121.SP1.1.1(A); 127.1d, 1h; 152.391; 176.56, 65; 179.18858e:24; 181.19805a:4; 187a, b; 206.a; 216.a-b.

tive (Sector 8, Compartment 4, Level II; Sector 8, Compartment 5, Level III; Sector 8, Compartment 5, Level V),⁸³ with some additional fragments that were picked out for their distinctiveness and diagnostic potential.

Dishes and bowls made from Nile B1 and B2 are treated together here, putting the focus on shape rather than on fabric. The colouring of the red slip now often has an orange tinge. Whilst not all of the fragments shown here were highly polished, a matte kind of polishing, perhaps achieved by a cloth or leather, was also recorded.

Noteworthy is a very flat dish with incurved direct rim with a red slip that appears very orange, and was polished (Fig. 8.e). A variety of other plate/dish shapes with direct rims occurs as well, to which mostly a dark red slip was applied and subsequently polished (Fig. 8.f-i). A few examples show high quality polishing, thus, the sherds appeared almost 'metallic' (Fig. 8.j; and a similar surface treatment was also used for the carinated bowls Fig. 9.i-j).

Other plates/dishes with thicker walls exhibit horizontal grooves of varying depth and width close to the rim, mostly on the inside of the vessels (Fig. 8.l-m).

A very distinctive rim shape is shown by Fig. 8.n, which is thickened with a horizontal groove on the outside (Fig. 8.n), but this feature appears in some variation. Parallels are found at Saqqara⁸⁴ and Elephantine⁸⁵ dating to the Late Old Kingdom.

A very large group is represented by carinated bowls with a carination that sits very high almost directly under the rim (Fig. 9.a-g). The surface treatment of this group is analogous to the plates/dishes with direct rims: most of them are dark red slipped with subsequent polishing of varying quality. The variation of the profiles seems ceaseless and parallels can be cited from several Old Kingdom sites (*cf.* above).⁸⁶ The examples shown belong to L. Op de Beeck's type B2b, that occurs in the 6th Dynasty.⁸⁷ The same holds true for parallels from West Saqqara, where the shapes are generally similar, but the ware used is finer (Nile A and B1) than the examples from Herakleopolis Magna. It is left to speculation at the moment if this signifies a difference in chronology.

A ceramic type, occurring in sizeable quantities, is the "Meidum bowl" proper⁸⁸ with an out-turned rim and a sharp carination that is situated approximately one third of the height down from the rim (Fig. 9.h-j). Unfortunately complete profiles have not yet been found. Variations show a smooth carination and different surface treatments (Fig. 9.k).⁸⁹ Whilst a very highly polished surface treatment was observed, matte polishing was also encountered.⁹⁰ These examples belong to L. Op de Beeck's type A2a, which occur in the

⁸³ Currently more ceramic material with a sound stratigraphy is in the course of being excavated in Sector 15, and it is hoped to concentrate on this pottery next season.

⁸⁴ RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 94.457; but deeper; dated to phase IV: the late reign of Pepj II to the terminal Old Kingdom, equivalent to "7th and 8th Dynasty"; FALTINGS 1998, pp. 83-88.

⁸⁵ SEIDLMEYER 2005, Fig. 1.EF61BD/2.

⁸⁶ The present example (Fig. 9.a) is very similar to RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 95.460, dating to phases III-IV, reign of Pepj II to terminal Old Kingdom. Fig. 9.g has a close parallel in pl. 131.663 of the same dating made from Nile B1, *cf.* OP DE BEECK 2000, Fig. 1, El Kab, 6th Dynasty; SEIDLMEYER 2005, Fig. 1.

⁸⁷ OP DE BEECK 2004, Fig. 10.

⁸⁸ OP DE BEECK 2000, 2004, *passim*.

⁸⁹ This example belongs to L. Op de Beeck's type B3a1 or 2 which occurs to the 6th Dynasty, *cf.* OP DE BEECK 2004, Fig. 10.

⁹⁰ In West Saqqara red slipped or red-slipped and polished, no exact parallels to the shape, *cf.* RZEUSKA 2006, *passim*.

