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The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

**“Fayyumi” Ware: Variations, Imitations, and Importations of an Early Islamic Glazed
Ceramic Type**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Arab and Islamic Civilizations
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

by

Gregory Williams

(under the supervision of Dr. Bernard O’Kane)

February 2013

Dedication

To my parents,

Who took me around the world, and always gave me books.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first the Department of Arab and Islamic Civilizations of the American University in Cairo, particularly my advisor Dr. Bernard O’Kane. I learned from him not only a great deal about the art and architecture of the Islamic world, but his scholarship and method will be always a guide in my future studies. I thank my readers, Dr. Jere Bacharach and Dr. Ellen Kenney, for their valuable comments and corrections. Dr. Kenney always provided much appreciated advice and encouragement throughout this entire process. I would also like to thank Dr. George Scanlon, for whom I literally crossed the Sahara desert to meet in the fall of 2010. I feel honored to have had the chance to study with him in his final semester of teaching. Meetings with him this past semester were always helpful and never without a good laugh. Those early weekend morning visits to monuments with Dr. Scanlon, Dr. O’Kane, or Dr. Kenney are what I will miss most, and I thank them for showing me the magnificence of Cairo.

I could not have completed this project without the help of the AUC Library staff. The librarians in Rare Books and Special Collections, members of the Reprographics Center and everyone in the Document Delivery office made this work possible, and to them I am grateful.

For my ending up in Cairo in the first place I must thank Dr. Karen Pinto, my undergraduate advisor. She introduced me to, and persistently kept me in, the medieval Islamic world, and for that I am sincerely grateful. I also want to thank several scholars who provided me with valuable information and assistance in this project: Matthew J. Adams, Katherine Strange Burke, Katia Cytryn-Silverman, Anna de Vincenz, Tracy Hoffman, Shulamit Miller, and Donald Whitcomb.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1: The “Fayyumi” Problem	1
Introduction	1
Literature Review	4
Islamic Ceramic Arts and their Antecedents	9
Chapter 2: Egypt	15
The History of Fustat and its Ceramic Industry	16
Fustat	20
Alexandria and the Nile Delta	31
The Fayyum	36
Upper Egypt	42
Nubia	48
Discussion	51
Chapter 3: The Sinai, Red Sea and Across the Mediterranean	55
Introduction	55
The Sinai and Red Sea	56
North Italy	66
Discussion	73

Chapter 4: Palestine and Syria	76
Introduction	76
Jund al-Filastin	77
Jund al-Urdun	90
Syria	98
Discussion	100
Chapter 5: Collections and Scientific Analysis	104
Introduction	104
Ceramics in Museum Collections or Islamic Ceramics Catalogues	104
Technological Analysis	123
Discussion	128
Chapter 6: Conclusion	129
Specific Types	130
Color in the Medieval World	136
Bibliography	140
Figures	152

List of Figures

1. Map of Sites in Egypt and Sudan
2. Sherds of “faïence a émail stannifère décorées sur cru” from Fustat
3. Underglaze painted dish from Fustat
4. Glass vessel from Fustat
5. Illustration of “slip painted early lead-glazed ware” from Fustat
6. “Slip painted early lead-glazed ware” sherd from Fustat
7. “Early ‘Fayumi’ ware” from pits at Fustat
8. “Early ‘Fayumi’ ware” from pits at Fustat
9. “Early ‘Fayumi’ ware” from pits at Fustat
10. “Early ‘Fayumi’ ware” from pits at Fustat
11. Jug with “siliceous” glaze from Fustat
12. Fustat sherd with radial bands of glaze decoration
13. Glazed white slipped bowl from Fustat
14. Glazed white slipped bowl from Fustat
15. Illustration of Jar from Fustat
16. “Fayyumi” sherd from Fustat
17. T’ang splash ware sherd from Fustat
18. “Fayyumi-I” sherds from Fustat
19. “Fayyumi-II” sherds from Fustat
20. “Fatimid Fayyumi-I” sherds from Fustat
21. “Fatimid Fayyumi-I” sherd from Fustat

22. "Fatimid Fayyumi-I" sherd from Fustat
23. Red ware sherd of "Fayyumi-I" from Fustat
24. "Fayyumi" sherd from Fustat
25. Splash ware with sgraffito decoration from Fustat
26. "Fatimid Splash Ware" from Fustat
27. Lead glaze bowl from Fustat
28. "Classic" Fayyumi bowl in Berlin
29. Bowl with epigraphy from Fustat
30. Daubed splashed bowl from Fustat
31. Bowl with central triangle motif from Fustat
32. Sherd from Kom el Dikka
33. Sherd from Kom el Dikka
34. Forms of "céramique du Fayoum" from Kom el Dikka
35. Group one of "Céramique du Fayoum" sherds from Kom el Dikka
36. Group two of "Céramique du Fayoum" sherds from Kom el Dikka
37. Group three of "Céramique du Fayoum" sherds from Kom el Dikka
38. "Fayyumi" forms from Abu Mina
39. Sherds from Tebtynis in the Fayyum
40. Complete vessels from Tebtynis in the Fayyum
41. New Kingdom two handled faience jar in the Freer Gallery of Art
42. Partial vessel from Tebtynis in the Fayyum
43. Partial vessel from Tebtynis in the Fayyum
44. Partial vessel from Tebtynis in the Fayyum

45. Sherds from Tebtynis in the Fayyum
46. Late Roman pottery forms from Naqlun in the Fayyum
47. Coptic pottery forms from Naqlun in the Fayyum
48. Polychrome glazed sherd from Hawara in the Fayyum
49. Sherds from Bahnasa
50. Sherds from Bahnasa
51. so-called "Fayyumi" waster from Bahnasa
52. so called "Fayyumi" sherd from Bahnasa
53. "North African polychrome glazed ware" from Bahnasa
54. White slip-painted sherd from Bahnasa
55. "So-called Fayyumi" ware from Bahnasa
56. "So-called Fayyumi" ware from Bahnasa
57. Forms of "Fayyumi" wares from Ashmunein
58. Partial vessel from Ashmunein
59. Sherds from Ashmunein
60. "Fayyumi" wares from Apa Shenute
61. Polychrome glazed wares from Tod, group one
62. Polychrome glazed wares from Tod, group two
63. "Fayyum" sherds from Qasr Ibrim
64. "Five color 'Fayyumi' style" sherds from Meinarti
65. Gloss glazed sherds from Meinarti
66. "So called Fayoum ware" from Raya
67. "So called Fayoum ware" from Raya

68. "So called Fayoum ware" from Raya
69. "So called Fayoum ware" from Raya
70. "So called Fayoum ware" from Raya
71. "Early Abbasid wares" from Raya
72. "Early Abbasid wares" from Raya
73. Sherds from Raya/al-Tur
74. Sherds from Raya/al-Tur
75. Glass bands from Raya/al-Tur
76. Marvered glass from Raya/al-Tur
77. "White glazed ware" forms from northern Sinai sites
78. "Fayyumi ware" forms from northern Sinai sites
79. "Fayyumi" color plate from northern Sinai sites
80. "Fayyumi ware" jars from northern Sinai sites
81. "Fayyumi ware" jar lid from northern Sinai sites
82. "Fayyumi" ware forms from Aqaba
83. "Fayyumi" ware forms from Aqaba
84. Glazed vessel from Aqaba
85. Glazed vessel from Aqaba
86. Glazed vessel from Aqaba
87. Glazed vessel from Aqaba
88. Map of sites with *bacini* in Northern Italy
89. *Bacini* from the Pomposa Campanile
90. *Bacini* from the Pomposa Campanile

91. *Bacini* from the Pomposa Campanile
92. *Bacini* from the Pomposa Campanile
93. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
94. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
95. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
96. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
97. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
98. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
99. *Bacini* from the Torre Civica
100. *Bacini* sherds from the Torre Civica
101. *Bacini* sherds from the Torre Civica
102. *Bacini* from Pisa
103. Map of sites in Palestine
104. Imitations T'ang splash wares from Ramla
105. "Fayyumi" ware forms from Ramla
106. "Fayoumi" wares from Ramla
107. "Fayyumi" wares from Ramla
108. "Fayyumi" wares from Ramla
109. "Fayyumi" wares from Ramla
110. Possible "Fayyumi" wares from Ramla
111. Possible "Fayyumi" wares from Ramla
112. Near complete "Fayyumi" bowl from Ramla
113. "Unique" bowl from Tushingham's excavations in Jerusalem

114. Possible “Fayyumi” ware from Jerusalem
115. Sherds from Askalon
116. Bowl from Caesarea
117. “Fayyumi” ware sherd from Caesarea
118. “Fayyumi” ware sherd from Caesarea
119. Color plate of Caesarea “Fayyumi” sherds
120. “Fayyumi” wares from Caesarea
121. “Fayyumi” wares from Caesarea
122. “Fayyumi” wares from Caesarea
123. “Fayyumi” wares from Caesarea
124. “Fayyumi” wares from Caesarea
125. “Fayyumi” jar from Caesarea
126. Egyptian imported vessel from Akko
127. “Fayyumi” bowl from Ramat Hanadiv
128. “Fayyumi” sherds from Horbat ‘Uza
129. “Fayyumi” sherds from Horbat ‘Uza
130. “Fayyumi” sherd from Yoqne’am
131. Possible Egyptian import from Yoqne’am
132. “Fayyumi” ware sherd from Tiberias
133. “Fayyumi” ware bowl from Tiberias
134. Possible local “Fayyumi” imitation from Tiberias
135. “Alkaline-glazed” ware from Tiberias
136. Map of sites in Syria

137. Sherds from Tall Aswad
138. Sherd from Tall Aswad
139. “Unique” wares and “splashwares” from Qasr al-Hayr East
140. Sherd from Hama
141. Bowl in Ashmolean Museum
142. Bowl in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo
143. Bowl in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo
144. Jar in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo
145. Bowl in the Barlow Collection
146. Cup in the Barlow Collection
147. Bowl in the Barlow Collection
148. Bowl in the Keir Collection
149. Bowl in the Keir Collection
150. Fragment with epigraphy in the Benaki Collection
151. Fragment with figural decoration in the Benaki Collection
152. Fragment with figural decoration in the Benaki Collection
153. Bowl in the Benaki Collection
154. Bowl in the Benaki Collection
155. Bowl in the Benaki Collection
156. Bowl in the Benaki Collection
157. Sherd with radial band decoration in the Benaki Collection
158. Almost complete vessel with radial band decoration in the Benaki Collection
159. Bowl with radial band decoration in the Benaki Collection

160. Bowl in the Benaki Collection
161. Bowl in the Fitzwilliam Museum
162. Bowl in the Benaki Collection
163. Jar fragment in the Benaki Collection
164. Sherd from Fustat
165. Bowl in the British Museum
166. Bowl in the Musée Nationale de Céramique-Sèvres
167. Jar in the Victoria and Albert Museum
168. Bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum
169. “So-called Fayyumi wares” in the Nasser D. Kalili Collection
170. Form of “so-called Fayyumi ware” bowl in the Nasser D. Kalili Collection
171. Bowl in the Tareq Rajab Museum
172. Sherd from the al-Sabah Collection
173. Sherd from the al-Sabah Collection
174. Sherd from the al-Sabah Collection
175. Sherd from the al-Sabah Collection
176. Form of “splashed-type of opaque-glazed class”
177. Form of “polychrome glazed wares”
178. Sherds from Fustat in the Royal Ontario Museum
179. Sherd in the Royal Ontario Museum
180. Sherd in the Royal Ontario Museum

Chapter 1

The “Fayyumi” Problem

Introduction

Ten years ago a series of reports concerning the Nubian site of Meinarti in northern Sudan were published, discussing the findings from excavations from 1963-1964. In the third volume, a number of glazed ceramics are described as exhibiting the “so-called Fayyumi-five color style.”¹ Inspiration for other styles within this same family of ceramic types can be, according to the author William Y. Adams, attributed to the Chinese T’ang dynasty splash wares imported from China to Iraq and Egypt in the early centuries of Islam. Many of these glazed sherds, however, were coming from archaeological contexts as late as the 14th century. Five years earlier, Denys Pringle published a number of medieval ceramic examples from the 1970’s excavations at ‘Akko, along the Mediterranean coast. One of the wares he describes is “glazed slipped ware with polychrome decoration,” which he claims is the earliest style (late 8th to 9th centuries) of a larger body of Egyptian glazed ceramics traditionally referred to as “Fayyumi.”²

Here, two roughly contemporaneous publications of roughly contemporaneous excavations use the same term to describe pottery found in very different geographical locations and environments, with an apparent range in stylistic and technical influences and time periods provided to give a definition for its type. What we are left with is a vague characterization for wares termed “Fayyumi”: ceramic vessels with multi-colored, often splashed, glaze decoration on an opaque white glaze or under a transparent glaze, exhibiting influences from Chinese imports and local Coptic pottery traditions and produced in Egypt sometime between the 8th and

¹ Adams, *Meinarti III*, 63.

² Pringle, “Acre”, 142.

14th centuries. In fact, there is no sound archaeological evidence supporting that these ceramics were produced in the Fayyum.³ Furthermore, this vague and overgeneralized definition, as well as more explicit definitions used for more specific regions, has resulted in confusion and ambiguity in discussions of both archaeological finds and pieces in museum collections.

Ultimately, there are differentiating factors that can more appropriately divide up this corpus of ceramic material into a more manageable and more useful collection. While much focus has been placed on the influence of Chinese T'ang wares and in turn their Mesopotamian responses on the pottery of al-Fustat, a review of the Egyptian material and range of decorative techniques shows that there are major differences amongst so-called "Fayyumi" wares. The style most commonly identified as "Fayyumi" in fact has many similarities with local Coptic pottery traditions which have often gone unnoticed. The other types, which almost directly imitate white opaque and splash-glazed wares of Iraq, can be further divided based on certain decorative features, forms, and petrofabric analyses.

The purpose of this study is twofold. The initial task is to present all documented examples of what has been identified as "Fayyumi" wares or similar ceramic types from excavations and museum collections alike, including possible imitations. Illustrations of forms, color plates, and discussions of technological studies or archaeological context are incorporated whenever possible. This collection of so-called "Fayyumi" wares will first focus on their likely center of production, al-Fustat, and include a number of sites elsewhere along the Nile Valley, from the Nile Delta to Nubian sites of Sudan. From Egypt (Fig. 1), evidence from the Sinai Peninsula and Red Sea Coast all the way to up to sites in northern Palestine (Fig. 103) and Syria will be reviewed. Finally, examples of *bacini*, or ceramics placed in the walls of medieval churches and abbeys in Italy and a number of pieces from various museum collections will be

³ Scanlon, "Fayyumi," 295.

discussed in conjunction with the previously laid out archaeological evidence. Examples from datable contexts and those with helpful color plates, well-illustrated forms, or information about their petrofabric or chemical make-up will be emphasized over others.

The second purpose here is to attempt a compromise between excavation reports and art collection works, as the study of Islamic ceramics has been greatly hindered by the rift between the methodological approaches and nomenclature utilized by archaeologists and art historians when discussing this material. This is not a new issue, but one which has been continually plaguing both disciplines.⁴ Archaeological reports tend to provide possible dating information and often useful illustrations of the pottery forms, but give little in way of decorative description or of any artistic styles. Their references to similar examples of types are often problematic, particularly with such a poorly-defined subject as “Fayyumi” ware.

On the other hand, a number of comprehensive museum collection catalogues have been published on Islamic ceramics that include excellent color photographs of some of the finer examples. But these works rarely provide convincing provenance and dating discussions, as it is often unknown from where these pieces were procured. Dating is often based on over-generalizations given by previous catalogues that have become problematic or even useless due to archaeological findings published since their original appearance. Perhaps the most useful first step in creating a dialogue between the work of archaeologists and art historians is to find a reasonable way to incorporate the technological studies (neutron activation or more recently petrographic analyses) into both fields, as a possible medium for synthesis.

⁴ Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, 13-14.

Literature Review

In the 1930's a number of *bacini* were found placed in the walls of an 11th century church in Pomposa, Italy. At the same time, Italian excavations in the Fayyum at the site of Tebtynis were unearthing a number of polychrome-glazed wares that very much resembled two of the *bacini* in particular. In fact these sherds were so prevalent at the site that the ware was subsequently dubbed "Fayyumi."⁵ Up until today however, no wasters have been found at Tebtynis or anywhere else in the Fayyum area.⁶ The name has stuck, nonetheless, perhaps because of the very general range of ceramic forms and glazing styles to which it has and can be applied. While admitting the inaccuracies of the name, George Scanlon used the term or the alternative, "so-called 'Fayyumi' ware," throughout his reports from the American Research Center in Egypt excavations at Fustat. Scanlon's Fustat reports constituted the earliest attempts at properly dating the ware and further defining it. Throughout his preliminary reports from the 1960's and early 1970's, he maintained that the origin of this style of glazing must have been Mesopotamia, as a response to the Chinese T'ang wares which were reaching sites like Samarra in the 8th century.⁷ As a result, he argued the earliest examples of this type were coming from 9th to 10th century contexts, a period he would go on to further define twenty years later.

During this time the site of Samarra, which was so fundamental in the early creation of a chronological evolution of glazing in the Islamic world, went through a thorough reevaluation. Additionally, work at Siraf and excavations at Susa contributed to a new chronological understanding of Chinese ceramic influence and later the development of luster techniques and

⁵ Ballardini, *L'Eredita Ceramistica*, 155-157.

⁶ Scanlon, "Fayyumi Pottery," 295; Wasters of the same style as the sherds found in Tebtynis are reported from Fustat, but up to the time of this report no other wasters of this specific type of pottery have been uncovered in any sites in Egypt, although wasters of "Fayoumi" and "Coptic-glazed" wares have been reported at Bahnasa, see Fehérvári, *Bahnasa*, 67.

⁷ Scanlon, "Fustat 1964," 26-28; *Ibid.*, "Fustāt 1978," 25-27.

spread of glazing styles from Iraq to Egypt.⁸ The culmination of this new chronology was best expressed in 1980 in Helen Philon's impressive review of the medieval ceramics of the Benaki Collection in Athens. Philon grouped many types of what had previously been known as "Fayyumi" wares into an even more general category: "wares decorated with different coloured glazes," which was ultimately an expansion of Ernst J. Grube's classification system in his review of the Keir Collection ceramics.⁹ Rejecting Scanlon's earlier dating due to the re-interpretation of evidence from Samarra she designates many of the items in the collection as having been produced as late as the 12th century. Additional support for this dating was given by similarities with forms of presumed Fatimid lustre wares. One dish in particular included a depiction of a bird with such similarity to examples of other pottery types from Egypt and Palestine that her study quickly came under much scrutiny.¹⁰

As Fustat excavations were coming to an end, a number of other sites in Egypt were beginning to publish findings that narrowed the scope on the Fustat "Fayyumi" material. Rodziewicz's publications from Alexandria ushered in a whole new version of the Islamic glazing story. His "Coptic-glazed ware" from the Kom el-Dikka excavations re-evaluated earlier notions of glazing coming to Egypt from the east and emphasized the influences of previous Egyptian traditions from Roman and Coptic ceramic material.¹¹ Donald Whitcomb's work at Quseir al-Qadim, and then Aqaba, further emphasized this approach. Whitcomb's seminal article on "Coptic-glazed ware" exposed the inconsistencies of the Philon chronology and brought the focus of this material to Egypt and the local traditions of slip-painted pottery.¹²

⁸ Philon, *Benaki*, 35-36.

⁹ *Ibid*; Scanlon, "Fayyumi," 298.

¹⁰ Philon, *Benaki*, 44, Fig. 82.

¹¹ Rodziewicz, "Egyptian Glazed Pottery," 73-75.

¹² Whitcomb, "Coptic-Glazed Ceramics," 180-182.

In 1991, J. Engemann offered a new interpretation on the later dating of “Fayyumi” and Coptic-glazed wares by reevaluating Philon’s arguments over vessel forms. From his work at Abu Mina, in the Nile Delta, he exposed definitive 8th century contexts for what Rodziewicz and Whitcomb had been terming “Coptic-glazed wares,” as well as their close relative and possible descendent: the so called “Fayyumi” wares.¹³

While many archaeological-based arguments were being made, new technological analyses were developing that largely altered the way in which Islamic ceramics, particularly glazed pieces, were studied. In the 1970’s, Jay Frierman began testing ceramics from Fustat with neutron-activation analysis. His findings were largely in line with earlier archaeological and technological studies in terms of an east to west assumption in the movement of glazing technologies in the Islamic world.¹⁴ These types of technological studies were advanced greatly by the petrography analyses of Edward Keall and Robert Mason. Petrography allows ceramic experts to identify the various rocks and minerals within the clay of the pottery. The materials and ratio of them are then used to define the physical components and help establish the provenance of the pottery or prove that it was imported from another region based on its physical properties.¹⁵ Mason’s work in the early 1990’s on material from Fustat changed the format for Islamic ceramic study and offered an alternative approach. His glazing techniques-based definitions actually divided what had previously been considered “Fayyumi” wares into two separate groups, some falling into “polychrome glazed wares,” and others into “white glazed wares.”¹⁶

¹³ Engemann, “Coptic and Nubian Pottery,” 63-65.

¹⁴ Frierman, Asaro, and Michel, “Provenance,” 120.

¹⁵ Mason, *Shine like the Sun*, 6-15.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 62; Idem and Keall, “Petrography Fustat,” 171-174.

Two years later Scanlon responded to all the various debates and arguments of the previous decade or so, in an article that directly addressed the topic of so-called “Fayyumi” ware. This time he supplied a date of 850 AD as a possible introduction of “Fayyumi” types to Egypt, and maintained that they were imitations of, or imitations of imitations of, T’ang splashed wares imported west. Scanlon’s article soundly repudiates the Benaki sequencing, but his division of different styles within the general type did not match exactly with that of the other Egyptian debunkers. His typology divided the Fustat material into two groups: “Fayyumi-I” represented ceramics with solid polychrome glaze decoration on white opaque-glazed vessels. “Fayyumi-II” was then more or less everything else, including vessels with more of a splash glaze technique so as to be unclear of any definitive pattern.¹⁷

The influence and actual importation of Chinese wares at such an early period has been called into question by scholars other than Philon and her work on the Benaki collection. A three-colored T’ang splash ware sherd found near the end of the excavations at Fustat is evidence enough for some.¹⁸ But Oliver Watson has more recently pointed out that the actual evidence is quite scarce archaeologically, and that the type of splashed ware that they would be imitating wouldn’t likely have been the type of ceramic to have been imported at that time.¹⁹ Certainly Muslim potters were imitating Chinese styles, but whether they were doing it early enough for the Abbasid Iraqi tin-glaze and splash ware styles to be considered true imitations is still in question.

In later publications of Aqaba material, Whitcomb suggested an entirely different definition for “Fayyumi” wares. For him, the term refers specifically to those pieces with

¹⁷ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 296; In his review of Nubian material Adams has similarly divided the so-called “Fayyumi” finds into two distinct groups based on glazing decoration, see Adams, *Meinarti III*, 63.

¹⁸ Kubiak and Scanlon, *Fustat Final Report II*, 47-48, fig. 68-69; Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 300; François, “Céramiques médiévales à Alexandrie,” 22.

¹⁹ Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, 47.

polychrome radiating bands. This in turn, has been accepted by many ceramic specialists in Palestine, where coastal sites in particular received a large amount of this kind of pottery in the medieval period. As a result, the mottled and irregularly-splotch-decorated polychrome splash glaze-on white-opacified vessels are left to be categorized as another type, though they may very well be from the same ceramic factories in Fustat. If this were not enough, Whitcomb also has exposed the possibility of Arabian influence on this pottery genre through his discussion of Hijazi ware, which is found at the site of Aqaba as well.²⁰

The definition provided by Jonathon Bloom and Sheila Blair in the Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture is generally up to date and comprehensive: they describe the Egyptian pottery type as splash ware with “glaze on glaze” decoration, they note the misnaming of the ware as “Fayyumi,” and the influence of imported Chinese ceramics since the 9th century through the 18th century. Therefore they provide a generous dating of “Fayyumi” wares as “before 1000 AD” until the 13th century.²¹ But with such a large range of dates and the continued use of a term that doesn’t necessarily accurately denote the provenance, confusion is sure to arise. As a result by the mid 1990’s, a type of pottery published as “Fayyumi” that had no evidence of being produced in the Fayyum was being dated by ceramists and archaeologists to anywhere between the 8th and 18th centuries. The inspiration for the styles of glazing were being attributed to anything from Chinese T’ang wares, to Iraqi opaque wares, to Hijazi wares, to Coptic slip-painted wares from Egypt, all the time having implications for larger disagreements over the origin and spread of Islamic lead-glazing and lustre technology because of the wide range of contexts in which they had been found.

²⁰ Whitcomb, “Abbasid Aqaba,” 53.

²¹ Grove Encyclopedia of Islam Art and Architecture, 2009 ed., s.v. “Ceramics.”

In the last twenty years not much has changed, with archaeologists and ceramic experts adopting any definition or terminology with which they agree. The term has been used in excavation reports (without mention of the problematic nature of the term) as recently as 2010. A recent slew of publications from Israeli archaeologists or the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA) on Palestinian sites has greatly added to the corpus of published ceramics but also further confused the matter. Other work on the Sinai and other sites in Egypt as well as further publication of *bacini* has similarly contributed to, but clouded, the discussion.

The intention is not to emphasize one argument over the other or disregard any previous work as being misleading or outdated. It appears the problematic issues at hand are well-understood, and yet the problem continues. Instead, this study aims to comprehensively gather the known examples in an effort to reorganize and reevaluate the material and offer suggestions for both archaeologists of Islamic periods and historians of Islamic ceramic art as to how this misnomer can slowly evolve into a number of new terms that more accurately divide the many variations within the general type.

An Introduction to Islamic Ceramics

Body

A variety of different types of clays were used by potters in the early Islamic and medieval periods, generally determined by the geographical location, the natural environment and the chemical and mineral compositions of the clays. One helpful aspect in studying Egyptian ceramics is that it often has a very distinctive clay body, ware, fabric, or ‘petrofabric,’ typical of clays found along the Nile River. But even within Egypt and along the Nile there can be variation, and the use of both Nile mud and clay produces major differences in the

petrofabrics of many of the Egyptian examples.²² In addition to the natural clays, the type of kiln and heat used in firing can drastically affect the ware, and other minerals or materials added can alter it as well.

Two common forms of fired ceramic wares made in the Islamic world during the early Islamic and Medieval periods were earthenware and stoneware. Earthenware is the most common, as it only needs about 700-1200 degrees Celsius to be fired. Stonewares are fired at a slightly higher temperature (1200-1300 C).²³ Despite numerous attempts, Muslim potters were never able to create the highly fired porcelains of China, as they simply lacked the necessary mineral make-up for such a high temperature of firing. By mixing glass and quartz with clay, stonepaste or “fritware” could be created with a high temperature firing. This was an attempt by potters in the Middle East during the early centuries of Islam to imitate the fine Chinese wares, and would go on to become a common component of the luster ceramic tradition.

Slips, Glazes, and Colorants

When clay is mixed with water a substance is created that can be used to smooth or decorate the ceramic vessel. These are called slips, and were used frequently in pre-Islamic times to alter the color of the ware or decorate it. In Egypt, colored slips were added to vessels in the Roman and Coptic periods, and one type in particular, generally termed Red-Slip, was imported north to Palestine and Red Sea sites.²⁴ This slip painting continued into the early Islamic period and, in some cases, was used underneath glazes to add a new kind of decorative style. The term “underglaze painting” however refers not to slip painting, but to the use of oxide colorants directly on the vessel which is then given an alkaline glaze over it. This technique is

²² Bernstead, *Early Islamic Pottery*, 70.

²³ Tite, Wolf, and Mason, “Stonepaste Ceramics,” 570.

²⁴ Watson, “Egyptian Links,” 320.

well-known in 12th century Syria and Iran.²⁵ Terms such as cobalt or manganese are often used to describe colors in descriptions of medieval ceramic vessels or tiles, but actually also refer to the mineral oxides used to create those colors. Cobalt produces a dark blue and manganese a dark purple or almost black color, for example. These colorants, when mixed with different types of glazes, create the colors we know so well from the art of the Islamic world.

The two main types of glazes used were lead and alkaline, although later on the two were mixed to create something often referred to as “tin-glaze” which creates an opacified product.²⁶ Lead glazed pottery was made in the Mediterranean world during the Roman Empire and contemporary cultures in Central Asia and China were also using lead for glazing. While hotly debated, the prominent theory holds that green lead-glazed vessels were introduced into the Islamic world sometime around the 8th century in Iraq.²⁷ They may have been introduced for their functional rather than aesthetic value, as glazed vessels can hold liquids, while unglazed earthenware jugs and bowls are porous and will leak the substances they contain.

The other less common form of glazing consisted of using alkali elements like potash or soda. The ancient Egyptians actually used a version of alkali glazes on faience and clay bodies and alkali glazes were used in pre-Islamic Mesopotamia long before they were used to decorate vessels in the Islamic world. “Tin-glaze” was created when the alkali and lead fluxes were combined. This is also sometimes referred to as tin-opacified glaze, because the ware is given an opaque covering of glaze on which additional decoration is then added. Tin-opacification is generally believed to have been established in the 8th century in Iraq, and is often the technique used to create the white opaque glaze underneath the polychrome splash glaze decoration exhibited on so-called “Fayyumi” wares.

²⁵ Mason, *Shine like the Sun*, 109.

²⁶ Mason and Tite, “Tin-Opacification,” 56-57.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

Glazing in the Early Islamic World

The general conception of early Islamic pottery and the glazing techniques adopted is that Muslim potters began glazing ceramics in the 8th century in Samarra and elsewhere in Iraq where there had been pre-Islamic alkali-glazing traditions, and that splash-glazing techniques spread west to Egypt and Greater Syria.²⁸ Arthur Lane promoted the idea that splash glazes and the development of fritware or stonepaste wares also developed in Mesopotamia as a response to the imports from contemporaneous Chinese culture. The desire to reproduce the celadon and porcelain objects coming from the east initiated these developments.²⁹ This general theory of the spread of technologies is somewhat based on the tendencies of Islamic history to focus on the Abbasid Caliphate as the first great dynasty of Islam and 8th and 9th century Iraq as a golden age of Islamic culture. It was during this flowering period in which the truly great contribution to ceramic arts of the world by Muslim potters developed: the technology of luster painting.

A fine general description of luster technology is given by Miriam Avissar and Edna Stern: “The designs were painted in pigment on an already glazed and fired vessel. This pigment consisted of a mixture of silver and copper oxides, mixed with red or yellow ocher and diluted with vinegar. The vessel was then lightly refired in a reducing kiln. Upon its removal from the kiln, the ocher was rubbed off, and the metallic elements adhered to the surface of the glaze-producing lustre decoration in a metallic sheen of gold and various shades of yellow, orange, or brown.”³⁰ A similar description of the technological processes is provided by a 12th century writer, Abū'l-Qāsim, who provides not only a breakdown of luster technology but sheds light on stonepaste production and also the plants and minerals used in these processes.³¹

²⁸ Mason, *Shine Like the Sun*, 172-173.

²⁹ Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, 12.

³⁰ Avissar and Stern, *Crusader Pottery*, 34-35.

³¹ Allen, “Abū'l-Qāsim's Treatise on Ceramics,” 111-115.

Once again, it was assumed that luster painting began in Iraq and spread to Egypt, where the technology blossomed under the Fatimid court.³² During this time, Egyptian potters began creating the crushed-quartz stonepaste wares for their luster vessels, an indication that as ceramicists migrated from Iraq to Egypt they brought with them these ceramic technologies. Finally, the appearance of fine luster production in sites in Syria, most notably Tell Minis, supported the idea that potters were moving from unstable regions in decline to more stable political and economic centers.³³ The fall of the Fatimids in the 12th century meant that these communities would have packed up and headed north, and the appearance of luster wares from one place to another reflects the migration of these artists.

Lane also pointed out, however, that luster painting technologies actually began in Egypt, on glass objects. In fact, ancient Egypt also boasted faience and glazed tiles, and Coptic potters produced a wide range of slip-painted wares with an impressive amount of exportation throughout the region.³⁴ Scanlon's publication of moulded, glazed wares suggests a much earlier presence of glazed ceramics in Fustat, and therefore Egypt. This calls into question the entire chronology of events and trajectory of technological adoption.³⁵ Oliver Watson, who has studied Mesopotamian and Syrian ceramics in great detail, has come to the conclusion that stonepaste or fritware technologies actually began in Egypt, and not in Iraq.³⁶ Finally, the arguments of Engemann, Rodziewicz, and Whitcomb discussed above, further question the true origin of glazing in the Islamic world and emphasize Egypt's role, both from ancient traditions and locally in Fustat and the Delta, in the development of glazing technologies in the Middle East.

³² Bloom, *City Victorious*, 90.

³³ Mason, *Shine like the Sun*, 180.

³⁴ Watson, "Egyptian Links," 320; Bloom, *City Victorious*, 90.

³⁵ Scanlon, "Moulded Early Lead Glazed Wares," 70; Idem, "Imported Wrinkle," 256-257.

³⁶ Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, 53-54.

Somewhere within this period between the introduction of glazing to the Islamic world and the production of fine luster wares from Greater Syria, Egyptian potters in Fustat were creating polychrome splash decorations on tin-glazed vessels in a variety of forms with a variety of different clays (though many examples exhibit the standard buff or pinkish clay traditionally associated with Fustat or Aswan in Upper Egypt). The entire history of ceramic glazing in the Islamic world will not be decided here, but understanding better the so-called “Fayyumi” wares, in terms of glazing styles and technologies, petrofabric, and vessel forms, could help to clarify the relationship between Egyptian and Iraqi potters of the early Islamic and Medieval periods. This in turn, could help to rethink the development and spread of the various ceramic technologies utilized by Islamic potters, particularly between the 8th and 12th centuries.

Chapter 2

Egypt and Sudan

Introduction

A series of field manuals published in recent years undertake the remarkable task of covering the published pottery of Egypt's entire archaeological history. In Volume IV Anna Wodzińska devotes a chapter to medieval pottery from Egypt which covers five locally produced types: "slip-painted early lead glazed ware," "Fayyumi ware," "metallic luster," "Mamluk sgraffito," and "Mamluk Painted." "Fayyumi Ware" is defined as "slipped and painted with simple patterns without clear boundaries, such as lines and dots in white, yellow, green, and brown," and is said to be produced during the Fatimid period (969-1172 AD).³⁷ This definition, as well as the definitions of the other types, is based on findings from excavations at Fustat, particularly those undertaken by the American Research Center in Egypt under Scanlon in the 1960's and 1970's.

There is no debating the importance of Fustat for our understanding of the development of ceramic technologies and styles of decoration in the early Islamic and medieval periods. One of the first purely Islamic cities, Fustat is well known for, amongst other things, having a prominent ceramic production center. Tebtynis, south of Cairo in the Fayyum, was the original site of supposed provenance for "Fayyumi" wares, but the site failed to produce any evidence that the wares were actually being produced there³⁸ and Scanlon suggests Fustat is the more

³⁷ Wodzińska, *Egyptian Pottery*, 243.

³⁸ However, the excavators do argue that slag from kilns was found at the Tebtynis site, see Blake and Aguzzi, "Torre Civica *Bacini*," 105.

probable place of production.³⁹ That his definition of “Fayyumi” wares, which evolved somewhat over time and includes a number of different variations, is still being adhered to is a tribute to his work and his attempt to organize a truly problematic corpus of ceramics into a more accessible grouping from a difficult site.

Nevertheless, even a perusal of the four examples illustrated in Wodzińska’s manual, not to mention all of the examples of what has been referred to as “Fayyumi” in Egypt, exposes the variety displayed by this general ceramic type.⁴⁰ Assuming this is in fact the site of production, a summary of examples found in various excavations at Fustat will help to provide a basis for comparison. A review of other sites throughout Egypt (Fig.1), from Alexandria and the Nile Delta to the Fayyum, to Upper Egypt and Nubia (including parts of present-day North Sudan) will help to identify several specific types within the general heading “Fayyumi,” and help us rethink the dating of these ceramics and the development of their glazing techniques and decorative styles.

The History of Fustat and its Ceramic Industry

The site of Fustat was established in 643 AD by ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, the Arab general who conquered Egypt. After taking Alexandria, the Byzantine capital, he established a permanent settlement for his troops and one of Islam’s earliest congregational mosques.⁴¹ Over the next several hundred years the city expanded northwards and Fustat remained a thriving and well-inhabited city until the end of the Fatimid period when the subsequent rise of al-Qahira left its southern settlements to decline and become largely abandoned. Repeated destruction and

³⁹ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 295; up until now only Fustat has produced wasters, or failed attempts at firing of specifically radial-band decorated types often called “Fayyumi” wares.

⁴⁰ Wodzińska, *Egyptian Pottery*, 276-277.

⁴¹ Jomier, s.v. “al-Fuṣṭāṭ,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 6 December, 2012); Kubiak, *Al-Fuṣṭāṭ*, 11.

abandonment actually came to define Fustat's history, which left behind a disturbed and challenging archaeological record.⁴² Fustat enjoyed a somewhat diverse population, and the local Coptic Christian community still had a substantial presence.⁴³ But when the Abbasids expanded into Egypt in 750, the last Umayyad caliph Marwān II burned much of the city behind him.

The Abbasid period in Fustat represented a period of fundamental change, as the city became a true metropolis. Some of the burned portion of the city was rebuilt but most of it became a large necropolis, some of which has been uncovered by excavations under the Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO) in an area known as 'Istabl Antar.⁴⁴ Eventually Ahmad ibn Ṭūlūn, an Abbasid governor turned independent ruler, established his own city, al-Qaṭā'i', to the north.⁴⁵ Fustat remained a thriving community and a powerful capital, which controlled trade and commerce along the Nile during the tumultuous years when the Abbasids struggled to regain control of Egypt. By the end of the 10th century, the Fatimids had moved in and established their own city to the north, al-Qāhirah, which became the foundation for today's modern city. Despite the development of other cities to the north, Fustat remained the commercial capital of Egypt well into the Fatimid period, and many of the craft industries may have been centered there.⁴⁶

Fustat is well known as a ceramic production center, and it is assumed that the fine luster painted and sgraffito-decorated wares of the Fatimid period, as well as the development of frit-ware technologies must have been a product of these Fustat kilns. But the evidence from the Fatimid period is actually quite scarce, and it appears the assumption is partly due to findings from later periods in the same area. The literary evidence as well as the excavations of extensive

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 62-85.

⁴⁴ Kubiak, *Al-Fustāt*, 133.

⁴⁵ Jomier, s.v. "al-Fuṣṭāṭ," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 6 December, 2012).

⁴⁶ Scanlon, "Fustat 1964," 8.

kiln sites in several parts of Fustat overwhelmingly relate to the Mamluk period.⁴⁷ The 11th century visitor to Fustat, Nāṣir-i Khusraw, is known to have commented on the fine *sufalin* that was used to make plates and cups so clear you could see through them.⁴⁸ These, he claims, were like the *buqalamun* textiles that purportedly changed colors in the sun which he had encountered in the textile factories of the Delta.⁴⁹ Obvious exaggerations aside, these comments provide for extremely little evidence in the way of a substantial pottery production center.⁵⁰

In fact the finest of luster wares were not even the most desirable ceramic types for the Fatimid royalty or elite classes of society. Imported Chinese porcelains and stonewares were the most preferred ceramic goods. Where that left simple polychrome tin-glazed ceramics like those described as “Fayyumi wares,” which were no easy feat to create in their own right, is very much in dispute. Certainly Fustat is an impressive site in terms of the sheer amount of ceramic evidence. But then so is Kom el Dikka, and so is the Fayyum for that matter in terms of specifically polychrome glazed wares with radial band decoration. But neither of these is assumed to be a major center of production, even though both of these sites would have access to the same of kind of Nile silt and Nile mud which were both used in the creation of pottery in Egypt.⁵¹

While Fustat may have been at its commercial and economic peak at the beginning of the Fatimid period, the city soon began to suffer from famine and drought. During the unfortunate

⁴⁷ Kawatoko, “Multi-Disciplinary Approaches,” 847-848.

⁴⁸ It has been noted by more than one scholar that this term could simply refer to glass and not a kind of ceramic material. In fact it makes more sense given the description; see Mason and Keall, “Petrography from Fustat, 169.

⁴⁹ Bloom, *City Victorious*, 93.

⁵⁰ Ibn Duqmaq and Makrizi, writing in the 14th and 15th centuries respectively, both indicate that Fustat is a place of ceramic production. Ibn Duqmaq makes specific reference to the kilns of Fustat, but again these authors are writing in the Mamluk period where kiln sites are very well established in the archaeological record as well, see Milwright, “Pottery in the Written Sources,” 505.

⁵¹ Bernstead, *Early Islamic Pottery*, 70.

reign of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mustansir, a horrible famine left much of Fustat abandoned.⁵² In the year 1070, many parts of the city were said to have been completely destroyed, and this destruction level is apparent in southern portions of the site. Fustat likely began its slow decline as al-Qāhirah rose under the Fatimids, and was greatly diminished by the events under al-Mustansir.⁵³ There still must have been a substantial population inhabiting this area in the late Fatimid period because in 1168-1169 the town was systematically burned down so as not to fall into the hands of threatening Crusader forces. Again, there is an indication the city was partially rebuilt soon after, because new walls were constructed around the entire city of Cairo, including Fustat, by the Ayyubid sultan, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.⁵⁴

A noticeable decline began in the Mamluk period as much of the eastern part of the city was abandoned for waterfront properties along the Nile. We do know the area remained a prominent production center, especially for pottery, even while it became increasingly impoverished. By the 19th and 20th centuries Fustat became a popular location for procuring *sabakh*, or agricultural fertilizer. This digging, and unfortunately much of the early excavation, left the site's stratigraphy shuffled and incomprehensible.⁵⁵ Despite continuous occupation from the 7th to the 21st century, Fustat's repeated phases of destruction or abandonment paired with the more recent looting and agricultural interests left an archaeologically haphazard site south of Cairo.

⁵² Jomier, s.v. "al-Fuṣṭāṭ," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 6 December, 2012).

⁵³ Kubiak, *Al-Fuṣṭāṭ*, 11.

⁵⁴ Jomier, s.v. "al-Fuṣṭāṭ," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 6 December, 2012).

⁵⁵ Kubiak, *Al-Fuṣṭāṭ*, 29.

Fustat

The excavations undertaken at various locations in the massive archaeological zone of Fustat have a considerable history of their own. In fact it would take a work much longer than this one to properly discuss the difficulties of the site, the surrounding urban development, and all of the different archaeological projects that have occurred in a period of over one hundred years.⁵⁶ The initial excavator was Ali Baghat who began in 1912 and would continue to work there for over a decade. Baghat was the curator of the Museum of Arab Art (now Islamic Art) in Cairo and seems to have been primarily concerned with uncovering fine ceramic examples for the museum. Unfortunately, Baghat never left a comprehensive plan of the site or his excavations.⁵⁷

He and Felix Massoul published much of the finer material in *La céramique musulmane de l’Egypte* but they did not have many examples of the kind of polychrome glazed wares that may have been later defined as “Fayyumi.” A single plate of six ceramic sherds (Fig. 2) is described as “faïence a émail stannifère décorées sur cru,” some with painted figural imagery, which they attributed to Iraqi influences.⁵⁸ The grouping together of these types according to glazing technique is a natural and commendable choice. But figural examples are extremely rare, especially among excavations where small sherds provide little assistance in imagining the remaining decoration on the vessel. While the sherd on the bottom left with dots and U-shaped lines glaze is definitely an example of what Scanlon later termed “Fayyumi-I,” similarly tin-

⁵⁶ For a succinct review of the major archaeological projects in Fustat, see the Introduction by ‘Abd al-Rahman and ‘Abd al-Tawwab in Bacharach, *Fustat Finds*, vii-xi.

