

KOM RABI^cA, EZBET HELMI, AND SAQQARA NK 3507

A STUDY IN CROSS-DATING

David A. Aston

Students of Egyptian ceramics have long known that New Kingdom pottery can be conventionally divided into four typological phases, and that the first of these is probably contemporary with the reigns of Ahmose to Tuthmosis II. Unfortunately this is also the worst known of the four phases, not least because our scant knowledge of this period comes almost entirely from tombs.¹ What a relief then, that excavations at Deir el-Ballas between 1983 and 1986, at Kom Rabi^ca, Memphis, between 1984 and 1990, and at Ezbet Helmi, Avaris, between 1989 and 2003 provided large quantities of settlement material to balance the ceramic corpus known from the cemeteries. Although only preliminary reports have appeared from these places, it is, however, clear, that a schism is developing between the (preliminary) dating of these sites, with consistently earlier dates being applied to the Memphite pottery than to the Ezbet Helmi material. The work at Deir el-Ballas unfortunately ended before any worthwhile input could be contributed to the debate. It is thus the purpose of this article to find correlations, if any, between Kom Rabi^ca and Ezbet Helmi, and to critically examine the dates so far given to the levels concerned.

A) THE NEW KINGDOM BURIAL ASSOCIATED WITH MASTABA 3507 AT SAQQARA

In the earliest preliminary reports concerning the New Kingdom pottery from Kom Rabi^ca, much was made of the similarity of the pottery from contexts RAT 305 and RAT 365 to that found with an intact burial situated on or near Mastaba 3507 within the Archaic Necropolis at Saqqara, and it is as well to

begin this paper with that tomb group. Although the number 3507 should really be applied only to the archaic mastaba itself, I will, for the remainder of this discussion, refer to the otherwise unnumbered New Kingdom Burial as Saqqara N(ew) K(ingdom) 3507 (cf. Figs. 1–2). Saqqara NK 3507 has no internal dating evidence, but was dated firstly by Merrillees no later than his Dynasty XVIII A (Ahmose–Tuthmosis II), with the possibility that it could belong to the second half of the Second Intermediate Period,² and later, perhaps more dogmatically, to around 1525 BC.³ In between it was dated by Bourriau to the reign of Amenophis I, originally with some reservation,⁴ but then more firmly by a comparison with the material from Kom Rabi^ca, particularly contexts 305 and 365, dated to the reigns of Ahmose–Amenophis I, which fits well with a scarab of Tuthmosis I, which was deemed in a preliminary report to be in a near-contemporary position,⁵ that was found in a higher context.⁶ A dating into New Kingdom ceramic Phase I (Ahmose–Tuthmosis II), is also suggested by the kohl pot, since kohl pots tended to be replaced sometime during the reign of Tuthmosis III by kohl tubes, so, provided this was not an antique, this would give tomb NK 3507 a *terminus ante quem* before the later part of the reign of Tuthmosis III. Moreover the kohl pot is an early type, since, as pointed out by Bourriau, the interior is carved out whereas the latest ones tended to have a simple cylindrical tubular hole.⁷

At first glance, then, a dating into the reign of Amenophis I seems entirely acceptable, but an examination of some of the other objects found in this tomb might suggest pushing this group to the very end of this ceramic phase.

¹ Cf. BOURRIAU, 1987, and for differences between cultic and burial pottery at this time see SEILER 1994.

² MERRILLEES, 1968, 28.

³ MERRILLEES, 2001, 26. ‘A date of around 1525 B.C. for the deposit cannot be too far wrong.’

⁴ BOURRIAU, 1981b, 31–32;

⁵ JEFFREYS, SMITH and MALEK, 1987, 16.

⁶ BOURRIAU, 1991a, 140; 1997, 165.

⁷ BOURRIAU, 1981b, 40–41, ASTON B.G. 1994, 146–149. An example with hollowed out interior, from Qustol, tomb R46, comes from a tomb group which has been dated to the reigns of Amenophis II/Tuthmosis IV, though I see no reason for dating this tomb so late. Cf. WILLIAMS, 1992, 17, with the grave goods shown on pp. 221–222. In my opinion this group should be similar in date to Saqqara NK 3507.

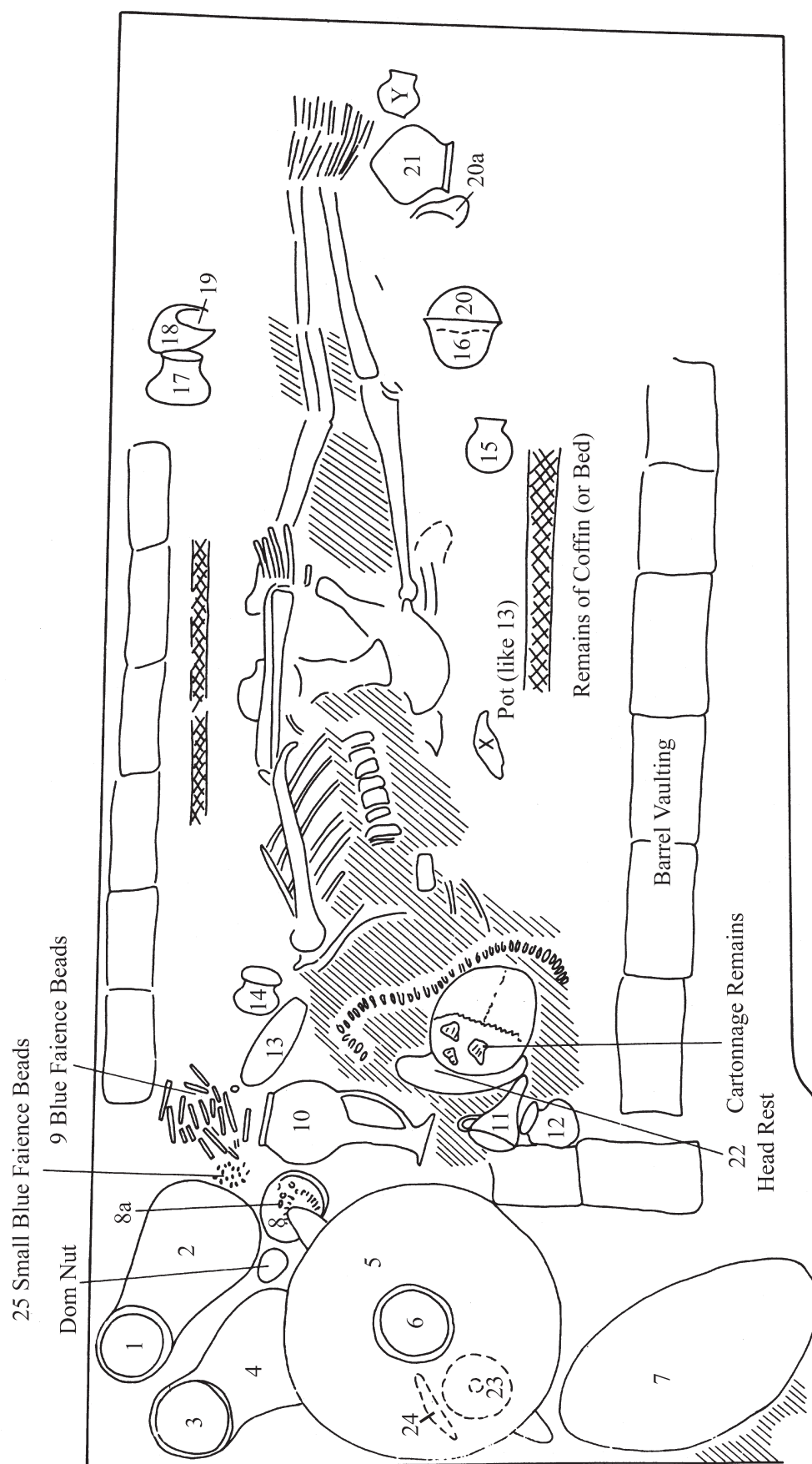


Fig. 1 Plan of Burial NK 3507 (after BOURRIAU 1991a, 137)