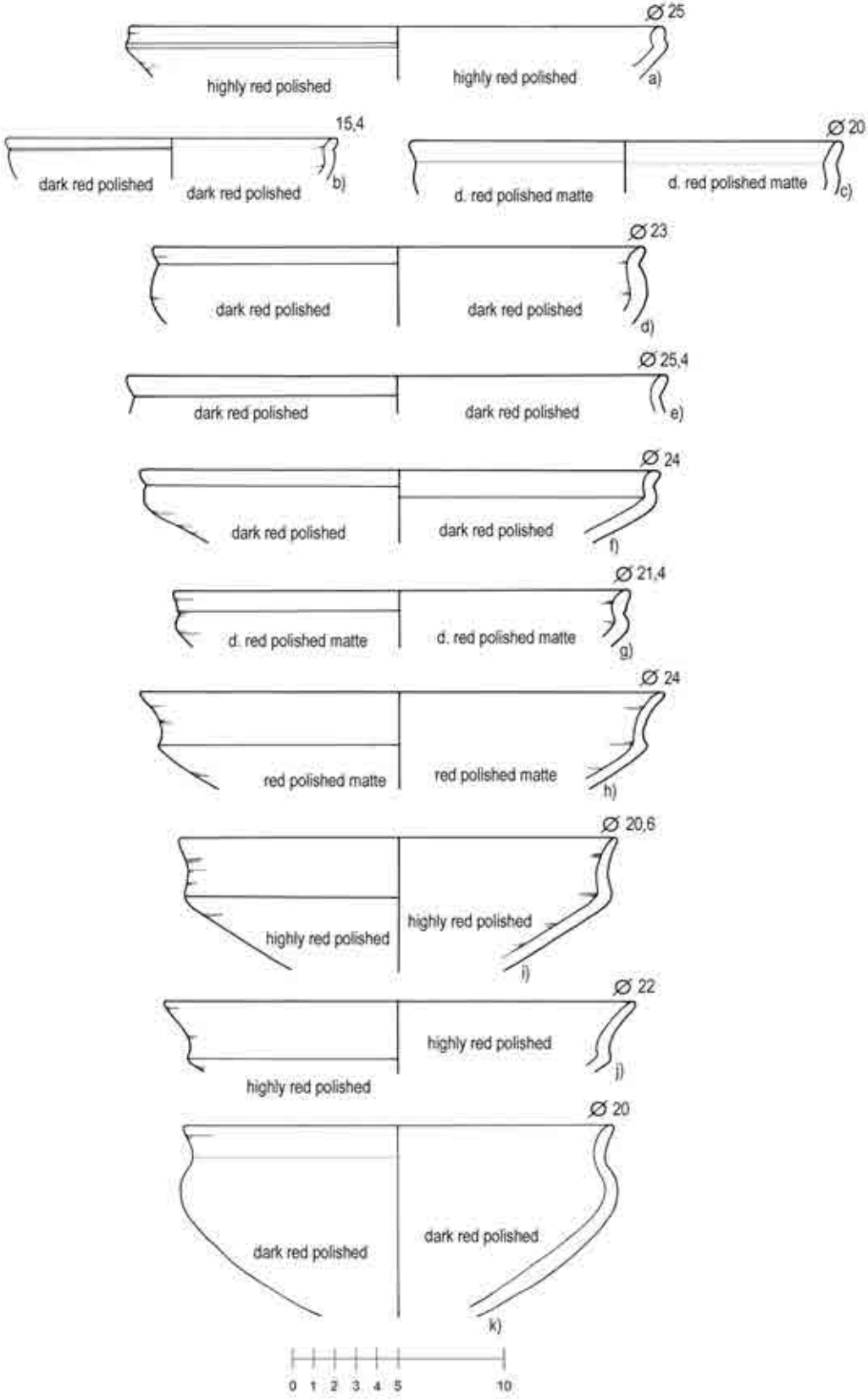


Fig. 9. Open shapes from “Late Old Kingdom/early First Intermediate Period” levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

4th to 6th Dynasties.⁹¹ Interestingly such shapes were also found in the settlement of the early Middle Kingdom in Tell el-Dab^a, but the quality of the polishing is not described in greater detail.⁹²

A thick-walled carinated bowl resembling later fragments (*cf.* Fig. 3.f-g) made from a fine variant of Nile B2 was also recovered in one of the earlier contexts (Fig. 10.a).