⁵⁷ Scanlon, “Fustat 1964,” 9.

⁵⁸ Baghat and Massoul, *La céramique musulmane de l’Egypte*, 81; Cl. pl. XLVIII features examples that are almost identical, including both figural and stippled decorative styles, to a plate of Byzantine ceramics from the Benaki Collections in Athens attributed to the late 12th or 13th centuries according to the reports from the Constantinople excavations, and earlier, to the 10th and 11th centuries based on excavations in Corinth, see Papanikola-Bakirtzi, Mavrikiou, and Bakirtzis, *Byzantine Glazed Pottery*, 25-29; As a result this entire genre of ceramics’ Byzantine-Coptic relations and influences should be reconsidered, especially if these styles were in fact being produced in 10th century Greece.

glazed vessels with figural motifs are largely absent from this study.⁵⁹ In addition, examples with epigraphy will largely fall into a category which could be described as “white tin-glazed wares,” for their definite link to earlier blue-on-white ceramics from Abbasid Iraq.

From 1964 to 1980 a large-scale project was initiated by the American Research Center in Egypt under the direction of Scanlon and later Wladislaw Kubiak as well. From an early stage Scanlon was skeptical of the term “Fayyumi,” placing it in quotations himself. The actual identifying definition seems to have evolved over time as he became more familiar with the variety of ceramics being found and as concurrent excavation reports from the region were also being published. But the association of the glazed styles with imports from and imitations based on ceramics from China was consistent throughout.⁶⁰

Some of the earliest reports featured ceramics that would later be discarded as candidates for “Fayyumi” wares. One bowl in particular described as “Fayyumi” with slip painting under a clear glaze (Fig. 3) was later assigned to the “slip-painted early lead-glazed wares” category which is more or less synonymous with Rodziewicz’s “Coptic-glazed wares.”⁶¹ The use of colors under the glaze in a wavy pattern resembles marble, or more specifically “marvered” glass. Marvered glass is a technique of rolling softened glass on a flat surface and threaded decoration of alternating blue and white is a typical combination.⁶² This style is often associated with Roman glass types or even examples from ancient Egypt, but the practice of working glass in multiple colors with a swirling, marble-like display is apparent at Fustat and a fine example

⁵⁹ Later ceramic reports on Islamic glazed pottery in the Benaki Collection follow in the spirit of Baghat and Massoul and include small sherds with figural decoration, even birds much like the one in *La céramique musulmane*, along with their Egyptian or North African polychrome glazed wares discussions. See Philon, *Benaki*, 55-61.

⁶⁰ Scanlon, “Fustat 1964,” 26; Idem, “Fayyumi,” 296.

⁶¹ Idem, “Slip-Painted Wares,” 21-22.

⁶² Kawatoko and Shindo, “Glazed Pottery and Glass,” 96-97.

actually came from the same part of the site as the bowl (Fig. 4).⁶³ Two other examples described as relating to “Fayyumi” wares which feature lead-glaze and painted figural and vegetal decoration (Figs. 5-6) should similarly be classified as “slip-painted early lead-glazed wares.” These were firmly dated to the Abbasid period by coins.⁶⁴

By the 1970’s the material was becoming somewhat clearer. Four examples published in 1973 all include decorative styles of daubs and dots of polychrome lead glazing. Scanlon doesn’t consider these “Fayyumi” because they lack the tin-glazing, or a tin-opacified background, and as a result dated them to the 9th century.⁶⁵ But it was not until a year later in his article on the “pits” of Fustat that he published images of what he described as “Early Fayyumi.” Pictured are four bowls, all with blue, green, and manganese slips under a transparent glaze (Figs. 7-9) and one similar bowl with epigraphy in the center (Fig. 10).⁶⁶ All of these examples are considered to be imitation porcelains,⁶⁷ but tin-opacified bowls with green and blue decoration, particularly these types with Kufic at the center and looped decoration around the rim, are well known from Abbasid Iraq.

These examples came from Pit G, but Scanlon notes that an almost identical set came from Pit U as well. As these pits are considered to be the few, rare examples at the site with reliable contexts from which to date artifacts, these “early Fayyumi” examples are important. Scanlon dates them all to the 9th-10th century, while a lead glazed bowl with daubs of green, lead glaze (a style we will see later) is dated to the 8th-9th century.⁶⁸ Additionally, there is a small jug

⁶³ Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1965, pt. I,” 102-103.

⁶⁴ Idem, “Fusṭāṭ 1965, pt. II,” 69.

⁶⁵ Kubiak and Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1966,” 15-16.

⁶⁶ Scanlon, “Pits of Fusṭāṭ,” 73, XVII, 4-6, XIX, I; Two of the other bowls have what appears to be a pseudo-Kufic, although the splashed style could have distorted a real attempt.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 74; this article has been improperly cited by several scholars suggesting Scanlon argues that the “Fayyumi” types are from an 8th century context. However, Scanlon clearly attributes these types to a later date and does not date any “Fayyumi” wares prior to 850 AD. The 8th century material is identified as lead glaze wares, while the

(Fig. 11) described as having a “siliceous” glaze, probably indicating the use of alkaline glazes which began to be used in Egypt during the Fatimid period.⁶⁹ While the form is somewhat different, the radial bands are similar to jugs found in the Sinai and Palestine because of the radial bands of polychrome glaze decoration running down the exterior of the vessel.⁷⁰ This jug is later dated to the 11th century.⁷¹

Because of the vast amount of material believed to be linked to Chinese prototypes, Scanlon discussed the trade relationships between China and Egypt in light of the archaeological evidence. One image (Fig. 12) is discussed as a definite local imitation of T’ang splash styles from China, indicating the developed skill of the Egyptian potters.⁷² The base sherd exhibits radial glazed rays running down to the rim to form a triangular shape. In fact the attempt at creating a central triangular motif may have been done in an eastern technique, but the motif and placement itself is quite like what appears to be an early glazed slip-painted ware at Bahnasa (Fig 54) which is part of the local Coptic slip-painting tradition. Despite the publication of wares from the Fayyum in the 1930’s, it is the first radial-band style example published by Scanlon that matches styles from Tebtynis. While he does not call it “Fayyumi” in this report, he suggests it is a later development of the 9-10th century imitation porcelains from the Fustat Pits. As a result, the later Fustat excavation reports indicate “Fayyumi” types provide (often along with other artifacts) reliable dating markers at the site.⁷³ But it is clear that the radial band style and the blue or green on white porcelain imitations are quite different in appearance.

sherds identified as “Fayumi” are clearly dated to the 9th-10th century (see reports by Avissar and Boas on material from Caesarea, Yoqne’am, and Ramat Hanadiv in Chapter 4).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Although the bands seem to be much more regular and controlled than examples discussed later.

⁷¹ Idem, “Fayyumi,” 328.

⁷² Idem, “Egypt and China,” 84, pl. IXb.

⁷³ Kubiak and Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1971, pt. I,” 104; “Fayumi” sherds are found with what becomes well established as Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito, or FFS, and therefore seems to be a clear indicator of Fatimid layers, despite an unresolved definition for what constitutes “Fayyumi” or “Fayumi” types.

As a result, the dating of two bowls with “slip-painting under a clear yellow glaze” to the 10th century is unclear.⁷⁴ One bowl includes radial lines of manganese on a white slip running into the center (Fig. 13), and the other has a deep manganese and green on a white slip in a radial design all meeting in the middle (Fig. 14). In this case the bowls have ring bases, which is common among the Fustat “Fayyumi” types. But the appearance of a ledge rim, or a flat, everted rim common among the wares with radial polychrome bands, is missing. A bowl with a ring base is mentioned in a preliminary report from 1980 is described as a “mottled green-yellow tin-glaze,” bowl. This is identified as “Fayyumi,” and has a whitish ware similar to that of Fustat Fatimid Sgraffito and Fatimid luster types, but is unfortunately not illustrated.⁷⁵ From the same report there is an example of a jar with radial bands of “siliceous” glaze in manganese, green, and yellow-brown with green glaze on the interior (Fig. 15).⁷⁶ More than the previous jar, this type has definite connections with examples from the Sinai, the Red Sea Coast, and Palestine.

The last example of a “Fayyumi,” sherd discussed in the preliminary material was one featuring radial bands separated into triangular sections (Fig. 16) creating a circle divided into triangles in the center. It displays green, yellow, white, and manganese colors with a light green glaze on the exterior, and includes a ring base and a clear flat, everted rim.⁷⁷ The sherd comes from a supposedly secure 9th-10th century context although it is described as specifically 10th century in the plate, perhaps on account of its unusual flat rim. Through all the previous reports, dates between the 9th and 11th century had been suggested, and while never stated it seems the

⁷⁴ Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1968, p. II;” If anything it seems they are dated by their location in Pit W, in between possibly 9th century vessels below them and Fatimid coins above them, see also Kubiak and Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1971, pt. I,” 104.

⁷⁵ Idem, “Fusṭāṭ 1971, pt. II,” 84; They are almost certainly describing the fritware, or stonepaste material developed in Egypt in the 11th or 12th centuries and commonly used in the fine luster ceramics from that period.

⁷⁶ Ibid., Fig. 18.

⁷⁷ Idem, Fusṭāṭ 1972, pt. I,” 63.

radial band examples are believed to be later than, say, that of the “early Fayumi” styles from Pits U and G.⁷⁸

The final reports of the ARCE excavations underscore the influences of the Chinese imports, citing the discovery of a T’ang splash ware sherd as evidence that the Egyptian ceramics were direct imitations of Chinese products (Fig. 17).⁷⁹ “Fayyumi” wares are described as a product of this phenomenon but the influences of Iraq are not completely ignored. One suggestion is that manganese is a possible Egyptian addition to the early tin-opacified types, and therefore a possible indicator of provenance.⁸⁰

In 1993 Scanlon published a comprehensive survey of all the Fustat examples of what he considered “Fayyumi,” while suggesting “Fayyumi” was never really an appropriate term for them. Those examples which were left out of the report are quite telling about the evolution of the definition over time. But the article is valuable in providing the first attempt at typology for these diversely decorated ceramics. The Fustat “Fayyumi” types are believed to be produced roughly between 850-1150 AD. Scanlon divides what was a truly massive amount of evidence into two larger groups based on glazing technique and appearance: “Fayyumi-I”⁸¹ and “Fayyumi-II.”⁸² The “Fayyumi-I” examples could be described as unfailingly tin-opacified with other colors of glaze added to this, sometimes opaque themselves. The applied colors consist of mostly turquoise but also manganese, honey-brown, and green and are typically applied in a splashed pattern (Fig. 18). “Fayyumi-II” examples on the other hand are described as having

⁷⁸ Ibid.,” 58, pl. Xlle; Scanlon and Kubiak list a number of different dates associated with “Fayyumi” finds: Ayyubid occupation levels (Scanlon, “Fustat 1964,” 27-28); 996-1094 based on coins in the name of Fatimid Caliphs al-Ḥākīm and al-Mustaṣir (Idem, “Fusṭāṭ 1965, pt. II,” 83); the 11th century at the latest (Kubiak and Scanlon, “Fustat 1966,” 16); 10th century (Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1972 pt. II”) which largely suggest an association with the Fatimid period in Egypt.

⁷⁹ Kubiak and Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ Final Report, pt. II,” 40-42.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ The focus of the article is specifically on this type. The “Fayyumi II” examples are not discussed in any detail.

⁸² Idem, “Fayyumi,” 295-296; he mentions that the ARCE excavations collected “over half a million glazed sherds.”

opacified colors of “equal decorative parity,” producing perhaps a more colorful display (Fig.19).

Viewing the color plates of the sherds (Fig 18-19) one notices the splashed blue-on-white of the Iraqi imitations in the first group and radial bands of glaze running from the rims of sherds amongst the second and the distinction seems clear enough: “Fayyumi-I” are the earlier examples and “Fayyumi-II” are the possibly later radial-band decorated types. But it is more complicated. In fact radial bands are apparent on “Fayyumi-I” types and Scanlon describes a specific variation termed “Fatimid Fayyumi I” which more less describes the examples with radial lines of glazed decoration as well as daubs applied randomly (Fig. 20-22) which he dates from the 11th century to just about 1200 AD.⁸³ But with the curious omission of the fine example we saw in Fig. 16, it is unclear where this style would be grouped. The added complication of over-glaze painting simultaneously used with underglaze slip-painting in both of the major groups only blurs the distinctions.⁸⁴

In early reports Scanlon suggests that ring bases are evidence of a later (9th century) development and seems to use it as a basis for defining wares as “Fayyumi.”⁸⁵ From the display of different vessel forms, it is clear that ring bases are very common in the “Fayyumi-I” group as well as the “Fatimid Fayyumi I” group.⁸⁶ But it is also clear that the ring bases greatly resemble earlier Iraqi models. Flat based dishes and flat, everted rims present in other examples are very unlike ceramic forms from these Iraqi types. Instead they are much more like forms of the “slip-painted early lead-glazed wares” which were sometimes jumbled with “Fayyumi” types in early reports and are often seen to be a related pottery tradition in early Islamic Egypt.

⁸³ Ibid., 298-299.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 295.

⁸⁵ Idem, “Fustāt 1968, pt. I,” 89.

⁸⁶ Idem, “Fayyumi,” 315-323.

The issue of ware and provenance is only dealt with briefly in the preliminary Fustat reports but here it is explained more fully. One typical characteristic of Samarra ceramics is the presence of easily recognizable uniform sandy-yellowish buff clay in the sherds. As a distinguishing characteristic between ceramics from Abbasid Iraq and “Fayyumi” wares in Egypt (both of which are found in Fustat), the “less well-prepared, clearly levigated,” clays that produce a light reddish or pinkish hue is apparent in “Fayyumi-I” types. This clay is also found in the “slip-painted lead-glazed wares” and some Egyptian luster types.⁸⁷ When added with neutron-activation analysis, it became clear that there was difference in the opaqueness of the over-glazes, providing another form of distinction.⁸⁸ A complication arises when definite red clay is found amongst similarly decorated examples (Fig. 23), which Scanlon believes is potentially still being produced in Egypt. Perhaps one of the most important points to this study is the fact that glaze on glaze types much like “Fayyumi-II” examples but also the reddish ware types of the “Fayyumi-I” types were definitely still being made in Cairo in the 18th century and possibly up until present day.⁸⁹

While the difference between Iraqi imports and Egyptian imitations has much evidence, the contention that all of these ceramics were being made locally in Fustat is still unproven. Scanlon notes that wasters have been found in Fustat and not anywhere else in Egypt.⁹⁰ In a Fatimid period “cul-de-sac” evidence of pottery and especially glass production was found in the form of a number of kilns. But the actual style of wasters found⁹¹ is not entirely specified and

⁸⁷ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 296.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 297; again the argument that manganese is an Egyptian development largely absent in Samarra and elsewhere in Iraq is made here, as well as the point that cobalt glazing is not found on Egyptian ceramics. Dark blue is a common color in pottery and ceramic tiles in Iraq and Iran due to the presence of cobalt, which is not found in Egypt. Thus, based on our current knowledge of regional clay types and mineral oxide deposits, the provenance of these ceramics (whether Egypt or Mesopotamia) is near certain.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 298.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 295.

⁹¹ Which were not in fact found at these kilns but elsewhere in areas A and B.

the indication is that they are lightly incised wares with splashed glaze decoration.⁹² While incised wares are related to many of the so-called “Fayyumi” types in glazing styles and found in large numbers in the Fatimid period they do not necessarily prove similar styles were also being produced. Another reference is made to wasters found at the site during Scanlon’s discussion of the “early Fayumi” types from Pits U and G, but there is still no direct reference made to any of the specific styles. Apparently, the majority of the “Fayyumi” wasters were of the radial-band style, attempts at producing pieces like Figs. 12 or 16, or more generally the “Fatimid Fayyumi-I” style.⁹³

Other examples from Fustat match well with Scanlon and Kubiak’s findings. A.R. Abdel-Tawwab published some additional examples from the ARCE excavations of Chinese T’ang-inspired sherds. The first is described as “Fayyumi,” of which there were apparently “thousands,” of sherds. Whether this relates to the specific type of ring-footed radial band-decorated sherd shown in Fig. 24, as opposed to a more general use of the term, is not clarified. Another sherd is described as being an example of an imitation of T’ang wares (Fig. 25), but it is clear that this splash-glazed sgraffito type is extremely different from the previous one.⁹⁴ The “Fayyumi” example is particularly interesting as it displays a geometric pattern similar to the repeated pattern surrounding a fine jug (Fig. 144) in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo discussed in Chapter 5.⁹⁵

The IFAO has also led many excavations in the area of Fustat, and some of the findings were published in 2009. Outside of the luster ceramics, they argue many of the glazed bowls

⁹² Scanlon, “Fusṭāṭ 1965, pt. II,” 74-75.

⁹³ Personal Communication with George Scanlon, December 20, 2012.

⁹⁴ Abdel-Tawwab, “The Débris of Fustat,” 55-60.

⁹⁵ Cat. No. 15980; Published in Ettinghausen, Grabar, and Jenkins-Medina, *Islamic Art and Architecture 650-1250*, 205; Denny, Ezzy, and Watson, *The Arts of Islam*, 222.

were for practical use, based apparently on the large amount of trashed sherds.⁹⁶ Unfortunately they include almost no discussion or descriptions of these ceramics albeit the inclusion of two bowl illustrations in a figure titled “Fatimid Splash Ware” (Fig. 26) which look like other examples of what has been called “Fayyumi” ware.⁹⁷ They claim that these types were made in different places, which would contradict Scanlon’s assumption that places Fatimid pottery production in Fustat. But without more discussion it is unclear what this argument is based on.⁹⁸

The principal investigator for the IFAO has been Roland-Pierre Gayraud. His findings from Istant ‘Antar can be used as a comparison to the findings of the ARCE excavations. While he mentions the term “Fayyumi,” he reiterates its regrettably common usage. Like Scanlon he sees them as based on Chinese imitations, although these types in particular should be seen as re-interpretations, not direct imitations. He similarly divides the early ceramics on technical grounds, between the tin-glazed “Fayyumi” types with the earlier lead glazed slip-painted wares.⁹⁹ One example includes a tin-opacified bowl with daubs of decoration in a fairly ordinary style. The bowl exhibits a ledge rim and would probably be best fit into Scanlon’s “Fatimid Fayyumi I,” and was dated from excavations to the 10th century (Fig. 27). In order to display a finer example of the more “classical” Fayyumi style a piece on display in Berlin is illustrated which exhibits radial bands running into the center to form a heavily splashed cruciform shape (Fig. 28). This would also qualify for “Fatimid Fayyumi I,” and is dated by Gayraud to the 11th century.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Pradines et. al, “Excavations in Fatimid Cairo,” 96; One bowl resembles those with polychrome bands in a radial pattern around the rim, the other with the triangles of small dots similar to those published by Baghat and Massoul and “Fayyumi-I” examples.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 229.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 96.

⁹⁹ Gayraud, “Les céramiques égyptiennes à glaçure,” 268.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 266-268.

In a more recent report Gayraud echoes these arguments. The same general material was found in several pits in Istabl ‘Antar. A clear Iraqi imitation is seen in Fig. 29, a large ring footed bowl with four groups of green and brown splashed decorations surrounding a central Kufic inscription possibly reading *al-mulk li-allah*.¹⁰¹ Like the previous report, two examples of what has traditionally been called “Fayyumi” are represented but no mention of this term is made this time. One ring based tin-glazed bowl with daubs of yellow (Fig. 30) is a more elaborate example of Fig. 27.¹⁰²

A fine almost intact example of Gayraud’s “classic” type is provided by a tin-glazed bowl with a ring base (but not the characteristic flat, everted rims common for these types) with yellow, brown, and green radiating around a central triangular shape divided into smaller triangles (Fig. 31). This piece is accurately compared by Gayraud with the Abdel-Tawwab base sherd from the ARCE excavations,¹⁰³ for its radial bands stop at the center instead of running into or in effect creating a central polygon or cruciform which is more typical in this style. All of these examples seem to fit with the rest of the Fustat material, except Gayraud’s dating for the radial band type of “Fayyumi” wares is the 11th century at the *earliest*.¹⁰⁴ This would seem to be in contradiction with the ARCE excavation reports but considering Scanlon’s dating of the specifically termed “Fatimid Fayyumi I” examples to the 11th and very end of the 12th century, the chronology does match well.

¹⁰¹ Idem, “Assemblages de céramiques égyptiennes,” 185.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Cytryn-Silverman, *North Sinai*, 100; Gayraud, “Les céramiques égyptiennes à glaçure,” 268; this is even more reasonable if Scanlon’s contention that some of these types with a more definite red ware are being produced in Egypt through modern times includes specifically types with radial band decoration (not just glaze on glaze types in general).

Alexandria and the Nile Delta

Kom el-Dikka

Established by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., Alexandria's status as the capital of Egypt under the Byzantines ended with the Arab conquests. It was replaced by Fustat, but remained a prominent port city largely independent from Fustat until the Fatimid period.¹⁰⁵

Excavated in hopes of exploring the city's ancient and classical past, the site often referred to as "Kom el-Dikka" was in the Islamic period a dump site for the surrounding urban areas as well as a cemetery and possible industrial area.¹⁰⁶ The site, not unlike Fustat, was greatly disturbed up until present times. In addition, much of the evidence is still unpublished.¹⁰⁷ Rodziewicz was the first to bring the material from Alexandria into the discussion by challenging the standard interpretation of the development of Islamic glazing. Contrary to Lane's assertions that glazing began in Iraq and Iran with the influx of Chinese porcelains into those eastern lands, he argued that the findings from Fustat and now those from Kom el Dikka could now place the development in the west, in Egypt.¹⁰⁸

The red and white slipped wares prominent in Egypt before the advent of Islam, according to Rodziewicz, continue with glazed decoration, a more seamless transition than that of eastern influences. The continuity in forms and decorative motifs is evident, especially in terms of the "early slip-painted lead-glazed wares," from not only the earlier slip-ware types but also other Coptic, Roman North African, and even Cypriot types. He even suggests the white slip to glazing tradition leads to the creation of fritware, which is associated with Fatimid

¹⁰⁵ Labib, s.v. "al-Iskandariyya," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 6 December, 2012).

¹⁰⁶ Kubiak and Redlak, "Storehouse Survey," 32.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰⁸ Rodziewicz, "Egyptian Glazed Pottery," 73.

Egypt.¹⁰⁹ Where exactly the “Fayyumi” types fit in isn’t clear, as he suggests they are part of this early Egyptian-based glazing, but provides little description other than claiming that are being produced in the 8th and 9th centuries.¹¹⁰

In an earlier report Kubiak takes a slightly more conservative approach, admitting the influence and transmission of Chinese-influenced ceramics to Alexandria. But he also points out the western influences, and ultimately argues that nothing is actually being produced locally at this period, it is host to a variety of ceramic imports coming from multiple sources.¹¹¹

Eventually Kubiak and others began going through the finds more thoroughly in an attempt to try and better define some of the perceived local, or at least Egyptian, types. In a survey from the ceramic storehouse by Kubiak and Redlak, “Fayyumi” wares seem to be organized and defined in similar parameters to that of Fustat: “mainly 11th century polychrome tin-glazed products.”¹¹² “Coptic-glazed” wares reverted to Scanlon’s term of “early slip-painted lead-glazed wares,” and accordingly associated with periods predating the appearance of tin-glazed ceramics with polychrome decoration so often called “Fayyumi” wares.¹¹³

Despite several references to sherds found in the recent Polish excavations at Kom el Dikka none of what they describe as “Fayyumi” is ever discussed in detail. The only reference to any kind of dating is given in a preliminary report that says “Fayyumi” sherds were found in a 9th-10th century context.¹¹⁴ One is left to assume that sherds of glazed pottery large enough to be identified as tin-glazed or exhibiting multiple colors may be called “Fayyumi” if it does not also

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 75; Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, 53-54.

¹¹⁰ Rodziewicz, “Egyptian Glazed Pottery,” 73-75.

¹¹¹ Kubiak, “Overseas Pottery Trade,” 10.

¹¹² Idem and Redlak, “Storehouse Survey,” 37.

¹¹³ Ibid., 36.

¹¹⁴ Majcherek, “Preliminary Report 2006/2007,” 42.

include some kind of further identifiable feature, but little more can be ascertained.¹¹⁵

Fortunately some other studies have been made on the Alexandrian pottery with somewhat more detailed analysis.

Veronique François published several pieces in two reports that show the lasting influence of the term from earlier Tebtynis excavations. Referring to the types as “céramiques du Fayyoum,” she claims they are influenced by contemporary Mesopotamian ceramics and Chinese imports.¹¹⁶ At first she assigns them to the 9th century, but later seems to adjust this to a period starting in the 10th century until the 13th.¹¹⁷ One ornate sherd of a tin-opacified bowl with polychrome stripes likely running from the rim (Fig. 32) recalls the finer radial-band decorated vessels where yellow glaze is used to separate brown, green, or manganese rays. The use of turquoise is also exceptional, not in tin-glazed ceramics in general but specifically for these examples with radial polychrome bands. Like Abdel-Tawwab’s report, an example of a T’ang imitation attempt is provided, this time providing a more convincing connection between the two (Fig. 33).

More examples of “Fayoum” ceramics are published in a complete work overviewing the medieval ceramics of Alexandria, and no point of production is ever identified. Instead they are treated as generally Egyptian products, and the many examples coming from other sites in Egypt are noted. While the definition seems to be generally polychrome decorated tin-glazed wares from Egypt, many of the pieces from Kom el-Dikka are rim sherds with the typical stripes running down to the center of the vessel. But there is quite a variety in the forms displayed (Fig. 33). Many of them feature a flat, everted rim but some are more like simple ledge rims, or just

¹¹⁵ Judging from a ceramics report from 2002/2003 from the Polish Kom el-Dikka excavations with excellent color plates and fuller analysis, more in depth studies will be (hopefully) forthcoming, see Redlak, “Syro-Egyptian Ceramics,” 46-52.

¹¹⁶ François, *Céramiques médiévales à Alexandrie*, 22.

¹¹⁷ Idem, “La céramique médiévale d’Alexandrie,” 327.

straight. Not surprisingly, the base sherds all exhibit ring bases and it could be assumed the vast majority of the sherds, had they been uncovered as complete vessels, would have included them as well.¹¹⁸

In terms of glaze decoration, the examples are divided into three types. Group one consists of daubs and dots applied with slip-painting, an occurrence Scanlon describes at Fustat, which leaves a more splashed or dripping look (Fig. 35). The second group consists of examples with splashed polychrome decoration on an opacified white surface, presumably a tin-glaze. This results in some opacity, but also a continued slur of colors over this background (Fig. 36). Finally a third group describes a type where all the colors have been opacified, and it is no longer possible to distinguish from the background color that they have been painted on (Fig. 37).¹¹⁹ Most examples with the thin radial-band decoration running from rim to base would fall into this category, as a black and white image of Fig. 32 is included in this group. This reminds one of Scanlon's "Fayyumi-I," but the two previous descriptions fail to fit into the "Fayyumi-II" type. Again, a glazing technique-based division system is valuable for categorizing these types. But without an analysis of their wares it is hard to know whether some of the so-called Chinese imitations were actually from Mesopotamia. The dating of these types to the 10th to the 13th century doesn't seem to be linked with any of the archaeological context from which they came, but instead with comparative publications from other sites in Egypt.

Abu Mina

While François and others may have worked off of Kubiak's and Scanlon's interpretations for the dating of "Fayyumi" types, Engemann very much argues "against the

¹¹⁸ Idem, *Céramiques médiévales à Alexandrie*, 34-36, 59.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

flow” as Rodziewicz had.¹²⁰ Engemann insists that based on stratigraphy of the site and numismatic evidence, contrary to the traditional view that Abu Mina was inhabited until the 12th or 13th centuries, the settlement met a serious decline sometime in the 9th century. As a result, the ceramics unearthed, including so called “Fayyumi” wares, “graffito (sgraffito) wares,” and “underglaze slip-painted wares,” should be dated to no later than the mid-9th century.¹²¹

Abu Mina was a major pilgrimage site in late antiquity for the Christian population in Egypt. When pilgrimage to the site ended is not known, but the History of the Patriarchs of Egypt suggests it continued at least until 859 AD. While Engemann notes the lack of 9th century coins, he argues that the evidence of pottery kilns suggest that it was in fact inhabited until the mid to late 9th century. However, while he claims historical sources that suggest a later occupation are unreliable, he relies solely on the accounts of the Christian Patriarchs to build his chronology.¹²² Based on his findings, continued occupation at the site after the confiscation of Church properties in the 9th century wouldn’t necessarily mean the desertion of the site or the end to the use of the pottery kilns.

Still, the consideration of rims and use of underglaze slip-painting does suggest that glazing did begin in Egypt at a very early date, and that many types of glazed wares from Egypt, particularly ones discussed by Philon in the Benaki Collection, could be dated earlier.¹²³ But the examples of so-called “Fayyumi” types are never actually described in the article. Fig. 38 displays five examples of ceramics from Abu Mina described as “Fayyumi” wares. While the first bowl appears to be quite similar to some vessels from Fustat (Figs. 7-9, 29) the others are difficult to identify without more description. The rims displayed on all of the types he discusses

¹²⁰ Engemann, “Early Islamic Glazed Pottery,” 63.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 64.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

are in fact much different from the Mesopotamian bowl forms, and do in fact relate much more closely to pre-Islamic slipped ware types from Egypt, including sites in the Nile Delta. But a specifically flat, everted rim like the ones Philon discusses as evidence of a link to later Egyptian luster wares is not present in any of the vessels in Fig. 38, nor in any of the other Abu Mina early glazed wares.

In general, the material from Alexandria and Abu Mina matches well with Fustat, but does little in supplying any alternative interpretations or new evidence. Hopefully more will be published in the future.¹²⁴ But based on arguments put forth by excavators from Kom el-Dikka and Abu Mina, it is necessary to remain skeptical of the early influences of Chinese and Iraqi pottery traditions (and perhaps generalize our time frame to the 8th to 12th or 13th centuries). If nothing else, a review of excavations in the Fayyum will help to better understand the development of the problematic term and examine the original pieces that were given this name.

The Fayyum

Separated from the Nile River valley by bluffs, the Fayyum is a major depression west of the river in Middle Egypt. The region was a major center of Coptic Christianity even several hundred years after the Islamic conquest of the major settlements of Egypt and was said to have over thirty different monasteries. The region is marked by its remoteness, which lasted up until the 19th century, when a railway was established under Muḥammad ‘Alī.¹²⁵ The inaccessibility of this part of Egypt and the comparatively significant amount of glazed ceramics found there is

¹²⁴ Darlene Brook Hedstrom has reported “Fayyumi” wares to have been found at the site of the monastery of John the Little in Wadi Natrun, southwest of the Nile Delta. Some sherds have also been reported at the site of Kellia, see Ballet, “Céramique tardive des Kellia,” 303. The John the Little ceramics are still unpublished, but perhaps these excavation reports will add to our knowledge of so-called “Fayyumi” wares in the Delta, and the rest of Egypt.

¹²⁵ Holt, s.v. “al-Fayyūm,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 15 September, 2012).

certainly an anomaly of sorts if so-called “Fayyumi” wares were really only being produced in Fustat. On the other hand, if ceramics were being produced locally, the chance that the population had remained predominantly Christian for some time begs the question of how and why the Coptic potters had adopted Chinese (via Iraq) ceramic styles over their own established traditions.

Tebtynis

In the 1930’s a team of Italian archaeologists discovered a correlation between pottery found at the monastery at Tebtynis in the Fayyum and some *bacini* implanted in the tower of the Pomposa Abbey, in northern Italy. Gaetano Ballardini published illustrations of a number of the bowls, discussed in the following chapter, as well as some of the sherds from the Egyptian excavations as a form of comparison (Fig. 39).¹²⁶ Believing at first that they were associated with the monastery, the Italian group referred to them as “Fayyumi” wares. Gilbert Bagnani also published a plate of Tebtynis ceramics, one which displayed several different vessels (Fig. 40).¹²⁷ The two smaller, very round form bowls seem to be decorated with daubs of glaze, but the larger plate exhibits an exceptional decoration of a ring of triangles around concentric hexagons that could possibly represent the sun. The ledge rim of the plate includes radial bands that seem to run down to the triangular border motif.

Ballardini later compiled all the material together in a larger work, *L'Eredità ceramistica dell'antico mondo romano*, which argued that the ceramics were originally produced there in the Fayyum. Based on these early images, it seems the only pottery they defined as “Fayyumi” wares were those with radial bands running from the rim, many of them exhibiting a flat, everted

¹²⁶ Ballardini, “Pomposa,” Pl. 30e.

¹²⁷ Bagnani, “Scoperte di ceramiche in Egitto,” pl. 18.

rim of varying width, but there may have been many other types of glazed wares. Hugo Blake and Francesco Aguzzi, in a report on some other Italian *bacini*, note that slag from a presumed kiln in Tebtynis was found, but make no reference to it.¹²⁸ Overall there seems to be much less archaeological evidence that these “Fayyumi” types were made in the Fayyum than that of Fustat.

One of Ballardini’s most valuable contributions is his position that these bowls of polychrome radial bands running down the interior have their colors swirled together enough to almost imitate a marbling effect.¹²⁹ He argues this is done in the tradition of Roman glass-making, in attempt to recreate the effects of marble or precious stones. In fact this practice was known well before Roman times in Egypt and many works of art from ancient Egypt appear to attempt this same style (Fig. 41). But as we have seen, there are also examples of marvered glass from Fustat (Fig. 4), and elsewhere in the Islamic world. Given the location of some of the Fustat glass finds with “Coptic-glazed” or “slip-painted early lead glazed” wares of a similar style, it would seem early Islamic glass and ceramics from Egypt shared similar tendencies in terms of decoration, and both drew from a longer, pre-Islamic Egyptian artistic tradition in regards to marbled or marvered styles.

More recent excavations have also taken place at Tebtynis except with far fewer outstanding finds from the Islamic period. Most of the glazed ceramics were merely sherds, and exhibited a much more varied set of decorations than the apparently large quantity of radial-band

¹²⁸ Blake and Aguzzi, “Torre Civica *Bacini*,” 105; they go on to challenge Scanlon’s discussion of wasters for the same reasons as previously discussed, but seem to have missed his discussion of the incised wares and instead are unable to find the reference from “Pits of Fustat” cited by Philon in her discussion of the Benaki Collection material.

¹²⁹ Ballardini, *L'Eredità*, 156; Philon, *Benaki*, 38; the best example of this style can be found in the Benaki Collection, Fig. 97, pl. 3, where turquoise and bright yellow swirl together in the center resembling a kind of marble pattern. Though it is worth noting the Tebtynis examples seem to be more of the controlled-glaze variety where lozenges and triangles, or even large cruciform patterns are attainable in the center of the vessel from the radial bands of glaze.

decorated pieces from the Italian excavations. From the general description of the glaze, some vessels found in 1998 seem to be in the same category as many of the other types of ceramics we have seen in Egyptian sites: streaks or daubs of green, brown, and yellow under a transparent glaze and over an opacified surface.¹³⁰ While one of the images (Fig. 42) resembles a bowl identified as “Fayyumi” from excavations in the Sinai (Fig. 69) because of the use of large streaks of green and purple, the other examples (Fig. 43-44) seem to just have random applications of polychrome glazing.

Surprisingly, these vessels are all described as having a “pâte d’Assouan,” meaning they have a pink ware.¹³¹ How this pinkish buff ware often associated with Upper Egypt and particularly Aswan may be differentiated from the sometimes white to pinkish ware described by Scanlon from Fustat examples is unexplained. A set of sherds (Fig. 45) was found the following season that also had polychrome decoration under a transparent glaze. One sherd had some splashed bands running down the straight rim, similar to Iraqi styles. The other two had more complicated designs with daubs or dots in between painted bands.¹³² While the whole vessels had ledge rims, these sherds did not. Ultimately the pottery from 1998 was dated to the 9th to 11th centuries, while the next year’s finds were dated between the 9th and 10th, perhaps on account of the straight rims or the use of only brown and green glazes. Once again, the ceramics from this excavation were based on comparative reports as opposed to the site’s strata itself.¹³³

¹³⁰ Rousset and Marchand, “Tebtynis 1998,” 256-257, 260, fig. 33.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 257.

¹³² *Idem*, “Sector nord de Tebtynis,” 427, Fig. 23, 435, F23.

¹³³ *Idem*, “Tebtynis 1998,” 257.

Naqlun and Hawara

The site of Naklonni, or Deir al-Naqlun as it is often referred to today, was another prominent monastic site north of Tebtynis in the Fayyum, especially during the 6th and 7th centuries.¹³⁴ Based on evidence of occupation, as well as the presence of Mamluk period pottery, it seems the site was inhabited until at least the 14th century.¹³⁵ Much of the earlier glazed pottery came from disturbed stratigraphy, and like other reports, the ceramics are dated on comparative terms. Anetta Lyzwa, familiar with the Kom el Dikka excavations, devotes a section of a Naqlun ceramics report to “Fayyumi ware,” and claims that these types are mostly datable to the 11th century.¹³⁶

Four items are described: the first two incomplete bowls, one bowl sherd, and finally an incomplete plate. They all consist of a pinkish-buff ware. There is no mention of tin-glazing, but a cream surface where decoration is applied under a translucent glaze sounds identical to the later finds from Tebtynis, and tin-opacified and underglaze painted ceramics in general. The vessels were decorated in streaks or daubs of purple, brown, and beige, also similar to other Fayyum examples, but their forms are unspecified. They were found with some Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito wares, so it is not impossible that these sherds also included ring bases in their complete forms.¹³⁷

Perhaps more valuable than this brief description of Naqlun “Fayyumi” types is the earlier evidence from the site. While Scanlon argues ring bases are a characteristic of “Fayyumi” wares, influenced by the Chinese ceramic traditions and Mesopotamian imports, the late Roman and Coptic pottery of Naqlun actually includes many examples of unglazed ceramics featuring

¹³⁴ Godlewski, “Deir el Naqlun,” 49.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Lyzwa, “Naqlun 2001,” 187.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

ring bases (Fig. 46) (as well as the more expected ledge rims).¹³⁸ These forms were typically assigned to 650 at the latest, but excavations in Naqlun suggest they could have been in production into the 8th or even 9th centuries.¹³⁹ Other examples from the same site dated to the 7th or beginning of the 8th century also exhibit ring bases (Fig. 47).¹⁴⁰ Admittedly, they are not the same as the high flat, ring bases from blue on white types from Abbasid Iraq, but their presence is notable, especially given the forms published in Scanlon's later article.

One final note on the Fayyum is from the site of Hawara. Thoroughly excavated by the famous Egyptologist Flinders Petrie in the 19th century, there is a chance some so-called "Fayyumi" sherds were identified as dating to the Roman period. One piece in particular (Fig. 48) includes green, yellow, and brown under a translucent glaze and suggests the context had been disturbed somehow in the early Islamic or medieval period.¹⁴¹ As a result, it should at least be considered that some of the earlier Egyptologists were encountering Islamic ceramics, even some that might be identified as "Fayyumi" wares, and were either assigning them to a different period or discarding them in an attempt to look for a more ancient past.

The evidence from the Fayyum is not overwhelming given that it was the originally perceived production center for what has become an eclectic grouping of ceramics. The most distinct type, of thin radial bands running down the rim, is largely published by excavations that have taken place over eight years ago. The other excavations there give brief descriptions and no local dates for the pieces uncovered. While there is apparently more to come, and perhaps some of what may have originally been called "Fayyumi" has been incorrectly identified and organized with other groups, we can only come to the conclusion that there was a sizeable

¹³⁸ Górecki, "The Pottery," 163-165.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 167.

¹⁴⁰ Godlewski, "Deir el Naqlun," 50.

¹⁴¹ Quirke, "Hawara."

number of presumably tin-glazed ceramics, many of the radial-band type, used at sites in the Fayyum between the 9th and 11th centuries. When and where they were being produced exactly cannot be determined. But the existence of ring bases with ledge rims on unglazed pottery from the late Roman and Coptic traditions of the Fayyum is markedly different than what we have seen in the Nile Delta.

Upper Egypt

Bahnasa

The primary source that feeds the Fayyum oasis its water is the Bahr Yusuf, a canal that runs parallel to the Nile River and connects to the Fayyum area. To the south of the Fayyum along the bank of this waterway is the site of Bahnasa, or classical Oxyrhynchus, and today part of the Minya governorate. The site was important to the Coptic community for its association with the early development of Christianity in Egypt and its holy association with the flight of the holy family to Egypt from Palestine. In fact it seems Bahnasa remained a prominent Coptic center with many churches well into the 10th century.¹⁴² The site reportedly had kiln wasters similar to a splash-glazed bowl in the Tareq Rajab Museum described by Geza Fehérvári as “so-called ‘Fayyoumi’ ware.” Issue of the kilns, the wasters, and the styles of pottery there is complicated, but the evidence from Bahnasa provides probably the best evidence for the strong local Coptic pottery influences in so called “Fayyumi” wares.

Fehérvári, much like Rodziewicz or Engemann, groups “Coptic-glazed” wares and “Fayyumi” wares into the same general discussion, and as a result the specific style of the wasters and location of the kilns is important to distinguish. Without a doubt, nice examples of the radial band style of “Fayyumi” wares like those at Fustat and Tebtynis were found near a kiln

¹⁴² Fehérvári et. al, *Bahnasa*, 4-6.

site in Area F at Bahnasa. But the area around this kiln was already in re-use in the Byzantine-Coptic period, and seems to have been mainly used in the late Roman period. The sherds found there were thrown into what appears to have become a cesspit in later periods, and Fehérvári dates these sherds to the 10th or 11th century, long after the kiln was in use.¹⁴³ The finest examples from deposits within the old kiln are sherds of radial band decorated vessels (Fig. 49) and fragments of a bowl with splashed daubs running into the well (Fig. 50) like Scanlon's "Fatimid Fayyumi-I" or *bacini* from northern Italy discussed in Chapter 3. But these cannot be the supposed wasters.

One sherd identified as a waster was not found near a kiln at all but in Area E. A fragment of a bowl with green splashes on both sides and the flat, everted rim (Fig. 51) was allegedly partially burnt in a kiln. Other types like it found at the site are made of red earthenware "covered with a thin white slip."¹⁴⁴ Another notable find from the same part of the site was a flat bottomed dish with an almost flat, everted rim (Fig. 52). It featured a distinct triangle of stippled dots and other splashes of glazes on a white opacified base glaze which relates to many examples of from the "Fayyumi-I" type.