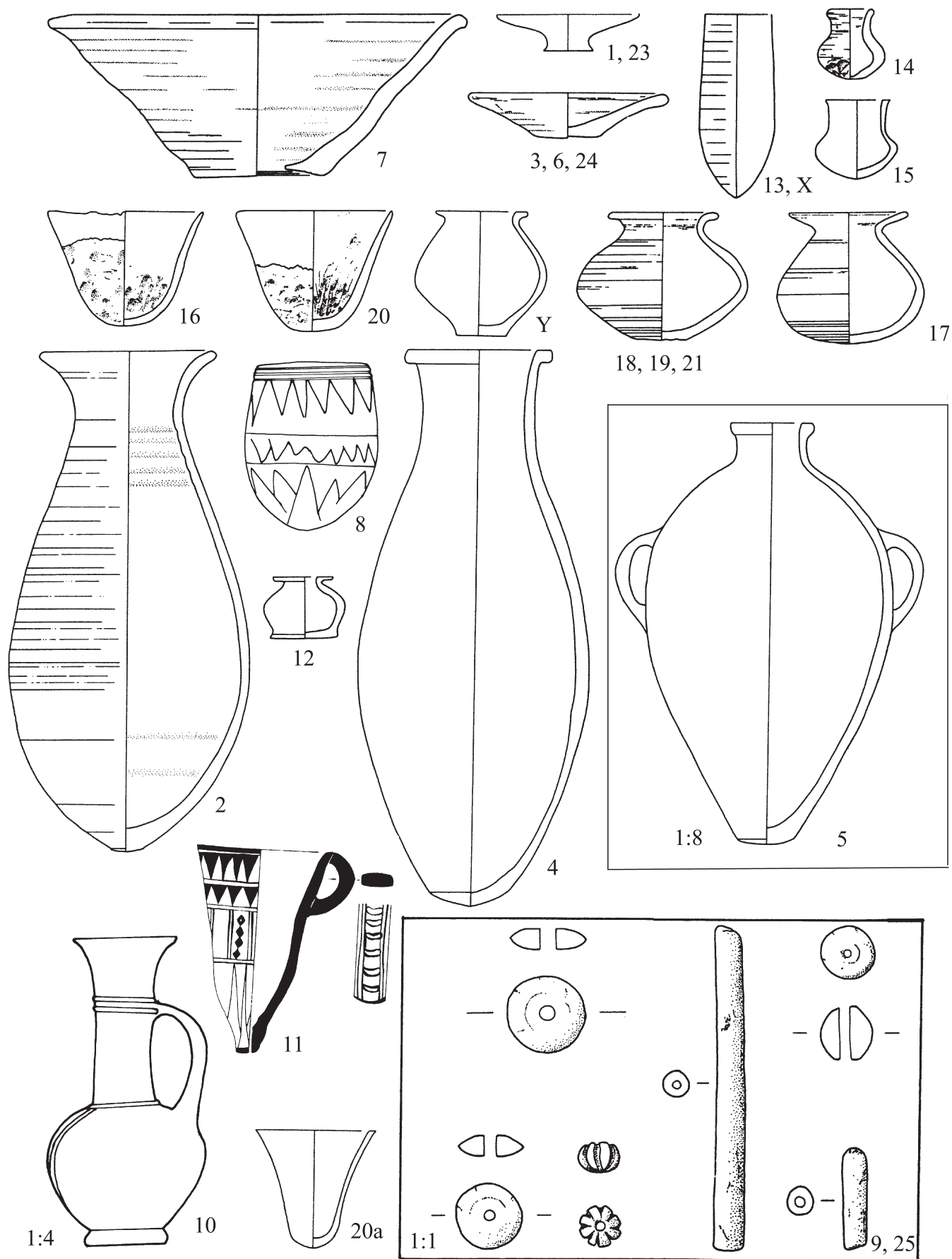


Fig. 2 Tomb Group NK 3507 (after BOURRIAU 1991a, 138, with additions and renumbering to parallel Fig. 1)

The Kerma beakers can be attributed to Gratién's Kerma Récente,⁸ which, succeeding the Kerma Classique phase, must be contemporary with the Eighteenth Dynasty, although since no major deposits of the Kerma Récente have yet been published, a more exact date for this phase cannot be given. However, despite the vivid descriptions of the sack of Kerma given in the bibliography of Ahmose, son of Ebana, there is no archaeological evidence for the common assumption that the campaign of Tuthmosis I put an end to the Kerman state.⁹ It is possible, and by analogy with Avaris, even probable, that the potters of Kerma continued to produce the same pottery as before although for new masters, and the cups *per se* need not necessarily predate the campaign of Tuthmosis I.

The blue faience beaker, was, on account of its rilled rim, thought by Bourriau to be from Kerma, and, indeed many ribbed bowls were found there, but these are of a different type, being wider, shallower, and entirely ribbed over the entire surface.¹⁰ The faience vessel from this tomb is perhaps more reminiscent of a copy of an early 18th Dynasty pottery vessel than a Kerma beaker,¹¹ and in terms of size, – height 12.7 cm. and rim diameter 4.8 cm. – it is probably closest to a Theban pottery vessel found in a context dated to the reign of Tuthmosis III.¹²

Of the faience copy of a Kerma tulip beaker, nothing can be said since it appears to be unique and its present location is unknown, however a similar vessel comes from a grave at Dra Abu el-Naga, which dates to the reign of Tuthmosis III.¹³

When considering the faience rhyton it is noticeable that, with the exception of this example, all the otherwise extant faience copies of Aegean rhyta found in Egypt cluster around the middle of the 18th Dynasty.¹⁴

Note, too, that the earliest representations of such in Egyptian tomb paintings are those from the tombs of Amenweser TT 131, Rekhmire TT 100 and Menkheperreseneb, TT 86, all of which date to the reign of Tuthmosis III, though how much reliance should be placed on this is a moot point since few painted tombs of the earlier Eighteenth Dynasty are extant. However it may be telling that conical rhyta only occur in the latest tombs to show scenes of Aegean tribute.¹⁵

There can be no doubt that the Egyptian pottery from this tomb is best placed somewhere in the early to mid Eighteenth Dynasty, whilst the flower pot, being wide and shallow is probably earlier rather than later in the phase, since the earlier examples tend to be wider and shallower.¹⁶ At this point it is worth recalling Williams' pertinent observation that flower pots are not found in tombs of the earliest part of the Eighteenth Dynasty, becoming common only during the reigns of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III, and dying out by the reign of Amenophis III¹⁷ which is undoubtedly of interest when considering the date of NK 3507. This observation is confirmed through a correspondence analysis of the material found by the Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Nubia, which convincingly demonstrates that the vast majority of flower pots date no earlier than the reign of Hatshepsut, with only 11 of 394 examples being found in the 97 earlier graves.¹⁸

The Base Ring jug was recently re-examined and fully published by Merrillees. It is of Aström's type VID1dβ¹ with three vertical ridges down the front of the body. Unfortunately this type is not closely datable, though the fabric and finish suggested to Merrillees that it was an early vessel, which he attributed to LC IA2.¹⁹ The dating of Base Ring ware found in Egypt has long been disputed. On one side stands

⁸ BOURRIAU, 1991, 139 n.89 referring to GRATIEN, 1978, 224.