Bowls with a restricted tendency showed either direct rims (Fig. 10.b) or direct rims with incised horizontal grooves (Fig. 10.c)⁹³ or raised ribs (Fig. 10.d). Parallels made from finer fabrics (Nile A) are known from West Saqqara.⁹⁴ Parts of spouted bowls, reminiscent of libation sets, known to have occurred in the Old Kingdom were part of the assemblage (Fig. 10.e).⁹⁵

Larger plates, dishes and bowls were made from slightly rougher materials, namely Nile B2 and C1 and to a lesser extent Nile C2. The variation in the details for these shapes is less extensive. Mostly a thickened rim is present (Fig. 10.f-g, j),⁹⁶ more rarely a small outer lip (Fig. 10.h). Large plates/bowls with several rows of string impressions were also found (Fig. 10. k-l). Most probably a flat base like Fig. 10.m belonged to those, so that they might be comparable to later types (*cf.* Fig. 2e). The surface treatment applied usually consisted of a red slip, often of a relatively dark tinge (Munsell colour ca. 10 R 4/6-8). Only few of the large dishes were polished.

One rather rare example of these rougher dishes exhibited a carination with a ridge on the inside (Fig. 10.i).

It seems noteworthy, though, that none of the bowls with inner ledges have yet appeared amongst this oldest material so far recovered from the site. This is an obvious hint that the material from Herakleopolis Magna should not be dated as early as the 4th Dynasty.⁹⁷

B. LATE OLD KINGDOM(?)/EARLY FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD – CLOSED SHAPES

Closed vessels, with close correlation to the Old Kingdom repertoire (*'beer bottles'*),⁹⁸ are represented by handmade vessels without exception consisting of Nile C2, sometimes in very rough variants. At the moment it is not quite clear if the top part was turned on a turning device or just smoothed with the fingers by the potter, although it seems more likely that they were entirely handmade, because of the uneven lines near the rim of the vessels. The top part is slightly turned inwards, with several variations of the rim shapes. Some show a tapering direct rim (Fig. 11.c), while others are just direct (fig. 11.d-e), or show a slightly folded lip (Fig. 10.f-g). The bases are very roughly handmade with plenty of finger impressions and scraping marks, that were not removed at the end of the manu-

⁹¹ OP DE BEECK 2004, Fig. 10.

⁹² CZERNY 1999, pp. 68-69, 143, Nf 104-106.

⁹³ Comparanda for the shape are also known from Tell el-Dab^a, *cf.* CZERNY 1999, pp. 73, 151, Nf 203-206, dark red polished. See also LÓPEZ GRANDE, QUESADA SANZ, and MOLINERO POLO 1995, Pl. XIV.i-j.

⁹⁴ RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 103.518, phases III-IV.

⁹⁵ See FALTINGS 1998, pp. 280-283, Figs. 26-27, for the development and parallels of that type.

⁹⁶ Parallels at West Saqqara, RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 89.418, Nile B1. Perhaps rims like in Fig. 10.g and h belong to carinated bowls, *cf.* RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 111.569-570. They are also consisting of Nile B1.

⁹⁷ ALEXANIAN 1999, pp. 144-147, Fig. 59.

⁹⁸ FALTINGS 1998, pp. 209-225, Fig. 16.a-1, for a convenient overview.