The Bahnasa sherds above are all categorized as part of Philon's four subgroups of styles from pieces in the Benaki collection in Athens. Fehérvári, like Philon, includes "Coptic-glazed" wares with so-called "Fayyumi" types and it is the cause for much confusion. Color plates include two sherds of what Fehérvári identifies as "North African polychrome glazed wares" (Fig. 53) that really look nothing like what Philon has categorized as such. Nor do they exactly match another piece described as part of this subgroup. Instead it appears to be much more similar to what Whitcomb and Rodziewicz called "Coptic-glazed wares" based on its central

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

white slip-painted triangle design (Fig. 54). As Fehérvári points out, a similar motif is found on a sherd of a polychrome radial band decorated sherd (Fig. 55) from Area F, similar to Fig. 12 from Fustat. In addition a complete vessel in the British Museum (Fig. 165) has this same type of central triangular decoration, and is practically identical in form and decorative style to an almost complete vessel from Fustat (Fig. 31).

Other sherds like this, with blurred, radial streaks in manganese divided by green and yellow bands of color (Fig. 56) were found near the kiln area as well although without much context. But the likely “Coptic-glazed” or “slip painted early lead-glazed” sherd was also found near this area with a glass weight dating to the reign of the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim (996-1021).¹⁴⁵ It seems the early Coptic slip-painting traditions may have lasted up until the same period that polychrome glazed bowls typically decorated under translucent glazes were being produced at Bahnasa, and had similar decoration on the center of the bowl. The evidence for kiln wasters is not overwhelming. But if we are to take Fehérvári’s word it would seem Bahnasa was producing tin-opacified bowls decorated with radial daub-splashing in green and other colors under a translucent glaze. While there is no evidence that the more highly colored and elaborately decorated types such as Figs. 55-56 were necessarily produced there, the wasters are at least of a similar production in terms of technique and form.

Ashmunein

Further south along the Nile also in the Minya governorate is a site known as Ashmunein, excavated for its ancient Egyptian occupation periods. But excavation of the later strata was handled well and relatively reliable dating can be provided from the site for the glazed ceramic finds. Some of the finds were identified by Donald Bailey, one of the excavators, as “Fayyumi”

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

wares based on the typologies of Nubian sites arranged by Adams. Ashmunein boasts several examples of these so-called “Fayyumi” wares, and as one of the few sites that is not only comparing with the findings of Fustat, provides some basis for comparison for material discussed below.

Five sherds described by Bailey as “Fayyumi polychrome bowls” were found during excavations. Despite being few in number, they exhibit a wide range of rim forms (Fig. 57), some flaring, some straight; one of them appears to have a ledge. The only base sherd has a triangular-shaped ring base, much more like the forms found in Naqlun than anything from Mesopotamia. The first example (Fig. 58), perhaps the best preserved, exhibits the U-shaped patterns of bi-chrome glaze around the rim over an opacified background much like examples from Fustat (Fig. 7) or the first example from Abu Mina (Fig. 38). It was found in what has been described as a relatively secure context datable to the 9th or 10th century.¹⁴⁶

From an even more secure context, probably 9th century but perhaps at the very latest 10th, came two more similar sherds (Fig. 59). One in particular had a similar glaze decoration to a piece from Tebtynis (Fig. 44), but the other was too small to provide much more of an indication of the glaze decoration.¹⁴⁷ There is not a lot of material, but Bailey adds helpful arguments that provide a conciliation of sorts between the findings at Abu Mina and the pieces in the Benaki Collection dated to the 10th, 11th, or even 12th centuries by Philon. While the Ashmunein evidence would suggest the polychrome splash-glazed on white types from Egypt are later than the 8th century, they must be earlier than the 11th or 12th as Philon suggests.¹⁴⁸ He adds

¹⁴⁶ Bailey, *Ashmunein V*, 162.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

that their production in the Fayyum is questionable, but that Fustat and Alexandria seem to have been producing a lot of glazed ceramics at an early stage.¹⁴⁹

Bailey also provides some relevant information for the glazed sherd from Hawara. Apparently Petrie had also found some “bright glazed bowls, of yellow black and green run roughly together” below a brick built mummy chamber that he attributed to the Roman period. Based on this description it appears the chamber could have been disturbed at some point in the medieval period. It seems more polychrome glazed wares were found in the 20th century but were classified as Roman ceramics. The extent of this mistake though, is difficult to estimate. All in all, Ashmunein helps support what is a natural conclusion: the glazing techniques developed in the 8th century in Abbasid Iraq were now being used to create new decorations on pottery in Egypt in the 9th and into the 10th century.

Apa Shenute

Continuing on down the Nile is another monastic site where “Fayyumi” wares have been recorded.¹⁵⁰ The Monastery of Apa Shenute near Sohag was mainly in use during pre-Islamic times, but the site must have been inhabited in later times given the existence of medieval ceramics there.¹⁵¹ After a brief surface survey, some sherds were identified by Darlene Brooks Hedstrom to be “Fayyumi wares.” She dated the pieces to the 8th to 10th century, but this was based on Engemann’s findings from Abu Mina, which as discussed do not actually refer to any

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁵⁰ “Fayyumi Pottery” defined as Chinese imitation wares was also recovered in Asyut, between Ashmunein and Sohag, but the examples are not discussed nor illustrated in the report, see Kahl, Khadragy, and Verhoeven, “The Asyut Project 2007,” 207.

¹⁵¹ Grossman et. al, “Apa Shenute,” 167.

“Fayyumi” types specifically.¹⁵² The only image provided is of a “fragment with black and blue splash,” which also includes a sherd described as “Coptic glaze” to the left (Fig. 60).¹⁵³

Tod

One site along the Nile just north of Luxor where “Fayyumi” types were reported is al-Tud, or Tod. Much like some of the previously discussed reports from the Delta or the Fayyum, the dating of these wares is based on other sites’ findings, and the glazed examples are discussed fairly generally. Polychrome glazed wares are divided into two groups, one distinguished by pink or beige ware vessels covered in a white slip covered by dripped, splashed, stained, or dotted colors under a transparent glaze (Fig. 61). The second group consists of similar glazing techniques, but with darker purple or black and brown colors, and with foliate scrolls of decoration (Fig. 62).¹⁵⁴ The first group in particular sounds like many examples from Fustat and elsewhere in Egypt, but the second group should not be forgotten as an example of underglaze painted bowls with distinguishable forms of decoration.

It seems the examples from Upper Egypt add in some cases more variety to an already complicated situation. But the datable contexts from Ashmunein suggest an earlier date for some of the Mesopotamian imitation so-called “Fayyumi” types and evidence of wasters and connections between “Coptic-glazed” types and radial-band underglaze wares at Bahnasa provide evidence further south along the Nile that perhaps some of these types are being produced locally. Their addition to the evidence from sites in Nubia, both in southern Egypt and North Sudan, will help to create a corpus of glazed ceramics matching general descriptions of wares found in Fustat and the Delta presumed to have been produced there.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Joel, “Céramiques glaçurées,” 2-3.

Nubia

While the region of Nubia represented a kind of unknown and foreign land in the minds of medieval writers, it seems trade between it and Lower Egypt was an important aspect of the early Islamic and Medieval Egyptian economy. Nubia was folded into the rest of Egypt by 645 AD and under the Umayyads was a major exporter of slaves, iron, and camels. The slave trade continued for some time along with later attempts at exploiting the region for gold. It wasn't until the Fatimid period, when their developed naval fleet reached and controlled the upper extents of the Nile River that Nubia became more connected to the rest of Egypt. But real political influence over Nubia from Cairo wavered considerably into the medieval period, and was almost nonexistent under the early Mamluks.¹⁵⁵

According to Adams, the principal excavator of sites of Nubia, alkaline glazed wares do not begin appearing in Nubia until the 11th century, but lead-glazes are common from an earlier period. Overall the glazed wares are categorized together under the letter "G" and smaller sub-categories relate closely with other glazed types found in Egypt, including tin-glazed types with radial bands. Not surprisingly there are a variety of clays used in the glazed vessels. Like Scanlon, he notes that the most common form is footed, or includes a ring base.¹⁵⁶

Qasr Ibrim

One of the earliest reports of "Fayyumi" types comes from Qasr Ibrim, north of Lake Nasser in the south of Egypt. The "Podium Site" was inhabited through many periods, but the excavators report finding some "Fayyumi" vases believed to be imported in the late 12th

¹⁵⁵ Hilelson and Christides, s.v. "Nūba," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 19 December, 2012).

¹⁵⁶ Adams, *Nubia Industries II*, 591.

century.¹⁵⁷ Judging from a photograph of “Fayumi” or “Moslem” sherds (Fig. 63) the term seems to be used to generally describe later, glazed ceramics.¹⁵⁸ But none of the pieces look much like anything else discussed in this study. Perhaps the caption is a mistake, because later in the report “Fayumi” dishes are described as having green and white blotches on yellow slips. This is fairly familiar, although the yellow ware is a surprise and different from the buff brown to pinkish often described from Fustat or Alexandria (or Aswan for that matter). These are dated, apparently under the suggestion of Adams, to the 11th century.¹⁵⁹

Meinarti

Adams discusses some of his own “Fayyumi” ware findings in a report on the site of Meinarti. Most of what he found was sherds, but this site helped to explain in more specifics some of the glazed wares. In particular, he identifies a “so-called Fayyumi five color style” as part of the early glazed ware typology (Fig. 64). He also discusses other polychrome glazed types, separating them according to the background color (green on yellow versus green and brown on white) (Fig. 65).¹⁶⁰ The former category could be used to describe many of the pieces with radial lines running from the rim, but the specific association with a certain number of colors probably excludes many related types. The latter types feature glazing decoration too abstract for what Adams considers to be “Fayyumi” ware: “decoration in the Fayyumi style is somewhat more formal, involving squares, triangles, or lozenges of blue, green, yellow, and

¹⁵⁷ Friend, “Qasr Ibrim,” 41.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pl. XII.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 59; “Fayyumi,” wares are also reported from a nearby site, Gebel Adda, but the excavations there from the 1960’s are largely unpublished.

¹⁶⁰ Adams “Meinarti III,” 63.

white, separated by broad lines of black. The designs in all cases have a runny or blurred appearance, the result of using a lead rather than an alkaline glaze.”¹⁶¹

He agrees with the general assumption that these polychrome glazed types are imitating Chinese wares (or at least imitating Chinese imitations from Iraq and Iran). Where his findings divert from Scanlon’s at Fustat is the dating. While Adams consistently argues these types come much earlier, the actual levels where these kinds of pottery are found at Meinarti date to Phases 5a, 5b, and 5c, generally covering the time period between 1200 to 1365. While in his larger work he suggests the glazed wares begin around the 1020-1172 period,¹⁶² possibly as a result of Fatimid influence further up the Nile, it seems the more elaborately polychrome glazed sherds are really being found much later. On the other hand, this Fatimid influence is established by the presence of Egyptian luster wares at Nubian sites like Meinarti and Kulubnarti.¹⁶³

Soba East, Kulubnarti, and sites in the Eastern Desert have also produced so-called “Fayyumi” wares.¹⁶⁴ The Soba finds are generally attributed by the excavators to the 11th to 13th centuries.¹⁶⁵ This is late compared with what we have seen, but considering its long distance up the Nile it suggests these wares were made in Lower Egypt and it took sometime before they made their way south, or began to be produced locally. In general the Nubian evidence from a variety of sites is generally homogenous, but differs somewhat from what has been found to the North. The use of Nile mud, as opposed to Nile clay, is also of note, although some finer sediments are used and a pinkish ware is still found in many of the glazed types.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid; Idem, *Nubia Industries II*, 591; the earliest of the glazed wares are attributed to a period between 950 and 110, much later than blue on white imitations from Egypt found in Lower Egypt sites, see Ibid., 614.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 256.

¹⁶⁴ Welsby and Anderson, *Sudan: Ancient Treasures*, 240.

¹⁶⁵ Welsby, *Soba II*, 174.

¹⁶⁶ Adams, *Nubia Industries II*, 588, 591.

Finally, the four or five color-scheme used to describe one type appears to be the first real attempt at defining the specific radial-band decorated wares as these are identified by their central geometric patterns. The Meinarti photographs would certainly support this. But the use of fewer colors on some, perhaps only three for example, results the number of colors condition somewhat arbitrarily separating vessels that may have been produced or imported from the same site. The tendency of these four or five colored types to exhibit well-controlled glaze decoration producing lozenges or triangles in the center does suggest there were developments even within the radial band decorated styles of so-called “Fayyumi” wares. This possible development will be considered in correlation with pieces found in Palestine and Italy.

Discussion

Egypt has examples of all the reasons why so-called “Fayyumi” wares have become so problematic: lack of a consistent, accepted definition, wide ranging variation among finds, absence of archaeological context or investigation of the clay types, and lack of discussion amongst archaeologists participating in excavations run by over eight different countries. What we have found despite this is that some sense can be made of all this material, at least in terms of dividing the different styles described into more specific groups based on glazing technique and decoration. These divisions seem to align along broad chronological lines, and defining them more accurately based on the archaeological evidence may help to better explain the development of glazing techniques in early Islamic and Medieval Egypt.

Without a doubt the major source of inspiration has been attributed to Chinese T’ang splash wares and other imports that are presumed to have come to this part of the world. But if T’ang wares were not coming to Egypt until the 10th century at the earliest, how are “Fayyumi”

wares or any other Chinese imitations to be seen as imitations if they are consistently found in levels dating to the 9th (or even 8th) century? It seems more likely the Egyptian examples are still more related to the well-established types of ceramics from sites such as Samarra, Basra, and Susa in Iraq. In the mid-8th century they adopted radically new forms, with outcurving rims and ring bases, also believed to be Chinese ceramic influences.¹⁶⁷ These are the forms we see in both “Fayyumi-I” and “Fayyumi-II” types, and in fact it is well-established that these Iraqi types were also present along with their Egyptian imitations in Fustat in the 9th century.¹⁶⁸ So while the influences of the Chinese ceramic tradition are generally accepted, when they actually begin to arrive in Egypt and directly influence the potters there is still in question. It would seem from the evidence at Fustat that they come in the 10th century, too late to have been major influences on the splash glazed styles of so-called “Fayyumi” wares.

With noticeably different rims from the earlier Iraqi forms, but identical to many Egyptian luster ware and Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito bowls, another source of inspiration should be considered for the later radial-band decorated type originally associated with the Fayyum. While “Fayyumi” wares are sometimes pulled into these discussions of early glazed types in Egypt by Rodziewicz and Engemann, if we accept the later dates provided by Scanlon or Gayraud, it would seem polychrome tin-glazed examples, especially those with daubs or radial bands connecting in the center to create geometric shapes are the result of a fusion of traditions. Perhaps remaining enclaves of Coptic potters and artisans attempted to incorporate some of the increasingly popular Iraqi or Chinese-imitation styles into their products. Or, Muslim potters may have been influenced by the slip-painting tradition of the remaining Byzantine-Coptic community. Wishing to create something with the most advanced techniques of their time, they

¹⁶⁷ Mason, *Shine like the Sun*, 42-43.

¹⁶⁸ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 300.

used tin-glazes and let polychrome glazes run during the firing as was standard, but had first formed a bowl with a ledge or flat, everted rim in order to create something more “local,” or more “Egyptian.”

What has been established so far is that in the Fatimid period in Egypt, the fine glazed, locally produced wares are typically broken down into several categories: Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito, Luster ware, and “Fayyumi” wares. The first two are easily identifiable and well established in the Fatimid period. As a result, “Fayyumi” has been a term used to describe anything else that is glazed but does not fit into these categories. The similarity of some types to earlier lead-glazed slip-painted wares from Egypt has caused an added layer of confusion. While the majority of the pieces described as “Fayyumi” exhibit polychrome decoration and tin-glazing, there is too much variety in the styles of decoration and forms to be categorized as a single type. The review of Egyptian material is not enough to prove that they were only produced in Fustat, but we can’t say for sure that they were produced anywhere else with the exception of possible wasters of a 10th or 11th century style at Bahnasa.

Some of the noticeable decorations do seem to generally align with differences in forms and glazing techniques. One major distinction we can make is between bowls that have clear parallels to white opacified Abbasid Iraq prototypes and are probably being made not much later, as opposed to later types that have a much more original decorative style and almost always use underglaze decoration. Bowls with fewer colors but distinct U-shaped splashes around the rim are seen repeatedly, and are very much like the earlier Iraqi models, especially in terms of form. Another similar type with a white background and small dots that form triangles could also be seen as part of the earlier group.

Bowls with radial bands of glaze in several colors running down from the rim, often with ring bases and flat, everted rims are a definite outlier, although it should be noted that glazes in radial bands around the interior of the rim, especially on straight rim vessel forms, is very well established at Samarra as well as Susa.¹⁶⁹ But the number of types of colors used and the control of the glazes may indicate several developments in this larger family of radial band decorated vessels. Other bowls with a similar form with daubs or more irregular splashes of glaze, recalling earlier and simpler lead-glazed styles should be considered related to the former. There are many examples of similar wares from the Sinai, Palestine and possibly even as far north as Syria, that may help to better define these different decorative groups. Perhaps wares imported from Egypt found in datable contexts can help us narrow down a chronology for the development of these different styles, and provide a better definition for the various ceramics so often termed “Fayyumi” wares.

The issue of color is also important, not just because Adams uses it to define a more specific type, but also because some colors have been argued to denote a later date than others. As Engemann suggests, “Coptic Glazed wares and Fayyumi wares are amongst the earliest of such wares and that amongst the latter, those with mainly turquoise color and those with black radiating patterns on a grey white ground are early, while those with more complex patterns and with yellow and manganese-brown colors are later.”¹⁷⁰ In general this may relate to the Adams “five color” type in that more colors can create for more geometric patterns if drawn together in the center, while vessels with fewer colors seem to be just display the glazes swirled together in the center. Whether certain colors, like yellow, can be used to indicate a later dating is still in question.

¹⁶⁹ Falkner, *1986 Survey at Samarra*, 14, pls. 15-20; especially 17a and 17b, which feature a variety of glazed decorations identical to almost all of the types reviewed in this chapter.

¹⁷⁰ Bailey, *Ashmunein V*, 112.

Chapter 3

The Sinai, Red Sea and Across the Mediterranean

Introduction

Before discussing some of the more recently published evidence from Palestine, which has greatly changed the way “Fayyumi” wares are being defined and classified, it is necessary to look at several publications that deal with the geographic region that separates Egypt from what we may call Greater Syria. In the Sinai, two excavations are of particular importance. The first took place at the two sites of Raya and al-Tur in the western Sinai on the Gulf of Suez by a Japanese team from Waseda University in the 1990’s. Another sizeable project was undertaken by Israeli archaeologists before the Sinai was returned to Egypt in the 1970’s. This territory included the sites of Bardawil, Shaykh Zuwayyd, and Qatya, which produced most of the ceramic finds. Generally speaking this area stretches from the Suez Canal to the Rafah area of the Gaza Strip (Fig. 1). The Islamic ceramics from these excavations are laid out in a comprehensive thesis by Katia Cytryn-Silverman. Finally, the site of Aqaba/Ayla on the Gulf of Aqaba in the Red Sea was excavated in the 1980’ and 1990’s; its ceramic material has been discussed by Whitcomb. The review of all the material from these three different sites (all undertaken with different approaches) helps to clarify the Egyptian evidence, and explain the importation of some of the more specific types into Palestine. The Sinai and Red Sea evidence will also be compared to some *bacini* from several medieval churches in Italy that provide complete vessel examples which can be approximately dated.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Craiger-Smith, *Lustre Pottery*, 41.

The Sinai and the Red Sea

Raya/al-Tur

The Sinai Peninsula was traditionally an important area in the eastern Mediterranean world because of its holy site of Jebel Musa, where Moses is believed to have received the Ten Commandments from God. The nearby city on the coast, al-Tur lasted as the major Egyptian port for the pilgrimage to Mecca from the introduction of Islam into Egypt until the mid-11th century.¹⁷² On the other side of the Sinai Peninsula, Aqaba flourished as the principal port of Palestine on “the Sea of China.”¹⁷³ Whitcomb identifies three major phases of occupation: the transitional period between the Byzantine and early Islamic occupation of the site, a series of destruction phases in the 10th to 12th centuries when Byzantine and Seljuk threats disrupted Fatimid control of the area, and most importantly for this study an intermediate period from between 800 and 950 AD, when Abbasid influence can be seen in the imported ceramics, and “Fayyumi” wares first begin to arrive from Egypt.¹⁷⁴

Japanese excavations in the Sinai produced a number of glazed table wares and a large amount of specifically “Fayyumi” ware was reportedly uncovered at al-Tur and nearby in a fort found at the site of Raya.¹⁷⁵ These wares are described as Egyptian in origin and appearing at the site from the 9th to the 11th centuries.¹⁷⁶ They note that the vessels are often composed of “whitish compound clay, mostly in a bowl shape.”¹⁷⁷ If nothing else this should differentiate them from the wares of similarly decorated and shaped blue-on-white wares from Iraq which

¹⁷² Honigmann and Bosworth, s.v. “al-Ṭūr,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 18 November, 2012).

¹⁷³ al-Muqaddasī, *Ahsan al-Taqaṣim*, 149.

¹⁷⁴ Whitcomb, “Aqaba Project,” 25.

¹⁷⁵ Kawatoko and Shindo, “Glazed Pottery and Glass,” 95.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 101; The dating criteria is unexplained, but perhaps the presence of an Abbasid coin dating to the reign of Caliph al-Mahdi in the end of the 8th century at a low level in a central street in Raya provides some support that the Islamic glazed pottery found in levels above this and rooms of houses along this street must be dated later, See Kawatoko and Takahashi, “Raya/al-Tur,” 115.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

exhibit a very uniform yellowish-buff body.¹⁷⁸ A set of five partial vessels are pictured and described as “Egyptian so called Fayum glazed pottery excavated in the Raya site.” Two of the sherds are questionable as one has some possible figural decoration (Fig. 66) similar to some pieces discussed by Watson in the al-Sabah Collection (Figs. 173, 175). There is also a piece with a possible Kufic or pseudo-Kufic inscription (Fig. 67) much in the style of early Iraq blue-on-white wares. They may have been made in Egypt but are either part of a different tradition or imitations of another type and should seem to be organized with the “Fayyumi” material because they feature glaze on glaze decoration.

One important note is that the majority of the so-called “Fayyumi” pottery exhibits a white glaze with painted bluish-green and dark purple U-shaped lines or in some cases dots.¹⁷⁹ The description sounds similar to examples from Abu Mina (Fig. 38) or Ashmunein (58). Sure enough one example matches this description (Fig. 68) and shows definite aspects of the Abbasid traditions of blue on white glazing from Iraq. Except instead of a simple green or blue on white or possibly combined with an inscription on the center of the bowl or plate, these examples have many U-shaped loops and have both black and blue (or green) splashed decoration on top of a white opacified background.

Another color plate of an almost complete bowl shows a second parallel to central Egypt (Fig. 69). The few splotches in splashed glaze on a tin-opacified glaze are again Iraqi in style, although the use of more than one color, including a purple-manganese for the splashed bands around the rim is very similar to examples from the more recent Tebtynis excavations (Fig. 42).¹⁸⁰ Another white glazed bowl with a slightly out-curving rim does have bands of decoration that swirl together in the center, but the bands are not striped. They are made up of daubs of dark

¹⁷⁸ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 296.

¹⁷⁹ Kawatoko and Shindo, “Glazed Pottery and Glass,” 95.

¹⁸⁰ Rousset and Marchand, “Tebtynis 1998,” 253-257.

glaze, probably manganese (Fig. 70). Its rim is not as distinctly out-curving as several vessels described as “Late Abbasid splashed glaze wares,” (Figs. 71-72). One of these vessels seems to look much more like some of the radial band decorated examples from the Fayyum, and the other an early model for the later U-shaped polychrome glaze “Fayyumi” examples. The former even has the distinct flat, everted rim while the latter has a more slightly out-curving type like the traditional examples from Abbasid Iraq.¹⁸¹

The only discussion of ware types is a brief note when the authors mention that the majority of the examples, as we have seen, were bowls. They suggest that the so called “Fayyumi” types were made in several places. They were probably aware of Scanlon’s description of wasters at Fustat, and so must be implying that the vessels displayed a variety of wares, suggesting varied provenance. They add that these bowls were probably made for practical use, not highly desirable trade goods.¹⁸²

Like the near-complete “early ‘Fayyumi’ type” pictured in Scanlon’s 1965 report (Fig. 3) that is not later included in his 1993 article, the Raya/al-Tur excavations had several vessels very similar to this style that were later not classified as “Fayyumi” in the pottery and glass summaries.¹⁸³ Two examples in particular (Figs. 73-74) have the same shallow dish form, and glazed lines that run across the body of the vessel but do not radiate. Instead they seem to have paired lines that cross at random. The two pieces are very similar to what Kawatoko and Shindo have termed “early Abbasid glazed wares,” though it seems from Scanlon’s early report that these types of wares were also being produced in Fustat. The poor quality of the images makes it hard to argue one way or the other, but based on the discussions of “Coptic-glazed” wares by Rodziewicz and Whitcomb, it is just as possible these were local developments of Coptic

¹⁸¹ Kawatoko and Shindo, “Glazed Pottery and Glass, 95.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 96.

¹⁸³ Kawatoko and Takahashi, “Raya/al-Tur,” 111-166.

traditions using slip-painting techniques quite distinguishable from any pottery types coming from Abbasid Iraq. Another important set of finds in Raya and al-Tur is the marvered glass (Figs. 75-76). As we saw in Fustat, examples of marvered glass were found along with so-called “Fayyumi” types. While none of the examples here exhibit an attempt to create this kind of style on ceramics, it is clear that the marvered or marbled look style was popular in glass products in the Sinai in the 9th century.¹⁸⁴

North Sinai Excavations

The material from the Israeli excavations in the northern Sinai largely reflects the continuation of the same “Fayyumi” styles but on an even larger scale. In fact the collection of the sites of Shaykh Zuwayyd, Bardawil, and Qatya especially have produced probably the largest collection of “Fayyumi” examples outside of Fustat. Part of this explanation could be that Cytryn-Silverman largely works from Scanlon’s definition, but she makes some exceptions, and ultimately notes that the northern Sinai material matches examples from the second and third groups of Philon’s “wares decorated with different coloured glazes” from the Benaki collection.¹⁸⁵ The exception is her use of the term “white tin-glazed painted ware,” which consist of bowls with a tin-opacified glaze and colored glaze decoration on top of this, something to which Scanlon usually automatically assigned “Fayyumi” wares in general and later Fayyumi-I specifically.¹⁸⁶

Instead of immediately assigning this type to Iraq, as Lane and other scholars tended to associate this type with Samarra, Cytryn-Silverman argues that the Sinai sherds were coming from Fustat, Egypt. Petrographic analysis based on Mason and Keall’s pioneering work suggests

¹⁸⁴ Kawatoko and Shindo, “Glazed Pottery and Glass,” 96-97.

¹⁸⁵ Defined by Philon in *Benaki*, 38-39, and discussed later in Chapter 5 of this work.

¹⁸⁶ Cytryn-Silverman, *North Sinai*, 97; Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 295-296.

that they were in fact coming from Egypt, and even a glance at the ware's pinkish, as opposed to yellow, hue would seem to reaffirm Scanlon's view that Fustat productions were imitating Mesopotamian glaze on glaze types.¹⁸⁷ Like Egyptian examples, there is a variety among their forms. Some are with flat rims, some with ledge or everted styles, and ring and flat bases are apparent (Fig. 77). What ties them all together is the use of white tin-glaze covered by turquoise, green, or manganese glaze.¹⁸⁸ The inclusion of the last color could be evidence of another one of Scanlon's suggestions, that the use manganese glazing is more indicative of Egyptian wares than Iraqi ones.

Also like Scanlon argues, the "Fayyumi" examples are believed to be dating mainly from the Fatimid period. Apparently 600 sherds of this type were found, mostly from Bardawil. They included wares varying in color from brown to reddish-yellow, and petrographic analysis carried out on twelve of the sherds suggested a provenance along the Nile, most likely at Fustat.¹⁸⁹ One important factor noted by Cytryn-Silverman is the issue of alkaline glazing, which was known to have developed in the Fatimid period. In fact the Sinai evidence produced a whole category of "Fatimid alkaline-glazed ware" with close parallels in form to the "white tin-glazed" and "Fatimid Fayyumi" types but should probably be seen as a local attempt to create the effect of Chinese porcelains.¹⁹⁰ It is possible that many examples were using alkaline glazes for the polychrome decorations.¹⁹¹ This could help to relatively date the piece, or clarify a development of a popular style of ceramic decoration.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 99, n.92.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 99.

The most common style of decoration is that of radial bands which “meet at the center, usually mixing randomly.”¹⁹² While this is not surprising and a style that we will see throughout, it is a noted change from Adams’ description from Meinarti and elsewhere that includes the radial lines running into the center to create lozenge, triangular, or geometric patterns in different colors.¹⁹³ This is not the only decoration style for open or closed forms, as polychrome-glazed examples with daubs or spots are also included in the “Fatimid Fayyumi” grouping. While most of the bowls have ring bases, the rims display a variety of styles (Fig. 78). Only several of the illustrated examples include the flat, everted rim, although a color plate of less diagnostic sherds also provides an example (Fig. 79). There were also several jugs with parallels to Fustat examples (Fig. 15) but they are largely incomplete (Fig. 80). The bottom example exhibits a neck decorated with “vertical colored stripes” very similar to one example discussed later in this chapter and one from Palestine.¹⁹⁴ One final piece discussed in this category is a closed-form vessel lid, featuring a bright yellow glaze (Fig. 81). While it is unusual, it does potentially match some Nubian examples discussed by Adams.¹⁹⁵ A number of other pieces are also categorized as “Fayyumi,” but are believed to have been made at a later date.

“Late Fayyumi Ware,” consists of bowls with red or reddish-brown wares, a similar variety in forms, and most importantly, very similar glaze decoration. Very few of these examples were found, only fifteen sherds compared to the six hundred “Fatimid” finds. One possibly divergent characteristic is the common use of yellow, dark-yellow, and often green as well, sometimes in the radial band style.¹⁹⁶ Yellow, however, is quite common amongst the

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁹³ Adams, *Meinarti III*, 63.

¹⁹⁴ Cytryn-Silverman, *North Sinai*, 100.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 101; Adams, *Nubia Industries II* 591.

¹⁹⁶ Cytryn-Silverman, *North Sinai*, 108.

“Fatimid Fayyumi” examples, according to the descriptions of the illustrated types.¹⁹⁷ This “Late Fayyumi” group would seem to correspond well with a “confusing element” amongst the Fustat “Fayyumi” material which had wares of “definite red clay.”¹⁹⁸ Scanlon’s noted discussion of these types still being produced in modern times could help signify the use of the term “Late Fayyumi,” but without any discussion of the archaeological context of these ceramic finds, it is hard to say either way. Most of the dating for the North Sinai evidence is conjectural. Even if the red ware “Fayyumi” types are post-Fatimid, when they were in fact being produced remains undetermined.

Aqaba/Ayla

The ceramic evidence from Aqaba represents a major change in the way that “Fayyumi” wares and early Islamic wares in general were defined. While Kawatoko, Shindo, and Takahashi and Cytryn-Silverman were using Scanlon’s Fustat models, Whitcomb’s discussions argue for different criteria, and offer new considerations as to the influence of the styles of pottery. In turn, his definition is accepted by many archaeologists publishing ceramics from Palestine. More than anywhere else, the Red Sea coast presents an opportunity to see how much the actual ceramic types change when moving from Egypt to Palestine, and how much a difference approach can affect the way pottery dating to the early Islamic period is understood.

The initial identification of “Fayyumi” types in Whitcomb’s Aqaba reports came in a 1988 article on the Fatimid Residence at the site. His determination of what constitutes “Fayyumi” is immediately apparent in his description of the glazed wares. He describes many

¹⁹⁷ Of the 22 illustrated “Fatimid Fayyumi” vessels, 10 exhibit yellow glazing on the interior and others have some yellow glazing on the exterior surfaces. This is hardly a confident sampling of the 600 sherds uncovered, but it does show that yellow glaze was found on all variations of so-called “Fayyumi” wares, regardless of form or ware.

¹⁹⁸ Scanlon, “Fayyumi”, 297.

examples of polychrome splashed ware that Scanlon may have described as “Fayyumi” as simply “splash decorated” and only describes two sherds (Fig. 82) as “Fayyumi” ware.¹⁹⁹ They both include “Orange-red, yellow, dark-yellow, white brown glaze,” on the interior and white on the exterior.²⁰⁰ These colors are applied in radial splashed bands much like types from Fustat, the Delta, the Fayyum, the “five-color Fayyumi” types in Nubia, and the “Fatimid Fayyumi” style from the North Sinai excavations. It is immediately clear that radial bands of polychrome glaze are an identifying factor for this type. Still, Whitcomb is hesitant to give an Egyptian provenance for this particular type, and the ware of these examples is described as “medium sand.”²⁰¹

In a later article on “Coptic Glazed” wares Whitcomb spells out this definition explaining that wares with “bold stripes of radiating color,” would make a more descriptive type for the widely encompassing “Fayyumi” term, as there is concern that some of the more specific “Coptic Glazed” types will be incorrectly identified under the larger heading “Fayyumi.”²⁰² In later publications of Aqaba ceramics he goes on to specifically challenge the term as too general to be useful.²⁰³ In this article he presents a number of divisions to these early glazed types, including “Coptic glazed,” “Splash cream ware,” “Fayyumi,” and “Hijazi.” “Coptic glazed” wares are possibly very early examples of glazing in the region during the Islamic period, taking after slip-painted styles already in use throughout Egypt, and exhibiting a “light-orange pink ware.”²⁰⁴ A variation on this type with similar ledge rims and linear painted motifs, but a

¹⁹⁹ Whitcomb, “Fatimid Residence,” 212.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² Whitcomb, “Coptic Glazed Ceramics,” 181; In his later article Scanlon more or less agrees with these problems of the term “Fayyumi,” and goes on to make a similar argument for the name “Coptic Glazed,” making the case instead for “slip-painted early lead glazed wares,” see Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 295; *Idem*, “Early Lead Glazed Wares,” 21-22.

²⁰³ Whitcomb, “Glazed Ceramics,” 64.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 53.

definite cream ware, is known as “splash cream ware” and could have been produced in southern Palestine at a site like Ramla.²⁰⁵ Based on excavations and importantly the discovery of wasters of a glazed ceramic in the Hijaz, another variation on the “Coptic glaze” type is named “Hijazi ware.” This type also exhibits similar forms but often features a distinguishable cross-hatching decoration and consists of a “dark-red orange fabric.”²⁰⁶

It is amongst this family that Whitcomb places the bold, radiating lined “Fayyumi” sherds. As noted when discussing the Egyptian material, there are a variety of forms associated with “Fayyumi” types, especially those from Fustat. Because Whitcomb narrows the evidence with a certain type of decoration, he also narrows the forms exhibited to those with “wide flat rims” synonymous with flat, everted rims, and “high ring bases.” The tin-opacified glaze on which the polychrome decoration is applied and the use of yellow and white in combination with other colors are indications of a later dating (late 9th or 10th century) than the other glazed types.²⁰⁷

An important consideration comes when we examine the illustrations of the ceramics. While a ring base and flat, everted rim are common, they are not a determining factor of the style of the radial glazed bands. One example of the six pieces identified as “Fayyumi” (Fig. 83d) has a straight rim, as many of the Fustat or Raya/al-Tur examples had. Some of the pieces do have everted rims, but they are not flat in the sense that they aligned with the surface of the rim. It is their glazing style and ware that was considered in their classification. All of the examples have an orange or red-orange colored body, and include interior bands of glaze in yellow, brown, white, and sometimes green or light green with clear or white glazed exteriors.²⁰⁸ All of these

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 58.

pieces are clearly differentiated from the other general groups, but there are several examples that expose the difficulties in defining glazed ceramics and in particular the types that were coming up at Fustat.

One jug in particular with radiating yellow and black bands of glaze and a yellow glazed interior (Fig. 84) is organized with the closed forms for the purpose of simplicity, but could perhaps be categorized with the other Aqaba “Fayyumi” pieces. It consists of a red-orange ware and has a form very similar to Egyptian examples from Fustat (Fig. 15) and the partial jugs found in the Sinai (Fig. 80).²⁰⁹ Several other examples scattered in other categories in the report also exhibit orange or red-orange wares and glazing styles that match some Fustat types. One bowl (Fig. 85) has an everted rim and glazed bands in green and brown glaze, but doesn’t have the same uniformity of the radial bands in the Aqaba “Fayyumi” type. Another (Fig. 86) has sloppier bands of glaze, also in green and brown and features a ring base. Finally, one bowl has a flat, everted rim, but lines of glaze done in daubs of green and yellow, not repetitive bands from the ledge of the rim (Fig 87).²¹⁰

Their exclusion from the “Fayyumi” group helps us clarify the definition somewhat. Certainly flat, everted rims and ring base forms and a red-orange or orange ware are typical, but not definitive. The radial-bands, in several different colors and often with the use of white and yellow on a tin-opacified glaze are paramount in identification. More specifically there seems to be the necessity of a regular pattern of the radial bands. Random splashed bands or several thick glazed stripes running down the interior would just be categorized as “splash ware” until a more specific typology can be established.

²⁰⁹ Jugs like this were also found on the Levantine coast and there is a similar jug currently on display in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, Cat. No. 24426.

²¹⁰ Whitcomb, “Glazed Ceramics,” 58-60.

Variations of this definition have been accepted by archaeologists working in Palestine and so the ceramics there must be approached as possibly excluding types that were previously known as “Fayyumi” wares in Egypt. The Aqaba evidence helps us specify one easily identifiable type that was definitely being made in Egypt. Whitcomb’s definition narrows down and specializes the glazed ceramics to make the overwhelming corpus of material from sites like Aqaba or Fustat more manageable. Naturally the result is that some of what we may call Fustat “Fayyumi” types are not included in this more specific definition. A review of some examples of *bacini* found in medieval churches in Italy helps to deal with the issues of the flat, everted rim and ring base form, the development of the radial band glazing style, and an overall dating scheme for a variety of ceramics that have been described as “Fayyumi.”

Northern Italy

Italy seems a surprising place to investigate a more accurate dating or provenance of glazed ceramics found throughout Egypt and Syria. But in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in northern Italy (Fig. 88) a practice developed whereby pottery from the eastern Mediterranean (along with local types) was placed in the walls of churches and abbeys as decorative devices. These vessels are commonly referred to as *bacini*, and many are now located in Italian museums. One of the values of this phenomenon for this study is that the method by which these bowls were embedded into the brickwork strongly suggests that the addition of the bowls is part of contemporary phase of construction.²¹¹

At the churches of San Sisto (built between 1080 and 1130) and Sant’ Andrea (built at the beginning of the 12th century) in Pisa, there are fine examples of bowls with orange or reddish

²¹¹ Blake and Aguzzi, “Torre Civica *Bacini*,” 103; Berti, “Pisa,” 301; the location in the courses of the *bacini*, the cutting of the bricks, and the consistent use of the same type of mortar unbroken between the bricks and inserted for the holding of the *bacini* all suggest the bowls are inserted during the building of the wall in which they sit.

luster painting decoration. These types of luster sheen have often been argued to be a later, Fatimid, development. Alan Craiger-Smith makes the important point that these examples provide good evidence for these styles to have developed well before the beginning of the 12th century, perhaps as early as the “end of the eleventh century and probably earlier.”²¹² The reasoning is that it is highly unlikely that the earliest examples of this luster style made in Fustat, or at least Egypt, would have arrived in northern Italy “hot from the potter’s kilns.”²¹³ It is more probable that there was already an established tradition and production centers of golden and reddish luster painting in Egypt before examples of it were appearing across the Mediterranean Sea.

The San Pietro a Grado of Pisa, the Campanile of the Pomposa Abbey in Ferrara Province, and the Torre Civica in Pavia all exhibited bowls described as “Fayyumi,” and the Pomposa Abbey in particular was one of the initial contributing factors that lead to associating these types of pottery with the Fayyum.²¹⁴ The same logic used to help date the development of luster ceramics could reasonably be applied here. All with phases associated with *bacini* dating to the 11th century or earlier, these buildings and the ceramics they displayed helps to narrow the time frame in which some of these so-called “Fayyumi” wares were being produced. The fact that these *bacini* are embedded as whole vessels makes them a valuable contribution to the corpora of forms.

Ferrara: Pomposa Abbey

Ballardini’s early article on the *bacini* of the Pomposa abbey only includes sketches of the bowls which calls to question the exact decorative style, and certainly the glazing technique,

²¹² Craiger-Smith, *Lustre Pottery*, 41.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Berti, “Pisa,” 308.

utilized. One color plate is devoted to the luster ceramics from the campanile and another set is illustrated but no direct parallels to any excavations can be drawn from these. He does, however, include in the final plate the photograph of sherds from excavations at Tebtynis (Fig. 39). He dates those sherds to the 10th to 14th centuries, which helps to identify several of the bowls from the same color plate as definitely part of the radial band type of glaze on glaze ware.²¹⁵

One bowl in particular (Fig. 89) is very much like one in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (Figs. 142-143) on account of the cross shape created in the center.²¹⁶ Surprisingly, other bowls that seem to exhibit this same general radial band style have figural imagery. One in particular is described by Ballardini as a “dove with outstretched wings” (Fig. 90).²¹⁷ Another seems to have some stylized birds’ heads in an interwoven square shape at the center of the bowl with the radial bands running from each head as if to represent wings (Fig. 91), but the illustrations of some Pomposa *bacini* have recently been called into question.²¹⁸ Both of the bowls with possible figural painting have green, manganese, and yellow glaze on white backgrounds.²¹⁹ A final bowl in this set exhibits tree-like branches of glaze in yellow and green (Fig. 92), and is largely unlike the other three examples except for the general type of polychrome glaze on an opaque vessel style. All of the bowls, according to the illustrations, seem to have everted, perhaps even flat-ledged, rims.

The atrium at the campanile of the Pomposa Abbey which contained examples of *bacini* probably dates to 1026, according to Blake and Aguzzi who make a comprehensive study of the

²¹⁵ Ballardini, “Pomposa ei suoi bacini,” 124.

²¹⁶ (Cat. No. 10083) first published in Mostafa, *Moslem Ceramics*, 15, no. 45; a better photograph is provided in O’Kane, *Treasures of Islamic Art*, 80.

²¹⁷ Ballardini, “Pomposa ei suoi bacini,” 126.

²¹⁸ Blake and Aguzzi, “Torre Civica *Bacini*,” 105; early 20th century water color paintings may have completely created figural imagery out of abstract designs. The bird motifs in the interior of the Pomposa bowl illustrations, especially the second example (Fig. 27) could be part of a problem that continued into the 1930’s.

²¹⁹ Ballardini, “Pomposa ei suoi bacini,” 125-126.

Torre Civica.²²⁰ Ballardini, based on his, Salmi, and Bagnani's earlier work that attributed the Italian *bacini* at Pomposa to the Fayyum, argues a date of 1066 for the campanile. Otto Mazzucato argued for 1063. The 1060's debate still gives a *terminus ante quem* for these vessels and they should therefore be attributed to the first half of the 11th century.²²¹

Pavia: Torre Civica

The massive, almost 80 meter-high Torre Civica in Pavia was destroyed in a tragic collapse in 1989. Fortunately, some photographs and illustrations of the building were saved, including ones of the large amount of *bacini* which had been inserted into the walls of the tower.²²² Blake and Aguzzi discuss the possible provenance and dating of the ceramics as a way to narrow down the dating of the tower itself. A number of the examples, including most importantly the "green spotted tin-glazed" and the "yellow and green tin glazed pottery decorated in brown and sometimes dark green" types have strong parallels to the Egyptian ceramic evidence and other *bacini* from the Pomposa campanile.²²³

The "green-spotted" types are fairly simple. They display thick daubs of green glaze in concentric rings on a white background under a yellow or off-white glaze (Figs. 93-94). While the first is missing its outer rim, they likely displayed prominent flat, everted rims and ring bases.²²⁴ According to a Munsell chart, their wares are quite different, the first a pinkish color and the second made of a reddish yellow clay. Despite this difference, petrographic analysis placed both of them in the same specific sub-group, possibly coming from Egypt.²²⁵ The

²²⁰ Blake and Aguzzi, "Torre Civica *Bacini*," 97.