⁹ As indeed pointed out by P.L. SHINIE, 1996, 81, and cf. below page 218.

¹⁰ G. REISNER, 1923, 155, fig 182; A.J. MILLWARD, 1982, 142.

¹¹ Cf. the photo with the pot, SMITH, JEFFREYS, MALEK, 1987, p. 17 fig 3 said to part of the installations dug into the sand at Kom Rabia, RAT 394 level V drawing no. 152; cf. also PETRIE, 1897, 8 and pl. vii.20 from a tomb beneath the mortuary temple of Tuthmosis IV; and WILLIAMS, 1992 type C/J-Id, from tomb R58 dated to the reigns of Amenophis II and Tuthmosis IV.

¹² SEILER, 1992, 128–129, Abb. 11. Cf. also SOWADA, 1999, 81, pl. 47 no. TNE94:38, unstratified.

¹³ Anne Seiler, personal communication.

¹⁴ R.B. KOEHL, 2000, 96. The reference there to earlier examples at Ezbet Helmi can be dismissed since the Ezbet

Helmi strata have since been redated. (cf. below page 214–217).

¹⁵ Cf. WACHSMANN, 1987, 69–70.

¹⁶ WILLIAMS, 1992, 34–35. Note, however, that his shallow type example comes from tomb R40 in which were also found late style kohl pots and a *mechak* razor, and thus R40 presumably dates to around the beginning of the reign of Tuthmosis III or a little earlier.

¹⁷ WILLIAMS, 1992, 34–35.

¹⁸ SAVE-SÖDERBERGH/TROY, 1991, 44, 225–239, 241–244. Altogether 680 burials were analysed, thus 11 flower pots were found in the earliest 97, and 383 in the remaining 583 burials. In terms of numbers of the flower pots, 268 are dated to the reigns of Hatshepsut/Tuthmosis IV, and 115 to the reigns of Amenophis III–Late Eighteenth Dynasty.

¹⁹ MERRILLEES, 2001, 27.

Merrillees, who believes that Base Ring I was imported into Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period,²⁰ a position which finds some support from Bergoffen who suggests that the earliest Base Ring found in Canaan arrived during the MB IIC.²¹ If this is the truth an attribution of this vessel to the reign of Amenophis I causes no problems. On the other side of the fence are Oren and Eriksson who are strongly of the opinion that Base Ring I ware was not imported into Egypt, or elsewhere in the Levant, before the reign of Tuthmosis III (Oren) or just before (Eriksson). Of Merrillees' supposed 85 early Egyptian tomb groups, i.e. those dated before the reign of Tuthmosis III, which contain Base Ring Ware, only two are associated with inscribed objects datable to a given pharaoh. One was found in the tomb of Minmontu, with a stone vessel inscribed with the name of Ahmose,²² but stone vessels were often placed in tombs long after they were originally made, whilst the other comes from a tomb group which contained scarabs of both Tuthmosis I and II,²³ so can be no earlier than the reign of the latter. Oren, one year after Merrillees published his dates, had, also, on the basis of the Cypriote pottery, disputed the dating, considering all these groups to be unreliable,²⁴ and would move them into Merrillees' Phase XVIII B at the earliest. Eriksson has recently re-emphasized this belief, though, on the basis of the Minmontu group, allowed for a possible earlier introduction of the ware.²⁵ Since, however, this is an isolated example, and, as far as I am concerned, unreliable context, this may be dismissed from the equation.

Thus two possibilities exist for the dating of this tomb group; with Bourriau and Merrillees a dating in the reign of Amenophis I, or with Oren and Eriksson an implied date nearer the reign of Tuthmosis III, to which would also perhaps better fit the faience rhyton. Against such a late date would be the kohl pot and, perhaps, the remaining Egyptian pottery, though, of course, it should not be assumed that the ceramic phases began and ended with the beginning and end of a king's reign. Phase I may well have extended into the first years of Tuthmosis III's reign,

and thus Saqqara NK 3507 could well be that late. The inexact dating of a single tomb group is, in the wider scheme of Second Millennium chronology, of little substance. Unfortunately this tomb group has achieved some notoriety since the unsupported Amenophis I date has been used, not only to date various contexts at Kom Rabi'a, but also to date Egyptian contacts with Cyprus and Crete.

B) NEW KINGDOM LEVELS AT KOM RABI'A

The excavations at Kom Rabi'a took place over six seasons, initially in an area of 500 square metres which revealed settlement remains of the Third Intermediate Period, Ramesside and Late Eighteenth Dynasty occupation levels (Levels I–III).²⁶ The excavation area was then drastically reduced to two 5 metre wide strips along the northern and western sides of the original 20 × 25 m. square, which led to the discovery of early Eighteenth Dynasty and pre- New Kingdom levels (levels IV–VIII). The three earliest levels, VIII–VI are said to be of Late Middle Kingdom date and were eventually buried beneath a mass of collapsed mud brick debris. This debris was then covered by a layer of sand (Level V), over one metre high in places, which effectively sealed off the Late Middle Kingdom structures from the New Kingdom levels, Levels IV–II. Level IV comprises a series of buildings laid out on a different alignment to that under the sand, and this new pattern was seemingly respected throughout the remainder of the New Kingdom. Unfortunately only a small segment of the Level IV settlement was revealed in the northern five metre strip. Levels III and II were excavated over a larger area. Since Level II is clearly Ramesside, it will play no further part in this paper.

Little New Kingdom pottery has so far been published from Kom Rabi'a,²⁷ but the deposits which have been partially made available to scholars are all dated by reference to Saqqara NK 3507 and the unpublished context RAT 782 supposedly similar to Dahshur complex 7, but as it is not published the veracity of this statement cannot be checked. These are RAT 289, 305, 365, 452, 530, 531, and 536. By analogy with Saqqara

²⁰ MERRILLEES, 1968, 147–168.

²¹ BERGOFFEN, 2001, 48.

²² Tomb of Minmontu. Cf. LEGRAIN, 1908, 55 no. 12; MERRILLEES 1968, 120.

²³ CARNARVON and CARTER, 1912, 64–88, pl. lxviii.1; MERRILLEES, 1968, 120.

²⁴ OREN, 1969, 148

²⁵ ERIKSSON, 2001a, 58.

²⁶ For the excavations see JEFFREYS, MALEK and SMITH, 1987,

15–18; JEFFREYS and MALEK, 1988, 17–20, JEFFREYS and GIDDY, 1989, 1–8; GIDDY and JEFFREYS, 1991, 1–4; GIDDY, 1999, 1–4.