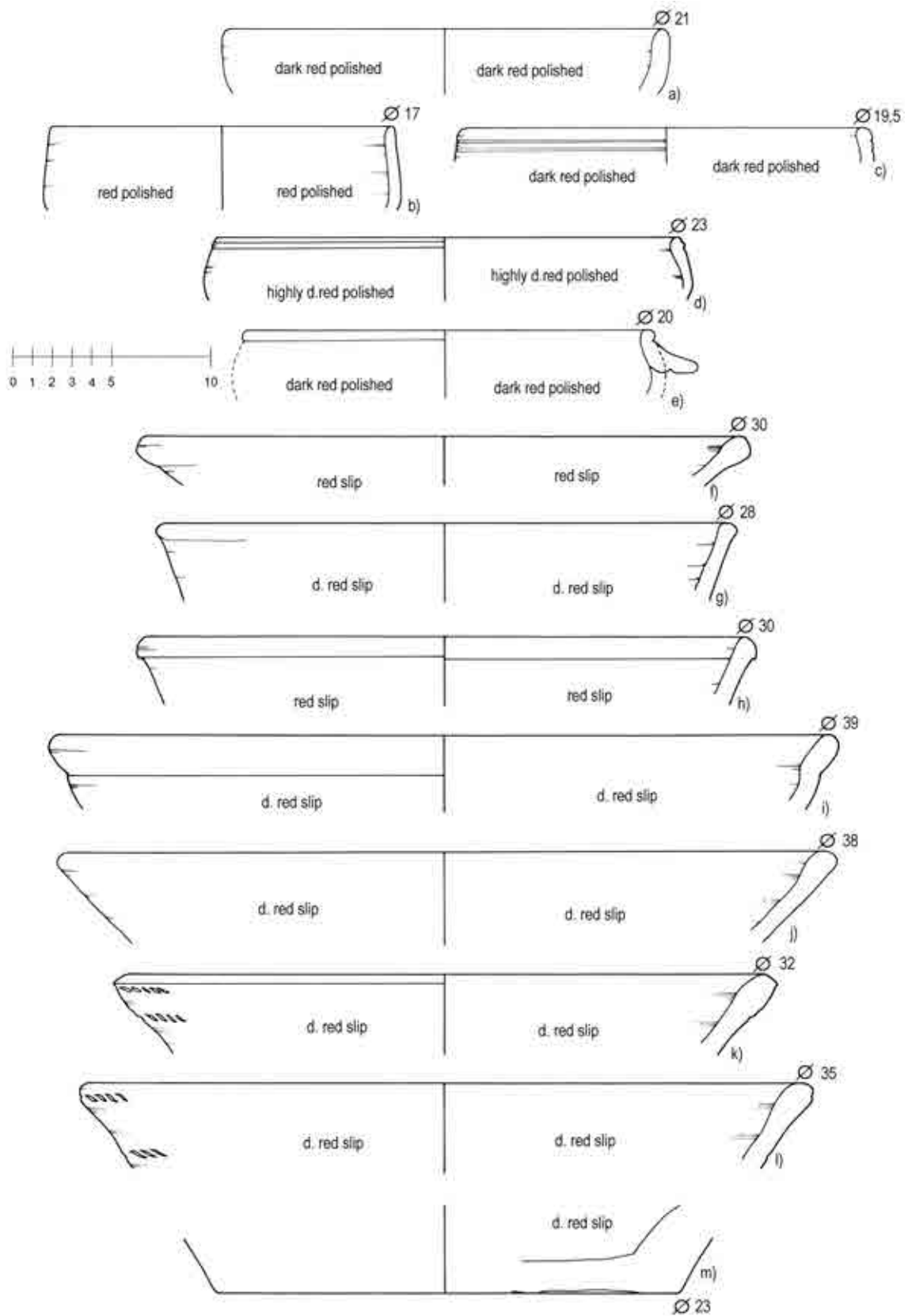


Fig. 10. Open shapes from “Late Old Kingdom/early First Intermediate Period” levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

facturing process. The fabric of those vessels used is a rough Nile C2 and seems to be equivalent to the fabric of the Middle Kingdom beer bottles, while the general shape seems similar to Do. Arnold's meat containers in the later Middle Kingdom,⁹⁹ although this might be coincidence.

Pottery known as 'Old Kingdom beer bottles' from a wide variety of sites, shown at the Warsaw Pottery Workshop shows striking resemblance to the findings from Herakleopolis Magna.¹⁰⁰ Unfortunately none of the vessels discovered at Herakleopolis Magna is well enough preserved to be sure which of T. Rzeuska's types are present at the site. It would seem that types 4, 8, 9, 10 and 12 are possible candidates for parallels for the fragments shown in Fig. 11. However, for the vessel shown in Fig. 11.c no exact parallel is recognisable amongst all of those examples from West Saqqara. The dating of these types falls into T. Rzeuska's phases III and IV, which are equivalent to the reign of Pepi II to the terminal Old Kingdom equated with the 7th and 8th Dynasties.¹⁰¹

Finally, two fragments made from marl clay fabrics associated with the older material discussed above should be mentioned. A very long jar neck in the shape of a funnel made of Marl C1 with outer lip (Fig. 12.a) can be connected to a vessel type that occurred amongst other sites also at Sedment, although no complete example is yet known from Herakleopolis. Type 90d,¹⁰² which is currently dated to the late 6th Dynasty by Seidlmayer¹⁰³ and known from several other sites in various regions of Egypt, such as Harageh,¹⁰⁴ Deshashah¹⁰⁵ and Qau.¹⁰⁶ The neck shape is rather to be compared to 90d than any others of the available sub types of type family 90.¹⁰⁷ Similar shapes have been recovered from West Saqqara.¹⁰⁸

The mould made base of a large jar (Fig. 12.b), probably for storage, judging from its size, belongs to a marl fabric that contains many quartz and other grain size granules, which looks similar to Marl C2, but is denser. A more exact identification of this kind of marl clay must also await more work to be done in the future. Such a base could have belonged to a great variety of large vessels, but it is filling in the sketchy picture of vessels used in this earlier period. It also indicates that beside the large number of vessels of Nile clay fabrics some made from marl clay fabrics also existed.