²²¹ Philon, *Benaki*, 38.

²²² Blake and Aguzzi, "Torre Civica *Bacini*," 95.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 103.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 125.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 149.

remaining polychrome *bacini* are much more varied in decoration, although some of them show radial band decoration similar to the Pomposa Abbey campanile. These pieces relate best to the polychrome radial band type with “regularly spaced rays.”²²⁶

The majority of these types exhibit a bright yellow glaze, sometimes with green mixed in as well. Many resemble lead-glazed types, though scientific analysis of the glazes has led to the identification of a tin-glaze.²²⁷ The appearance of a pale white color under the glaze decoration suggests this type is typically tin-opacified like the examples from Egypt and the Sinai. These bowls typically have their radial lines painted in manganese, often appearing black. The best example of this general type is Fig. 95, a bowl with evenly spaced radial lines running into the center to meet a glazed circle, but some of the other examples have interiors filled with glaze or geometric patterns.²²⁸ A couple of the other *bacini* show the same kind of regular radial band pattern, except the lines almost seem to be a development of the applied daubs style: the daubs becoming a straight band, but still producing a marble-like swirl where the glaze was blurred during firing (Figs. 96-97). Finally, the remainder of this general type exhibits what appears to be lines that have become so swirled during firing as to hardly resemble radial bands (Figs. 98-99). But it is noteworthy that Figs. 97 and 99 both include a central triangle like examples from Bahnasa (Fig. 55) or Fustat (Fig. 12).

The final piece of evidence from the Torre Civica comes not from the façade of the tower but instead as sherds of former *bacini* found below after storms. The first (Fig. 100) is large enough to show brown bands of glaze between yellow and green glazing as well as evidence of a

²²⁶ Ibid., 104; the best Fustat example is from Scanlon, “Egypt and China,” pl. IXb; Tebtynis and Bahnasa have several examples and the Benaki Collection: Philon, *Benaki*, 49, Fig. 95, 96, 97, pl. III, A.

²²⁷ Blake and Aguzzi, “Torre Civica *Bacini*,” 104.

²²⁸ Ibid.

ring base, something not always discernible from *bacini* implanted into architecture.²²⁹ The other sherd is smaller but has green and yellow glaze decoration and shows evidence of the daub to line transition style, where daubs are applied but ultimately create bands of glaze (Fig. 101). As before, the difference in their clay is apparent, but the assumed provenance based on the petrographic analysis is Egypt.²³⁰

The difference between *bacini* at the Pomposa campanile and those from the Torre Civica is very small, but must be clarified fully. Blake and Aguzzi suggest the difference is the issue of “regular spaced rays.”²³¹ The difference is that at Torre Civica they are all equally spaced around the rim like the spokes of a wagon wheel. In the examples from Pomposa (and therefore Tebtynis), the radial bands are bunched in groups (still equally spaced within each “bunch”), resembling more the spokes of a bicycle wheel. This may be a minor stylistic difference, but when we compare this to the material found in museum collections, the different styles become pronounced and perhaps they have implications for the development of these glazing styles and their dating.

Pisa: San Pietro a Grado

Graziela Berti gathers much of the evidence from these three buildings in Northern Italy and published her finds with scientific analysis by Tiziano Minnoni. She explains that some of the *bacini* of the San Pietro a Grado in Pisa are very similar to two pieces from Pavia (Figs. 93-94) of the “green spotted tin-glazed type.” The pieces from Pisa she assigns to the last quarter of the 10th century. She describes them as having a decoration of round, green spots done in lines from the rim to the center on a tin-opacified glaze background and coated in a yellow lead

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 143.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

glaze.²³² The best example is a bowl with a flat, everted rim and ring base (Fig. 102) which does in fact match well with the Torre Civica pieces. These bowls are identical to fragments from Bahnasa (Figs. 50-51), which includes the possible waster. Consequently it is reasonable to view these daub splashed types as a separate group from those with more radial streak glaze decoration, specifically those pieces from the Pomposa campanile.

Fortunately, both Blake and Aguzzi and Berti include petrographic analyses sections in their respective reports. The findings from Blake and Aguzzi are fairly general and unspecific, but they do divide the material analyzed into three definite groups. Group A includes all of the possible “Fayyumi” wares that were sampled including both of the “green-spotted” types. Neither group B or C includes any of these types. Group A is so general a petrofabric that it is not possible to identify a specific location, but is “paralleled above all else with clay sample from Egypt in the Middle East and central eastern Sicily.”²³³ Given the fairly well-established connection of these decorative glazing styles and techniques to Islamic lands, Egypt (rather than Sicily) seems the likely place of production.

Mannoni’s report was carried out more recently and was more thorough, as it included samples from all three sites, Pavia, Pisa, and Ferrera, as well as samples from Gayraud’s excavations at ‘Istabl Antar. The results were largely consistent with the earlier petrographic findings. While there were of course some differences in petrofabric, they were “all from alluvional deposits of the low Nile valley—not typical of anything else in the Mediterranean.”²³⁴ Notably, the material was ultimately determined to be from the Nile Delta, and no specific attribution to Fustat was made.²³⁵ So while the evidence overwhelming points to an Egyptian

²³² Berti, “Pisa,” 308.

²³³ Blake and Aguzzi, “Torre Civica *Bacini*,” 151.

²³⁴ Berti, “Pisa,” 310.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

provenance, there is no scientific evidence that directly links the material to production centers of Fustat. But the evidence from Bahnasa does suggest these types were being produced there. Maybe tributary waterways associated with the Nile River, like the Bahr Yusuf, would produce similar alluvial deposits and therefore similar potting clays. This could explain why identical bowls with evidence of production south of Fustat were found in churches in northern Italy that gave petrographic associations with the Nile Delta.

Discussion

The Red Sea and Sinai material is overwhelming in the amount of sherds and the variety of glazed ceramic styles. All the sites have parallels to Fustat and other sites in Egypt, and they all help to define some of the more specific type under the misnomer “Fayyumi.” A possible 9th century development of the blue on white glazed types from Abbasid Iraq with U-shaped decorations around the rim and the addition of a darker glaze splashed within the interior is the most common type at Raya/al-Tur. The lack of examples from the Sinai is undoubtedly due to Cytryn-Silverman’s assignment of these types to the “white tin-glazed painted” wares group, which probably includes both examples of this type as well as blue on white vessels featuring epigraphy and possibly figural imagery. At Aqaba all the “Fayyumi” types are described as having radial bands of glaze, and the splash glazed wares are similarly organized elsewhere.

The radial band style, apparent at Fustat but also common in the Fayyum and even Nubia, has become a definite type. But it does not just exhibit radial bands of glaze. This type has bowls with polychrome bands that run into the center either to form geometric shapes or a swirling, marbled pattern. The use of multiple colors over a tin-opacified glaze, often on a bowl with a flat, everted rim and a ring base, is most standard. This type is particularly well

represented in the northern Sinai and Aqaba, but is not seen in the Raya/al-Tur excavations, possibly because the ceramic material from those sites is earlier. This type is also seen in the *bacini* in Northern Italy. The Pomposa Abbey campanile may even include *bacini* done in this style featuring figural decoration. This type must be a later development, and much of the Sinai, Red Sea, and Northern Italy evidence points to a dating during the Fatimid period. But variety in forms and wares leads one to wonder if some of the vessels from the Sinai and the Red Sea Coast were not made locally as opposed to imported from Fustat or elsewhere in Egypt.

For Berti, the issue of importation is central. While the related dating to the phases of construction is near definite, how the *bacini* were brought to Northern Italy is still unresolved.²³⁶ In their conclusion, Blake and Aguzzi suggest it is most likely that Venetian merchants, well documented as having business ventures in Egypt at the time, were bringing these ceramics back to Italy. Whether they were being imported in large quantities or came over as spoils is not certain, but especially for large scale projects requiring a number of fine wares, it seems more likely that Venetians, as opposed to individual travelers or scholars, were bringing these pieces back.²³⁷ In this view, it is possible these pieces came in like waves, and what one merchant brought back from Egypt was certainly to be different from what one returned with forty years later.

If the atrium of the Pomposa Abbey was decorated with *bacini* in 1026 without examples of what has been described as “Fayyumi” wares, but the 1066 (or 1063) campanile did, it would appear new styles were arriving in Italy from Egypt as time passed. The Pavia and Pisa monuments both had the “green-spotted tin-glazed” type dated at Pisa to the last quarter of the 10th century. The Torre Civica also had polychrome examples with similar styles to Scanlon’s

²³⁶ Berti, “Pisa,” 301.

²³⁷ Blake and Aguzzi, “Torre Civica *Bacini*,” 116.

Fustat “Fayyumi” types, but maybe not as directly relatable as those of the Pomposa Abbey examples.²³⁸ The Pomposa examples drawn in the early Italian reports and originally connected to Tebtynis pottery, best described as bowls decorated with polychrome radial bands running together to form geometric shapes at the center under a transparent glaze, could well be stylistic developments of the earlier types.

In other words, from daubs of glaze to merged radial bands of daubs and then radial bands, until they were done in a number of different colors other than just green or brown (often yellow and manganese) and finally began to display central shapes and designs as the splash of the glaze became more and more controlled. According to the monument and *bacini* dates suggested by Ballardini, Berti, Blake, Aguzzi, and others, this process would seem to have occurred in the end of 10th century or earlier until the mid-11th. To return finally to the luster comparisons in Pisa, the well-developed style of radial band decoration with interior geometric shapes was probably first created by potters in Egypt in the early 11th century, and is later displayed as a delayed appearance in the 1063 campanile. Luster wares with newly developed sheens of luster-painting decoration coming from Egypt with flat, everted rims and ring bases were also coming to Italy around the same time. Not surprisingly, the period under consideration was during a relatively peaceful period in Egypt and the Mediterranean as the Fatimids had established their capital just north of Fustat and were continuing to consolidate their rule in the region.

²³⁸ *ibid.*, 116.

Chapter 4

Palestine and Syria

Introduction

When the Muslim armies swept through Greater Syria in the mid-7th century AD, displacing Byzantine governance of the territory, they largely followed their predecessors' geographical delineations. Under the Romans and Byzantines, the area generally referred to as Palestine consisted of several provinces known as Palaestina Prima, Secunda, and Tertia. In the Early Islamic period, these areas were slightly adjusted. Prima and a portion of Tertia were folded into the Jund al-Filasṭīn, with Ramla as its capital city and Jaffa its primary port. Secunda, with its capital at Scythopolis (Beit Sean), was absorbed into the Jund al-Urdunn, whose new capital became Ṭabariyya, or Tiberias.²³⁹

While Jerusalem and Damascus have received much of the attention of scholars of Islamic history and art, Tiberias and Ramla have become increasingly important sites of study for understanding the early Islamic period, as the two provincial capitals of the region until the Crusaders from the west and an influx of Turkic groups from the east in the late 11th and 12th centuries largely transformed the political landscape of the region. Historically, the territory of Palestine from the 7th until the 12th century was marked by unrest and shifting claims to power. Even the major dynasty in the region during this time, the Shi'a Fatimids, never really had control of Palestine despite their relatively firm control of Cairo and Egypt.²⁴⁰

After the fall of the Umayyad dynasty in the mid-8th century, who had largely made Palestine and Greater Syria in general their home, the focus of the Islamic caliphate shifted to

²³⁹ Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Moslems*, 26-27.

²⁴⁰ Sourdel, s.v. "Filasṭīn," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (accessed November 13, 2012).

Iraq and the Abbasids. But Palestine may not have fallen into such a period of decline and neglect as is often argued.²⁴¹ What seems fair to say is that the following 300 years after the rise of the Abbasid caliphate was a period of rival groups struggling for power, with some intermittent periods of consolidated rule and relative calm. The Abbasids, Ikshidids, Qarmatians, the Fatimids and the Katama Berber factions they brought, Tayy Bedouin, and Turkic freebooters were all involved in a politically tumultuous scramble for power.

But Egypt had a certain amount of importance in this time as “the long arm of Cairo made its influence predominant in social and political spheres.”²⁴² This began in “877 CE when Ibn Ṭūlūn, a quasi-independent Abbasid governor of Egypt, established control over Palestine and Syria” and went on to rebuild the coastal areas along the Mediterranean which opened trade routes from the Nile Delta and Fustat.²⁴³ The second stage was the continued conquest of the Fatimids past Cairo into Palestine. But it was not until after fierce fighting in Ramla, Askalon, and Tiberias during the reign of al-‘Azīz that Fatimid power was truly established there.²⁴⁴ It is during these periods, when the social and political influence of Egypt was most strongly felt in Palestine, that some of these glazed wares may have made their way north to the various sites in the Jund al- Filasṭīn and Jund al-Urdunn.

Jund al-Filasṭīn

Ramla

As the new regional capital of the southern Levant, Ramla became a prominent center in the early Islamic period. Muqaddasī even notes that wares from Ramla were imported to

²⁴¹ Whitcomb, “The Socio-Cultural Transition of Palestine,” 498.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ Stacey, *Tiberias*, 3.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

Egypt,²⁴⁵ a change from the traditional thinking that Egypt was mainly exporting to Palestine and not the other way around. But the lack of any major source of water was constantly an issue for the country town, and an earthquake in 1033 destroyed much of the settlement. This catastrophic event was probably a cause of decline in the city, and Ramla's importance in the region probably dwindled even before the Crusader sacking of Jerusalem and the renewed importance given to that holy city.²⁴⁶

A number of excavations have taken place all around the site of Ramla. Muqaddasī's account and archaeologists' suggestions that Ramla was a ceramic production center in the 8th and 9th centuries makes it a particularly important site for this study.²⁴⁷ Cytryn-Silverman has gone as far as to argue that Ramla material should serve as the basis for understanding finds, including ceramics, from other Islamic sites in Palestine.²⁴⁸ The material discussed came from excavations north and west of the White Mosque, as well as salvage work done several hundred meters further to the north and east on Marcus Street.

Cytryn-Silverman defines "Fayyumi" ware from Ramla as vessels with a "pale brown to reddish-yellow" ware, "covered by colored glazes on their interior, while the exterior is coated by a thin layer of transparent glaze. The glazing is either monochrome or polychrome. Radial colored stripes mixed randomly in the well are very characteristic" and distinguish it from other Tang imitation splash wares (Fig. 104).²⁴⁹ Also uncovered was a type termed "white glazed ware" for its close similarity to Iraqi examples from the 9th century. These wares are described as vessels "covered by an opaque white glaze. The surfaces, if not left plain, are decorated with

²⁴⁵ Honigmann, s.v. "al-Ramla," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (accessed November 13, 2011).

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Whitcomb, "Glazed Ceramics," 53, Whitcomb suggest Ramla could have been the center of production for the "Splash cream wares" he uncovered at 'Abbasid Aqaba.

²⁴⁸ Cytryn-Silverman, "Ceramic Evidence," 97.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 120.

moderation over the glaze in cobalt dark blue, green, turquoise, and manganese purple” with a “fine pinkish to yellowish buff” fabric.²⁵⁰ Most examples include calligraphy, lunettes, or vegetal motifs typical of Abbasid examples from Iraq or some examples from the Benaki collection that Philon claims are from 10th-12th century Egypt. But some have radial line decoration and for this the general description is extremely reminiscent of Scanlon’s description for Fayyumi type I.²⁵¹ The fabric is also noteworthy here, as Scanlon emphasizes the yellowish-buff nature of the Samarra clays as opposed to the pinkish-buff and sometimes darker red, of Fustat.²⁵² The “white glaze wares” of Ramla are believed to be imports but given the variation in wares and style of glaze on the initial opacified vessel they may have been coming from both Egypt and Iraq as early as the 9th century.

“Fayyumi” ware at Ramla was not found in great numbers, but was often uncovered with a type of “slipped glaze ware” found throughout Palestine typically dated to the eleventh century. The variation in its fabrics relates more to the different firing temperatures than the source of the clay,²⁵³ but its marked difference from the description of the “white glaze” examples could possibly indicate an attempt at local production or imitation of the earlier radial line-decorated white glaze ware imports. From the illustrations and descriptions of the few sherds it seems the vessels were bowls with ring bases, exhibiting green glaze on opaque yellow glaze backgrounds (Fig. 105).

The excavation report from Marcus Street provides two additional examples of so-called “Fayyumi” ware as an example of Yael Arnon’s “color splashed: mottled glaze bowls.”²⁵⁴ This

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 112; The use of cobalt, traditionally associated with Iran and the eastern Islamic world, is absent in Egyptian glazed wares and should indicate an eastern provenance.

²⁵¹ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 295-296.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 296-297.

²⁵³ Cytryn-Silverman, “Ceramic Evidence,” 120.

²⁵⁴ Arnon, “Marcus Street: Pottery,” 41.

large family of wares essentially includes all the previously discussed types from the north of the White Mosque excavations. Noted again is the early influence of Chinese T'ang wares in the 9th century and the common practice of yellow and green glaze decoration on these types of vessels. Interestingly enough, Arnon differentiates the "Fayyumi" examples as those exhibiting more than just green and yellow glazing.²⁵⁵ One of the sherds is illustrated (Fig. 106) and is described as: "yellowish/brown ware 10YR 7/6, white slipped both sides under "Fayyumi" style glaze in black, turquoise and yellow on inner surface and transparent on outer surface."²⁵⁶ "Fayyumi," in this case, must refer to radial line decoration running around the bowl and given its ware and style of decoration. This fits well with the examples uncovered further south near the White Mosque.

Some finds from excavations in the 1990's west of the mosque add several more examples. Only one of the finds matches the other Ramla material in terms of form and decoration, with an everted rim and alternating polychrome bands on a white slip (Fig. 107).²⁵⁷ Another sherd done in a similar style albeit with blue and black decoration instead of dark brown and yellow was also uncovered, but was so small as to be hardly diagnostic. One bowl matches the general description of polychrome radiating bands but is very badly preserved. In addition, its form doesn't match any other bowls from Ramla, or any other vessel forms in this entire study (Fig. 108). As a result this piece should probably be removed from consideration as a related sample. The last piece from these excavations is a large, closed jug (Fig. 109) with "traces of yellow all over it."²⁵⁸ The jug's ware is believed to be of local origin, and so this could also be

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 46.

²⁵⁷ Kletter, "Islamic Ramla," 68.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

an example of a local attempt at imitation.²⁵⁹ The excavator noted before all else the rarity of this type.

The use of yellow is common among these examples but its presence should hardly be used as a determining factor in the identification of the type. Two bowls in particular, in terms of description and illustration, seem possible candidates for more general descriptions of “Fayyumi” ware. One bowl defined as a “common glazed bowl” has polychrome splash decoration with green and blue hues on a white slip. The ware is “buff” and the illustration makes it appear to be very similar to a near-complete example from Tiberias (Fig. 110). Another bowl is identified under “bowls with wide ledge rim,” as part of the polychrome splash family and has “radial pattern of dark brown lines and spots” (Fig. 111).²⁶⁰ This piece also includes a white slip on both sides underneath the green and yellow glaze. Both pieces could potentially be included in some of the more general “Fayyumi” ware definitions especially if what appears to be a white-slip is in fact an opacified tin-glaze base. Judging by the forms, they are more similar to Egyptian examples than Fig. 108.

The most important example uncovered in Ramla is a mostly intact vessel found during excavations by the IAA. With a low ring base and flat, everted rim, the bowl has radiating bands of polychrome glaze that create a circle in the center (Fig. 112). Noteworthy are the “mending-holes” found on the interior indicating a possible repair of the bowl in the medieval period.²⁶¹ This is the most complete of all Ramla finds, and the only one to have clear and definite parallels in both Egypt, and as we will see, northern Palestine. Besides being a clear example of the radiating streak style found throughout Egypt, it is almost identical to one of the Torre Civica

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 65.

²⁶¹ De Vincenz, “Ceramics from Ramla,” Report Forthcoming; the bowl has two unusual features: the radial streaks are reportedly also on the outside of the vessel, and sgraffito decoration was applied on the surface of the interior.

bacini with the central circle design (Fig. 95). The Ramla vessel has black, pale green, and yellow bands broken up by the white glaze underneath. The ware is also described as a “weak red” but not as pink, and includes black and white inclusions in the clay material.²⁶²

Overall, the Ramla evidence suggests there is a small amount of ceramics with polychrome glaze radial line decoration on opaque glazes or covered by transparent yellow glazes, mostly on bowls. The colors used are almost always green and yellow although turquoise and what is described as black but is probably manganese are attested from two sherds from the Marcus Street and IAA excavations. None of these examples exhibit the triangles or lozenges or type of radial line decoration in five colors typical of the Adams “five color-Fayyumi style,” found in Egypt. In addition, there is a variety in clays and the only one that convincingly matches Egyptian wares is the early white glaze wares found north of the White Mosque which often exhibited very different decorative styles than anything else described as “Fayyumi.” Only the last piece discussed is fully illustrated and complete enough to find parallels, so the evidence of Egyptian importation to this site is not very strong, but they could be seen as possible local imitations.

Jerusalem

As noted, Jerusalem began to replace Ramla in importance around the end of the 11th and 12th centuries. While also subject to many of the constant power struggles of the 9th -11th centuries, Muqaddasī notes that it never went a day without foreigners and travelers, and even though Ramla was the administrative center for much of this period, Jerusalem was still a religious and cultural center of its own, where the exchange of goods and ideas was certainly to

²⁶² *ibid.*

occur.²⁶³ A few ceramic finds from Jerusalem could help evidence this kind of exchange in the early Islamic or Fatimid periods.

Tushingham's excavations of the Old City walls in the 1960's produced one curious sherd that was eventually assigned to the Ayyubid period (Fig. 113). The sherd is described as having a "light brown ware, a few reddish brown grits, bands of color radiating from base and up over [the] rim" and exhibits a white slip with white, aubergine, deep yellow and green glaze strokes under an all-over clear glaze.²⁶⁴ Judging by the illustration the vessel had a recessed base and a flat everted rim, as well as a color scheme of white and polychrome radial bands like sherds from the Fayyum, but the curious aspect is its dating.

Tushingham argues this piece came from a secure Ayyubid deposit along the wall. This would place the sherd somewhere in the 12th-13th centuries, a little later than all but Philon's dating schemes. It is also the first example in Palestine that could be later than the Fatimid period, which is a common dynastic label in which to place the production of "Fayyumi" wares, although the evidence from Nubia suggested this style was being produced or imported well into the medieval period. Unfortunately the excavation report shows the context where this sherd was found was dated by the other pottery found within it, which leaves an unreliable conclusion for our specific example.²⁶⁵ Ultimately, anyone arguing for an earlier date could presume the sherd was an earlier remnant that had found its way into a later level but it is relevant that the sherd is frequently described as "unique" and there seems to be a lack of any parallels for comparison at the time.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Goitein, s.v. "al-Kuds," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (accessed November 13, 2011).

²⁶⁴ Tushingham, *Excavations in Jerusalem*, 340.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 111; the fact that this sherd was found in squares opened along the Ayyubid wall itself does make the Ayyubid dating claim somewhat more reliable.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 143.

A scarcity of material is largely apparent when you consider Avissar's work in Jerusalem, excavations in the Old City and in Silwan mainly in the 1970's. While the reports mention splash polychrome glaze of the 9th-11th century local variety and "Coptic glazed ware" imports²⁶⁷ there is nothing that could necessarily be described as "Fayyumi." On the other hand, recent excavations in the Muristan Quarter of the Old City have an example of a "Fayyumi-type" bowl (Fig. 114), with radial polychrome bands. The sherd came from a fill designated as "early Islamic" although the phase also produced some monochrome sgraffito wares typical of Fatimid Egypt and known to be imported to Palestine in the Crusader period.²⁶⁸ As a result, we are again working in a very broad range, and are forced to admit that there could be more examples of ceramics that fit more general definitions of "Fayyumi" that were not categorized as such. While it appears that this style of pottery was quite rare in inland sites in Palestine we can't necessarily say it was any less common than some of the other early Islamic-Medieval period Egyptian imports.²⁶⁹

Levantine Coast

While inland examples may be rare, sites along the Levantine coast reportedly exhibit more material. Both "unglazed and glazed bowls, including tin glaze with polychrome overglaze decoration were imported from Egypt to the coastal sites of Palestine until the 12th century."²⁷⁰ Three prominent coastal sites of Askalon, Jaffa, and Caesarea therefore, should be

²⁶⁷ Avissar, "Old City Excavations," 433.

²⁶⁸ 'Adawi, "Muristan in the Old City."

²⁶⁹ Some surface sherds uncovered near a Mamluk tomb at Beit Jiz, near Jerusalem, were identified by Adrian Boas as "Fayyumi" ware. It is difficult to tell from the photographs but they appear to be similar to some of the "unique" types found at Qasr al-Hayr East or elsewhere in Syria, possibly related to what Whitcomb describes as "Hijazi" wares with splashed glaze in thin, meandering bands of and irregular dots, see Postscript in Amitai-Preiss, "A Fourteenth-Century Mamluk Inscription from Rural Palestine," 241-242.

²⁷⁰ Boas, *Crusader Archaeology*, 142.

central to this study. They all contribute differently however, unfortunately determined more by their amount of published material and the definitions of “Fayyumi” employed than their likely commercial exploits or historical importance. The southernmost city, just north of the present-day border with the Gaza Strip, is Askalon.

A prosperous coastal trade center under the Fatimids, it lasted as a maritime port until its destruction by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in the end of the 12th century. According to some sources the head of ‘Ali’s son Ḥusayn, a major figure in Shi’a Islam, was kept within the city.²⁷¹ Perhaps it was this holy association which encouraged the Fatimids to retain control of the site even when Seljuk encroachments had extended far into all other parts of Palestine. In terms of the archaeological record, the evidence of Egyptian importation there is well established: “if Fustat had it Ashkelon had it.”²⁷² Here, the definition of “Fayyumi” is vessels with radiating lines of glaze, following Whitcomb’s suggested definition. As a result, the few images from the site are described as underglaze painted, though they look remarkably like the common Raya/al-Tur bowls, or even Scanlon’s Fayyumi-I sherds (Fig. 115).

According to Tracy Hoffman, one of the principal excavators, the site has a sizeable collection with a wide range of colors, but reports on this material are still forthcoming. Certainly it is fitting that there is a large amount of “Fayyumi” pieces found at Askalon according to anyone’s definition, but it will have to be discussed at a later date. Further north up the coast is the site of Jaffa, the port of Ramla in the early Islamic period. It was an important maritime trade center at an early period because of Ramla’s status as the regional capital. Later it seems to have followed Askalon as a major Fatimid port, and remained under their control

²⁷¹ Hartmann and Lewis, s.v. “Āṣḳalān,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (Accessed 14, November, 2012).

²⁷² Personal Communication with Tracy Hoffman, September 4th, 2012.

even in times of unrest or conflict.²⁷³ Jaffa has been recently excavated, but the lack of “Fayyumi” ware may once again relate to a difference in definition or more recent tendency to avoid the problematic term.

Katherine Strange Burke claims that Coptic-painted ware and other Egyptian imports have been found, but doesn’t indicate any of her finds as matching the “Fayyumi” types.²⁷⁴ She instead groups some possible finds into the larger “polychrome splash glaze” grouping. Judging by the comparisons she makes with Avissar’s material in Yoqne’am, many of these ceramics have white paint or glaze underneath the polychrome splash glaze decoration. One example published in 2011 included “thick drips of green running over the yellow glaze from the rim to the interior, creating a splashed appearance.”²⁷⁵ But these are most likely a polychrome splash ware common in Palestine and proven to be manufactured in Tiberias and probably other local sites.²⁷⁶ The report has no examples of vessels decorated in radial polychrome bands of glaze, certainly nothing like examples from Egypt with radiating bands and central geometric patterns.

Unlike the ceramic corpora of Askalon and Jaffa, which are just now beginning to be published, Caesarea is probably the best published site in Palestine as far as medieval ceramics are concerned. Caesarea, or *Ḳayṣariyya*, was the site of the last stand of Christianity against the Islamic conquests in the 7th century. In fact the Byzantines held onto the seaport for some time, before the new rulers “created a new kind of urbanism” there in the early Islamic period.²⁷⁷ In fact there is no sign that the sand that had filled the port after early conquests was ever removed

²⁷³ Buhl and Bosworth, s.v. “Yāfā,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (accessed 13 November, 2012).

²⁷⁴ Personal Communication with Katherine Strange Burke, September 2nd, 2012.

²⁷⁵ Strange Burke, “Pottery from Jaffa,” 202.

²⁷⁶ These wares are often mentioned with reference to Abu Ghosh excavations by De Vaux and Stève or the ceramics found in the Serce Limani shipwreck, see Jenkins, “Medieval Islamic Pottery,” 55-66. In fact wasters of local Palestine polychrome splash wares have been found at Hammath Tiberias and the material is discussed in Johnson, “Pottery”, 54-74; Stacey, “Dating the Islamic Phases of Pottery,” 253-60; and related, Stern and Stacey, “Khirbat al-Khurrumiya,” 172-177.

²⁷⁷ Holum, *King Herod’s Dream*, 202.

during the Fatimid period. Though it maybe should not be viewed as a seaport in the way Askalon and Jaffa were, especially in the Fatimid period, it should still be considered a major site with a plethora of ceramic evidence. As early as the 8th century ceramic and glass artisans there were moving forward from the classical modes of decoration and style to the new styles that would define an early and developing Islamic art.²⁷⁸

In 1986 Na'ama Brosh published a sizeable amount of “Fatimid” pottery, much of which was luster painted examples believed to have been potted in Fatimid Cairo. Some of the splash glazed examples from this general group were “decorated with spots and splashes in green, manganese, purple, and ochre” some of which had stripes.²⁷⁹ Even in the 1970s there was a sense among excavators that there were variously decorated polychrome glazed ceramics and some types that were coming from Egypt in the Fatimid period.

Adrian Boas began applying the term “Fayyumi” to Caesarea examples in 1992, when he published a bowl with a complete profile and the characteristic flat, everted rim and tin-opacified glaze. The bowl exhibited a pattern of polychrome bands that included pale green, manganese, white, yellow, and even a pale blue (Fig 116).²⁸⁰ Conveniently, this partial vessel was found in context with two Fatimid coins, providing a date range of 1071 to 1150. While these “Fayyumi” examples are common at Caesarea, Boas claims they are uncommon at inland sites.²⁸¹

Arnon has also contributed to our understanding of “Fayyumi” examples at Caesarea by discussing several pieces in two publications. Like Brosh, she discusses the “Fayyumi” material

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 213.

²⁷⁹ Brosh, “Ceramic Remains,” 68; Judging from the footnote, many of these examples can be more accurately associated with the polychrome splash types local to Palestine as in the Jaffa example, exhibiting a brown and green stripes *and* dots on the same vessel, very distinct from Fustat “Fayyumi” examples.

²⁸⁰ Boas, “Islamic and Crusader Pottery,” 161; probably the turquoise color described in reports from Egypt.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 158; Boas makes a note concerning L.4020, which contained the illustrated and described example of “Fayyumi,” that it also contained material as late as the 13th century, an important note for anyone intent on automatically associating this type of “Fayyumi” ware with specifically the Fatimid period, or even the 11th and 12th century for that matter. Coins in a fill do not necessarily provide a helpful context for the ceramic material, though they are better than nothing.

with luster ware, as they both seem to begin appearing at levels associated with the second half of the 10th to early 11th centuries.²⁸² This would push its introduction to the Levantine coast to a slightly earlier period than that proposed by Boas. Using the Whitcomb definition of radiating bands, two pieces of “Fayyumi” in particular are illustrated and discussed in some detail. The first piece is a rim sherd with green and manganese glaze bands on a white slip. Luckily the flat, everted rim is apparent from the illustration, and should likely be categorized in the same group as the almost complete vessel from Ramla (Fig. 117). Less of the second bowl remains (Fig. 118), but it seems to have been included as another example of “Fayyumi” because it had the same “porous pink clay” as the first bowl, and its green and manganese splash-glazed bands.²⁸³

A larger corpus of material is discussed by Arnon in a later publication. Surprisingly it diverges from her previous work, which seemingly utilized the narrower definition supplied by Whitcomb which has been widely adopted by excavators in Palestine. Instead, the material has a greater variety more like the ARCE Fustat reports, or even the material discussed by Philon. In fact, Arnon’s definition changed in the decade between publications, perhaps as a way to accommodate the more irregular glazed finds, or to categorize what had become a larger corpus of material. But this also helps explain her more general definition for describing the finds at Marcus Street in Ramla. While she generally defines the type as glazed with radial bands from the 10th to 11th centuries like her earlier report and provides a color plate with several sherds (Fig.119), the examples she presents and the parallels that she cites expose a larger generalization for the term.²⁸⁴

²⁸² Arnon, “Islamic and Crusader Pottery,” 226.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 239.

²⁸⁴ The term may be almost too general, as she incorporates in the opening discussion of the ware a bowl from a shipwreck off the coast of France (Ximenes, “*l’epave sarrasine*,” 1975) which has almost no definitive characteristics of any of the styles where scholars have used to previously identify something as “Fayyumi” save some thin splashes of glazing on the interior of the vessel.

One base sherd consists of glazed decoration on what Arnon describes as a white slip, as opposed to a tin-opacified glaze. The stripes of glaze consist of yellow, green, and manganese in a “*Fayyumi*” style. The outside is glazed in white, which is surprising given the interior white slip.²⁸⁵ A second, though smaller, example also includes a ring base and general glazing style but does include yellow glaze. They also both have a light red, possibly pinkish, ware.²⁸⁶ The presence of micaceous inclusions in the clay is a clear sign of an import, as local clay does not contain mica.²⁸⁷ Given the thickness and disorder of the stripes of glaze (Figs. 120, 121) these bowls should be seen as more similar to Figs. 13 and 14 from Fustat, different from the radial band type in his earlier report.²⁸⁸

One example does include a flat, everted rim, but is more of a triangular ledge rim (Fig. 122) than the Ramla bowl. On the interior are green and yellow splashed glazed bands, but it has a transparent yellow glaze on the exterior of the vessel like previous incomplete examples from Ramla. Differing from the aforementioned bowls, the ware is dark brown, which is rare for these types of splash-glazed productions.²⁸⁹ Also unusual is a bowl with a ribbed exterior but the more familiar pinkish-colored ware (Fig. 123). The strange form is paired with a strange interior green glaze, while the exterior features the more typical yellow and green glazes in radial patterns down the side of the body. Arnon also describes a pinkish slip on both sides which is similar to a base sherd that similarly includes the ring base form and green, yellow, and manganese splashes on the interior (Fig. 124).²⁹⁰ There have been examples of clear glazes over decoration, and

²⁸⁵ Many of the reports from sites in Palestine describe a white slip but it could be a white tin-opacified glaze difficult to determine under all the other polychrome decoration. If the exterior is opacified in white glaze one would expect the same to be true of the interior of the vessel.

²⁸⁶ Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 238.

²⁸⁷ Avissar, “Tel Yoqne’am,” 55.

²⁸⁸ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 303: Pl. XIX 9 and Pl. LX Fig. 5-a; Philon, “Benaki,” 49: Fig. 92.

²⁸⁹ Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 292.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 316.

white slips and glazes as a type of basic overall covering to the vessel, but a pinkish slip is unique.

Finally, there is one example of a jar, and it is much less rare than some of these other Caesarea examples. The jar includes the telling micaceous clay, a hard-fired pinkish ware. Both sides are white slipped under a transparent glaze and includes manganese, green, and yellow glazed streaks running in equal length and spacing down the exterior of a “globular body, a slightly concave base, a funnel neck, and a straight rim (Fig. 125).”²⁹¹ This jar or jug is the most complete example of a type we have seen in found in excavations at Fustat (Fig. 15), the northern Sinai (Fig. 80), and Aqaba (84).

Jund al-Urdunn

Akko

One of the efforts of Ibn Ṭūlūn when he extricated himself from the Abbasids and took over control of Egypt was incorporate Palestine into his domain. During this time he worked on revitalizing the area, by rebuilding sites along the coasts. In particular, Muqaddasī gives us an account of Akko, or ‘Akkā, where Ibn Ṭūlūn rebuilt the port fortifications and in doing so jumpstarted the seaport.²⁹² This led to the Fatimids utilizing Akko as their naval base in the 11th century.²⁹³ The site was basically under siege for two years after the defeat at Hittin of the Crusader forces at the hands of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, and was ultimately destroyed in 1291. As a result, one of the principal excavators, Pringle, has decided many of the medieval ceramics cannot date

²⁹¹ Ibid., 293.

²⁹² Muqaddasi, 138-139; he gives an especially detailed account of this as his grandfather, Abu Bakr, was apparently the architect hired for the job.

²⁹³ Buhl, s.v. “Akkā,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2011 ed. (accessed 13 November, 2012).

to later than the end of the 13th century. Finding the earliest date is harder, but given the use of the site by the Fatimids, perhaps the late 11th century is a reasonable assignment.²⁹⁴

For Pringle, the “Fayyumi” examples are a larger group of imported early Egyptian glazed ceramics, the earlier pieces constituting some of the first examples of glazing in the Islamic period in Egypt, and the later pieces probably dating to the later Fatimid period along with the Egyptian luster wares. Some of the examples from Akko exhibit manganese and green glazes covered by a colorless glaze, something we have seen quite commonly in the other Palestinian examples of so-called “Fayyumi” wares. Even the description of the ware, a pinkish-red color, is on par with some of the other Palestine examples. But the form of the bowl is strange, as it is large and hemispherical with flat and thickened rims.²⁹⁵ Many of the bowls have had slightly out-curving rims, or the flat, everted-style rims that could possibly connect it back to definite Egyptian examples.

Finally, it is clear there are no radial polychrome bands, but instead the kind of splashed, wavering dark stripes around the rim and interior, and the green or blue splashes added inside and outside of this dark winding pattern (Fig 126). If smaller sized sherds are being examined, this type of polychrome splash glaze bowl can easily resemble the aforementioned local polychrome splash glazed type. But given the pattern of the illustration and description, this piece seems to be much more like examples from the Raya/al-Tur excavations in the Sinai, and more importantly, the larger group of “Fayyumi” wares discussed by Scanlon from Fustat, probably fitting into the “Fayyumi-I” type.

Roughly located between Caesarea and Akko is the site of Ramat Hanadiv. It is south of Mt. Carmel but still close to the Mediterranean coast. There a sherd identified as “Fayyumi

²⁹⁴ Pringle, “Acre,” 137.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 142.

ware” (Fig. 127) was described by Boas as having “manganese, tin-opacified glaze with white horizontal stripes painted over it; thin transparent glaze on exterior.”²⁹⁶ One wonders whether it was not in fact a white tin-opacified vessel with thick manganese bands added instead, as would be more typical. The ware is described as “pale-ish” yellow, or 7.5YR/8/4, with fine inclusions.²⁹⁷ Contrary to Boas’s assumptions that the imported material and specifically “Fayyumi” wares appear mainly at the coastal sites and less inland, it is clear some of the various “Fayyumi” types were making their way into the countryside and urban centers near the Jordan Valley. Furthermore, northern Palestine provides some of the best parallels to the so-called “Fayyumi” types from the Fayyum and Bahnasa.

Inland Sites

Horbat ‘Uza is an archaeological site located just inland from Akko, and one rim sherd of a bowl was found there with radial polychrome stripes on the interior identified as “Fayyumi.” Without a very helpful illustration (Fig. 128) we are forced to rely on the parallels drawn by the author. The examples mentioned however, with the exception of one of the Caesarea pieces, have flat, everted rims, while the Horbat ‘Uza sherd is just slightly out-curving. Therefore we should assume it is similar to some of the Ramla material that includes radial bands on opacified bowls but is not specifically the type with the ring base, the flat, everted rim, and a number of various bands forming geometric patterns at the center of the interior of the vessel. This sherd

²⁹⁶ Boas, “Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds,” 221-222.

²⁹⁷ “Fayyumi” wares are attributed to as early as the 8th century like his earlier work at Caesarea. This is an inaccurate attribution to Scanlon’s excavations (see discussion of “early Fayumi” from Pits G and U at Fustat and note 305 in this chapter).

was found within a level that the excavators of the site identified as dating to the Abbasid-Fatimid periods, or 9th-10th centuries.²⁹⁸

Some other examples are discussed more generally as possible later examples of “Fayyumi” ware. Dated to the first half of the 12th century, these bowls have flat, everted rims and ring bases, and reddish or pinkish fabrics. With a transparent glaze on the exterior and colored glazes on the interior, they exhibit yellow, pale green and black dribbling of the glaze.²⁹⁹ Only the central interior decoration remains on the second sherd (Fig. 129), but judging by the lack of patterns at the center one can only guess that it included the kind of wheel-spoke radial band groups sometimes seen on Egyptian vessels glazed with four or five different colors of polychrome glaze.

Further east of Horbat ‘Uza is the site of Tel Yoqne’am, with almost continuous levels of occupation from the Early Bronze Age to the Ottoman period. It is surprising that a site probably best known as Caymont, the site of the Crusader castle, would have a good deal of early Islamic ceramics, but it seems there was some occupation on the Tel firmly situated between the last remains of the Hellenistic period and the later Crusader architecture. In fact the gap is quite clear in the stratigraphy, but a precise date for this time period is difficult to identify.³⁰⁰ The argument put forth by the excavators is that the period of occupation dating to somewhere during the Islamic period must have related to the late 9th century, when this area would have been under the leadership of Ibn Ṭūlūn.³⁰¹

²⁹⁸ Tatcher, “Early Islamic, Crusader, and Mamluk Periods,” 119; Numerical dating should be preferred here because associating this area of Palestine as Abbasid, Tulunid, or Fatimid during the 9th and 10th centuries is problematic given the turbulent political situation and lack of many controlled levels in associated sites and excavations.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 128.

³⁰⁰ Ben-Tor, Avissar and Portugali, “Architecture and Stratigraphy,” 13.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

The site produced an excellent example of “Fayyumi” ware at an inland site, but Avissar notes that only a few sherds of this type were found. Some of this may have to do with her narrow definition, as she is certainly working from the Whitcomb definition of specifically radial band-decoration. There are a number of other splashed wares that she groups under “splashed and mottled ware,” probably the previously discussed type also found at Jaffa and Caesarea. Two examples in this category, one with radial lines but with the colors of this more traditionally Palestinian splash ware, would possibly have been defined as “Fayyumi” had they been found in Fustat, though the sherds are so small it is difficult to say.³⁰²

One of the sherds she defines as “Fayyumi” is drawn and is photographed in color (Fig. 130). The color and description of the fragment, a rim sherd of a bowl with a flat, everted rim and slightly curving edge (and probably a ring base) allows us to firmly relate this piece to the mostly intact Ramla piece and possibly some of the coastal site examples. While it clearly exhibits white, yellow, and black, Avissar claims it also may include traces of a blue glaze no longer preserved.³⁰³ This makes the sherd a nice parallel for a bowl in the Benaki collection (Fig. 159)³⁰⁴ which potentially helps assume the rest of this vessel would have exhibited a wheel-spoke pattern of radial bands.