²⁷ The principle publications, which include pottery drawings are BOURRIAU, 1990b, 1991a, 1997, and BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997. Other references to the Kom Rabi'a material are to be found in BOURRIAU, 1992; 2002, BOURRIAU and NICHOLSON, 1992, BOURRIAU, NICHOLSON and SMITH, 2000, BOURRIAU, SMITH and SERPICO, 2001.

NK 3507, RAT 305 and 365 are dated to the reigns of Ahmose–Amenophis I. As well as the illustrated pottery (Fig. 3), these contexts are also said to contain body sherds of a Cypriote Base Ring I juglet, Cypriote Red Lustrous Wheel-Made Ware (in addition to the Cypriote Black Lustrous jug Fig. 3 no. 10) and a Canaanite jar. The question of the dating of Base Ring ware has already been referred to, and one sits either in one camp or the other. This also affects the dating of the Red Lustrous Wheel-Made Ware. The earliest presumed contexts in which (published) Red Lustrous Wheel-Made Ware appear are Gurob 27, Aniba SA29, RAT 349 and RAT 308/327/334 at Kom Rabi'a. Gurob 27, which has no internal dating evidence but also contained Base Ring ware, was dated to the reign of Amenophis I by the excavators, a date challenged by Oren who dated it to the reign of Tuthmosis III, whilst Eriksson, slightly more conservatively dated this tomb to between the reigns of Amenophis I and Tuthmosis III. Aniba SA29, although dated to the reign of Amenophis I through a scarab of that king found in it, was clearly in use to at least the reign of Tuthmosis III, since it also contained an Egyptian pottery jug of a type not known before then. Leaving aside the RAT deposits, all the other Red Lustrous Wheel-Made Ware contexts examined by Eriksson are assigned to the reigns of Hatshepsut/Tuthmosis III. RAT 289 is also dated to the time of Ahmose–Amenophis I, though only one amphora handle from this deposit has been published so far.²⁸ RAT 349 was apparently sealed by RAT 308/327/334 in which was found the scarab of Tuthmosis I. Since neither of these contexts appears on the part of the site matrix which has been published one can assume that these contexts are somewhat higher than 305 and 365, hence the logical sequence which would place 305 and 365 contemporary with Ahmose–Amenophis I, 349, by implication to Amenophis I–Tuthmosis I, and 308/327/334 to Tuthmosis I. From the published matrix RAT 530 is contemporary with 305 and 365, all three being above the sand layer which divides *New Kingdom pottery styles* from *Middle Kingdom pottery styles*,²⁹ which, of course, should not to be confused with a division between the

New and Middle Kingdoms. RAT 530 is only dated, *on ceramic evidence*, between the reigns of Ahmose and Hatshepsut,³⁰ though Bourriau at first dated the context to the reign of Amenophis I,³¹ and subsequently, less dogmatically, to anywhere between Year 22 of Ahmose and the end of the reign of Tuthmosis I.³² Reasons for defining a closer date are based on the unsubstantiated assumption that the Kerma cooking pottery found in RAT 452, “stratigraphically just a little later” was brought there by Nubian mercenaries before the sack of Kerma early in the reign of Tuthmosis I.³³ RAT 530 is particularly important since it also included a sherd, RAT 530.1301, of an Aegean vessel. Although the sherd is not very large, current opinion now favours its identification as a fragment of a Minoan LM IB bridge spouted jar.³⁴ As with the Cypriote Base Ring Ware, there are two schools of thought relating to the dating of LM IB. On the low chronology such as that followed by Warren and Hankey,³⁵ and Eriksson,³⁶ a correlation of LM IB with the reign of Ahmose (perhaps earlier, if the sherd were residual) would be impossible, whilst a dating to the very end of the reign of Tuthmosis I would be more acceptable since the Warren/Hankey/Eriksson start of LM IB, which they argue is co-eval with the beginning of the reign of Tuthmosis III, would need only a slight adjustment. However, not long before this sherd was discovered, Kemp and Merrillees had argued that Late Minoan IB appears to overlap with the later part of the Hyksos period and the first part of the Eighteenth Dynasty,³⁷ and this view has been championed in recent years by Manning.³⁸ On such a high chronology, Bourriau's dating of RAT 530.1301 would be perfectly acceptable. Also sealing the sand layer is RAT 293, from which two P31 and one P33 Canaanite jar fragments have been published.³⁹

As can be seen from contexts 305 and 365, there occur bowls with black rim bands, which we are told elsewhere first appear in context RAT 740, which is in the sand. Within RAT 707, dated to the late Second Intermediate Period, and lying immediately below RAT 740, a fragment of a Marl D amphora was also found,⁴⁰ whilst bowls with ring (pattern) bur-

²⁸ BOURRIAU, 1990, 22*–23*

²⁹ BOURRIAU, 1997, 163 (my italics).

³⁰ BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 108.

³¹ BOURRIAU, 1991b, 18.

³² BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 108.

³³ BOURRIAU in BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 108.

³⁴ WARREN and HANKEY, 1989, 139; BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997; MANNING, 1999, 202–204. Note, however that WIENER, 2003, 371, still prefers to see it as LM IA, though

this is perhaps influenced by the supposed date of the context.

³⁵ Conveniently, WARREN and HANKEY, 1989, 138–144; WARREN, 1995, 13; IDEM, 1998, 326.

³⁶ ERIKSSON, in BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 98.

³⁷ KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 254.

³⁸ Conveniently, MANNING, 1999, 202–208.

³⁹ BOURRIAU, 1990, 23*–25*

⁴⁰ BOURRIAU, SMITH and NICHOLSON, 2000, 18.

nishing first appear in RAT 758, which is itself immediately below RAT 740.

To sum up the following matrix can be produced:

Level III

308/327/334	Red Lustrous Wheel Made ware	Tuthmosis I scarab
349	Red Lustrous Wheel Made ware	

Level IV

305–365	Black Lustrous; Base Ring I; Red Lustrous Wheel Made ware	Ahmosé–Amenophis I	for some of the pottery see Fig. 3
452	Kerma ware	pre sack of Kerma under Tuthmosis I	for some of the pottery see Figs. 5 and 7
530	LM IB	Ahmosé–Tuthmosis I	for some of the pottery see Figs. 9 and 11
536	Contemporary with, or earlier than, 530		for some of the pottery see Figs. 13 and 15

Level V

Top of Sand Layer

289		Ahmosé–Amenophis I	
531 [contemporary with 289]		Ahmosé–Amenophis I	for some of the pottery see Fig. 17
740	black rims		
707	Marl D amphora	Second Intermediate Period	
758	ring burnishing		

Bottom of Sand Layer

782		Dahshur Complex 7	
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In essence this is very neat and undoubtedly acceptable to proponents of a high chronology.