C. LATE OLD KINGDOM(?)/EARLY FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD – BREAD MOULDS

The bread moulds that belong to the oldest levels from the necropolis show different features when compared to the ones of the later level (*cf.* Fig. 8.a-c). One variety of bread moulds is very thick walled and either vertically orientated (Fig. 12.c) or wide open (Fig. 12.d). The rims were probably trimmed with a tool, the base was certainly finished

⁹⁹ ARNOLD 1982, Fig. 7.14-15, 10.13.

¹⁰⁰ See the other contributions in this volume.

¹⁰¹ RZEUSKA 2006, pp. 382-383, Table 1.

¹⁰² PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 35, U.C. 17996, on Petrie Museum web site.

¹⁰³ SEIDLMEYER 1990, pp. 285, 298-299.

¹⁰⁴ ENGELBACH and GUNN 1923, Pl. 33.116, but coarse red, red slip.

¹⁰⁵ PETRIE 1898, Pl. 33.15. Marl clay, Vth Dynasty.

¹⁰⁶ BRUNTON 1928, Pl. 87.66b.

¹⁰⁷ PETRIE and BRUNTON 1924, Pl. 35.

¹⁰⁸ RZEUSKA 2006, Pl. 35.111, 389, phases III-IV, see there for more parallels.

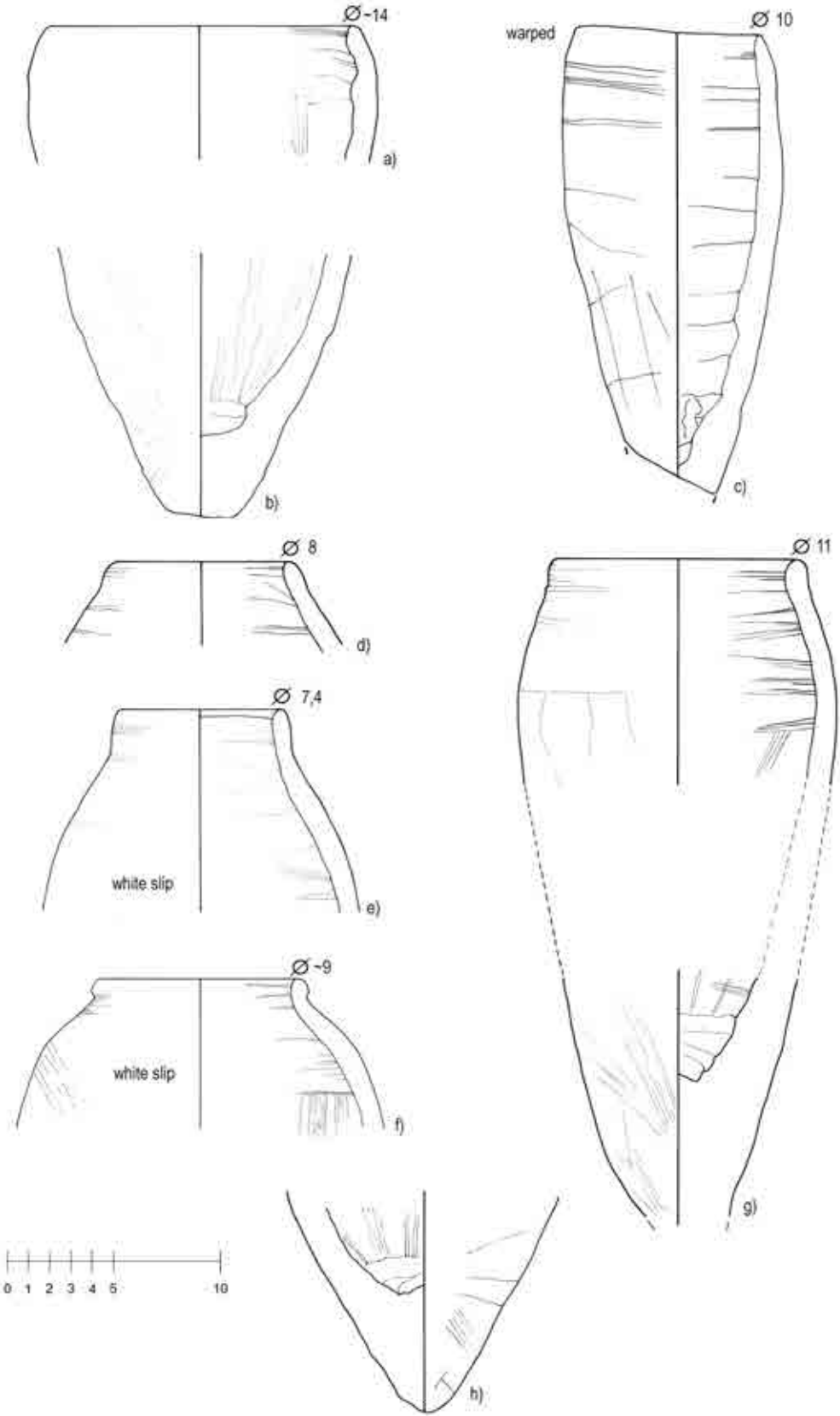


Fig. 11. Closed shapes from “Late Old Kingdom/early First Intermediate Period” levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