Avissar includes this type in her discussion of glazed wares from the early Islamic period, so unfortunately little of the context can be discerned from this study. More problematic though is her mention of the ware having originated in Egypt in the mid-8th century, an idea she

³⁰² XIII.6.3 in Avissar, “Medieval Pottery,” greatly resembles a piece of radial-band glazed ceramics with a creamy white background, but given the decoration on another sherd of the same bowl it seems to be more related to the local splash and mottled ware type. This underscores the difficulties of classifying small sherds, as a little sherd may resemble one type of ware but without a fuller picture of its decoration is almost impossible to accurately classify. XIII.6.4 is very similar to pieces found in Tiberias and believed to come from 10th century Samarra: Frierman, *Medieval Ceramics*, 51:91. Though clearly we can see even these styles of green splashed and running on white glazes can be incorporated into the splash and mottled ware type of northern Palestine.

³⁰³ Avissar, “Medieval Pottery,” 82.

³⁰⁴ Philon, *Benaki*, 49; Fig. 97, Pl. III, A.

attributes to Scanlon. In fact Scanlon makes no such claim, and this citation seems to have been copied many times over by archaeologists working in the area.³⁰⁵ Still, Avissar provides an important distinction in her studies: polychrome splash glazed wares on white opaque slips or glazes should not necessarily lead one to define the vessel as “Fayyumi,” or assume an Egyptian provenance.

Another piece excavated at Yoqne’am highlights why this hesitant response to splashed-ware is warranted. An incurved bowl with splashed glazing in brown and green stripes is simply classified among “early Islamic glazed wares,” as a result of its many possible origins (Fig. 131). The decorative patterns are similar to that of early Egyptian glazed wares, such as “Coptic-glazed wares” or “Cream Splash wares” from Aqaba.³⁰⁶ The variety of splash glazed wares and paucity of firmly dated contexts or large examples has hindered the study of early Islamic ceramics in Palestine. The rim sherd example from Yoqne’am though is probably diagnostic enough to link it to Egyptian examples and assume an equivalent provenance.

Tiberias

Tiberias was established as the new capital of the Jund al-Urdunn and the surrounding area was a favored place for the Umayyad royalty to build their country or lake-side estates. The town went through a difficult period at the end of the Umayyad caliphate and the introduction of the Abbasids. Still, it remained a thriving center and probably was rejuvenated by Ibn Ṭūlūn’s

³⁰⁵ The report cites Scanlon’s 1974 article “The Pits of Fustat: problems of Chronology,” which at no time argues an 8th century date for any of the “Fayyumi” wares and in fact dates the “Fayyumi” vessels from pit G to the 9th-10th century which is much more on par with the findings in Palestine. Furthermore, the examples discussed in “Pits” are much more similar to the Iraqi blue on white examples, none of which have radial band decoration. Arnon botches the citation in the same way in her Caesarea report. As a result, early appearances of so-called “Fayyumi” wares in Palestine should be deemed suspect, and when it is defined with such a specific definition as to exclude even some radial band decorated glazed wares, it should be noted as having strayed from the general groupings of Scanlon’s Fustat material.

³⁰⁶ Avissar, “The Pottery,” 55.

work at Akko.³⁰⁷ As discussed before, this was one of the few true periods of relative calm, and it was another hundred years before the Fatimids once again established some legitimate control in the region. That was not to last either, and Seljuk and later Crusader incursions certainly ended any chance of the city flourishing.

But unlike some of the coastal sites, quite a bit of the excavated material has been published. One sherd found during excavations in the 1980's and early 1990's is extremely similar to the flat, everted rim Yoqne'am sherd (Fig. 132). Both have this same type of rim with a definite pattern of radial bands of black stripes in groups of three or four and broken up by yellow glaze.³⁰⁸ The white is more apparent in the Yoqne'am example, but there are remains of it on the Tiberias sherd, as well as more evidence of a blue glaze as well. The flat, everted rim and similar (and unusual) sandy yellow ware of the piece leads one to think the two sherds could almost be from the same vessel. Unfortunately no other examples such as this were found, and the context provided is only described as "Abbasid-Fatimid," in other words somewhere in the 9th to 11th centuries in Palestine.³⁰⁹

The main commentator on Islamic pottery from Tiberias has been David Stacey, who published several examples from the excavations of 1973-1974. Basing much of his work on the studies of Mason, he discusses the material very briefly but does provide some illustrations and color plates for the purposes of comparison. The one piece of "Fayyumi" that he feels is genuinely from Egypt includes radial bands that swirl into a marbled pattern at the bottom of the

³⁰⁷ Stacey, *Tiberias*, 2-3.

³⁰⁸ Amir, "Tiberias Pottery," 44.

³⁰⁹ As discussed Abbasid –Fatimid is a problematic term for dating material, but there is simply too little information to properly separate material from the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries at many sites, including in particular Tiberias. With the 12th century, many archaeologists want to begin classifying material as Crusader-Ayyubid, which is another issue in its own right.

dish (Fig. 133).³¹⁰ There appears to be a ring base and slight ledge rim, though the bowl is quite squat compared to some of the other larger almost dish-like examples from Ramla and Caesarea. Another portion of a bowl (Fig. 134) is what he defines as a local imitation, apparently judging from the colors used and style of glazing. But the sherd is so small, and has the yellow and green glazes of local splash and mottled ware as to be far from a definite example of imitation. There is no discussion of the ware, but both these pieces were uncovered within Stratum II, which is described as “Early Fatimid” or relating to 980-1033 AD.³¹¹

Another very poorly preserved example, classified by Stacey as an “alkali-glazed ware,” has glaze decoration remarkably similar to some of the Sinai examples from Raya/al-Tur or even Fustat, where black glaze is done in chevrons or U-shapes on the interior of the rim, and green or blue splashes are added in loops around them in a dripping style (Fig. 135).³¹² Not surprisingly, this piece comes from an earlier stratum associated with 880-980 AD, and has a style much more similar to the blue on white examples from Abbasid Iraq. The vessel’s form is also very similar to pieces with this aforementioned glazing style, especially types from the Sinai.

Overall the Tiberias material is not overwhelming given the political importance of the site during the period generally associated with the production of so-called “Fayyumi” wares. But it does show, through importation and possible imitation, its relationships with foreign lands. Certainly the coastal sights were not the only ones with connections to Egyptian centers, as the sites of the Jund al-Urdunn and particularly Tiberias show that the same kind of material was reaching these northern inland sites in Palestine during the early Islamic and medieval periods.

³¹⁰ Stacey, *Tiberias*, 121.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 112.

Syria

What is surprising is that similar finds have not been reported in the politically and geographically linked hinterland of Jordan, such as sites like Amman, Pella, or Khirbat al-Mafjar. A comprehensive volume of published pottery from sites all over Jordan discusses the ceramics from the Fatimid period as largely removed from relations with Egypt, as much of the material is argued to have come from Iraqi sites. When the term “Fayyumi” is mentioned, it is listed almost as a separate type of glazing style, not unlike Arnon’s more recent use of the term, and only Whitcomb’s examples from Aqaba are noted.³¹³ Some sites further north in Greater Syria however (Fig. 136), such as Hama, Tall Aswad, and Qasr al-Hayr East, have some material which is relevant here.

Tall Aswad is far removed from even the Jund al-Urdunn sites but one group of the glazed ceramics found in excavations there, studied by Watson, have radial band decoration of “parallel stripes running down from the rim” (Fig. 137).³¹⁴ Another piece has bands, but in an alternating thin, controlled black and splashed blue pattern, with black mottling on the bottom of the interior (Fig. 138). It appears to be not so different from the local splash wares of Palestine which often have green splashes and dark brown mottling. Both of these types are identified by Watson as “sparse decorated wares,” though in his introduction he admits that the salts and acids in the sediments of the site caused the glaze on the sherds to be extremely deteriorated, with the yellow glaze particularly degraded.³¹⁵

While the site of Hama and Qasr al-Hayr East are closer than Tall Aswad, they are still a great distance from the sites in Palestine. Renata Holod mentions in her discussion of the ceramics from Qasr al-Hayr East some “splashwares” as well as “unique wares” which were

³¹³ Hendrix, Drey, and Storfjell, *Ancient Pottery of Transjordan*, 278-279.

³¹⁴ Watson, “Glazed Ceramics,” 82.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

apparently unclassifiable at the time. Many of these “unique” types included splashed glaze decorations, often they had everted rims and ring bases, and some had radial bands of polychrome glaze decoration. Of note is that they all have similar clays, all reddish-yellow between 5YR 7/6-5YR 6/4 on the Munsell chart.³¹⁶ The various images of some of the splashed and unique wares (Fig. 139) seem to be very similar to the Tall Aswad examples and may have parallels to the “Fayyumi-I” sherds published by Scanlon. The central image in particular resembles examples of what Whitcomb defines as “Hijazi” wares.³¹⁷

Also similar to these examples are two pieces from excavations at Hama discussed by Vagn Poulsen in the 1930’s. The two sherds are both believed by Poulsen to be descendent from T’ang styles, one with brown and green spokes and (Fig. 140) and the other with green and brown dots.³¹⁸ It is difficult to tell from the early photograph if there is a flat, everted rim on the sherd with spoke decoration, but certainly there is some sort of ledge, and glaze decoration similar to the other Syria examples. Altogether, they could be generally described as bowls with radial band decoration in polychrome splashed glazes, and perhaps they are more similar to examples from Aqaba than more abstractly decorated styles in Fustat. They are also not so different in form and ware as some of the more simply decorated examples from Palestine that exhibit spokes or bands of glaze from the rim to the center.

But given the long distance from Cairo and lack of meaningful context for any of these examples, it is hard to imagine they were all imported from Egypt. As a result, we should consider this material as local responses to Iraqi splash glazes much like the local material encountered in Palestine, or even imitations of direct Chinese imports. Given the evidence from

³¹⁶ Grabar et. al, *Qasr al-Hayr East* v.2, 218.

³¹⁷ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 313; Whitcomb, “Out of Arabia,” 417, particularly Fig. 2m which includes the same kind of alternating meandering and straight lines of decoration.

³¹⁸ Poulsen, “Les poteries,” 128.

Fustat, this process seems to have occurred on a large scale in Egypt, where imitations were imitated themselves. If nothing else, the evidence from Syria confirms that a great variety of splash-glazed styles were in use throughout the Islamic world from a very early stage, and that radial bands of glaze are by no means a single defining characteristic useful for application in the creation of typologies for early Islamic pottery.

Discussion

Admittedly, the evidence from Palestine is varied and sometimes patchy, but if we consider the datable pieces and consider the variation in style, some general comments can be made. First, one of the most common splash-glazed types, often with green, yellow, or brown glazing and often with daubs of brown glaze is not an Egyptian import at all, but a local production, definitely made in Hammath Tiberias and probably at several other sites as well. These were clearly apparent in the assemblages from Jaffa, Caesarea, Yoqn'eam, and Tiberias, and should serve as a reminder that small sherds of splash glaze are almost impossible to classify definitely.

Secondly, the opacified types, or white-glazed wares found most notably at Ramla, should not immediately be presumed to be from Egypt. This style is well attested to have been found and produced in Egypt by the excavations at Fustat. But their original models were of Mesopotamian origin. Opacified bowls found in Palestine with dots or splashed decoration or epigraphy, in monochrome or polychrome, often with ring bases and everted rims, could really be from either location and perhaps even locally manufactured. Therefore, the term "white glazed wares" used by Cytryn-Silverman or Mason, with a regional modifier like "Egypt" for those found at Fustat for example, is a suitable way to classify these types.

The tin-opacified bowls with bi-chrome glazing of black (manganese) loops coming down from the rim and blue or green splashes seen in Fustat, Abu Mina, Ashmunein, and the particularly the Sinai are rare, but do occur in very small numbers as possible imports from Egypt. Some of the pottery from Syria seems to be adaptations on this general style, but the photos of some ceramics from Askalon and the possible bowl from Tiberias are examples that could very well be imports from Egypt. This type is well established at Fustat in the “Fayyumi-I” type, and the examples from Raya/al-Tur have several complete vessel parallels in museum collections.

The radial band types of “Fayyumi,” especially those with multiple colors including blue, or with a kind of wheel-spoke pattern where the radial bands are bunched in several groups around the interior of the bowl, is represented not just along the coast but at the inland sites as well. This is a definitively Egyptian type judging from the material from everywhere between Alexandria and Nubia, its prevalence in Fustat, and the parallels in museums in Cairo and Athens. But one should be wary of descriptions of radial bands of glaze as more simply decorated and shaped bowls are well established at Samarra and seem to have been imitated as far north as Tall Aswad. The datable material of presumably Egyptian types (the bowl at Caesarea found with the coins, the rim sherd from Tiberias which is almost identical to that of Yoqne’am, Stacey’s Tiberias bowl, and the Horbat ‘Uza material) suggests this pottery was brought to Palestine from Egypt during the 10th to 12th centuries, perhaps most commonly during times of Fatimid sovereignty, when the major towns were not subject to battles between warring factions.

The jars with the radial band decoration down the exterior should not necessarily be included in this group. As we will see from pieces in Museums in Cairo, there is a definite

difference in style between the wheel-spoke bands and that of the jars with the bands on the exterior that are often much thicker and do not have any signs of the marbling effect or attempts at geometric patterns that we see on the former. They would probably be classified under the “Fayyumi-II” type, but a review of the material in museum collections shows a distinct style of decoration, and an attempt to incorporate that into typologies in the field should be made.

Lastly, the use of the term import is problematic. There is such a small number of actual pieces, but so sizeable an amount of small sherds displaced all over Palestinian sites, that we should be wary to think of ceramic importation, especially of these types, as a large scale practice. As the Cairo Geniza makes clear, leather products or skins, or woven fabrics were much more commonly used to transport items. Ceramics like amphora were no longer the main mode of carrying things, and so any ceramic vessels, especially open ones like small bowls, may have been brought for their artistic value than any utilitarian purposes.³¹⁹ More likely, these bowls and several jugs made their way to Palestine as items belonging to travelers or migrants.³²⁰ The existence of finds both at inland and coastal sights seems to confirm this idea. It was not just that the production center at Fustat’s items were sought after and traded north to Palestinian trade centers along the coast, though that may have occurred in some instances. It seems some of these vessels also made the trip overland, and the lack of a single sizeable corpus of any specific type at any site in particular would suggest these were not being traded or imported in large numbers, but instead brought on a more individual, non-commercial basis.

Furthermore, the staggering variety in clays and inconsistency in forms of the vessels suggest there were some imitations of the glazed vessels coming from Egypt in local potting centers in Palestine. But the sheer variety and lack of any encompassing definitions or any

³¹⁹ Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, I, 334.

³²⁰ Avissar and Stern, *Crusader Pottery*, 34; This conceptualization of the term “import” is used in discussing specifically 12th century or later ceramics, but in the context of Egyptian importation to Palestine.

comprehensive petrography study of Egyptian ceramics during the Islamic period make it difficult to positively identify anything as an imitation. The “Fayyumi” vessels at Ramla, given their very different wares in comparison to the “white glazed” examples from the same site with a probably Egyptian provenance may provide the most likely examples of Palestinian imitations to Egyptian glaze on glaze traditions. Ramla’s identification as a kiln site for other types of ceramics in the early Islamic period certainly helps to support the case.

Chapter 5

Museum and Private Collections

Introduction

As stated in the introduction, a major component of this work is blending the contributions of art historians and archaeologists, who both encounter fine glazed vessels from Egypt and the surrounding region. In conjunction with technological analysis, particularly petrographic studies, these two disciplines can both contribute effectively in understanding the development of glazing techniques in early Islamic and Medieval Egypt. While the excavation reports have aided our understanding of some of the dates and locations from which certain types are produced, the studies of the finer pieces may help to explain some of the artistic developments and adoption of certain techniques in different locations. We begin and end with Cairo, where fine glazed ceramics formerly called “Fayyumi” wares are in the Museum of Islamic Art, and petrographic studies from Fustat provide indications of the provenance of some of the styles we have reviewed.

Ceramics in Museum Collections or Islamic Ceramics Catalogues

Although they do not consist of ceramics from a particular collection, museum, or site, beginning a discussion of Islamic ceramic art should begin with Arthur Lane considering his early pioneering work on the subject. Lane emphasized the importance of T’ang China on the developments of glazed ceramics in Mesopotamia, and its subsequent spread: “T’ang mottled wares and their local imitations have been found in places as far apart as Fostat in Egypt,

Samarra, Samarkand and Nishapur in Eastern Persia.”³²¹ While he never deals with so-called “Fayyumi” wares directly, perhaps because he considered them to be of inconsequential artistic value,³²² he does present some of their Mesopotamian predecessors (Fig. 141).³²³ This mottled ware inspired by T’ang models is described as “lead-glazed, mottled-green, brown, and purple...perhaps 9th century.”³²⁴ For Lane the 9th century is when Islamic ceramic art really began, with these types that developed in Abbasid Iraq through commercial exchanges with the Far East. But he is also quick to note the use of alkaline fluxes in ancient Egypt, then the use of glazing in the Roman world, and even its greater influence than Sassanian glazing.³²⁵ Lane’s contributions remain invaluable, but more recently the influence of Chinese ceramics has been challenged, and the early glazing traditions already extant in Egypt must also be considered towards the development of the later underglaze painted types in Egypt.

Cairo

The earliest reference to Islamic ceramics from the Fayyum in a museum collection was in Cairo, Egypt. Mustafa Muhammad, the director of the Museum of Islamic Art, published a piece in 1956 described as a “so-called Fayyoun” dish from 10th century Egypt (Fig. 142).³²⁶ He goes on to say that it was made in the Fatimid period and is known as a “Fayyoun ceramic” because similar sherds were found there (undoubtedly from the Italian work at Tebtynis). The bowl features a decoration of radial lines in white, yellow, manganese, and green that run in a slightly splashed fashion into the center to create a cruciform design. He adds that it is

³²¹ Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, 12.

³²² Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 301.

³²³ Ashmolean, Acc. No. 1956-61.

³²⁴ Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 7a.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

³²⁶ Muhammad, “Moslem Ceramics,” 29, Fig. 45, Cat. No. 10038.

reminiscent of Chinese splashed stone wares, and also notes it is made of red clay.³²⁷ Several more recent publications by Bernard O’Kane provide a clearer image of this bowl (Fig. 143). In his descriptions he notes the use of underglaze painting, and that while there is a “distorted effect” of the glazes, the central geometric pattern indicates a level of planning. O’Kane also moves the dating to the 11th century.³²⁸

The note by Muhammad that the bowl was made of a red clay is rare in discussions of ceramic art, but may be relevant considering the “definite red clay” types of Fayyumi-I vessels (some of which are produced in Cairo until the present day)³²⁹ and the identification of “later Fayyumi” types with a red ware in the sites of the northern Sinai.³³⁰ Without more description and the knowledge that the firing process can greatly alter the clay color these arguments are merely conjectural. But they do remind us that while an 11th century date is likely for the beginning of style of underglaze bowls with radial streaks running into a central pattern, placing an end date is basically impossible given the continued production of comparable types in Cairo.

Another piece from the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo has sometimes been identified as an example of “Fayyumi” pottery but it is a jar (Fig. 144).³³¹ Originally published by Hasan in 1938, it was displayed in the Hayward Gallery in 1976 and described as a jar with green, yellow, purple, and white glazes and decoration “of alternating eight-pointed stars and crosses, each of the former containing an inscription, *baraka kamila* (perfect blessing), in purple. Pieces in this technique are often attributed to Fayyum but there is still no conclusive evidence for their manufacture there.”³³² Attributed then to the 10th-11th centuries or the Fatimid period, and now

³²⁷ Ibid., 13-15.

³²⁸ O’Kane, *Treasures of Islamic Art*, 80; Idem, *Museum of Islamic Art*, 87.

³²⁹ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 297.

³³⁰ Cytryn-Silverman, *North Sinai*, 108.

³³¹ Ettinghausen, Grabar, and Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, 205, Fig. 326; Cat. No. 15980.

³³² Denny, Ezzy, and Watson, *The Arts of Islam*, 222.

just to the 11th, it has also been argued that the eight-pointed stars are most similar to a style displayed on Abbasid luster wares dating to the 9th century.³³³

While we have seen a number of jars with underglaze striped polychrome decoration along the exterior, this specific example seems to be more related to the radial band decorated bowls than any of the aforementioned jars. The bowls with radial lines of glaze that form geometric patterns in the center, like the first Cairo bowl, are much more similarly decorated than the plainer striped jars. One sherd from Fustat in particular (Fig. 24) has a central lozenge on a white background not unlike the more elaborate eight-pointed designs on white exhibited on the jar. The jars with radial stripes, also found in the Sinai and Palestine, use an alkaline glaze and often include a light green color in the interior not found in this piece.

Along with these two, the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo also has two other pieces on display with similar underglaze painting. Altogether they are attributed to the 11th century and presented together in a room of portable Fatimid minbars and other works dating to the later Fatimid period. The two other pieces are a jar³³⁴ featuring the striped glaze style we have seen in Fustat, North Sinai, Aqaba, and Caesarea and a very small bowl with dark radial bands not displaying any of the opacified interior surface.³³⁵ This bowl relates best to Scanlon's Fayyumi-II type. Perhaps the best comparison is with the smaller bowls included in Bagnani's plate from Tebtynis which also displayed a large radial-patterned dish with a central star motif (Fig. 40).

The museum pieces in Cairo, not surprisingly, are similar to the finds of Fustat, although only examples from Tebtynis in the Fayyum have the same sophistication of design and control of the glazes in the center of the dish as Fig. 143.³³⁶ The only outlier is the large jar, which

³³³ Wade Haddon, "Two Ceramic Pieces," 155, Fig. 1.

³³⁴ Cat. No. 24426.

³³⁵ Cat. No. 2525.

³³⁶ (Same as Fig. 142)

features polychrome decoration, repeated geometric designs, and epigraphy, which has not been seen altogether on any of the finds reported from excavations. It has similarities to sherds from Fustat, but in many ways it is a unique work of art, and can at best be thought of as a culmination of polychrome tin-glazing traditions that were popular in Egypt during the 11th century and later.

Barlow Collection

In the 1970's, large catalogues of Islamic ceramics from collections around the world began to appear and helped to organize some of the basic types along regional and chronological lines. One early work by Fehérvári published the pieces from the Barlow Collection housed in the Ashmolean Museum. Based on the work of Lane, he attributes a number of splashed glaze wares with green lead glazed daubs all over the interior to 9th or 10th century Mesopotamia. In fact, one of the bowls is the very same piece from the Ashmolean (Fig. 141) discussed by Lane. Figs. 145-146 are further examples of the Mesopotamian splashed wares with somewhat more radial streaked designs, but the glaze has run in the kiln far more than any of the radial streaks seen on sherds from Tebtynis or the sherd from Hawara.³³⁷ The argument is that the glazing style changed and radial bands of glaze become more popular until the 11th century in Egypt.

Fehérvári mentions that some of these kinds of vessels were known from the Fayyum and date to the 10th or first half of the 11th century.³³⁸ But he only lists one bowl as honest to goodness "Fayyumi" (Fig. 147).³³⁹ Footed bowls with radial bands of glaze were also found on sherds in Samarra and Susa, and the bowl doesn't exhibit the traditional flat, everted rim arguably diagnostic to Fatimid Egypt. Not apparent from the photograph is that the bands are polychrome, in green yellow, and manganese, under a translucent glaze. The use of these colors

³³⁷ Ashmolean Acc. No. 19567-89; 1956-125

³³⁸ Fehérvári, *Barlow Collection*, 36.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 26, 40; Ashmolean Acc. No. 1956-139.

may be just as convincing evidence of an Egyptian provenance as the radial style of the bands, though it is comparable to bowls from Fustat (Figs. 13-14).

Keir Collection

Another early catalogue that covered a wide range of Islamic ceramics was Ernst Grube's work on the Keir Collection which is now mostly in Berlin. Grube does not use the term "Fayyumi," but does attribute some polychrome glazed wares to Egypt from the 9-10th century and notes that these types have been found in the Fayyum (Tebtynis).³⁴⁰ Two examples illustrate this category well (Figs. 148-149), but one is reminded that they exhibit the "shape, size, and background color of Iraqi Abbasid models."³⁴¹ Grube also notes Ballardini's argument about the influence of Roman marvered glass on ceramic glazing designs, but these two pieces don't really display the kind of swirling or threading of multiple color glazes that appear on some of the finer, more complete radial band decorated types from Egypt.³⁴²

Grube goes as far to say that Fig. 148 could be from the same workshop as other Tebtynis finds. In fact it does match well with some of the polychrome glazed pieces found in later excavations in 1998 and 1999, but has markedly different designs than the wheel-spoke style of radial bands found in the original Italian excavations. Fig. 149 on the other hand is described as imitation T'ang splash ware but the provenance is difficult to determine.³⁴³ The simplicity of the designs on these tin-opacified bowls makes it hard to say whether they were made in Iraq or Egypt just like the pieces from the Barlow Collection. It seems at this stage there was knowledge of polychrome splash glazed wares found in Egypt (and particularly the Fayyum) but

³⁴⁰ Grube, *Keir Collection*, 114.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 116, no. 73, 76.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 118.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 116, and it resembles more the Iraqi imitations of T'ang wares suggesting a Mesopotamian provenance.

there was not enough information to differentiate between those produced in Egypt and those from Abbasid Iraq.

Benaki Collection

By the end of the 1970's much of the ARCE Fustat material had been published, and greatly changed the understanding of "Fayyumi" types. One response to these developments was the comprehensive study by Helen Philon of the ceramics of the Benaki Collection in Athens, understood as having originated in Cairo, Egypt.³⁴⁴ Philon's approach was more or less a reiteration of Grube's approach with a new (and Egypt-centric) set of pieces.³⁴⁵ The underlying assumption behind the dating, however, challenged the Fustat dates based on re-considerations of the traditional Samarra chronology.³⁴⁶ As a result, many polychrome glazed types were dated later than what had previously been assumed, in some cases contrasting starkly with archaeological excavations.³⁴⁷ The problem is not the challenging of archaeologically-based chronologies as much as the disregard for any kind of technological development between types that must have been produced in a range of different periods. Dating provided by excavation reports are assumed to be too early, not for one type or subgroups, but for the entire polychrome glazed ware collection.

Still, Philon's work was the most ambitious project to date of categorizing what the Keir and Barlow collection material had failed to clarify: the issue of whether these splashed glaze

³⁴⁴ Philon, *Benaki*, xvii.

³⁴⁵ Scanlon, "Fayyumi," 298, n. 17.

³⁴⁶ Whether one is convinced that the chronology at Samarra should be moved forward slightly based on Whitehouse's work on Siraf, or the reinstating suggested by Terry Allen, see Whitehouse, *Siraf* III; Allen, Review of *Siraf* III, 188-189, the time period in question remains roughly between 850-1100 AD as displayed by Scanlon's ARCE reports.

³⁴⁷ As discussed Engemann's work at Abu Mina challenges the late dates of Philon, insisting some of these types are being created by the 8th or even 7th century.

wares were the Mesopotamian originals or the “Fayyum” based imitations. Generally organized into a chapter on “wares decorated with different colored glazes,” Philon tried to create a scheme for this huge class of Islamic ceramics based on four types. The first subgroup consists of “vessels decorated with dabs, streaks, or figural motifs under a clear colorless glaze.”³⁴⁸ The second subgroup is of similar glazing technologies, but with epigraphy (Fig. 150) or figural motifs (Figs. 151-152), or even just linear or abstract forms done in either monochrome or polychrome glaze. The third has evidence of the use of yellow glazes (often with green and manganese as well), and the fourth is described as “vessels of Western Islamic origin.”³⁴⁹ While very reasonable from a visual standpoint, combining in the same group bowls featuring glaze on opacified vases with those decorated under a translucent glaze because of epigraphic bands, or separating bowls of identical glazing technique because of the use of yellow on one and not on the other is problematic from a development standpoint. In other words, it seems more likely a workshop would be producing vessels of the same glazing process as opposed to similarly decorated vessels using a variety of glazing technologies.

Nevertheless, the large amount of types shows the diversity of what has been called “Fayyumi” ware. The first group consists of mostly bowls with ring bases and ledge rims with daubed glaze designs like simpler early lead-glazed bowls. Now using a glaze on glaze technique, a good representative of the group is Fig. 153.³⁵⁰ Some comparison to this first type would be the *bacini* found in northern Italy or the Bahnasa fragments (Fig. 50) and as a result her dating of these bowls to the 10th or 11th century is reasonable. The second and third group delineations are much more confusing. The second group is supposedly similar to group one in technique but decorated with epigraphic or figural motifs, or even just more “lively” abstract

³⁴⁸ Philon, *Benaki*, 35.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 35; this is based heavily on the work of Jenkins-Madina: Jenkins, “Western Influences,” 81-107.

³⁵⁰ Cat. No. 1201.

decorations (Fig. 154).³⁵¹ The third group is technically made up of bowls with yellow glaze, but mainly consists of those with polychrome streaks, the radial-band type which has been most consistently referenced as “Fayyumi” ware. As a result, some vessels which contain radial streak decorations assigned to the second group for a lack of yellow glaze (Fig. 155)³⁵² are separated from vessels in group three that do include yellow (Fig. 156).³⁵³

More importantly, while the polychrome streaks are discussed as a high aesthetic achievement, the use of yellow is not discussed as a chronological development, resulting in both group two and three types to be given similar dating. Certainly the pieces with radial bands or streaks are the highlight of the “wares with different coloured glazes” chapter (Figs. 157-158)³⁵⁴ culminating in perhaps the finest example of what have been called “Fayyumi” wares in Fig. 159.³⁵⁵ But if these bowls have prominent flat, everted rims and high ring bases matching Fatimid luster examples as Philon argues,³⁵⁶ then why are they seen as possibly being produced earlier than Fig. 154, attributed to the 11th century. With a flat base, straight rim, and a green and manganese on white glaze, it seems it should be given an earlier date, or if nothing else relatively dated as earlier than the likes of Figs. 157-159. In other words, a fairly late dating and Egyptian provenance is assumed for all of these vessels but clearly are there technological developments evidenced even within the subgroups.

Perhaps the best example of this problematic dating is a piece described as a “fragmentary bowl with flaring walls” decorated with black and green semi-circular stripes of

³⁵¹ Philon, *Benaki*, 38; 54, Fig. 112, pl. III, B; Cat. No. 1345.

³⁵² Cat. No. 1305.

³⁵³ Cat. No. 1302.

³⁵⁴ Philon, *Benaki*, 49; Fig. 95-96; Cat. No. 16799, Cat. No. 21481.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Fig. 97 pl. III, A; Cat. No. 1344.

³⁵⁶ The forms of Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito wares should also be considered here as they are possibly the best established ceramic type relating to the Fatimid period and exhibit the same high ring base and everted rim forms we have seen in Egyptian luster ware and radial-band decorated polychrome glazed examples.

glaze (Fig. 160).³⁵⁷ It is very similar to a fragment of a bowl discovered at Ashmunein from a well-dated 9th-10th century context (Fig. 58). Similar bowls with the U-shaped decorations of typically bi-chrome glazes were found in the Sinai at Raya (Fig. 168) and given the same date.³⁵⁸ This decorative pattern is exemplified by a piece in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (Fig. 161) which has almost identical form and decoration with the Sinai bowl and is similarly dated to the 9th and 10th century by curators.³⁵⁹ These polychrome on white glazing styles seem to drop off sometime in the 10th century Egypt in favor of bowls with more colors, and shapes with ledge rims and ring bases. Returning to the radial-band type (Figs. 157-159), it is worth noting that while they are fine examples, there is a marked contrast to pieces such as the Cairo bowl (Fig. 143) or examples from Tebtynis (Fig. 40). Instead of the swirling effect of the polychrome streaks, in these latter vessels the glaze is more controlled, and clearly formed triangles, lozenges, cruciform, or other geometric patterns can be produced. But in the case of Figs. 158-159 the bands run together without any kind of structured form.

One bowl (Fig. 162) has a form reportedly like pieces found at the Qal‘at Bani Hammad in Algeria.³⁶⁰ While western influences had been largely ignored for these types of ceramics up until this point, Philon fails to also note the similarities of the form to more local examples from the Fayyum, such as the late Roman and Coptic pottery from Naqlun. There the flat, everted rim and slanted ring base is not only present, but also the low rings and ribbing in some pieces dated by Godlewski to the 8th century are much more similar to the lower-lip on Fig. 162 than anything from the Qal‘at Bani Hammad. The bowl also exhibits a more formalized rim decoration,

³⁵⁷ Cat. No. 16812.

³⁵⁸ Philon even notes that this bowl has parallels to Fustat: Scanlon’s “early Fayumi” types from Pits G and U which have an even earlier dating than that of the Ashmunein bowl.

³⁵⁹ Fitzwilliam Museum, OC.1946.142.

³⁶⁰ Philon, *Benaki*, 51; Cat. No. 1343.

although the glazes still drip, somewhat like examples from later Tebtynis (Fig. 59) excavations or even the second group of polychrome glazed ware reported from Tod (Fig. 62).

The fourth subgroup's relation to Maghrebi and Spanish *cuerva seca* pottery indicates it is further from this study of ceramics traditionally defined as "Fayyumi" wares. The control of the decorations and complexity of figural decoration, not to mention the vessel shapes, is a far cry from the swirling of radial bands of glaze potentially aimed at imitating precious stones or contemporary glass vessels. But one jar fragment's (Fig. 163) similarity to *cuerva seca* examples does underscore the importance of looking both east and west from Egypt when considering the development of glazing techniques and styles.³⁶¹ While providing a fine summary and early attempt at organizing these ceramics, this is maybe Philon's biggest contribution by considering western influences when the entire focus of glazed ceramics had been centered on China via Abbasid Iraq.

Syrian Wares from the Ashmolean Museum

A year later Venetia Porter discussed some of the fine medieval wares from Syria in the Ashmolean. The one bowl she identified as "Fayyumi" ware is one from Fustat excavations (Fig. 16). Reproduced with a somewhat clearer image (Fig. 164) Porter describes this fragment's flat (everted) rim, yellow, turquoise, purple, and green splashed glazes. She dates it to the 11th century from Egypt, and uses it mostly as an example of the predecessors in form to the later Syria Raqqa wares.³⁶² These Syrian examples have remarkably similar forms, a ring base with a flat, everted rim, to what Philon uses as an identifier of 11th or 12th century Egypt. The form seems to be the only reason something like this would appear in the catalogue, as Porter refers to

³⁶¹ Ibid., 53, Fig. 110 pl. V, C; Cat. No. 16745.

³⁶² Porter, *Medieval Syrian Pottery*, 21, 26, Pl. XVII.

“Fayyumi” types as “crude” examples of pottery. This focus on form goes further than the Philon work to support the idea that Fatimid potters left Egypt and moved to Syria, sites like Raqqa and Tel Minis, and began to produce perhaps the finest examples of luster wares of the Islamic world.

The British Museum

Like Porter’s use of an excavated sherd from Fustat as comparison to some museum pieces, Féhérvári similarly displayed a fine bowl from the British Museum (Fig. 164) that was similar in many ways to the finds at Bahnasa.³⁶³ As discussed, this bowl is almost identical to one found in Fustat, and most importantly, includes a triangular pattern in the center very similar to several pieces found at Bahnasa, including sherds that resemble more local “Coptic-glazed” traditions in Egypt. The attempt at controlling the glazes and creating a geometric pattern in the center is best expressed by pieces found by the Italians at Tebtynis and the bowl in Cairo (143). But it is important to point out that like its related Fustat bowl it lacks the typical flat, everted rim. It has no ledge rim or any ring base commonly seen on these types, but instead just a flat bottom.³⁶⁴

Musée Nationale de Céramique-Sèvres

Around the same time Jean Soustiel published a major work on Islamic ceramics from the Museum in Sèvres and some other collections around the world. He devoted a section to the so-called “Fayyumi” wares as part of a larger colored glaze group, much like the *Benaki* book.

What seems to be some kind of mistake is maybe one of the most important dates from any of

³⁶³ Féhérvári, *Bahnasa*, 403, pl. IX, Inv. No. 1932/6-15-9.

³⁶⁴ The British Museum includes a number of other so-called “Fayyumi,” examples that all seem to consist of a red earthenware body and are generally dated to the 12th century or later.

these catalogues. He describes one vessel with the typical flat, everted rim and ring base form and thick radial bands in manganese around the rim with a central glazed circle as dating to the Ottoman period (Fig. 166). This one bowl is described in a section devoted to Fatimid period ceramics although some of the dates run from the 10th to 14th century, which is already a late end-date for many of these types.³⁶⁵ But the radial-band bowl is assigned to the 18th century. This bowl, because of the circle design in the center is somewhat similar the mostly complete vessel at Ramla (Fig. 112) and is particularly similar to one *bacini* at the Torre Civica (Fig. 95) suggesting it should be dated to the 11th century. The very late dating is not explained, except to say that this style was popular throughout the eastern Mediterranean into the Ottoman period. Scanlon's argument allows for more or less the same thing in his article on the "Fayyumi-I" type, and it should not immediately be seen as a mistake. Instead it underscores the difficulty of dating these ceramics. While this study mostly focuses on trying to determine when the styles first appear, it should be clear from examples like this that an end date to this style, specifically the one with radial polychrome bands or streaks is difficult to establish.

Victoria and Albert Museum

In 1998 Anna Contadini discussed the impressive collection of Fatimid art from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Over time, especially after the similarity of forms was emphasized by Philon, these "Fayyumi" wares were being associated with the Fatimid period, as one of several fine wares along with Egyptian luster and Fatimid Fustat Sgraffito wares. No specific pieces are described, but "Fayyumi wares" are discussed as part of the discussion of the developing glazing techniques as they related to the Fatimid period in Egypt.³⁶⁶ Dated to the 10th

³⁶⁵ Soustiel, *La Céramique Islamique*, 110.

³⁶⁶ Contadini, *Fatimid Art*, 74.

to 13th century by Contadini, “Fayyumi” and luster wares both exhibit one of the biggest issues encountered in this study. As discussed, tin-opacified vessels with glazes added in monochrome and later polychrome splashes are known to have developed in Mesopotamia either at the beginning or middle of the 9th century. White slips coating the vessel with painted decoration covered by a translucent glaze are also well documented here but relate much more to the pre-Islamic white and red slip Egyptian pottery traditions. As Contadini notes, the difference can be hard to detect, and “both could be used, in the Fatimid period, for lustre-painted ware,” or of course for so-called “Fayyumi” glazed types.³⁶⁷

Over twenty years earlier Frierman discussed some specific pieces from the Victoria and Albert in a general survey of medieval ceramics from the Islamic world. One piece in particular is relevant to the stripe-glazed jar styles we have seen found from Nubia to Palestine (Fig. 167). Described as a vase with a light brown clay body and tin-opacified glaze, Frierman claims it followed T’ang shapes and decorations. It includes polychrome glazing in yellow and green in both stripes and daubs. It was dated to the 10th century or later and attributed to Fustat. Another bowl (Fig. 168) has the same type of dots or daubs covering the interior in green and purple. Again it is tin-opacified and dated to the 11th century.³⁶⁸ While we have seen this kind of daubing in a tin-glaze, clearly continuing an earlier common decorative pattern in a more developed glazing technique, we have not seen the combination on a vase. Fig. 167 has stripes and a form much like jars found in Fustat, but also displays daubs as well. It is just another indication of the continuity of basic decorative schemes even with more sophisticated forms of lead glazing. Why the bowl is associated with Egypt and the vase Fustat specifically is not clarified.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 75.

³⁶⁸ Frierman, *Medieval Ceramics*, 27, no. 12 and 9.

Nasser D. Kalili Collection

While many reports were associating these wares with the Fatimid period, some scholars still kept a slightly earlier dating around the 9th to 10th century. Grube was one of a number of contributors who discussed the fine ceramic collection of Nasser D. Kalili in *Cobalt and Lustre*. While categorized in the chapter on Fatimid ceramics, Grube still suggests one of the three vessels described as “so-called ‘Fayyumi ware’” can be dated to before the Fatimid period.³⁶⁹ Two different sized jars and a bowl (Fig. 169) look very heterogeneous. Unfortunately only the bowl’s form is illustrated (Fig. 170), but the two jars are somewhat different from the other examples from Egypt and Palestine. One has thick bands of glaze not unlike the previously mentioned vase in the Victoria Albert (Fig. 167) and has striped decoration very much like one example from Fustat (Fig. 15). But in general the size of the vessel is not enough to convincingly compare it to the jar in Cairo (Fig. 144) as the forms are quite different and the sole similar feature is underglaze decoration.

The smaller jar has generally speaking a more familiar form to the jars we have seen in Fustat, the Sinai and Red Sea, and Levantine coast. But it doesn’t have radial lines of glaze, nor is the glaze well-controlled as it is on these “Fayyumi” jars that typically display an alkaline glaze. Instead there are daubs of glaze which have run to the point on which the vessel was laid during firing. The final piece is a fine bowl, but the small scattered green dots and overwhelming use of yellow are not exactly like any of the daubs or transparent glazes common amongst the archaeological evidence. The flat base is also unusual which even Grube points out.³⁷⁰ The vessels are all made of a brick or dark-reddish earthenware. Had they been of a pinkish buff ware perhaps it would be more reasonable to associate them with Egypt. Given the

³⁶⁹ Grube, *Cobalt and Lustre*, 145.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

great variety and unusual features, it seems these vessels were grouped together more for lack of similarity with other types than a presence of similarity between them. The dating of the 9th to 10th century however is reasonable given the style of glazing exhibited.

Tareq Rajab Museum

In 2000 Fehérvári covered another wide range of Islamic ceramics, this time from a private collection in Kuwait known as the Tareq Rajab Museum. As was common in previous reports, he also included a section for splash glazed types in a chapter on Fatimid ceramics. He only includes one image (Fig. 171) of a small bowl but claims that the “so-called Fayyom” types can be generally divided on the basis of glaze control: earlier types with glaze running all over, later types with more controlled radial bands.³⁷¹ While he uses the term “Fayyumi” because of the association with these types with the Fayyum oasis, he states there is no evidence that they were ever produced there. This is surprising because he does cite similarities to wasters found at his excavations in Bahnasa, which is a site not so different from those in the Fayyum. With the irregular form of the bowl and badly preserved splash glaze, it is unclear what exactly about this example matches with those of the definite radial band decorated sherds or “Coptic-glazed” types from Bahnasa.

The small bowl is not so different from an example of a possible Egyptian import from Yoqne’am (Fig. 131) but is quite different from the vast majority of forms in this study.³⁷²

Again, it seems that unusually shaped or decorated vessels are easily thrown in with Fatimid

³⁷¹ Fehérvári, *Tareq Rajab Museum*, 69.

³⁷² Fehérvári claims the bowl is like an example from the Benaki except for its inverted rim, but this small bowl has such a poorly preserved body it is hard to say if it ever had anything but a very basic splash decoration of green and manganese glazes. With such a common style of glazing known in many parts of the Islamic world, a completely different rim is a major difference, not a minor factor, between another somewhat similarly glazed bowl.

ceramics simply for displaying an uncharacteristic splashed glaze pattern or having evidence of underglaze decoration because of the flexibility (and ambiguity) of the terms “Fayyumi” or “Fayyumi.” But there was by this time an accepted understanding that the term “Fayyumi” was the popular, but no longer useful, term and that the provenance of these ceramics should not be assigned to the Fayyum.