C) NEW KINGDOM LEVELS AT EZBET HELMI

Excavations carried out since 1989 in six locations at Ezbet Helmi, areas H/I–H/VI, have brought to light

settlement layers covering ten distinct strata, from relative strata a (= b/2) to relative strata h (a = b/2, b = b/3, c, d, e/1.1, e/1.2, e/2, f–h).⁴¹ Relative strata a and b, (b/2–b/3) which can probably be dated to the reigns of Horemheb and Amenophis III respectively,⁴² are separated from the lower strata, c–h by a hiatus of unknown duration. Although more pottery from Ezbet Helmi than that from Kom Rabi'a has so far been published, very little, with the notable exception of those articles written by Hein,⁴³ has been accompanied with reasoned chronological argument; most of what has been published consists of catalogues in which the pieces remain undated or are appended dates which are not defended.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, from the published sources and the pottery illustrated in Figs. 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18–21,⁴⁵ it is clear that the pottery from stratum c parallels most closely that from Kom Rabi'a Level IV, whilst stratum d (cf. Figs. 22–24) probably parallels Level V. Moreover as an aid to dating the levels at Ezbet Helmi, much is made of the Cypriot imports, since they appear in a well-stratified sequence as shown in the following chart. Also in comparison with Kom Rabi'a, I also list the first occurrences of black rims, in stratum e/1.1, ring burnishing in stratum d, and Marl D also in stratum d:

c	White Slip I, Base Ring I, White Painted VI, Black Lustrous, Base Ring II, Red on Black, Bichrome, White Lustrous, White Slip II, Marl D, Black Rims, Ring Burnishing
d	Base Ring I, White Slip I, Red Lustrous Wheel Made Ware, Black Rims, Ring Burnishing, Marl D
e/1.1	Bichrome, Proto White Slip, Black rims, Base Ring I (?)
e/1.2	Proto White Slip, Bichrome
e/2	Proto White Slip
f	Red on Red
g–h	White Painted V

The first definite appearance of Base Ring I, and Red Lustrous Wheel Made Ware in stratum d would suggest that Kom Rabi'a contexts 305 and 365 within Level IV are no earlier than stratum d, although the suggested parallels and the Black Lustrous ware are more reminiscent of stratum c. Similarly the first

⁴¹ Cf. BIETAK, DORNER, HEIN and JÁNOSI, 1994, 20–38; BIETAK, 1996a, 63–83; IDEM, 1996b, 11–44; IDEM, 2000, 185–205; BIETAK, DORNER, JÁNOSI, 2001, 27–119; BIETAK and FORSTNER-MÜLLER, 2003, 39–50. Note in the first preliminary report the relative strata are called stratum IV and V. These can be correlated with d and e/1 respectively. Relative strata a and b have also been renumbered b/2 and b/3 respectively

⁴² ASTON, 2001, 168–196.

⁴³ For publications with discussions of the date of the mater-

ial, and its consequences see I. HEIN, 1994, 39–43; EADEM, 1998, 547–553; EADEM, 2001a, 121–147; EADEM in: BIETAK and HEIN, 2001, 174–181.

⁴⁴ FUSCALDO, 1997, 59–69; EADEM, 2000; EADEM, 2001, 149–166; EADEM, 2002, 167–186; EADEM, 2003, 69–82; BIETAK, 2001, 175–201.

⁴⁵ Note some of the Ezbet helmi pottery illustrated in this report comes from contexts to be published by Perla Fuscaldo.

black rims in stratum e/1.1 would suggest that Kom Rabi'a context 740 in Level V, is no earlier than this level. To all intents and purposes, however, the Egyptian pottery from Ezbet Helmi strata c and d, cf. Figs. 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18–24, is basically identical, and must belong to the same ceramic phase, and, as such, Kom Rabi'a levels III and IV could also be equated with stratum d. For the sake of argument, however, I shall proceed with the assumption that Kom Rabi'a levels III and IV may be equivalent to either Ezbet Helmi stratum c or stratum d.

It is the finds from relative stratum d that have caused the major interest in archaeological circles, since it is with this stratum that the fragments of Minoan wall paintings are associated. These clearly once adorned the walls of Palace F but had fallen off before expansion of the palace in stratum c. At first stratum d was dated to the Late Hyksos Period since scarabs with the names of Ahmose and Amenophis I were found in a domestic compound which abutted (and is thus later than) the palace.⁴⁶ Subsequently it was noticed that the palatial compound itself cuts, and is differently aligned to, a Hyksos enclosure wall, thus the palace must be later in time. Consequently it was then dated into the very early Eighteenth Dynasty.⁴⁷ As such this brings Ezbet Helmi stratum d and Kom Rabi'a strata III–IV into the same absolute time. This dating is supported by Fuscaldo's analysis of the Kerman pottery, from areas H/III and H/VI, which is found in levels b/3–d. She suggests that all the pieces found in stratum b/3 are from rubbish deposits or derive from stratum c walls,⁴⁸ but the sherds from c and d are deemed by Fuscaldo to provide "more archaeological evidence for the presence of Kermans in Egypt during the beginning of the 18th Dynasty that must predate the destruction of Kerma".⁴⁹ Thus if the Kerman pottery found in relative strata c and d was brought to Ezbet Helmi before Kerma was sacked by Tuthmosis I, then these two strata must predate the end of the reign of Tuthmosis I. Moreover, since she points out that all these pieces belong to the Classic Kerma Phase, rather than

the later Kerma Récente, one presumes, though it is not stated, that Fuscaldo would argue that stratum c should be no later than the reign of Ahmose, since, conventionally, this is the latest secure date for Classic Kerma pottery in Egypt.⁵⁰ In so doing she clearly sides with Bourriau's dating of Kom Rabi'a, and contra Bietak's current position, would place the Minoan frescoes in the late Hyksos Period. Since, however, she also ascribes Locus 66 which comes from level e/2 to the late Hyksos Period,⁵¹ it follows that, for her, strata e/1.2, e/1.1, and d must all be very short, since e/1.2 must date from Ahmose's Year 22 (sack of Avaris) at the earliest. Then for Kermans to be in Ezbet Helmi before the sack of Kerma, based on the presence of Kerman sherds in strata d and c, it follows that the sack of Kerma took place sometime within the duration of stratum c. Therefore strata e/1.2, e/1.1, d and the beginning of c must be fitted between Ahmose's Year 22 and the sack of Kerma during the early reign of Tuthmosis I.⁵²

That strata d and c could be dated as early as Ahmose or Tuthmosis I, thus favouring the dating suggested by Bourriau, gains support from a preliminary analysis of Carbon 14 samples. At a conference in Vienna in January 2004, Walter Kutschera, indicated that although the Carbon 14 dates from samples taken from the Middle Kingdom levels at Tell el-Dab'a are roughly equivalent to the dates suggested by Bietak on archaeological grounds, samples from later levels are consistently earlier. Thus if stratum D/2 (= Ezbet Helmi stratum e/2) is up to 100 years earlier in (real) time than one supposes, then there would be no problem, for example, to date strata e/1.2 to the late Hyksos Period, which would thus indicate that at Ezbet Helmi, there exists a later Hyksos level, not present on the main tell, or that D/2 is longer than previously thought, as already suggested by Manning.⁵³ This chain of thought results in two differing scenarios depending on whether the Kerman sherds are as late as the reign of Tuthmosis I, or whether the fact that these sherds being only Classic Kerma, and not Kerma Récente, are no later than the reign of

⁴⁶ BIETAK, DORNER, HEIN and JÁNOSI, 1994, 20–38.

⁴⁷ BIETAK and MARINATOS, 1995, 62; JÁNOSI, 1995, 63–71. Cf. also, BIETAK, 2000, 194–195.

⁴⁸ FUSCALDO, 2002, 174–175, nos. 6–8, 10, 11.

⁴⁹ FUSCALDO, 2002, 172, and reaffirmed by personal communication, Spring 2004.

⁵⁰ BOURRIAU, 1991a, 136.