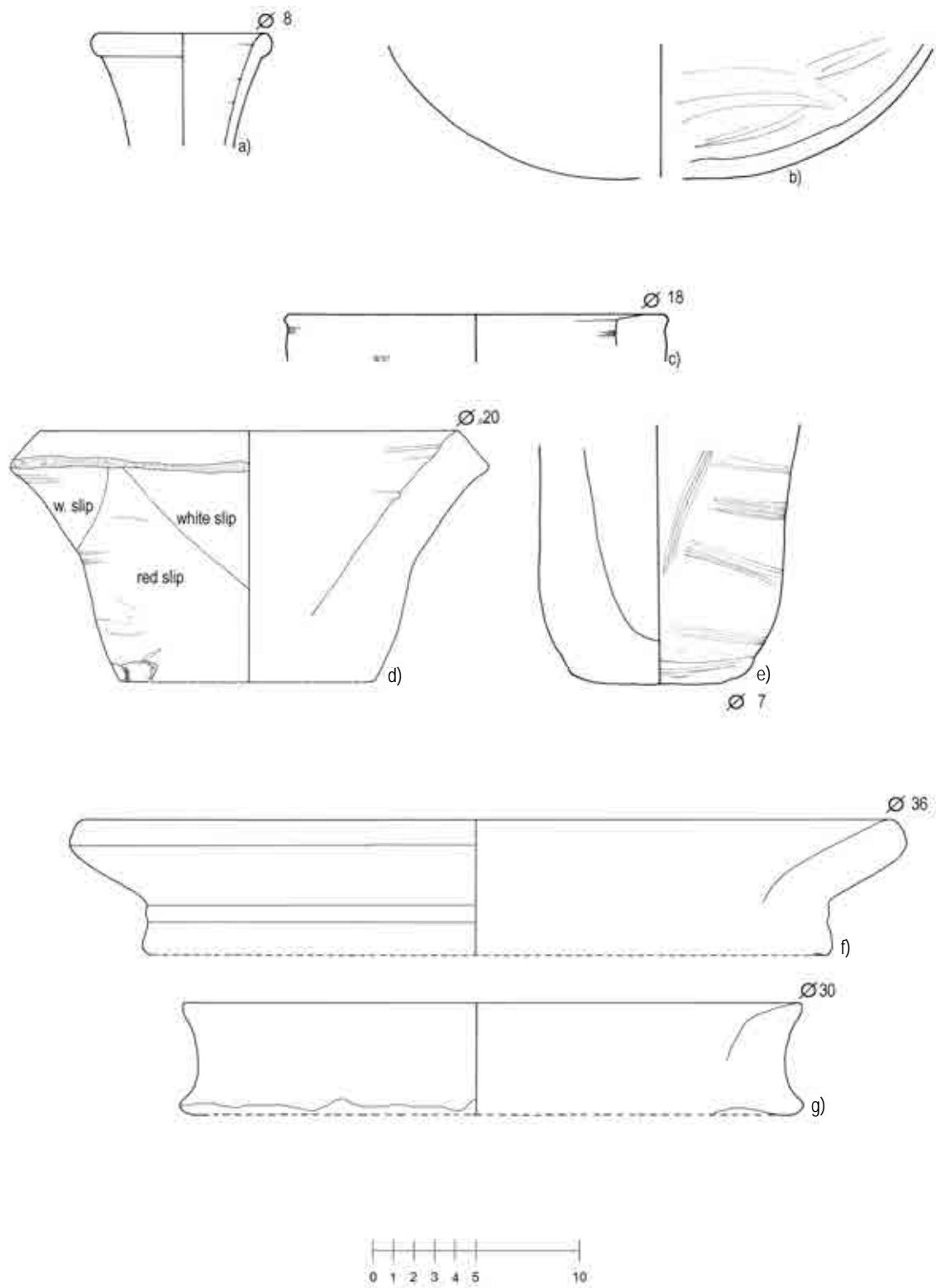


Fig. 12. Marl clay vessels, bread moulds and bread trays from “Late Old Kingdom/early First Intermediate Period” levels at Herakleopolis Magna.

with the fingers of the potter as shown by the imprints on the base. This relatively low and massive variant is commonly dated to the Old Kingdom.¹⁰⁹ The fabric can be classified as Nile C2, the vessel shows a white slip on the outside and what seems to be a red slipped triangle (Fig. 12.d) as well. Parallels for these types, but not the surface treatment, can be found at West Saqqara.¹¹⁰

The other type of bread mould is rather tubular, perhaps becoming wider towards the rim, but shows a base diameter of about 7.0cms (Fig. 12.e). This base might be a link in the development from wide bread moulds to the later tubular shape, with the base diameter getting smaller in the course of time.¹¹¹

Bread trays (Fig. 12.f-g) that don't show a great degree of difference to the later examples (cf. Fig. 8.d) made from Nile C2 fabric were also found amongst the earliest material of the site. This universal form escapes as yet detection of any minute chronological changes and has a range of parallels at West Saqqara, which show a similar lay-out but are not exactly the same.¹¹²

At last, the observation of tightly combed fragments consisting of a Nile C fabric should be noted, although as yet, there was no chance to record any such ceramic material. The fragments have a general similarity to vessels from West Saqqara indicating that this is a ceramic type with a predominance in the Old Kingdom,¹¹³ particularly as it did not occur in the later levels. Further conclusions can only be made after more detailed recording was conducted.

IV. CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