Kuwait National Museum

In 2004 Oliver Watson published an immense work on Islamic ceramics from the al-Sabah Collection. Like Philon, he finds creative ways to work around the simple but problematic chronological-dynastic based trajectory of Islamic ceramic catalogues. Clearly, similar glazing techniques and decorative motifs were used in different parts of the Islamic world, overlapping the reigns of different rulers and groups. Fitting splashed glaze types to a certain region or dynastic period like the Abbasids or Fatimids is hardly practical, and so Watson’s mention of so-called “Fayyumi” types is found in a section devoted to “opaque white glazed wares” from all over the Islamic world. As Watson relates his four examples to Scanlon’s Fayyumi-I type, what are not dealt with are the so-called “Fayyumi” wares with decoration under a translucent glaze like the fine examples from Cairo or the Benaki in Athens.³⁷³

Nevertheless, Watson provides a definition for the Egyptian examples of the splash glazed “family” of ceramics. He described these glazed wares as types “where the pattern is made up of areas of different coloured glazes (brown, green, turquoise, yellow, white) applied separately and sometimes divided by a dry manganese line.”³⁷⁴ This is a fine description that encapsulates a lot of the material reviewed in this study, although it fails to settle some of the

³⁷³ Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, 180.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

more important issues of glazing technique or provenance. The actual examples given are somewhat different though, and much like Philon's work emphasize connections to western Islamic lands.³⁷⁵

The first of four sherds (Fig. 172) presented by Watson is similar to some of the pieces published early on by Baghat and some of the "Fayyumi-I" sherds from Fustat. The second (Fig. 173) looks as if it may have had a larger figural motif like examples in the Benaki, but perhaps more abstract. Although only a sherd, this kind of decoration resembles designs typically found on underglaze slip painted wares from Egypt, where figures in broad strokes such as birds are often surrounded by borders of circle or dots. The third sherd (Fig. 174) has epigraphy in green glaze on an opacified background, and could be from either Egypt or Iraq. The final piece is known to be from North Africa, and like the pieces in the Benaki, has much thinner and detailed glaze decoration and epigraphy (Fig. 175).³⁷⁶

These sherds are much different from the description provided for some of the polychrome glazed Egyptian wares. They are more like the tin-opacified types from Mesopotamia which typically include one or two colors of glaze decoration. More valuable than evidence from these small sherds are the arguments provided by Watson's survey that help to challenge the common assumptions of Chinese ceramic influences. He notes that the T'ang splashed earthenwares of which finds at Samarra were originally believed to be imitating are used in funerary contexts and probably wouldn't have been used as trade goods. More importantly, it seems they stopped being produced by the end of 750 AD, and yet are viewed as a major influence on styles of Islamic pottery being made in the 9th century. He claims that "we cannot yet point to a Chinese source in the Islamic world for the Islamic white slipped

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 36; Watson sees the "Fayyumi" examples from the al-Sabah collection as precursors to the Spanish *cuerda seca* examples, but admits similar tendencies were being developed at the same time as far east as Pakistan.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 180.

earthenwares with splashed decoration in a transparent lead glaze.”³⁷⁷ But it is clear that the examples from Egypt were imitating styles in Iraq.

Certainly a great variety of types have been displayed in the various catalogues, collections, and museums, but there is a general progression that becomes apparent. Over time excavations have changed the way these ceramics were termed, when they were believed to have been produced, and most noticeably where they were produced. But these works can also aid archaeologists by providing parallels and comparative material, and generating conversations about ambiguities or problems. Philon’s book included fine color plates, form illustrations, and described the ware. Many catalogues and articles after followed suit. Excavation reports on pottery should also try to adapt as well, including as much information as possible in the event it becomes useful for a later study. One way to combine meaningfully these two different approaches is through a number of scientific studies which have become more and more popular in recent years. Petrographic analysis in particular can help determine provenance with more confidence. But it also becomes clear that only under certain circumstances do these analyses aid the archaeologist and art historian, and it is necessary to be holistic in one’s approach for them to make a real contribution to the field.

Technological Analysis

In the 1970’s archaeology began incorporating more “scientific” methods into the field. As more and more Islamic ceramics were published from museums around the world, conservators and ceramic specialists also began using technological studies to aid their work. Frierman was one of the earliest to apply these types of studies to Islamic ceramics, using neutron activation analysis or NAA on luster wares. Some of the problems with these

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

investigations were immediately apparent. While using a chemical analysis to study a pottery sherd is definitely adding a more scientific approach, some important parts of the scientific process have been seemingly left out in a many of these studies.

Frierman for example, took samples from several archaeological sites, including Fustat.³⁷⁸ But when dealing specifically with ceramics that are known to have been produced in different areas and often traded to other regions (and even more specifically luster wares which have a highly debated chronology of development and provenance) the archaeological context from which they were found can hardly be used as an assumed place of origin. If they are, the results will provide at least partially skewed chemical statistics for future studies, and if they are used only as reference in a study with intent on determining provenance, the modern day samples cannot possibly be seen as matching exactly the clays used by medieval potters. We have seen a wide range of clays used in this study and even along the Nile River at a single site the use of river clays versus the “Nile mud” produces extremely different wares.

This same issue never seems to be totally resolved, whether the groups is using NAA, X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), atomic absorption spectroscopy (AAS), proton-induced X-ray emission (PIXE), or general petrographic analysis. In the end, using sherds from excavations, or (as is more common in these studies) sherds in museum collections attributed to certain sites, is not a perfect science by any means, and results should reflect these fundamental ambiguities and uncertainties. A perfect example is a recent study by Daszkiewicz, Schneider, and Bobryk, in which several groups of sherds were generally attributed to Fustat. But the only other site that seemed to be of consideration was that of Raqqa, Syria. Based on modern day Egyptian pottery made from Nile clays, the chemical compositions of the sherds may match

³⁷⁸ Frierman, Asaro, and Michel “Provenance,” 114.

better than with the data from Raqqa.³⁷⁹ But an either-or scenario seems less than scientific despite the WD-XRF analysis performed on the samples.

Sometimes these technologies are helpful in providing more general statements about types of glazing used in terms of oxides and colorants on a more regional scale. Based on a recent study of tests undertaken by Alexander Kaczmarkczyk, who also worked on some of the Fustat “Fayyumi” sherds, it seems some general comments can be made about which types of glazes were used in which parts of the Islamic world at which time.³⁸⁰ The value of this study is that samples were taken from a wide range of sites all over the Islamic world and from different time periods. Important was the evidence that suggested lead antimonite yellow and green with low copper contents were used exclusively in Egypt and Syria. Also noteworthy is that tin-opacification was rare in samples using this antimonite yellow, or other colors that work as natural opacifiers. Instead, tin-opacification was used primarily for white and luster painted ceramics.³⁸¹ This brings to mind the “Fayyumi-II” sherds from Fustat, where the polychrome glazes are so prominent as to make it difficult to discern an opacified glaze underneath. This glaze technology data would suggest that there rarely was in fact an opacified glaze underneath, perhaps only a white slip.

Mason and Keall’s work at Fustat is most valuable to this study, not just because it focuses on ceramics that were sometimes referred to as “Fayyumi” wares, but also because they provide a more holistic approach that considers historical factors and the complicated processes of technological exchange and trade patterns in the early Islamic and medieval world. In the 1991 petrography study of Fustat, later as part of his dissertation, and finally expanded on a book on luster ceramics, Mason divides anything that has previously been described as Fayyumi into

³⁷⁹ Daszkiewicz, Schneider, and Bobryk, “Islamic Glazed Pottery.”

³⁸⁰ Tite, “Technology of Glazed Islamic Ceramics,” 337.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 337.

two groups, “Egyptian white glazed wares,” and “polychrome glazed wares.”³⁸² Later these groups were more specifically broken up, possibly after running into the same problem as Scanlon did at Fustat with an inability to determine whether or not there was in fact a white opacified surface beneath the various colors of decoration. As a result, the “white glazed wares” can be more specifically defined as “splashed-type of opaque-glazed class (OG-Splash) (Fig. 176) or “polychrome-painted type of Opaque-glazed class (OG-Poly),” and the “polychrome glazed wares” (Fig. 177) abbreviated to “(PG or Poly-Glaze).³⁸³ Also further specified are “semi-glazed wares” which are essentially the “slip-painted early lead-glazed wares” of Scanlon or the “Coptic-glazed wares” of Rodziewicz or Whitcomb.³⁸⁴

A justification for dividing the “polychrome glazed wares” from Egypt into even smaller sub-groups was found based on a difference in petro-fabric. The sherds on the right of Fig. 178 have similar petrofabrics and apparently relate to pottery found in Yemen (apart from the obvious connections of radial band decoration to other pieces discussed in this study from Egypt and Palestine). The ones of the left however are of a different petrofabric.³⁸⁵ A similar sherd to the one on the lower left of Fig. 178 can be found in Mason’s work on luster ceramics (Fig. 179).³⁸⁶ There it is described again as a “polychrome glazed ware” dating to 975-1025 and the petrofabric related to Nile clays.³⁸⁷ Another sherd is given an almost identical description (Fig. 180), although it is clear the decoration is different, exhibiting radial polychrome bands similar to a sherd from Kom el Dikka (Fig. 32).³⁸⁸

³⁸² Mason and Keall, “Petrography Fustat,” 172-174; Mason, “Islamic Glazed Pottery,” 92-93; Idem, *Shine like the Sun*, 62-68.

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 61-62.

³⁸⁵ Mason and Keall, “Petrography Fustat,” 174.

³⁸⁶ If not the same sherd, they appear identical but are given Cat. No. 988.117.53 versus .50 in different reports.

³⁸⁷ Mason, *Shine like the Sun*, 256; Royal Ontario Museum Cat No. 988.117.50.

³⁸⁸ Ibid; ROM 988.117.56.

The example given for the “polychrome glazed ware” form (Fig. 177) includes a flat, everted rim, typical of vessels decorated in spoked streaks of radial glaze. It is more specifically described as having a “Ca-Nile 2” petrofabric, part of the larger group of Nile clay wares. This petrofabric is distinguished by its inclusions and “pinkish” hue, while the first “Ca-Nile” type is without inclusions and more of a buff fabric.³⁸⁹ This petrofabric is found in the “opaque-glazed ware” form (Fig. 162), which includes a slightly out-curving rim similar to tin-opacified models from Abbasid Iraq.³⁹⁰ The petrofabric found in the more difficult to define opaque-glazed style is unmentioned, but this Nile clay variety is noteworthy. There is no way to link the “Ca-Nile” types to Fustat directly. The major correlation is that luster wares assumed to have been produced in Fustat also exhibit this same petrofabric. As a result, relating either the opaque-glazed or polychrome glazed types to production in Fustat is not possible.

The link with luster wares is valuable for the dating of these types however. Mason has organized the luster wares of Egypt into four categories based on both the petrographic evidence and historical events during the Fatimid period.³⁹¹ While the easily identifiable opaque-glazed types should be seen as earlier given their established connection with earlier Mesopotamian ceramics, the more hard to define “polychrome painted opaque glazed-class” and the “polychrome glazed class” both can be “associated with Lustre Groups One and Two” which date to the range of 975-1075.³⁹² Mason’s arguments are quite convincing. They match well with excavation findings from Egypt and Palestine, and provide a new holistic approach that

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

³⁹¹ Lead isotope studies of medieval Islamic ceramic glazes have supported the petrographic analyses that support the luster groupings, see Wolf, Stos, Mason, and Tite, “Lead Isotope Analyses,” 419-420; isotope analyses on the wares themselves are potentially more accurate than petrography and should be further investigated as a powerful tool for archaeologists interested in determining near-absolute provenance for ceramic material.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, 67-68.

includes petrography along considerations of form, stylistic and technological development, and historical trends.

The issue with these studies in terms of their relation to so-called “Fayyumi” wares has to do with sample size. Judging from the material in his articles, dissertation, and book only several sherds are being used to base a lot of arguments. In fact only four or five sherds from the Royal Ontario Museum of so-called “Fayyumi” wares are used and broken into three well-defined subgroups. It is possible to divide a group of ceramics into clearly defined categories if there are only a few to work with. But when you are dealing with thousands of sherds from an excavation or hundreds of vessels from a museum collection, the ability to create well-defined groups diminishes greatly. All the material is well-correlated and fits in nicely with a historical narrative based on potters migrating from major center to major center between the 9th and 13th centuries. But the variety and regional disparity of finds that can generally be categorized as “opaque-glazed” or “polychrome glazed wares” from Egypt suggests summarizing the findings for more than several sherds would perhaps be a different story.

Discussion

In collections of Islamic pottery around the world it is possible to find parallels to almost all of the types discussed in excavations in Egypt and Palestine. Fortunately, unlike excavation reports, art historians have moved away from the term “Fayyumi” and mention it only for its former popularity and continued influence. Detailed petrographic analysis of a group of ceramics from Egypt has helped to support many of the general dates suggested by archaeologists. But the basic problems are unresolved, if not more clearly exposed, by efforts of ceramic specialists. A basic division is apparent between Mesopotamian-related opacified bowls

with splash glaze decoration and presumably later polychrome decorated ware under a translucent glaze. But both are well-known from Egypt, sometimes viewed as being produced in contemporary periods, and often examples are described that overlap either group, whether in terms of technique, form, ware, or decorative style or use of colors. The examples in museum collections and scientific studies up to date may help to paint in broad strokes the development of ceramics in Egypt between the Islamic conquest and the end of the Fatimid period, but there are still many details of this development that remain unresolved.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The problem of so-called “Fayyumi” wares may seem somewhat trivial in the larger scheme of archaeological issues in Egypt and Palestine.³⁹³ We know polychrome tin-glazed bowls and jars were being made roughly between the 9th and 12th centuries in Egypt, definitely in Fustat, likely in the Delta, and possibly some other sites as well. These vessels were brought to cities along the Palestinian coast and even in some cases across the Mediterranean Sea and placed in walls of Italian churches. There are some outliers, and some styles perhaps continue in Cairo well into the Ottoman period. The splash glazed styles exhibited on these types is a clear imitation of earlier pottery in Iraq and Iran, most definitely influenced by three-color splashed wares produced in China during the T’ang dynasty.

The problem is that any polychrome sherd with glaze on glaze techniques found in excavations in Egypt could be from a variety of places made in a variety of time periods. Local pre-Islamic pottery traditions seem to have more of an influence than previously supposed. The extent of Egyptian ceramic importation to Palestine is not well understood. Certain colors of glaze and styles of glazing are possibly erroneously connected with larger technological and historical developments. This study is only an initial attempt to clarify some of the stylistic consistencies between sites and regions and propose accurate dates that can be associated with them.

³⁹³ In fact it is probably trivial in comparison to the almost completely ignored issue of unglazed ceramic evidence from early Islamic periods at the same sites, which, with detailed investigations could prove to be more helpful in assigning layers to certain periods but has up to this point been ignored for the more attractive glazed ceramics.

Specific Types

Opacified Splash Wares

Chapter four concluded with an argument that the term “white glazed wares” was an appropriate way to differentiate some of the examples similar or identical to those from Abbasid Iraq. Considering Mason’s subdivision of this group on account of the difficulty of appropriately identifying a tin-opacified vessel, it seems “opacified splash wares” (or in Mason’s most recent terms: “splash type of opaque-glazed class”) are a suitable name for these types given their tin-opacified base with splashed glaze decoration, often in blue or green and sometimes polychrome. Of course the location must be specified, as types like this found in Palestine, and even those in Egypt, could have come from Mesopotamian production centers. The best datable examples of this type from Fustat are what Scanlon formerly described as “Early Fayumi” (Figs. 7-10) dated from Pits U and G to the 9th to 10th centuries. Iraqi models are certainly produced earlier, and may well represent earlier levels at sites in Palestine.

This group is essentially Scanlon’s “Fayyumi-I” type, but we know that these styles come from not only Egypt, and in fact this larger group can be further divided into smaller decorative groups. The epigraphic bands sometimes found on these opacified forms can come in polychrome and monochrome styles, and in a variety of forms (Figs. 9, 10, 29, 67, 144, 150, 154). The examples with figural imagery (Figs. 2, 66, 151-152, 173) sometimes include images similar to those displayed on early underglaze slip-painted wares from Egypt. Two more specific types of opacified splash wares with polychrome decoration have certain distinctive traits and are dated by excavations.

I. *Opacified U-Shaped Splash Wares (Figs. 7, 38, 58, 115, 135, 160, 161)*

One specific type of bi-chrome decoration exhibited on tin-opacified vessels is U-shaped loops splashed down from the rim towards the interior of the bowl, often with turquoise blue or green and black or manganese alternating in successive loops or bands. It seems to be an Egyptian development of earlier opacified bowls from Abbasid Iraq. The forms often include ring bases but ones that slant outwards more similar to local Egyptian pottery traditions than Iraqi blue on white wares. They also often have a flat or even outcurving body and rim very different from both Iraqi models and later Egyptian luster and sgraffito wares. Confidently dated to the 9th-10th century at Ashmunein, finds in Abu Mina and the Sinai also suggest a 9th, possibly 10th century, date. Examples in museum collections correspond to the archaeological evidence, and this style was possibly imported or imitated at Tiberias.

II. *Opacified Stippled-Splash Wares (Figs. 2, 7, 18, 26, 36, 52, 172, 179)*

This type consists of tin-opacified bowls or dishes on which decoration in two or several colors with extremely small dots is applied, often in triangular shapes. Not to be confused with mottled or daubed decoration with larger splotches or irregularly applied mottling, the stippling on these types is small, and organized in shapes (but still sometimes blurred from the running glaze). This type sometimes displays loops around the rim inside which the dots are applied, very similar to the basic decoration of the U-shaped type above. It is been found almost exclusively in Fustat with several small sherds also uncovered in Kom el-Dikka excavations. One bowl with this type of decoration was published with others as “early Fayumi” from Fustat pits, and dated to the 9th to 10th century. But excavations in Greece have uncovered identical types attributed to local Byzantine potters from the 10th to 12th centuries.³⁹⁴

³⁹⁴ Papanikola-Bakirtzi, Mavrikiou, and Bakirtzis, *Byzantine Glazed Pottery*, 25-29, See Ch. 1 note 60 of this study.

Classic “Fayyumi” Ware

Typically referred to in this study as bowls with radial or spoked bands or streaks of glaze decoration, if anything should be called “Fayyumi” ware, it should be these examples. They were the original style first termed “Fayyumi” and continue to be the only consistent style that is still referred to by that name, especially in sites in Palestine. While the problems with the term “Fayyumi” have been established, using the description of radial bands is also a bit misleading because it implies the bands run from a central point. In many cases the streaks either converge to form another shape or do not reach much further below the edge of the rim. Attempts at defining this type by color are similarly problematic because they display a variety of colors (sometimes as many as five) and some examples control the running of the glazes better than others. To be clear, a description of the glazing technique employed would be preferred, but as we have seen determining whether the vessel has an opacified glaze, a white-slip base, or otherwise is not always possible given the overwhelming coverage of the opacified polychrome decoration, itself often covered by a translucent glaze.

It is also important to note here that this type should be distinguished from examples that display larger bands that also radiate around the vessel, often meet in the middle, but usually are fewer in number and divide the colors of the bowl like almost like pieces of a pie (Figs. 13-14, 21-22, 48, 71, 115-116, 147, 156). These are found in a variety of colors, forms, and glazing techniques in Egypt and Palestine and date to roughly the same period. Also distinct from this type are the examples from Syria that display thin streaks running down from the rim. These appear to be the Syrian response to Iraqi models (and are quite similar to finds at Samarra) but are also potentially related to Whitcomb’s “Hijazi” wares which sometimes include wavy streaks running down from the rim.

Two clear Egyptian anomalies include characteristic decoration of radial bands in alternating colors but much simpler forms, such as Figs. 31 and 165. These hemispherical bowls without the everted rims include central overlapped triangles resembling the Seal of Sulayman. The similarity of this triangular decoration at the center of the “Coptic-glazed” base sherd from Bahnasa shows the definite influence of more local pottery traditions to these so-called “Fayyumi” wares typically associated with ceramic influences to the east. While they do not match the classic “Fayyumi” style in terms of form, their decoration is so similar as to suggest these are a kind of stage of development from “Coptic glazed” or “slip-painted early lead glazed wares” to the wider underglaze tradition that encompassed the more classic “Fayyumi” types displayed in museums in Athens and Cairo.

The classic “Fayyumi” type is one with high ring bases and flat, everted rims like Fatimid luster or sgraffito wares. Polychrome stripes are almost always done in opacified manganese in between white or yellow spaced either equally around the rim or in equally divided bunches that run down into the center of the bowl either forming geometric patterns or swirling together in a way that caused early excavators to claim it was an attempt at imitating marble. This more or less matches Whitcomb’s definition of “Fayyumi” wares, the “five-color Fayyumi style,” described by Adams, Cytryn-Silverman’s “Fatimid Fayyumi,” the third group of Kom el Dikka types described by François, and Philon’s third subgroup. Wasters of this specific type were found in Fustat and are part of Scanlon’s “Fatimid Fayyumi-I” category which he dates to the later end of a period between 850-1200 AD.³⁹⁵ This roughly matches the range of dates provided by the definitions above, if combined all together, and a major issue has been finding these types in a very controlled context. One exception is at Caesarea, where sherds of this specific type were found with two Fatimid coins providing a date range of 1071 to 1150. The *bacini* from

³⁹⁵ Scanlon, “Fayyumi,” 298-299.

Pavia and Pomposa suggest they are being made at least several decades prior to this. In the end all that can be said confidently is that this style was being made at Fustat and possibly other sites in Egypt from the mid-11th to the mid-12th century and maybe before this time and very likely after this time as well.

Whether or not they have a white opacified surface underneath is not always apparent, but they typically include a clear or yellow translucent glaze covering the pattern of streaks which can result in some of the colors running. One observation is that some vessels appear to have well-controlled glaze decoration which produce clearly defined central geometric shapes or circles while others appear to have been intended to display these geometric shapes but the colors ran so much as to obscure the lines. Though many sherds are not large enough for this difference to be determined, dividing the evidence based on these criteria does allow some suggestions as to the dating and development of these more specific types. A single kiln could have produced both styles, the obscured forms the result of a poor mixing of the fluxes or poor positioning during the firing. But the evidence from the *bacini* in Italy suggests this may be an indication of a technological development.

A number of similarly shaped and decorated bowls (Figs. 12, 28, 97, 99, 159) all exhibit central decorations that seem to suggest a geometric or cruciform pattern was intended but the glazes ran too much to allow for this development to take place. They sometimes include the spaced division between bunches of radial streaks. The culmination of this style could be seen as Fig. 159, where the use of yellow and blue produces an exceptional alternating display of color. Still, the central blurred yellow triangle shapes suggest a pattern similar to the one on Fig. 16 (164) was originally intended and the colors ran.

The alternating radial bands very much resemble marvered glass traditions that go back, as Ballardini noted, to Roman glass styles (and even earlier to ancient Egyptian faience productions) but this does not seem to be the ultimate intention of the central decoration. In fact the purpose seems to have been to have the bands run together to form a shape, perhaps like the one displayed in Fig. 164, or the presumably later examples discussed below. The *bacini* at the Torre Civica have types like this (Figs. 95, 97, 99) in which the central triangles or circles are clear enough to recognize but also so blurred that the bands overlap or streaks create partially obscured motifs.

The campanile at Pomposa has *bacini* which were placed possibly forty years later, and judging from the drawings (Figs. 89-91) have more defined streaks and perhaps even figural motifs as the central decoration. Their early identification with the Fayyum is not surprising as the early Tebtynis excavations produced types with very clear radial decoration and central geometric patterns with a high level of glaze control. The most exceptional example of this kind of work is seen in Cairo (Figs. 142-143) and shows that the obscured types must have been trying to attempt this kind of pattern in the center with triangles, lozenges, or circles which are also described by Adams in Nubia (Fig. 64).³⁹⁶ Admittedly, the glazes still run to some extent, and the distinction is somewhat arbitrary without more evidence. But the noticeable change in differently dated sets of *bacini* and the increased control of the underglaze decoration suggests if nothing else that by the end of the 11th century potters in Egypt had begun to master the technique of underglaze painting and that the pre-Islamic Egyptian ceramic traditions, in addition to the discussed influences from Mesopotamia and China were incorporated when creating these fine pieces.

³⁹⁶ Adams, *Meinarti* III, 63.

Polychrome Striped Jars (Figs. 11, 15, 79, 80, 125)

We have encountered a number of jars or jugs with striped glaze decoration in several colors on the exterior and often a glazing on the interior. These should not be seen as related to the classic “Fayyumi” radial band decorated bowls however, because they do not include the same kind of alternating patterns or thin slightly wavering or even stepped streaks. Their exterior bands are thick and they resemble more bowls with only several radiating bands that divide the bowl into two or three different colors. The similarity in forms of the more or less irregularly striped types found in a number of sites from Nubia to the Levantine coast makes a provenance difficult to determine but they seem to generally be produced between the 10th and 11th centuries. A variation of this type is also found in a more closed-form with an inward slanting rim (Figs. 109, 170). The eight-pointed star decorated vase in Cairo (Fig.) should not necessarily be seen as part of this group but instead more similar to the classic “Fayyumi” radial-band style discussed above.³⁹⁷

Color in the Medieval World

While it is not possible to create an entire typology of this diverse group of ceramics, some larger comments can be made about glazing technique and color on a regional level. Throughout this study arguments have sometimes been based on certain colors. Scanlon discusses the use of manganese as a possible indication of Egyptian provenance. Philon uses yellow as a defining characteristic of one of her sub-groups, and excavators in Kom el Dikka saw yellow as an indication of ceramics produced later as it was relatively absent amongst the early Islamic pottery. From the review of Kaczmarkczyk’s studies by Tite, it seems yellow was more

³⁹⁷ The other jar on display in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo probably should be included in this group (Cat. No. 24426).

of a regional indicator than a chronological one. In fact it seems yellow and manganese used together was a phenomenon seen mainly in Egypt and Syria. Their use should be viewed as a regional development first and possibly evidence of a later development because of its growing popularity amongst potters in Egypt and Syria.

Egypt and the medieval world in general was an extremely colorful place. The passage below, compiled from order lists for textile purchases in the Mediterranean area from the 11th to 13th centuries shows the range of colors available and the desire of individuals to bring color into their everyday life.

Five fine covers, one gazelle blood, one pure violet, one reddish brown (“musk-colored”) one silvery, one intense yellow; two others pure, clean white, inclining to yellow...Eight Pairs of (small) prayer carpets, two white, two indigo blue, two green, two red... Please, my lord, the red should be as red as possible, likewise the white and the yellow should be exquisite, I was not satisfied with the yellow...The siglaton robe is of the utmost beauty, but not exactly what I wanted, for it is white and blue, while I wanted to have, instead of the latter, onion color, an “open” color. The lead-colored (i.e. blueish gray) robe is superb, better than all the rest.³⁹⁸

The types reviewed above, particularly the classic “Fayyumi” types with four or five different colors under a transparent glaze are a fine example of how ceramics were just as colorful as textiles or anything else in the medieval Mediterranean. Kawatoko and Shindo suggest “Fayyumi” types were made for everyday use, and their appearance in a vast spread of sites suggests they were a fairly common style used by everyday people in places all over Egypt. The mention of holes on several vessels believed to be added for a later repair could in fact be evidence of hanging holes, to display the pieces along the wall. Unlike porcelains or Chinese ceramics in general, these would not have been greatly desired luxury items. Not even the fine

³⁹⁸ Goitein, “Industries,” 181.

Fatimid period luster wares were. But Scanlon's note that glaze on glaze types like this were produced up until present day is sign of their long-standing popularity in Egypt.

There is little definitive evidence for local imitation of specifically Egyptian imports in Palestine. There are some fine examples along the coast, and some of the pieces seem to have made their way further inland, but not so far inland as to ever pass the Jordan River valley. In some ways this is not surprising. In general, it seems different regions had their own responses to splash glazing styles in the 9th century. Tiberias and Ramla, the former more so than the latter, show evidence of provincial production centers for glazed ceramics. The splashed and mottled green and brown wares found in great numbers throughout Palestine and dated generally to the 9th to 11th centuries seems to be a Palestinian response to the developments we see in Samarra and other sites in Abbasid Iraq. Again Watson's concept of "families" of pottery styles comes to mind. Like much of the art and architecture of the Islamic world, identical styles and developments sometimes appeared at different corners almost contemporaneously. Ceramic arts are not so different, and regional interpretations of a general style of splashed glazing are expressed even from the small sherds of archaeological excavations.

Finally, while the roaming potter theory of Islamic history holds weight in terms of luster painting developments, the evidence of polychrome tin-glazed wares in Egypt suggests simpler techniques of pottery production were much more provincially based. Kilns were found at Abu Mina and Bahnasa, and identical types of the radial band so-called "Fayyumi" style have been uncovered from Northern Sudan to the Sea of Galilee. Along the Nile, they are found at many intervals from Nubia to Fustat and the Delta. Especially noteworthy is the wealth of evidence at Tebtynis and Bahnasa, both separated from the Nile and prominent Coptic Christian sites that seem to have resisted Islam's spread for several centuries. Finds at other sites known for their

large Coptic communities and important churches or monasteries as far south as Nubia suggests either of two things: local glazed pottery production by Christian communities or, the development of large scale trade networks from Fustat up the Nile most likely during the Fatimid period.

In the early Islamic and medieval periods it seems not only the capital Fustat was producing fine glazed ceramics in Egypt. Furthermore, it seems a certain technological advancement did not migrate from one region to another over time. In the case of splash-glazing, the techniques and technologies spread over the Islamic world somewhat contemporaneously. In Egypt in particular, a fusion of local Coptic forms and motifs met with the tin-opacified wares of Abbasid Iraq and led to the development of fine polychrome underglaze bowls and jars that were brought outside Egypt to Palestine and Italy and perhaps elsewhere in the 11th and 12th centuries.

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Figures

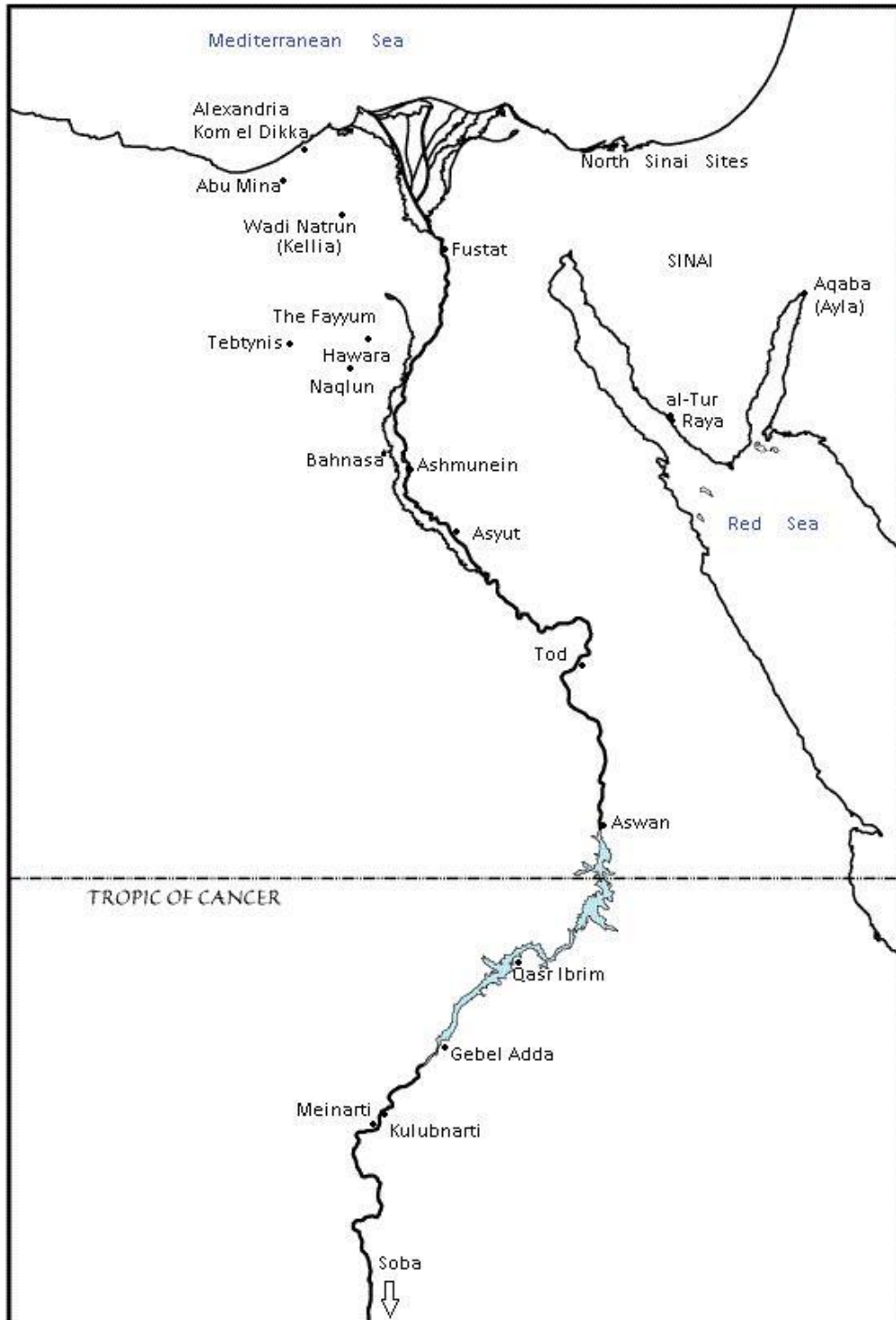
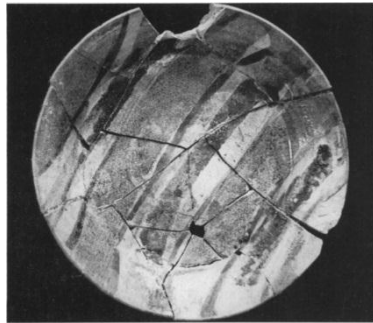


Fig. 1

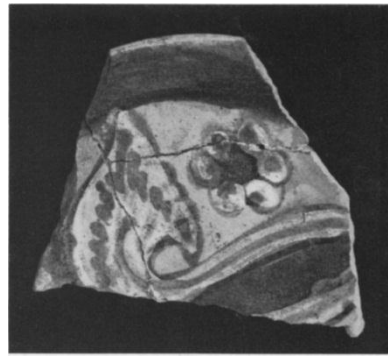
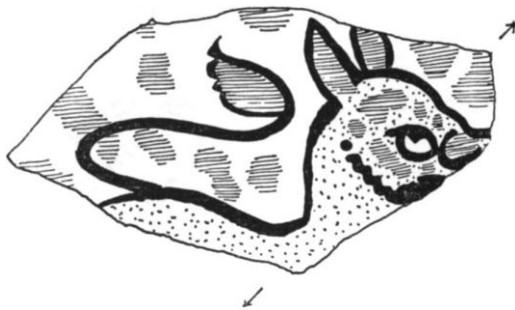
Fustat



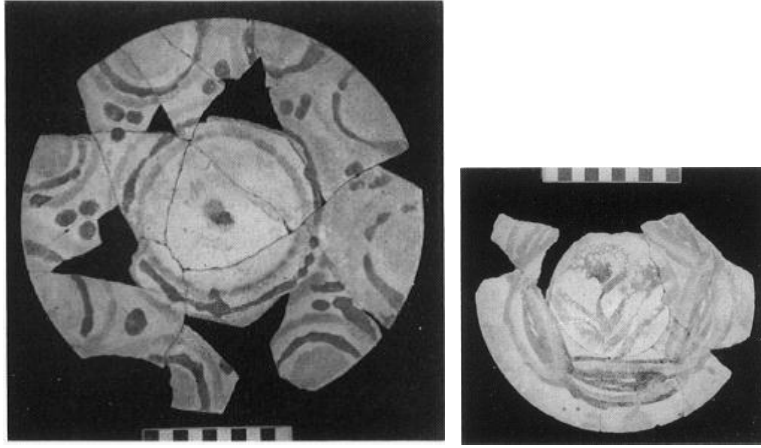
Fig. 2



Figs. 3-4



Figs. 5-6



Figs. 7-8

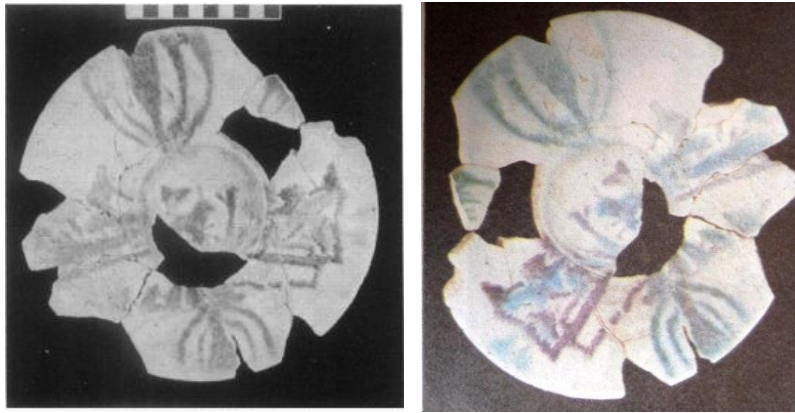
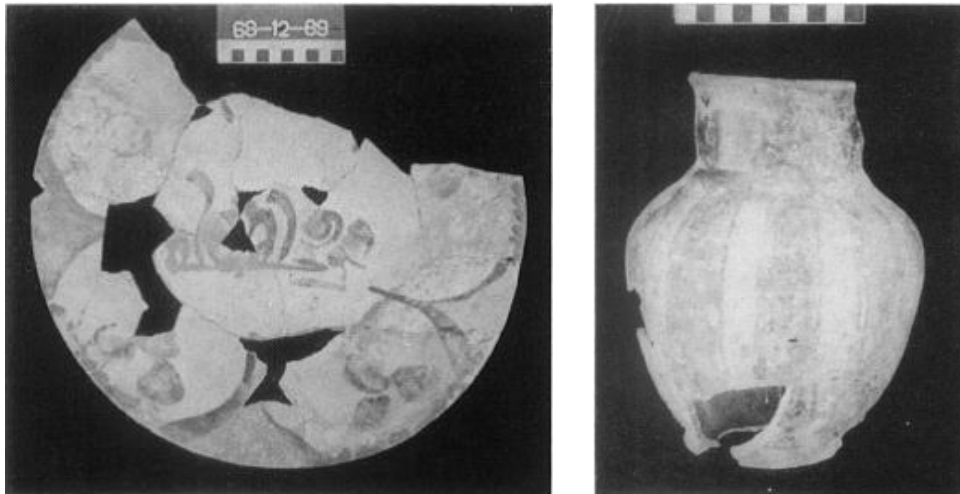


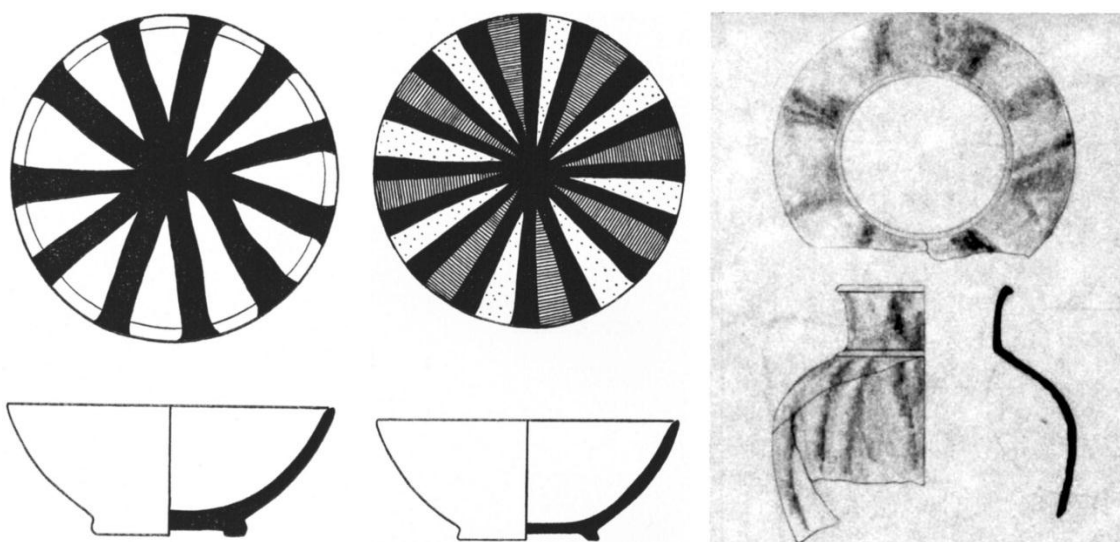
Fig. 9



Figs. 10-11



Fig. 12



Figs. 13-15

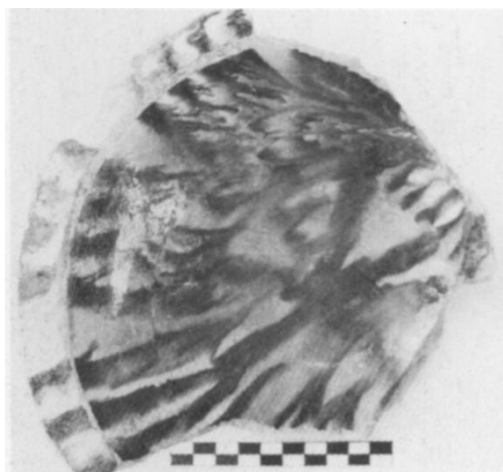


Fig. 16



Fig. 17



Fig 18



Fig. 19

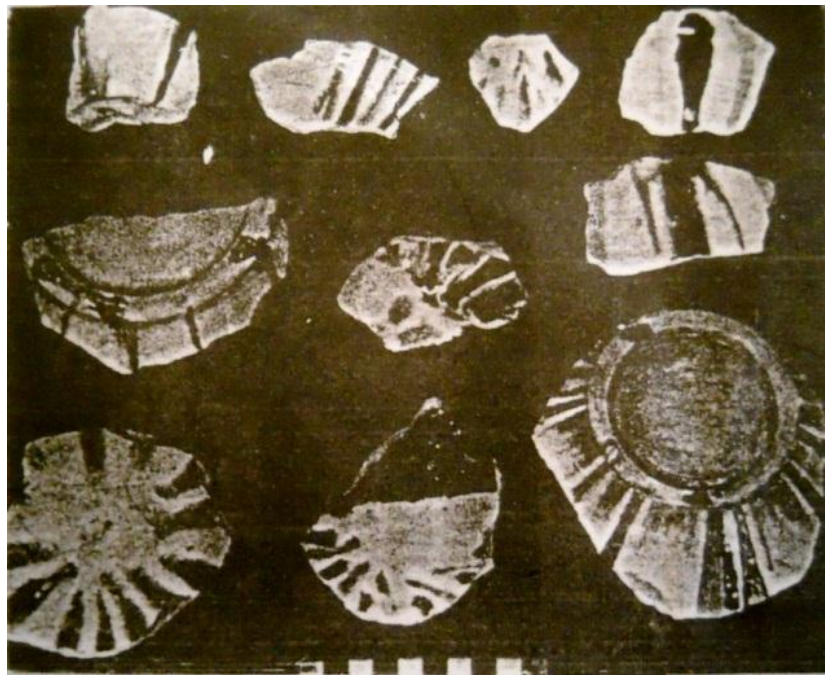
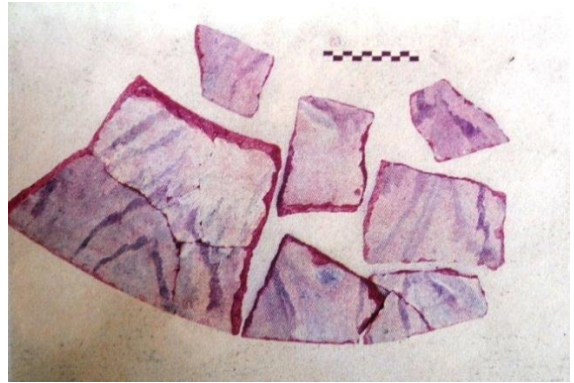
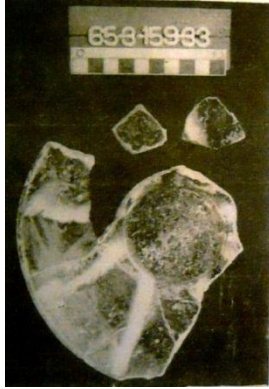