⁵¹ FUSCALDO, 2000, *passim*. That Locus 66 belongs in stratum e/2 is clear from the report of BIETAK, DORNER and JÁNOSI,

2001, 33, although this is never stated in Fuscaldo's publication of the pottery from this locus.

⁵² It is thus somewhat perplexing that in her publication of a catalogue of Base Ring sherds from areas H/III and H/VI strata d to the Ramesside Period, FUSCALDO, 2003, 70, she mentions Oren's and Eriksson's dates for this material (no earlier than, or just before Tuthmosis III), rather than those of Merillees (late Second Intermediate Period onwards).

⁵³ MANNING, 1999, 325–329.

Ahmose. Then, with the reign of Tuthmosis I falling in stratum c, stratum e/1.1 could then date to Ahmose, d to Amenophis I and c to Tuthmosis I, in exact parallel to the dates proposed for these levels at Kom Rabi'a. Base Ring I would then appear first at Ezbet Helmi during the reign of Amenophis I, Merrillees' dating of Base Ring Ware would be proved correct, the Minoan frescoes would date to Amenophis I, and the hiatus between strata c and b/3 would be co-eval with the reigns of Tuthmosis III–Tuthmosis IV. If the reign of Ahmose falls in stratum c (Classic Kerma sherds), then e/1.2, e/1.1 and d must all fall into the Hyksos Period, Base Ring must occur within the Second Intermediate Period, as Merrillees supposed, the Minoan frescoes would be late Hyksos, and the hiatus between c and b/3, would cover the reigns of Tuthmosis I–IV.

By contrast, however, Hein has consistently argued for a different scenario. Ceramic studies from Ezbet Helmi areas H/I, H/II, and H/V are used by Hein to date stratum d to the reign of Hatshepsut – early Tuthmosis III, with the possibility that it could start as early as Tuthmosis I, and to equate stratum c with the reign of Tuthmosis III extending into the reign of Amenophis II.⁵⁴ Hein has also attempted to date the Kerman sherds found in areas H/I, H/IV and H/V from the Egyptian pottery in the contexts with which it was found, with the result that, contra Fuscaldo, she would date the levels with Kerman sherds from the early Eighteenth Dynasty on into the reign of Tuthmosis III.⁵⁵

From the publications of the Cypriote material from Ezbet Helmi,⁵⁶ it is obvious that Bietak and Hein favour the dating proposed by Oren and Eriksson. It is also clear, however, that the Cypriote pottery can be used in support of either a high chronology (Merrillees/Manning) or a low one (Oren/Eriksson), thus, in itself, it cannot date the levels neither at Kom Rabi'a nor at Ezbet Helmi, and one must be wary of falling into a circular argument. An examination of the Egyptian ceramic material from Kom Rabi'a levels III–V and Ezbet Helmi, in particular area H/VI, strata e/1.1 to c, do, in fact, provide a number of hints

indicating, to my mind, that a date in the reigns of Hatshepsut–Tuthmosis III is perhaps more likely than an earlier one. Firstly the presence of a Marl D amphora in RAT 707 in Level V, and the first appearance of such at Ezbet Helmi in stratum d is telling. Unfortunately little can be said about Egyptian amphorae before the reign of Tuthmosis I, since very few early New Kingdom amphorae have been published with enough fabric details to know whether the vessels concerned are genuine Egyptian vessels, or whether they are Canaanite imports. Egyptian made amphorae are certainly known in late Hyksos levels at Tell el-Dab'a, where they were produced from Nile clay, but the earliest unequivocally dated Egyptian amphorae of the New Kingdom must be those with the stamped cartouches of Tuthmosis I known from Serra East,⁵⁷ Deir el-Medineh⁵⁸ and East Karnak (Naga al-Tawil).⁵⁹ For those from Serra East and Deir el-Medineh, no indication of the fabric is given, though that from Naga al Tawil is definitely of Marl D.⁶⁰ An amphora found in cemetery 185, tomb 196 at Fadrus is dated to the Eighteenth Dynasty before the reign of Hatshepsut by correspondence analysis,⁶¹ but, from the published fabric description it is not clear whether the vessel is of Egyptian or Canaanite origin. Many evidently Egyptian amphorae, since they bear stamped cartouches on the shoulder, are known from the reigns of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III, though again no indication of fabric is given. Numerous examples of such amphorae, are known from the nécropole de l'Est at Deir el-Medineh,⁶² whilst the next datable, indubitably Marl D, amphorae are those from Theban Tomb 87, which are assumed to belong with the first use of the tomb, i.e. to the time of the original owner, Nakhtmin, who was in high office from the reign of Hatshepsut to at least Year 34 of Tuthmosis III,⁶³ and those from the tomb of the three foreign wives of Tuthmosis III, of which the pottery assemblage found therein is dated to the end of the reign of Hatshepsut or to the beginning of Tuthmosis' sole reign.⁶⁴ From the reign of Tuthmosis III onwards Marl D amphorae become extremely common, and many have been found in well dated con-

⁵⁴ HEIN, 1995, 554, 2001a, 140; 2001c, 242.

⁵⁵ HEIN, 2001b, 199–212.

⁵⁶ BIETAK and HEIN, 2001; HEIN, 2001c.

⁵⁷ HUGHES, 1963, 129; KNUDSTADT, 1966, 172.

⁵⁸ NAGEL, 1938, 129 no. 10.

⁵⁹ ASTON, forthcoming

⁶⁰ ASTON, forthcoming

⁶¹ For the vessel see HOLTHOER, 1977, pl. 22 type AO1, and for the date, TROY, 1991, 223, 264.

⁶² BRUYÈRE, 1937, 93, with an illustration of a complete vessel on p.95, fig. 48.1, though this one does not appear to be stamped.

⁶³ GUKSCH, 1995, 82, Abb 36a–d. The vessels were shown to the present writer by Heike Guksch, and it is clear that these are of the coarse (Marl G) variety.

⁶⁴ LILYQUIST, 2003, 73, 76, 101–103, figs. 75a–e, 76a–b, 77a–b.

texts, or bear dockets referring to year dates of given kings. From the above it is clear that, when RAT 707 is left out of the equation, the earliest datable Marl D amphorae can be assigned to the reign of Tuthmosis I, yet they do not become common until the reign of Tuthmosis III. It may be argued, of course, that the lack of examples before the reign of Tuthmosis I is simply due to chance, and that they were already being made as early as the Second Intermediate Period, the date assigned to the handle found in RAT 707, but this would be an argument *ex silentio*, and is better avoided. However, not only does one have to explain the gap between that found in RAT 707 and the otherwise first datable examples in the reign of Tuthmosis I,⁶⁵ one also has to explain why such Egyptian amphorae were suddenly produced during the Second Intermediate Period. Canaanite Jars, which the earliest Marl D amphorae copied, had been imported into Egypt since at least the Late Twelfth Dynasty,⁶⁶ and the most logical reason why the Egyptians would need 'home-made' amphorae is that they must have begun producing their own wine in sufficient quantities to need wine jars in which to keep it.⁶⁷ Thus the question has to be asked how and why this should have come about. Although wine was clearly a favourite of the Hyksos, being both imported – witness the large number of Canaanite jars found at Tell el-Dab^a,⁶⁸ – and home grown, since Kamose specifically refers to the vineyards of Avaris,⁶⁹ – surprisingly few wine jars (that is Canaanite jars) or fragments thereof, have been found outside of the Delta in early Eighteenth Dynasty contexts. Those that have been found were probably appreciated more for their practicality than their contents, since even those found in royal tombs had been reused for holding beer.⁷⁰ Thus it may be supposed that the conquest of the Eastern Delta,