It is too early to say anything definite about the dating of the two earlier levels to be distinguished at the necropolis at Herakleopolis Magna, but it seems certain that, at present, at least three phases can now be distinguished. Whilst the latest phase dates to the Late Period/Ptolemaic Period,¹¹⁴ the next oldest phase is the main occupation of the currently excavated necropolis, namely the First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom.¹¹⁵ The oldest phase could be provisionally termed 'late Old Kingdom/early First Intermediate Period' as was done in this first presentation of the new material above.

The final answer to the question of whether the material of the oldest phase genuinely dates to the Old Kingdom or if it represents a continuation of Old Kingdom style pottery, that could well have lasted into the First Intermediate Period, has to await further analytical work. At the moment that possibility cannot be excluded, particularly as much of the comparanda of the closest Old Kingdom site at West Saqqara dates to the later phases

¹⁰⁹ FALTINGS 1998, Figs. 9a-10a; JACQUET-GORDON 1981, Figs. 3.2-3.7

¹¹⁰ RZEUSKA 2006, Pls. 143-145, esp. 145.734-735, phase III (late reign of Pepj II).

¹¹¹ FALTINGS 1998, pp. 125-137, indicating the existence of such forms, Figs. 10a.30, 10b.42, 10b.46.

¹¹² FALTINGS 1998, 83-88; RZEUSKA 2006, Pls. 60-63, 66-70. The closest parallels for Fig. 12.f being Pl. 60.244 and for Fig. 12.g Pl. 69.295.

¹¹³ RZEUSKA 2006, Pls. 71-76, mostly dating to phases III-IV, reign of Pepj II to terminal Old Kingdom.

¹¹⁴ Dating by courtesy of D.A. Aston, cf. BADER forthcoming-a, note 2.

¹¹⁵ BADER forthcoming-b.

of occupation there, which are currently thought to last to the ‘terminal Old Kingdom’ equated with the 7th and 8th Dynasties, the early First Intermediate Period.¹¹⁶

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank C. Pérez-Die for the invitation to take part in the mission and study the ceramic material and to her and her team for making these visits so delightful.

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