Fig. 20



Figs. 21-23



Figs. 24-25

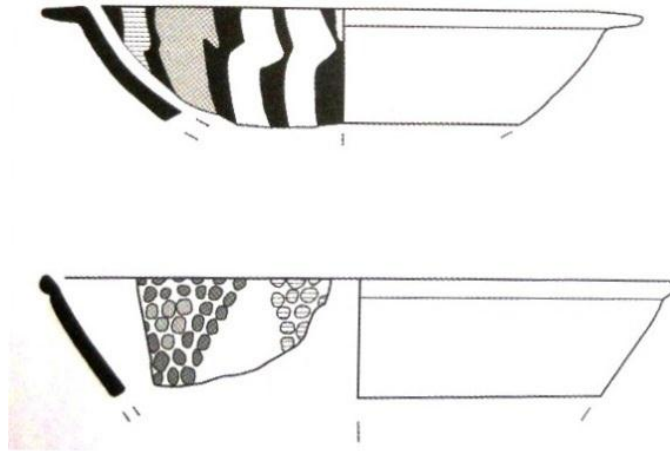
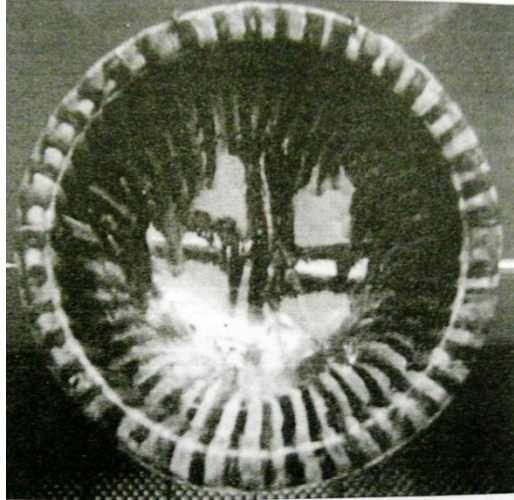


Fig. 26



Figs. 27-28

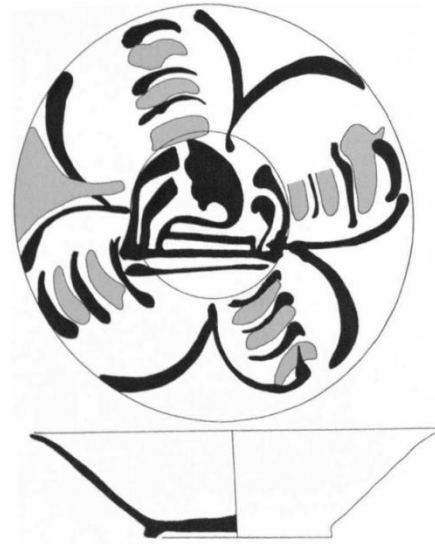


Fig. 29

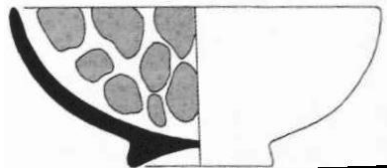
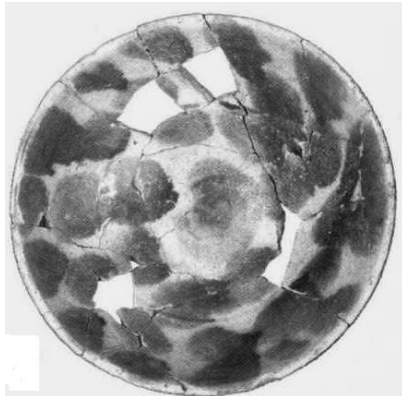


Fig. 30

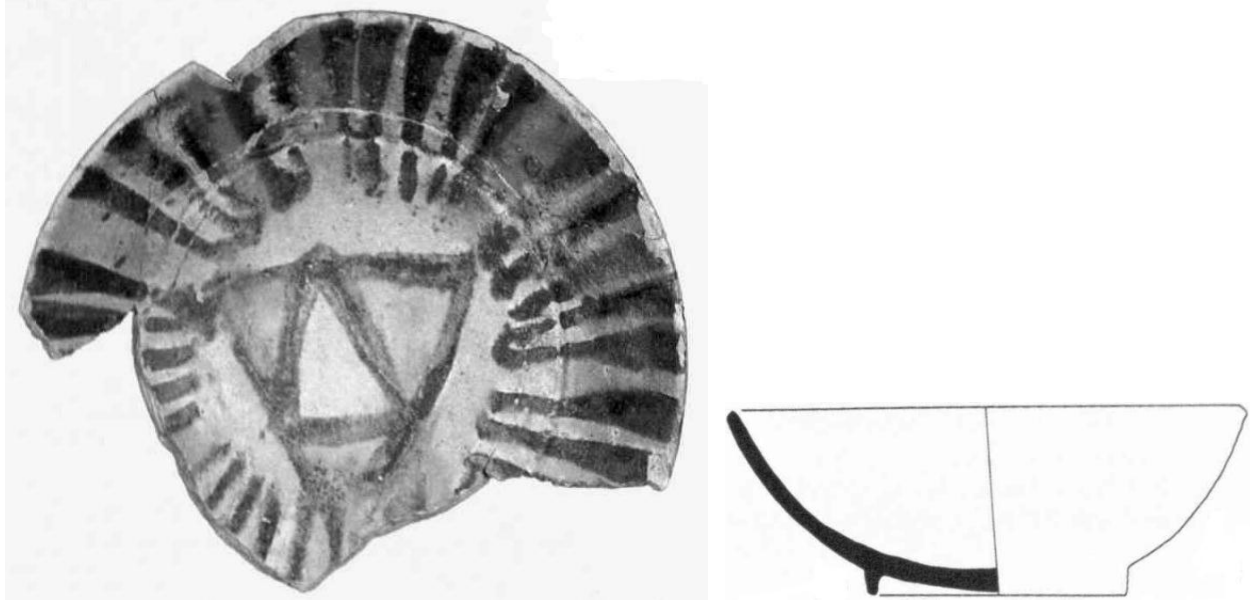


Fig. 31

Nile Delta Sites

Kom el Dikka



Figs. 32-33

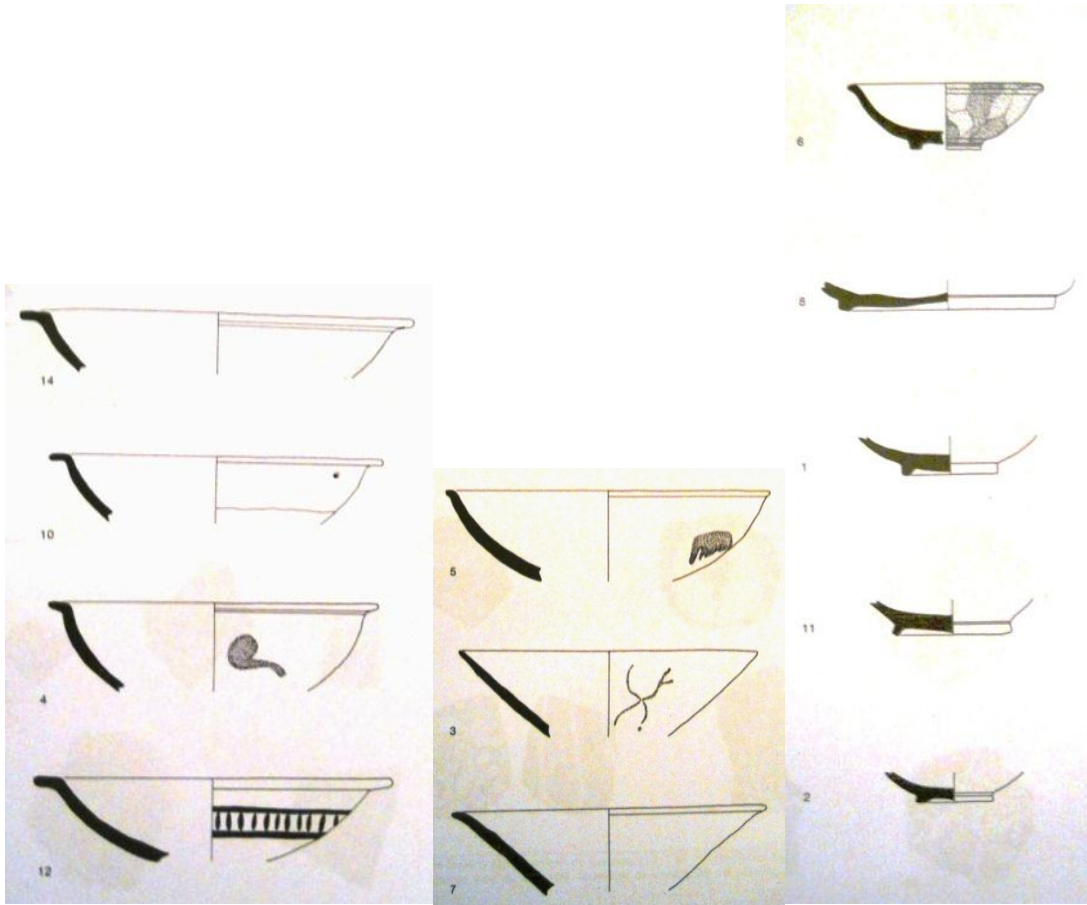


Fig. 34

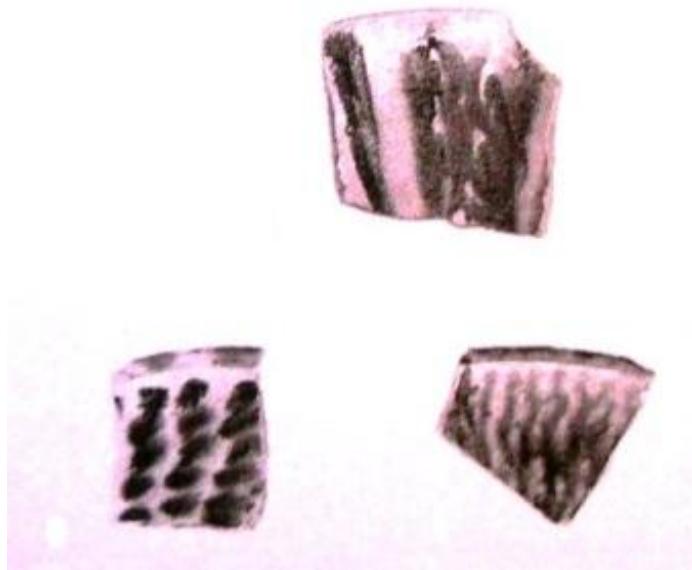


Fig. 35



Fig. 36



Fig 37

Abu Mina

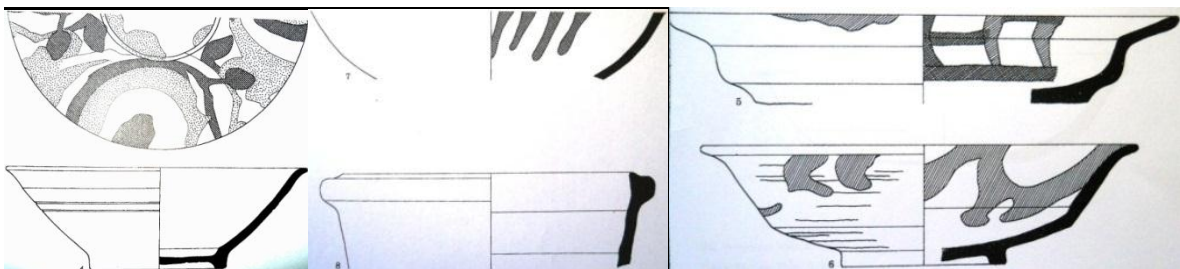
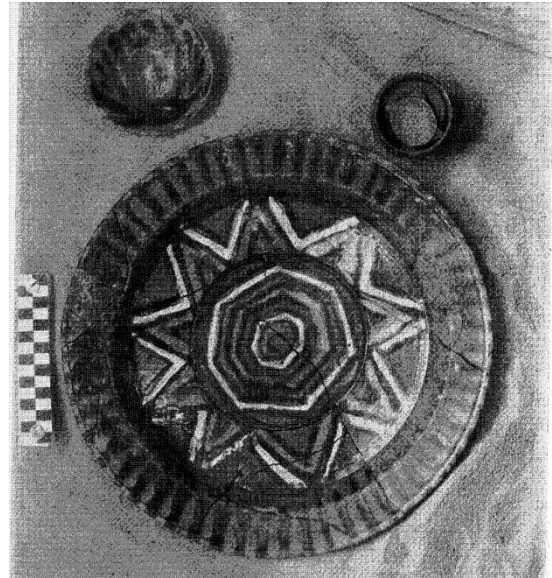
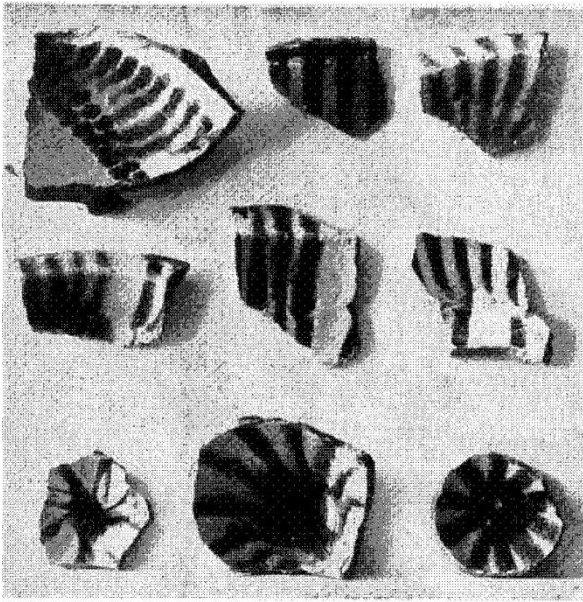


Fig. 38

The Fayyum

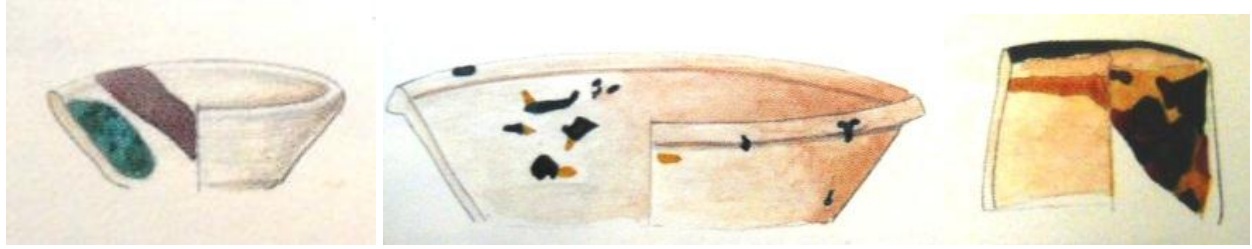
Tebtynis



Figs. 39-40



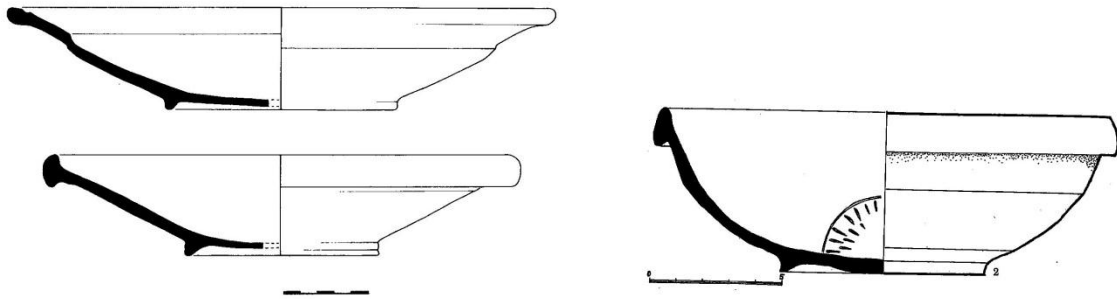
Fig. 41



Figs. 42-44



Fig. 45



Figs. 46-47



Fig. 48

Bahnasa



Fig. 49



Fig. 50

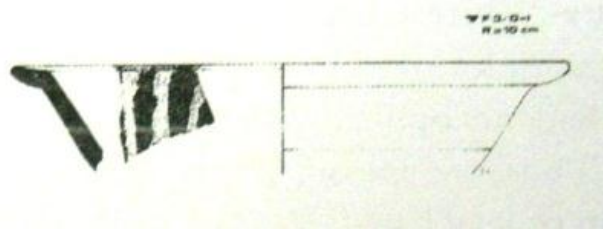
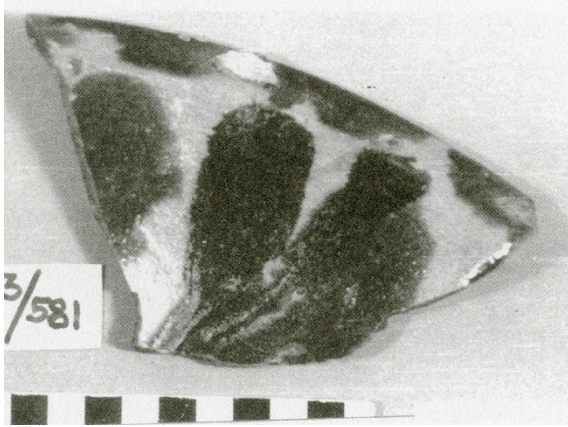


Fig. 51



Fig. 52



Fig. 53



Fig. 54



Fig. 55



Fig. 56

Ashmunein

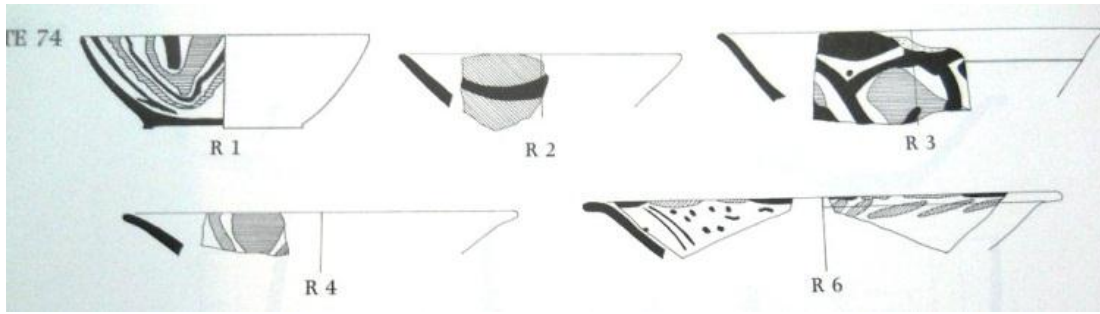


Fig. 57

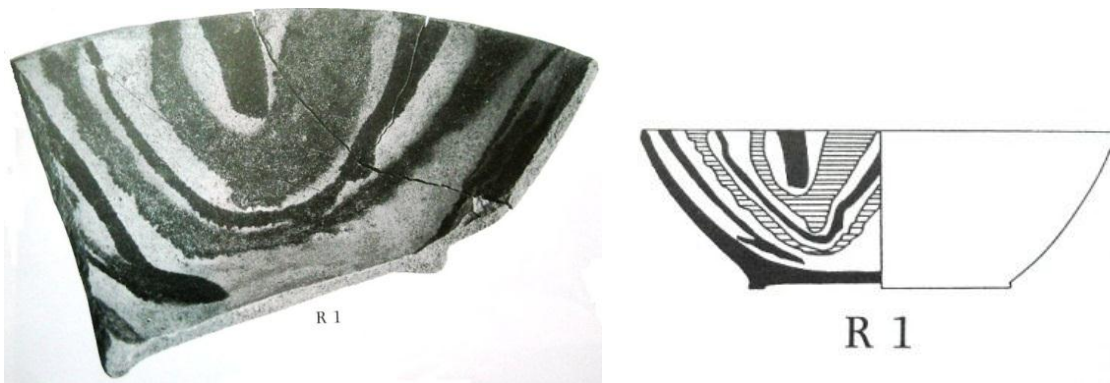


Fig. 58

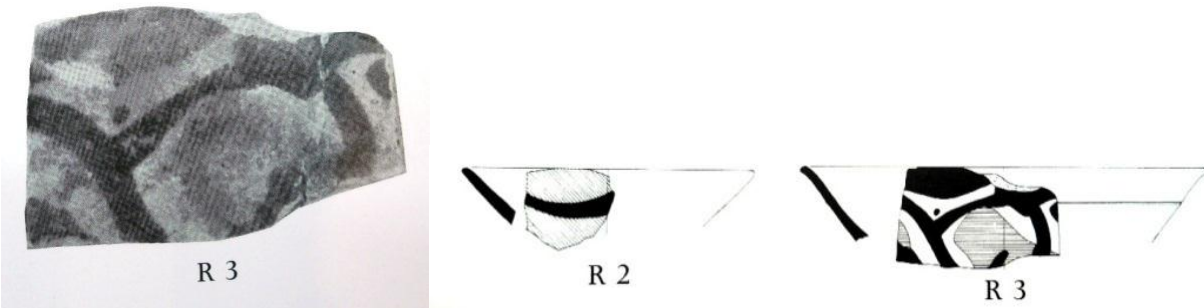


Fig. 59

Apa Shenute



Fig. 60

Tod

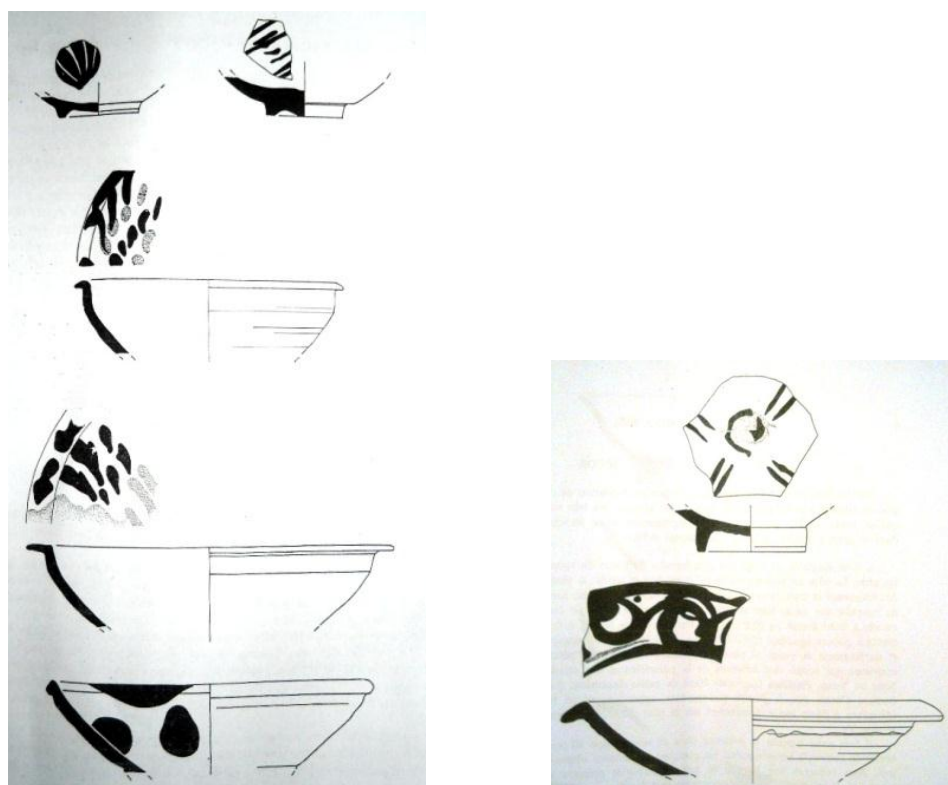


Fig. 61-62

Nubia

Qasr Ibrim



Fig. 63

Meinarti



Fig. 64



Fig. 65

The Sinai and the Red Sea

Raya



Figs. 66-67

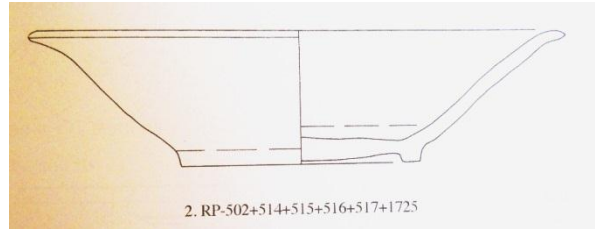
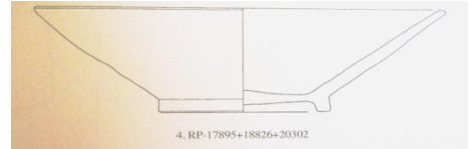
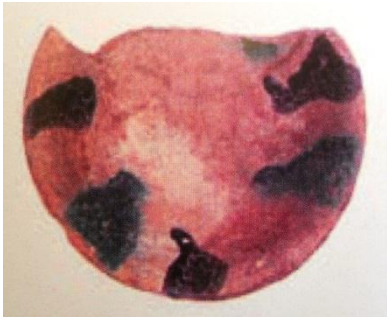


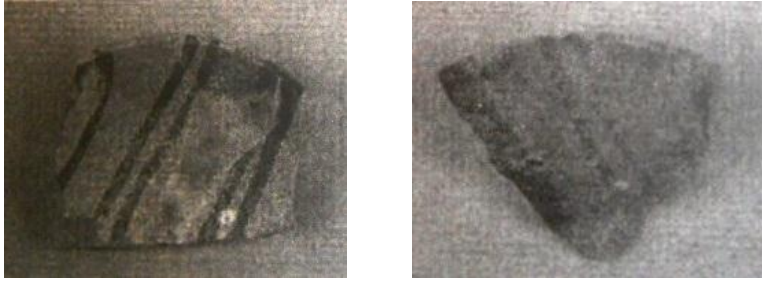
Fig. 68



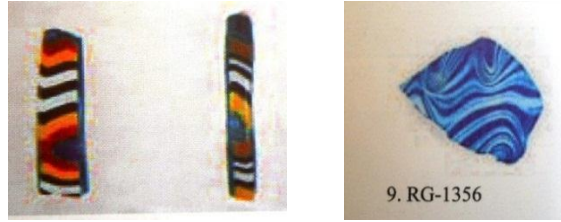
Figs. 69-70



Figs. 71-72



Figs. 73-74



Figs. 75-76

North Sinai Sites

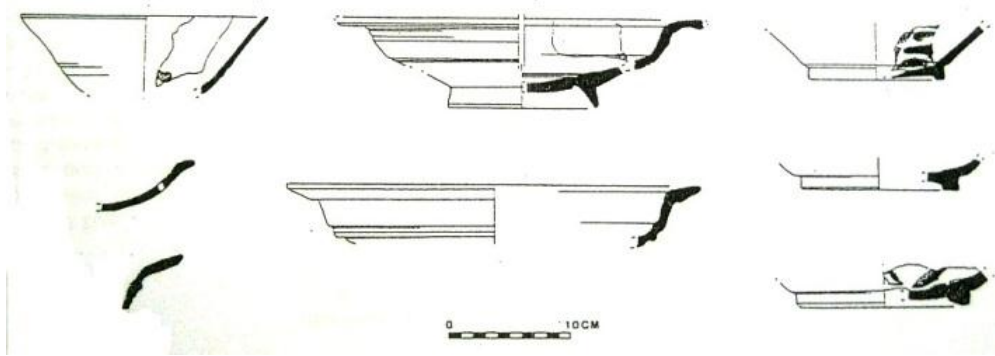


Fig. 77

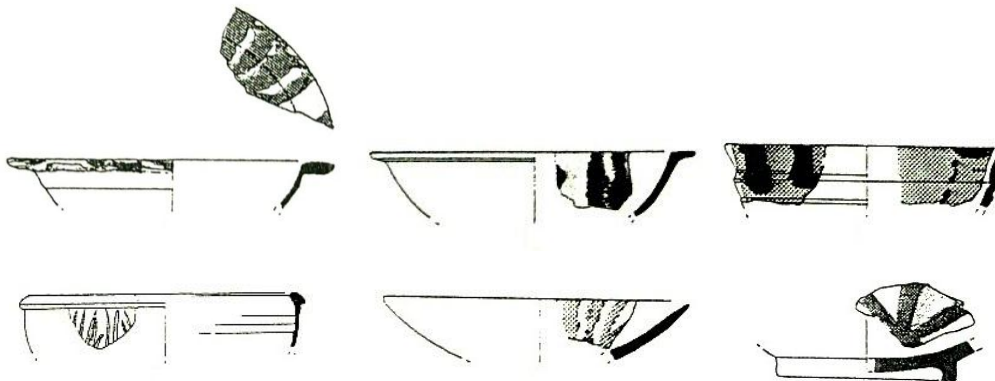
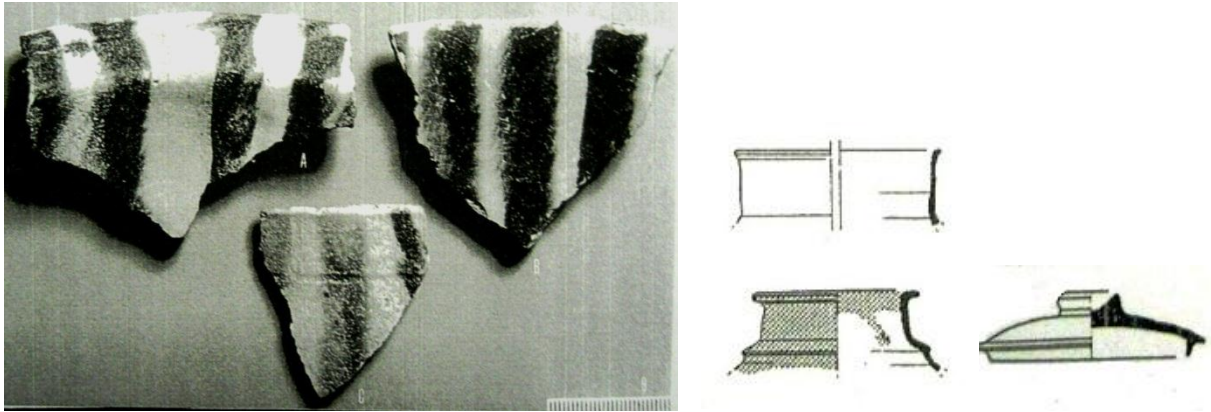


Fig. 78



Figs. 79-81

Aqaba

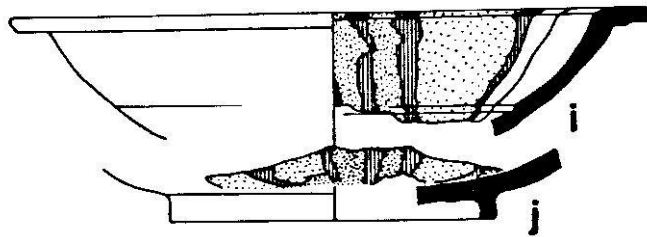


Fig. 82

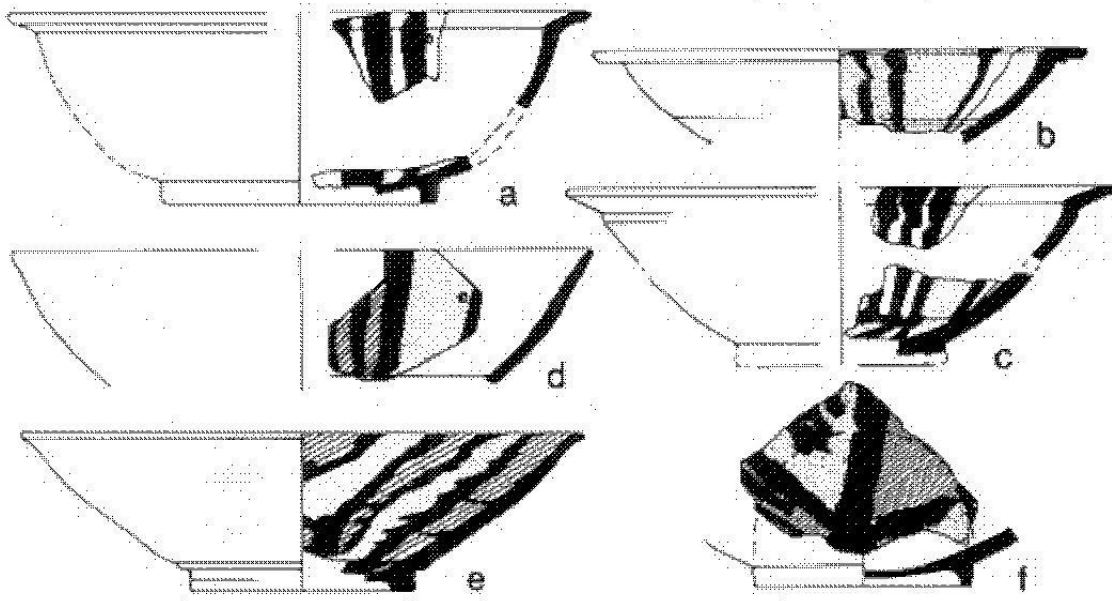
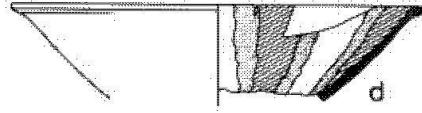
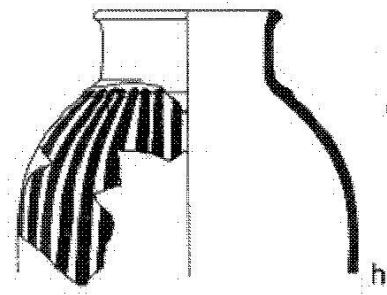
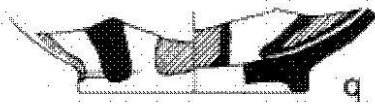


Fig. 83



Figs. 84-85



Figs. 86-87

Northern Italy

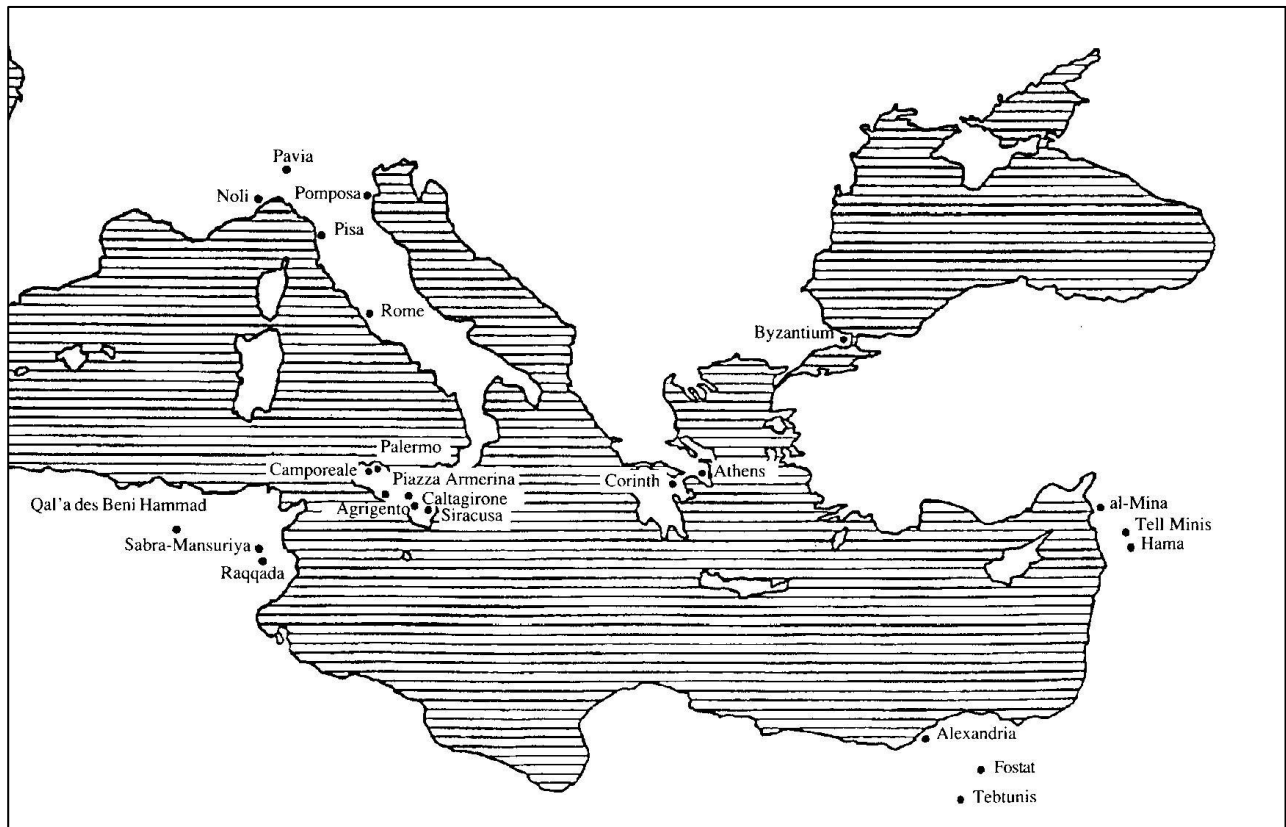
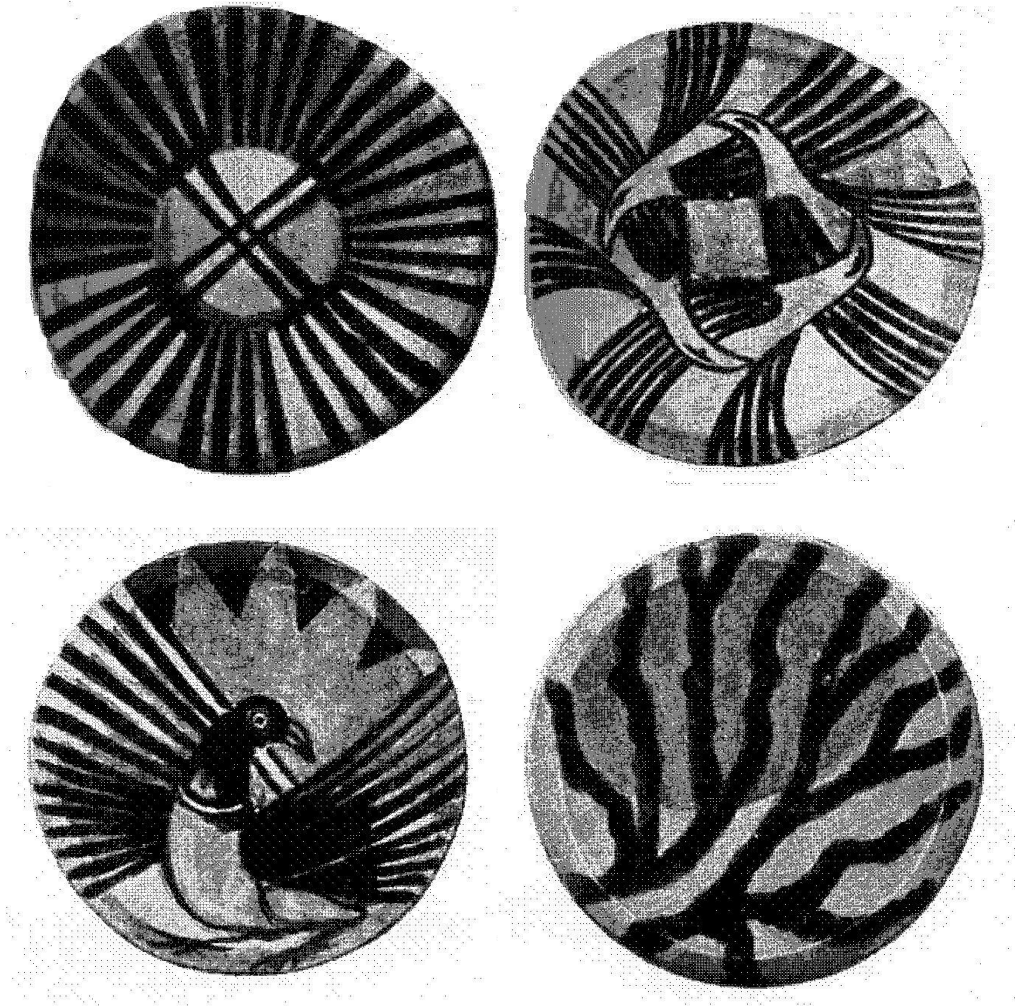