and subsequent raids into Palestine by the first pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty brought the Eighteenth Dynasty elite not only into contact with wine as a drink, but also, and more importantly, into acquaintance with vintners able to produce it, the latter clearly being persuaded to ply their trades for their new Egyptian masters.⁷¹ At this time it is probable that new vineyards were planted 'on the western river', i.e. somewhere in the Western Delta, since this is where most of the wine came from that supplied Malkata, Amarna, and the tomb of Tutankhamun. Thus if a large native wine industry developed as a consequence of the conquest of the Eastern Delta, then the need for amphorae in the early Eighteenth Dynasty would be explained. Indeed Bourriau is of the same opinion supposing that 'royal encouragement of viticulture in the Delta at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty suddenly required transport amphorae.'⁷² It is hard to see, therefore, why Marl D amphorae should have been produced before the conquest of Avaris, and before the royal encouragement of viticulture by the early Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs. The presence of a Marl D amphora fragment in RAT 707, therefore, suggests the fact that RAT 707 postdates the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

The stratum d fragment 8912X, Fig. 24b, is clearly the upper part of a figure vase. It is made of a red slipped and burnished marl with additional decoration in black, and, although fragmentary, clearly belongs with a small, but well-known group of female pottery figurines. These can be conveniently divided into two kinds – kneeling figures representing wet nurses, and standing women representing servant figures or musicians.⁷³ Although not enough is preserved to determine whether 8912X should be considered a

⁶⁵ Note that at Dra^c Abu el-Naga, a number of amphora sherds are found in Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Dynasty tombs, but significantly none are of Marl D – Anne Seiler, personal communication. From Seiler's description of the fabric of these sherds, it is possible that they may derive from the oases where similar sherds, Hope's fabric B23, have also been found in Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Dynasty tombs. Cf. HOPE, 2002, 99.

⁶⁶ ARNOLD DO., ARNOLD F., and ALLEN S., 1995; MCGOVERN, 2000, 31–40; ASTON, 2002, 44–45; SCHIESTL, 2002, 346–348.

⁶⁷ Whilst such jars could have also been used for transporting other contents, it is noticeable that analysis of the fabrics found in the earlier levels at Memphis seem to indicate that those found in the earliest New Kingdom levels were used for wine (fabrics, P31, P33), and only with the fabrics found in later levels were Canaanite jars used for transporting pistachio resins and honey (P11, P30) or oil (P40, P46). Cf. SERPICO and

WHITE, 1998; SERPICO, 2000, 458–9; EADEM, 2003; SERPICO, BOURRIAU, SMITH, GOREN, STERN and HERON, 2003, 373.

⁶⁸ MCGOVERN, 2000, 31–40.

⁶⁹ SMITH and SMITH, 1976, 60, 74.

⁷⁰ Note that an analysis of the residue remaining in the Canaanite jar found in the tomb of Meryetamun, revealed the contents to have been beer, WINLOCK, 1932, 32. According to Emery's records, the Canaanite jar found in NK 3507 contained milk: BOURRIAU, 1991a, 139.

⁷¹ Cf. the clear reference to the vintner Khor, 'the Syrian', HAYES, 1951, 102.

⁷² BOURRIAU, forthcoming.

⁷³ MURRAY, 1911, 40–46; DESROCHES-NOBLECOURT, 1952, 49–67; BRUNNER-TRAUT, 1970a, 35–48; EADEM 1970b, 145–64, RAND, 1970, 209–212; BOURRIAU, 1981a, 34–36 nos. 47–50; EADEM, 1987, 90–93 sections 7.3–11; DORMAN, 2002, 21–24.

wet nurse or a servant figure; in terms of dating this is of little consequence, since all the examples discussed by Bourriau can be dated between the reigns of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis III.

In Ezbet Helmi stratum d, a small ring-based carinated bowl, 8963Q, Fig. 22g, with a red rim and 'splash decoration' on the interior comes from Locus 4901. Pots with such decoration are not uncommon. A number of open forms with similar decoration were found in tombs 195, 316, 420, 507, 511, 515, 517 and 598 at Fadrus.⁷⁴ The Fadrus cemetery was subjected to a correspondence analysis by Lana Troy, who was thus able to separate the tombs into three main chronological phases, divided into seven sub-phases, which, in real terms, were equated with (1) the early Eighteenth Dynasty pre-Hatshepsut (Fadrus Ia-b); (2) Hatshepsut/Tuthmosis III–Tuthmosis IV (Fadrus IIa-c) and (3) Amenophis III–Late 18th Dynasty (Fadrus IIIa-b).⁷⁵ As a result of this analysis, tomb 195 was placed in phase Ib; 420 and 598 in phase IIa; 507, 511, and 517 in phase IIb; and 316 in phase IIc, whilst 515 could only be assigned a broad date range encompassing phases IIb–IIIb. Thus with the exception of the bowl from tomb 195, all these vessels can be placed in the period co-eval with the reigns of Hatshepsut/Tuthmosis III–Tuthmosis IV. Yet another flat-based bowl with red rim on the interior and exterior with red splashes on the interior, was found at Qustol in cemetery R tomb 43,⁷⁶ which was dated by Williams to the reign of Amenophis III or IV, with the possibility that it could be a little earlier.⁷⁷ Large deep flat based bowls with 'splash decoration' were found within a disturbed foundation deposit of Tuthmosis III at Deir el-Bahri.⁷⁸ Bowls with incurved rims and flat or raised bases, with 'splash decoration' on the interior are found in the valley of the Three Pits.⁷⁹ The tombs found in the Valley of the Three Pits were dated by their excavators to the reign of Tuthmosis III, through an analysis of the coffin fragments, ceramic forms, and faience balls found in some of them. Such a date is confirmed by the discovery, in tomb B, of a Menkheperre sealing, which cannot have been made before the reign of Tuthmosis III.⁸⁰ The recent publication of the tomb of the three foreign

wives of Tuthmosis III reveals that yet more of these bowls were associated with that tomb.⁸¹ On the basis of a number of parallels, the pottery assemblage found in this tomb was dated to the end of the reign of Hatshepsut or the beginning of Tuthmosis III's sole reign.⁸² Thus the example from Ezbet Helmi stratum d seems to fit best somewhere within the reign of Tuthmosis III, rather than earlier in the Dynasty. In this respect it should be noted that one of the vessels of type 7 found in the RAT 530 random sample is described as having irregular splashes of red slip on the inside.⁸³ This suggests that this bowl is yet another example of the bowls with splash decoration just discussed, with, if true, the subsequent implication that RAT 530 ought also to date within the reign of Tuthmosis III. Of course it is possible that this type of vessel with splash decoration may have a long lifespan, and examples could have been produced much earlier with the painted vessels found in Tuthmosis III contexts all being late examples. This, however is also an argument *ex silentio*, which would create a gap between the otherwise undated Ezbet Helmi and Kom Rabi'a vessels and the datable examples listed above. I would suggest that it is more logical to assign the undated Ezbet Helmi and Kom Rabi'a pots to the reign of Tuthmosis III thus bringing them into line with the other datable vessels. In stratum d at Ezbet Helmi, there is also a pottery rhyton.⁸⁴ As mentioned in the discussion of the tomb group Saqqara NK 3507, all the otherwise extant faience copies of Aegean rhyta found in Egypt cluster around the middle of the 18th Dynasty, in particular the reign of Tuthmosis III.⁸⁵ Whilst the Ezbet Helmi example is made of pottery, not faience, its presence with vessels that seem to belong in the reign of Tuthmosis III is probably significant.