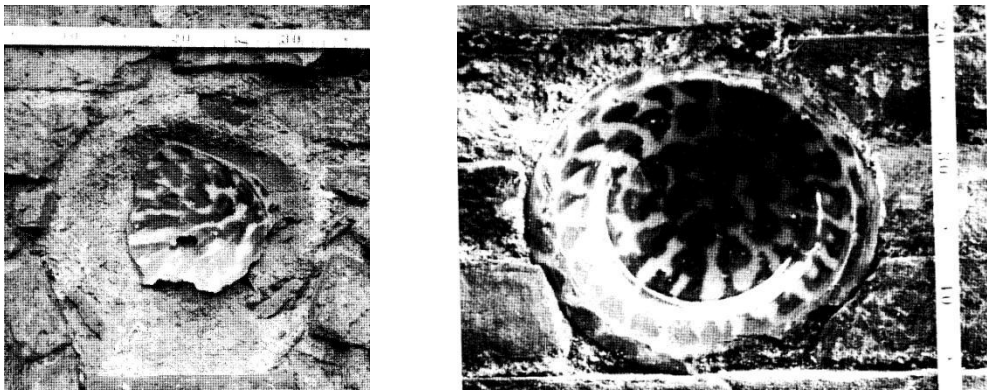
Fig. 88

Ferrera: Pomposa Abbey



Figs. 89-92

Pavia: Torre Civica



Figs. 93-94

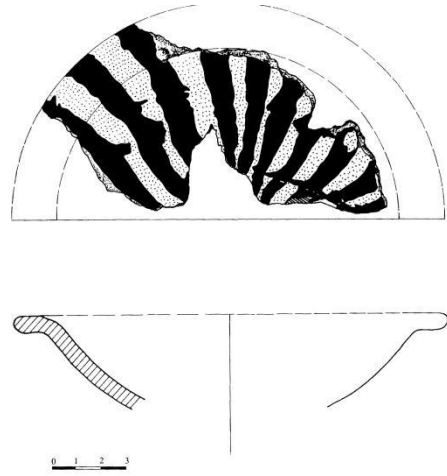
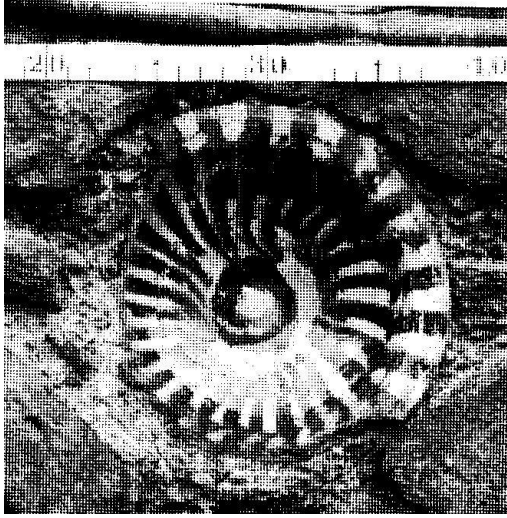
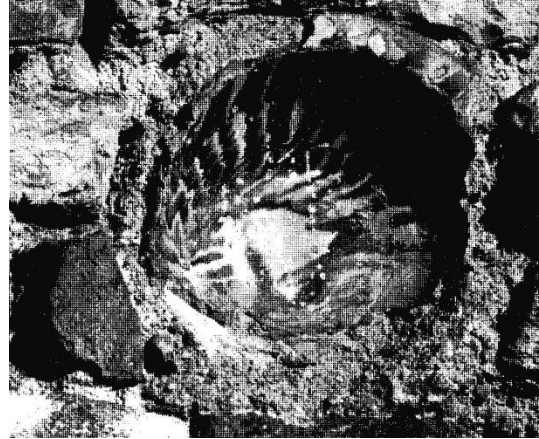
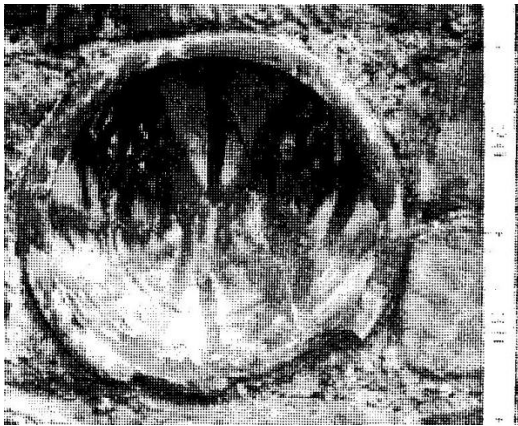


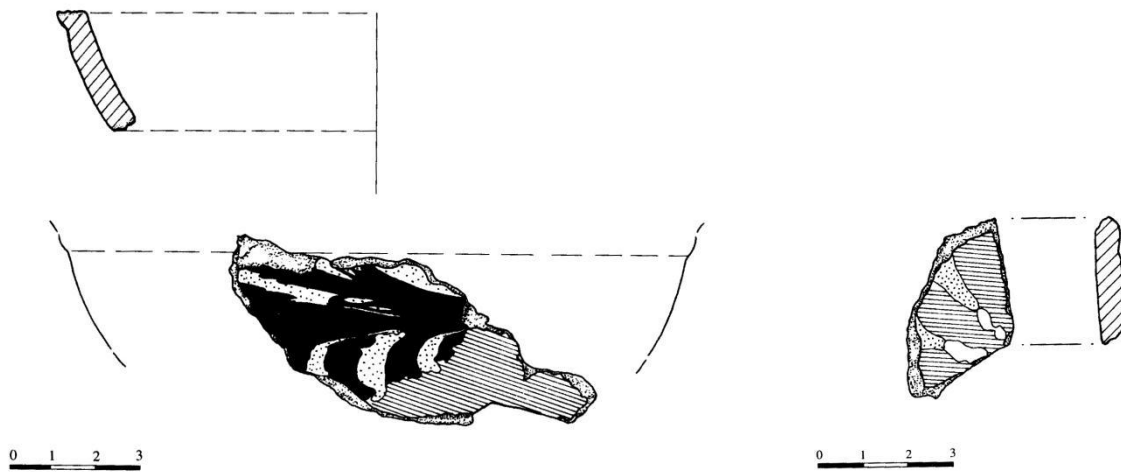
Fig. 95



Figs. 96-97



Figs. 98-99



Figs. 100-101

Pisa

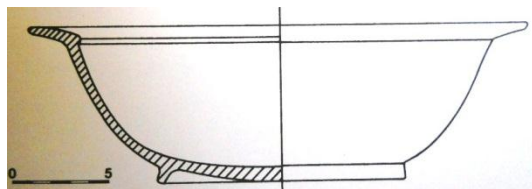
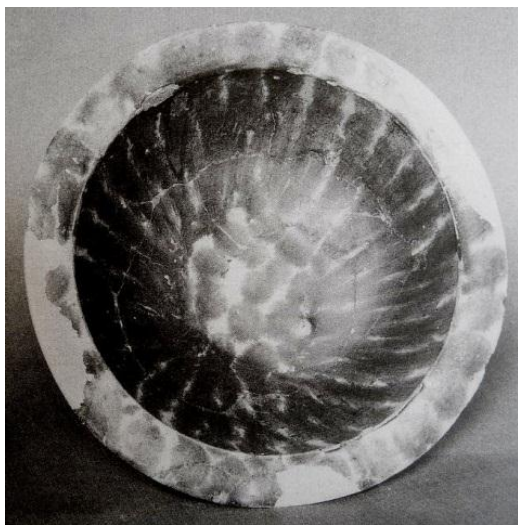


Fig. 102

Palestine

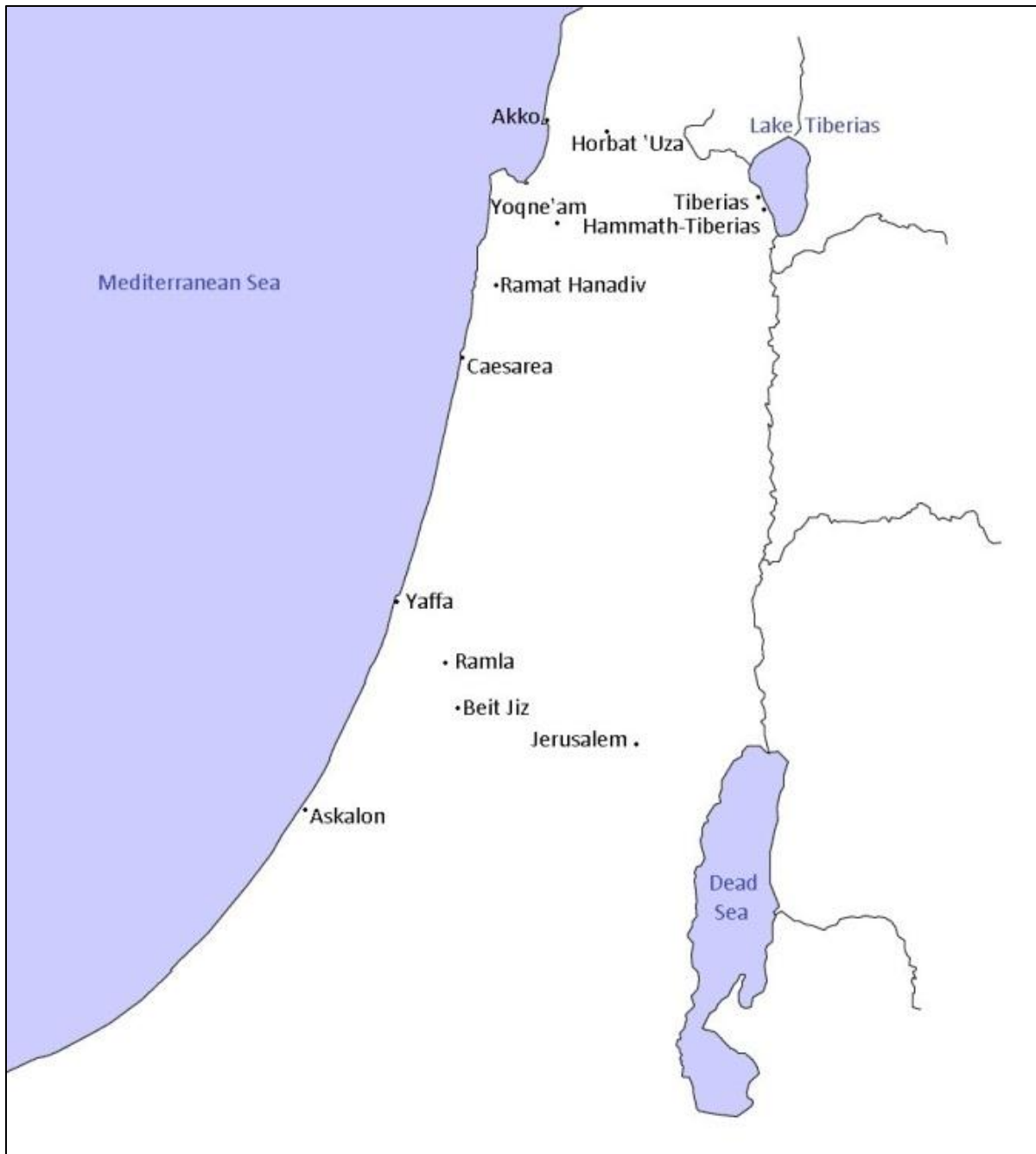


Fig. 103

Ramla



Fig. 104

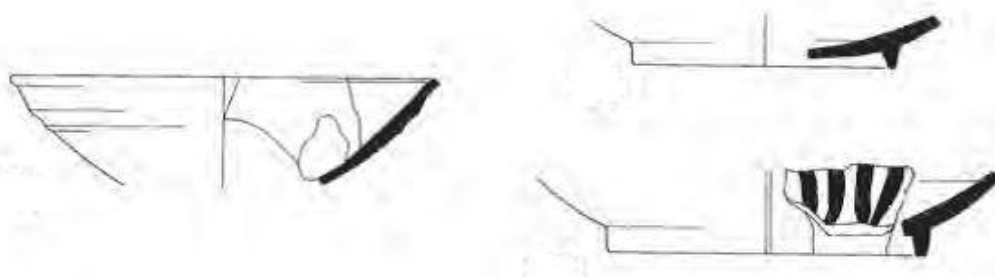
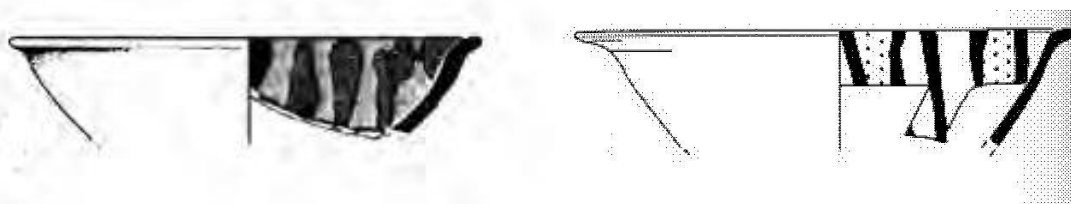
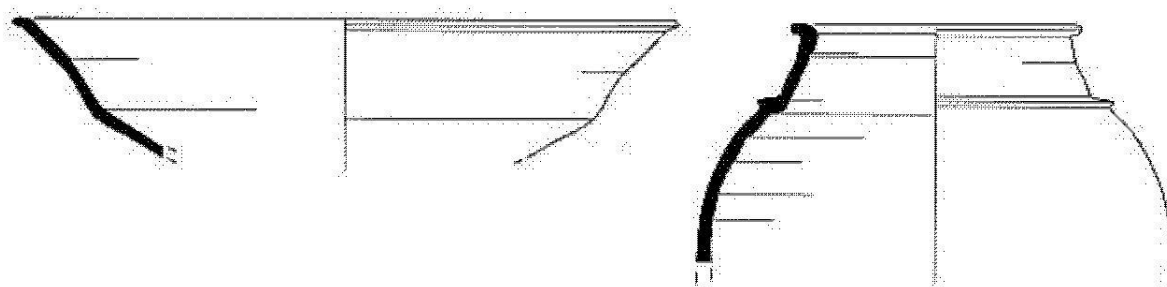


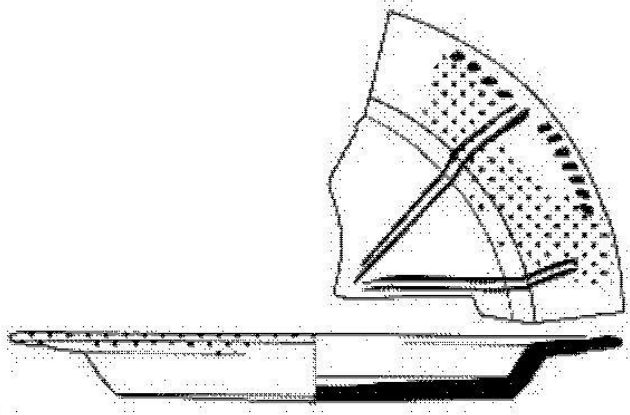
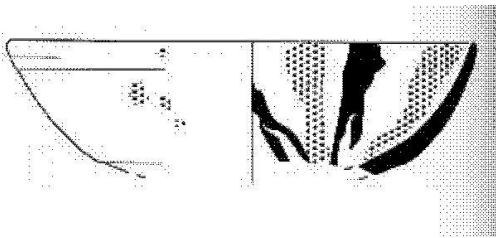
Fig. 105



Figs. 106-107



Figs. 108-109



Figs. 110-111

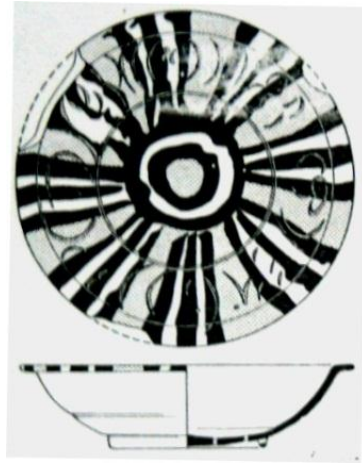
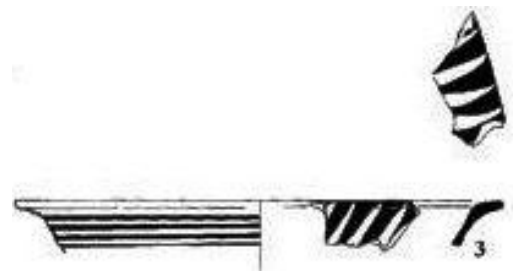
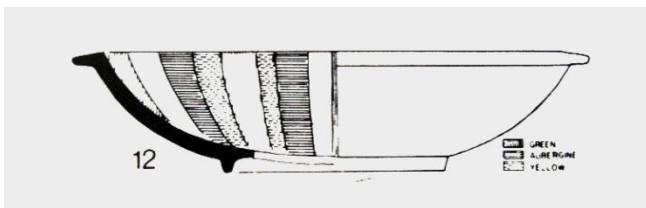


Fig. 112

Jerusalem



Figs. 113-114

Askalan



Figs. 115

Caesarea

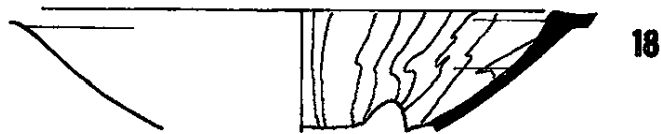


Fig. 116

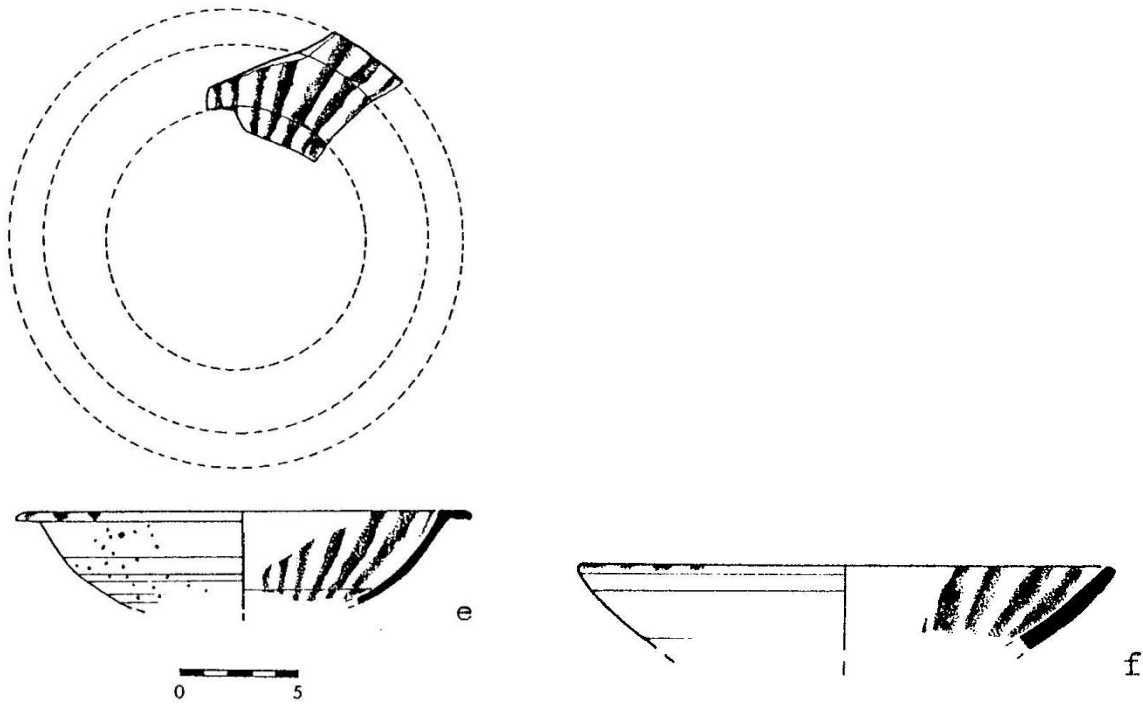


Fig. 117-118

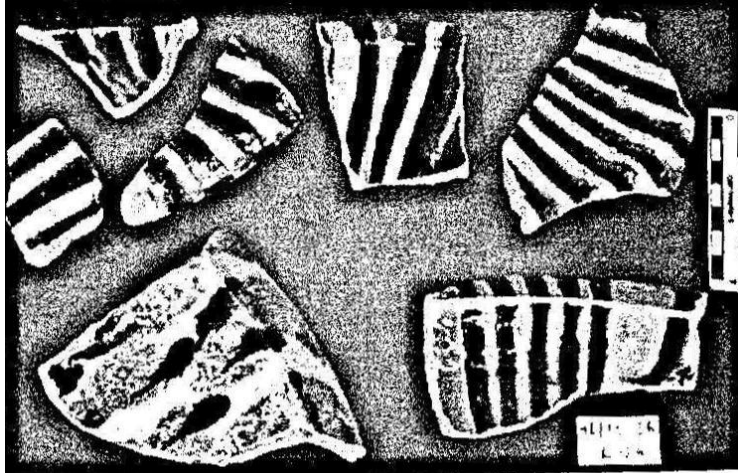
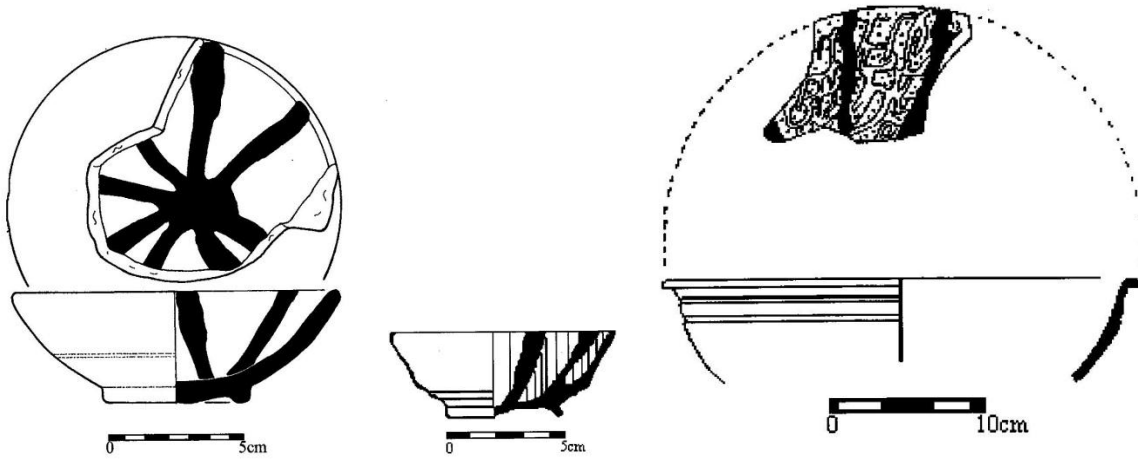
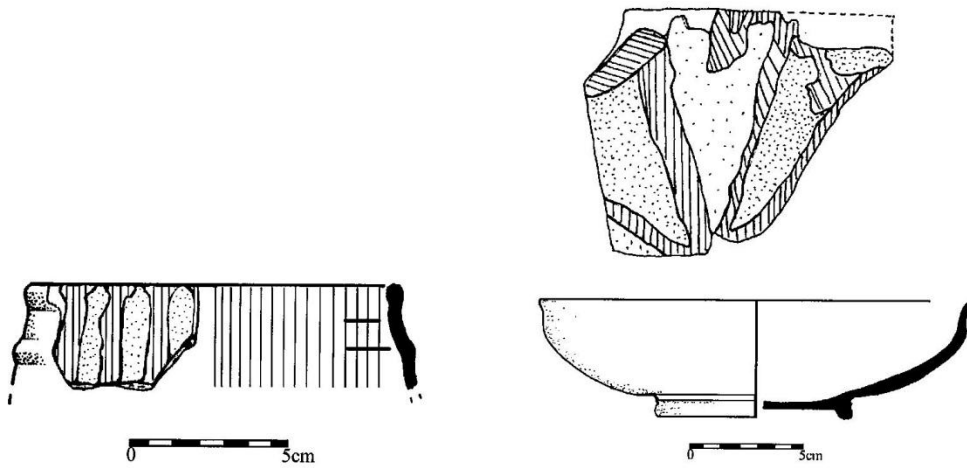


Fig. 119



Figs. 120-122



Figs. 123-124

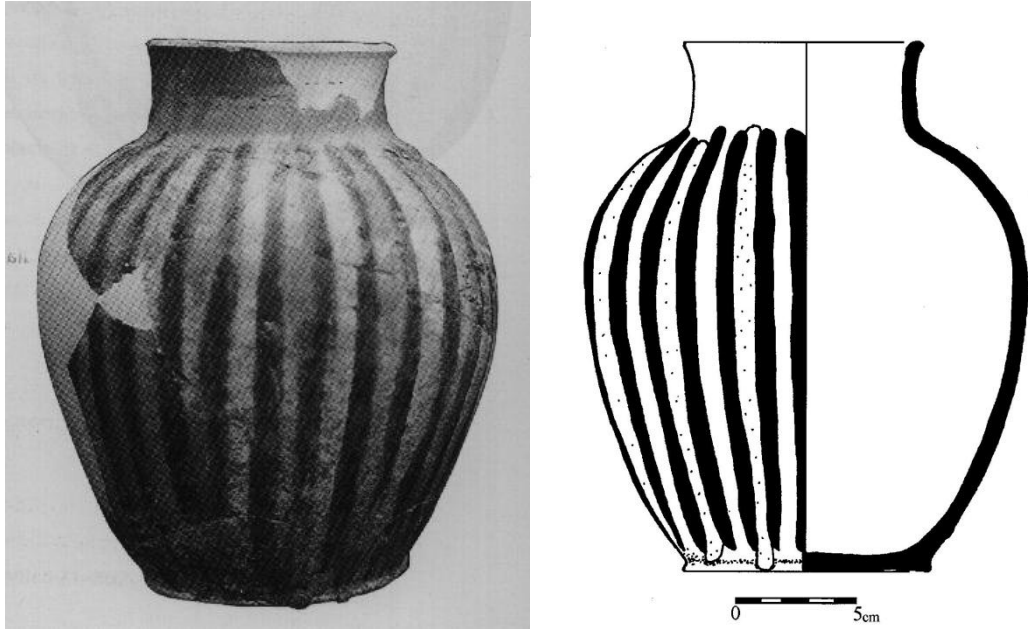


Fig. 125

Akko

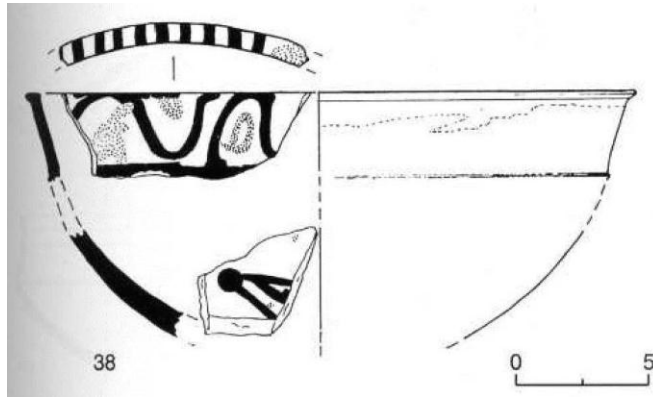


Fig. 126

Ramat Hanadiv

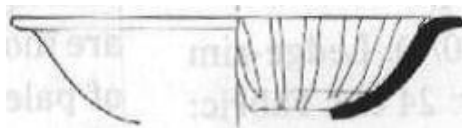


Fig. 127

Horbat 'Uza

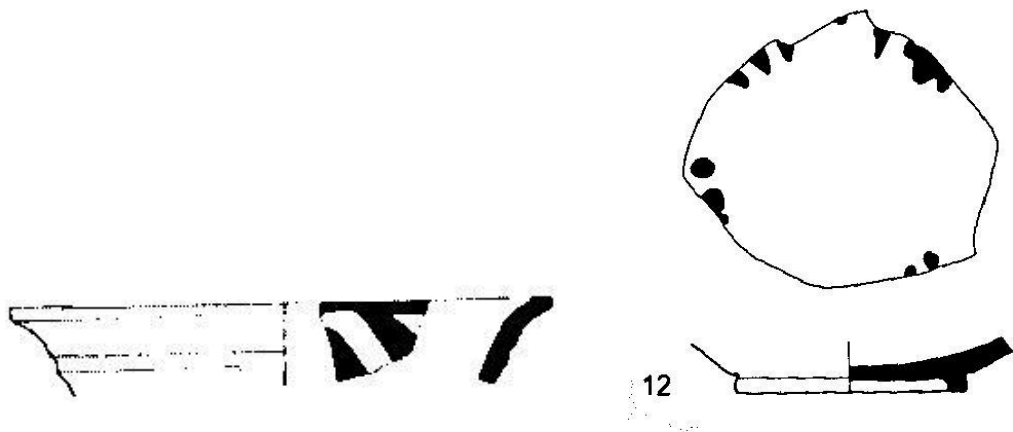


Fig. 128-129

Tel Yoqne'am



Fig. 130



Fig. 131

Tiberias

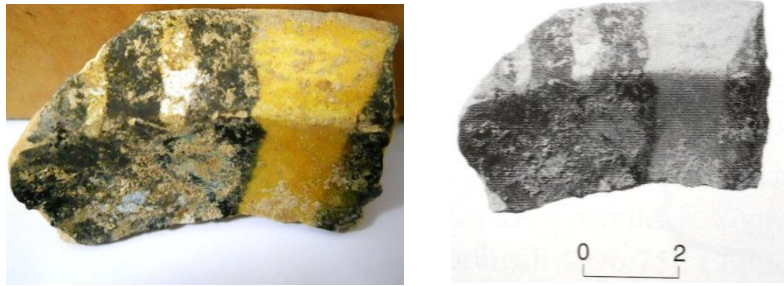
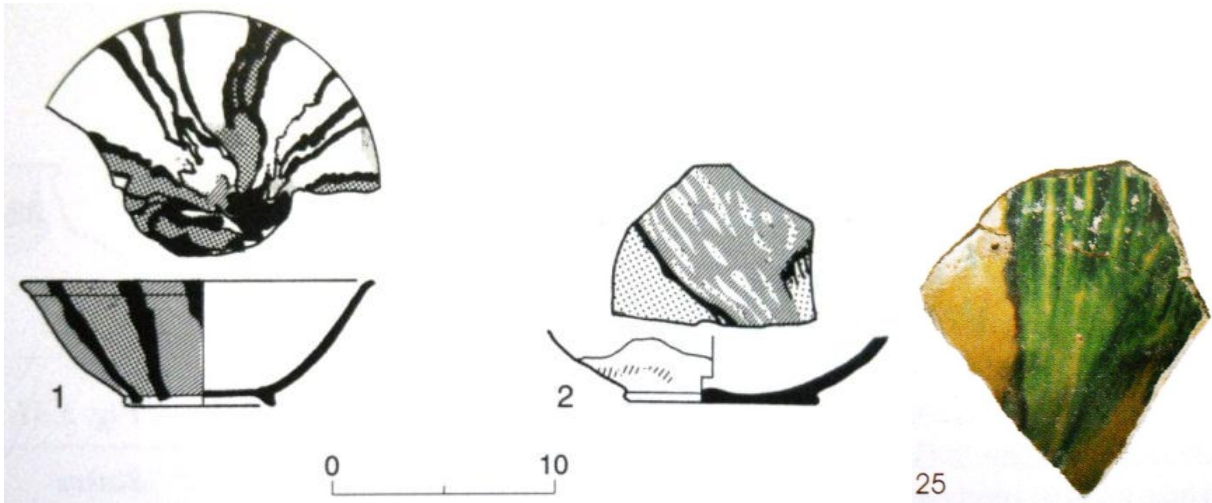


Fig. 132



Figs. 133-134



Fig 135

Syria



Fig. 136

Tall Aswad



Figs. 137-138

Qasr al-Hayr East

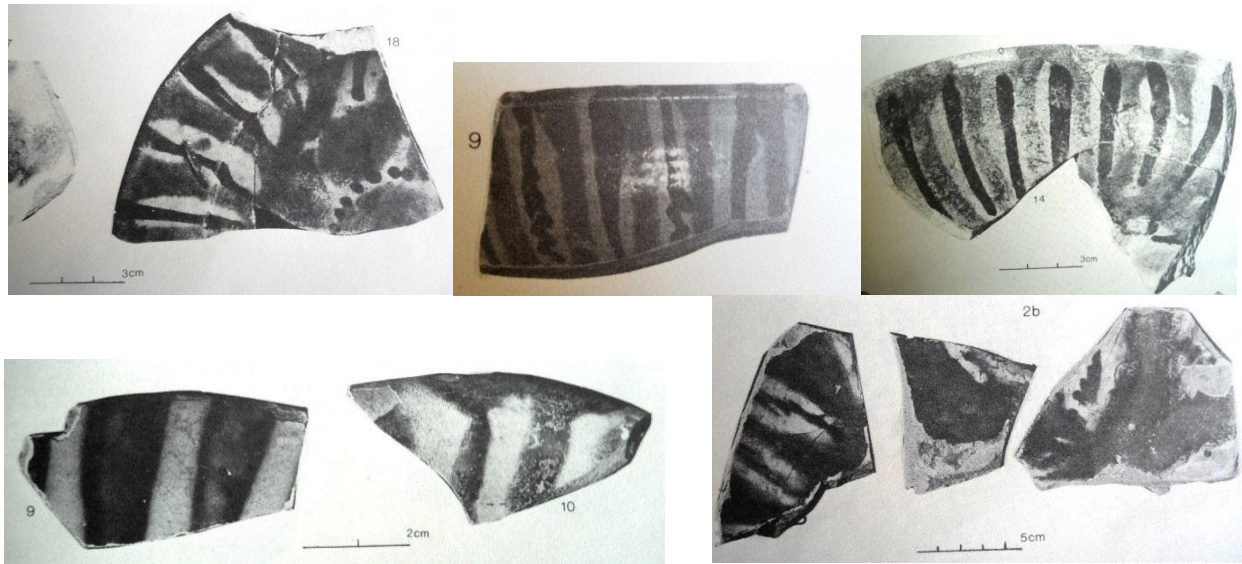


Fig. 139

Hama



Fig. 140

Museums/Collections

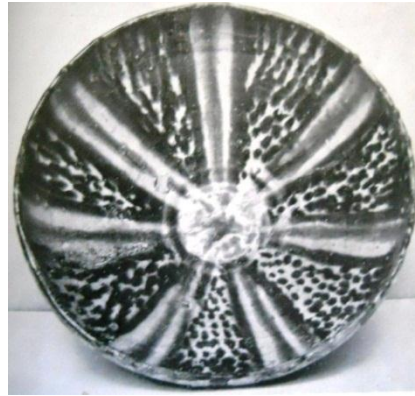
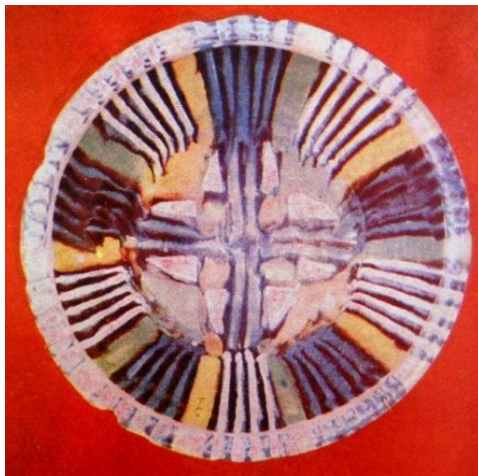


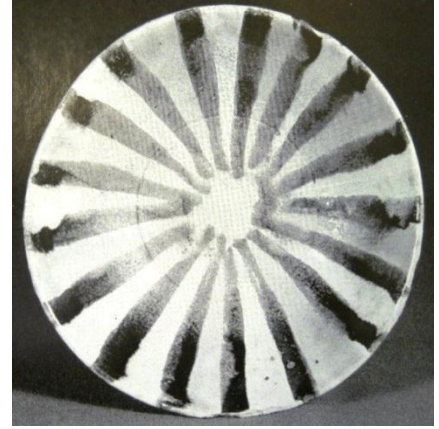
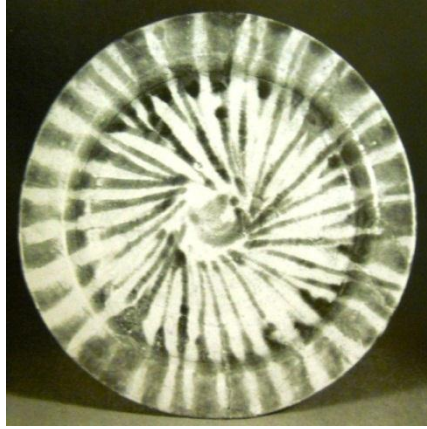
Fig. 141



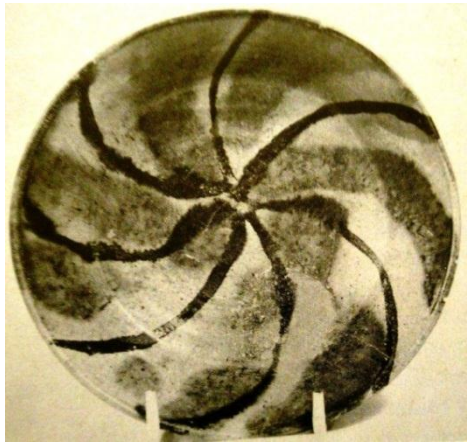
Figs. 142-143



Fig. 144



Figs. 145-147



Figs. 148-149



Figs. 150-152

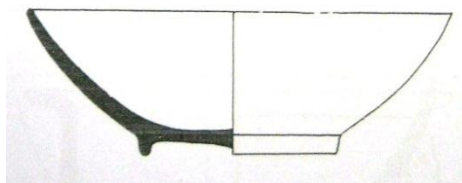


Fig. 153



Fig. 154

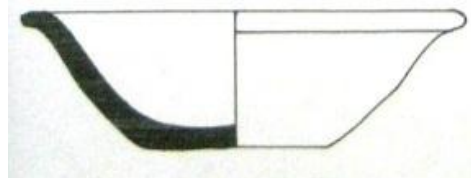


Fig. 155

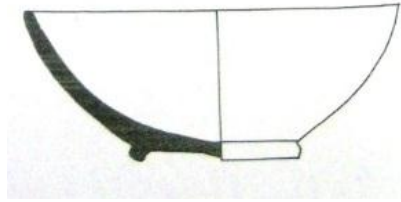
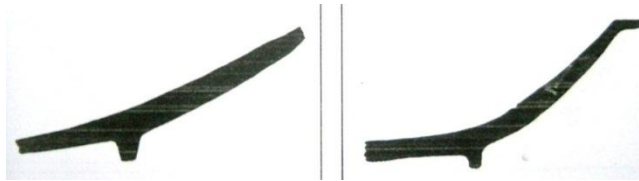
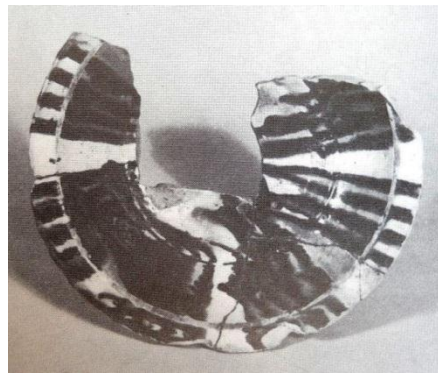
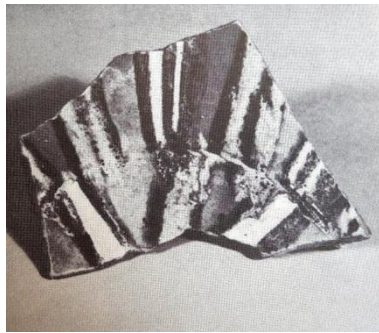


Fig. 156



Figs. 157-158

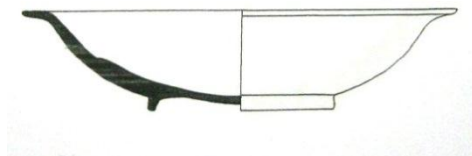


Fig. 159

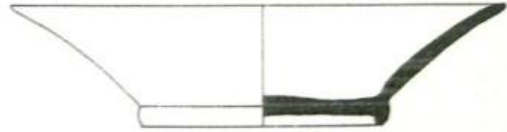
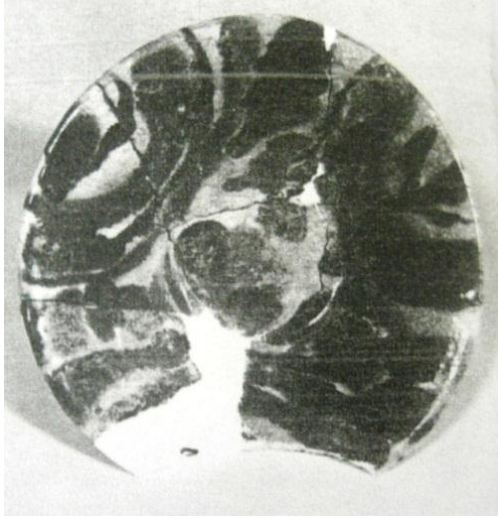


Fig. 160



Fig. 161

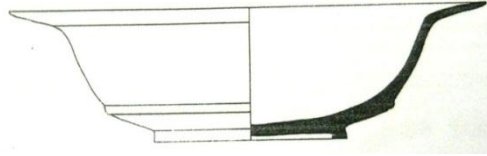


Fig. 162



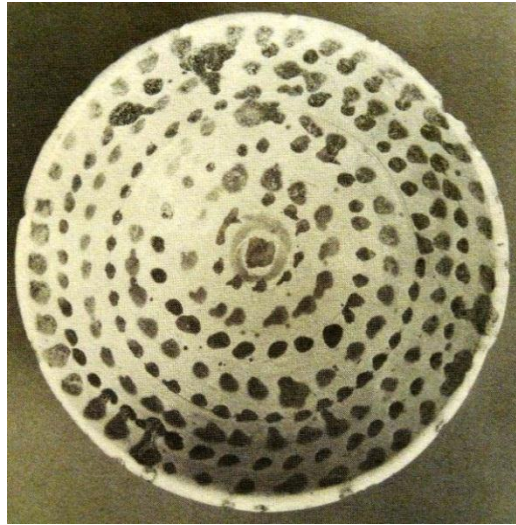
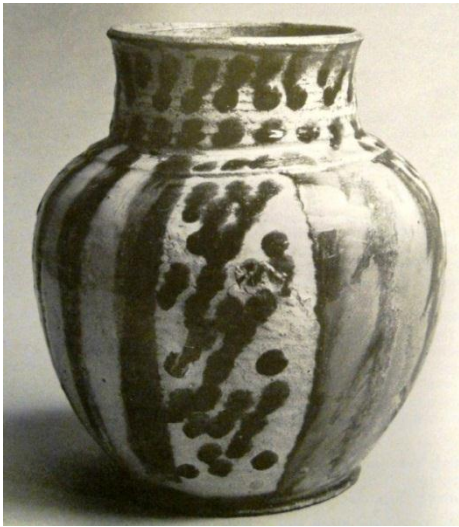
Fig. 163



Figs. 164-165



Fig. 166



Figs. 167-168



Figs. 169-170

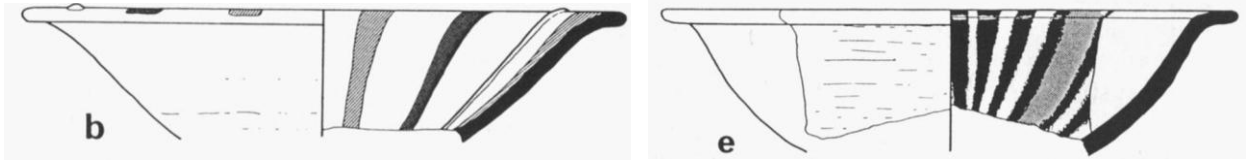


Fig. 171

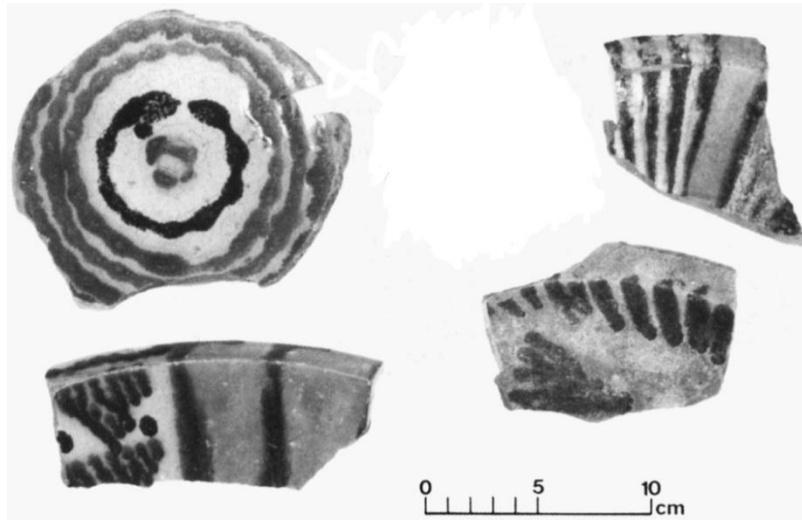


Figs. 172-175

Scientific Analyses



Figs. 176-177



Figs. 178



Figs. 179-180