From what has been written above, therefore, I would suggest that stratum d should be dated to the reigns of Hatshepsut–Tuthmosis III and stratum c to the later reign of Tuthmosis III, which is thus in close agreement with the work of Hein.

A dating of stratum d into the reign of Tuthmosis III has consequences on the Nubian pottery found in these levels and on the date of black rim bands, both

⁷⁴ HOLTHOER, 1977, 85, pl. 18, FP2/IR/3R/d-f; 113, pl. 24, CC6/IR/3D/f-g; 116, pl. 25 CU1/IR/3R/d-e; 118, pl. 25, CU3/IR/3R/c-e; 119, pl. 26, CU4/IR/3R/d-e; 124, pl. 27, PL3/IR/3R/d-e

⁷⁵ TROY, 1991, 223.

⁷⁶ WILLIAMS, 1992, 213 fig. 56d.

⁷⁷ WILLIAMS, 1992, 17.

⁷⁸ SZAFRANSKI, 1997, 63 nos. 5, 7.

⁷⁹ LOYRETTE, 1997, 186, fig. 6f, 6i.

⁸⁰ LOYRETTE, 1997, 180–184.

⁸¹ LILYQUIST, 2003, 94, figs. 59e–g, 60d, 97 fig. 64i.

⁸² LILYQUIST, 2003, 76.

⁸³ BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 114, fig. 6 no. 7.

⁸⁴ Vessel 7545, HEIN, 1998, 550.

⁸⁵ KOEHL, 2000, 96.

of which may now be examined in turn. Since, conventionally the Classic Kerman sherds could not have reached Ezbet Helmi any later than the reign of Ahmose, nor the Kerman cooking pot sherds after the middle of the reign of Tuthmosis I, unless they are residual, how then can this be explained? It may, of course, be argued that the presence of Kerman cooking pot sherds are against such a chronology, but Bourriau's argument, followed by Fuscaldo, that such sherds predate the campaign of Tuthmosis I collapses when, in a later work, Bourriau indicates that those found at Memphis were made locally, from a special fabric specifically manufactured only for the production of Nubian style vessels.⁸⁶ Since similar sherds are also found at Ezbet Helmi in contexts presumably datable to the reign of Tuthmosis III, this would perhaps suggest that the presence of Nubian cooking pots has a culinary rather than political reason, in much the same way as modern European cooks use woks to prepare traditional Chinese food. Alternatively one might argue that after the sack of Kerma by Tuthmosis I, Kerma was not entirely destroyed, as obviously Avaris was not completely razed when the Hyksos were expelled, and that the survivors continued to trade, or bring with them, such cooking pots northwards. As such, Kermans and their cooking pots could have continued to emigrate to Avaris during the reigns of Tuthmosis I–III. Indeed the fact that Tuthmosis II, Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III all led campaigns into Nubia indicate that the Kerman state was certainly not wiped out as a result of Tuthmosis I's sack of its principal city. However, since the Kerman (style) cooking pots found at Memphis are now considered to be locally made, I tend to favour the first of these two hypotheses.

The presence of black rims on pottery as a decorative style is traditionally assumed to have developed at the end of the Second Intermediate Period,⁸⁷ though there is no real evidence for such a belief. It can be traced back to the bowl, which is very similar to that from Ezbet Helmi, stratum c, (8909K, fig. 12c) found with the intact burial discovered by Petrie at Qurneh, which, on the basis of a rishi coffin, was dated by him to the Seventeenth Dynasty since Seventeenth Dynasty royal coffins are of similar style.⁸⁸ This Sev-

enteenth Dynasty date has been defended in the most recent discussion of this group,⁸⁹ on the grounds that the style of mummification is consistent with Seventeenth Dynasty mummification techniques. However the factors quoted by Eremin, Goring, Manley and Cartwright, viz the poor tissue preservation, the presence of some brain material and the unbroken nasal bones, indicative of little emphasis being placed on the actual preservation of the body, and the non-removal of the brain is also still current during the early Eighteenth Dynasty.⁹⁰ Secondly they suggest that this burial is that of a Seventeenth Dynasty queen simply on the location of the burial, in roughly the same general area as other known Seventeenth Dynasty royal burials. They also point out, however, that the gold earrings associated with this burial would appear to be the earliest noted example of an open-ended form which subsequently became popular in the New Kingdom, thus they, themselves, also leave the way open for a dating into the early New Kingdom. Later excavations at the Nécropole de l'Est at Deir el-Medineh,⁹¹ brought to light more rishi coffins in combination with amphorae, stamped with the cartouches of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III, and it is now known that such coffins extend from the Seventeenth Dynasty well into the reign of Tuthmosis III.⁹² In her examination of Petrie's Qurneh burial, Bourriau has drawn attention to another rishi coffin, that of Rennefer, wife of Neferkheut, keeper of palace documents under Hatshepsut. Providing Rennefer did not long predecease her husband that coffin can thus be dated to the reign of Hatshepsut. In its style of decoration it bears two transversal bands as part of the design. These transversal bands are also found on the coffin of Rai, wet nurse to Ahmose-Nofretari, but are not found on any of the Seventeenth Dynasty royal coffins. Since these bands are not found on the Qurneh burial coffin, Bourriau concludes, with Petrie, that the Qurneh burial should also be dated to the Seventeenth Dynasty. However, the rishi coffin found in tomb 1389 at Deir el-Medineh, is also of the type without transversal bands.⁹³ The man buried in this coffin was accompanied by various grave goods including a double kohl tube (not pot) of wood and a *mechak* razor, both of which are indicative of a date no earlier than the reign of Tuthmosis III,⁹⁴

⁸⁶ BOURRIAU, SMITH and NICHOLSON, 2000, 18, 32.

⁸⁷ BOURRIAU, 1981, 74; ASTON 2003, 142, but the discussion in this paper leads me to reject the Seventeenth Dynasty date for black rims.

⁸⁸ PETRIE, 1909, 6–10.

⁸⁹ EREMIN, GORING, MANLEY and CARTWRIGHT, 2000.

⁹⁰ Cf. DAWSON and ELLIOT SMITH, 1924, 89–90.

⁹¹ BRUYÈRE, 1937.

⁹² TAYLOR, 1989, 30.

⁹³ For the coffin, BRUYÈRE 1937, 26 fig. 10; for the tomb group as a whole, BRUYÈRE, 1937, 197–201.

⁹⁴ For kohl tubes as opposed to kohl pots, see above xxx, and for the razors see ERIKSSON 2001b. Note if the razor shown in BRUYÈRE, 1937, 81 fig. 40 is from tomb 1389, then the

and, what is more telling, some of his accompanying boxes were sealed with seals of Tuthmosis III, hence Bourriau's argument for the date of the rishi coffin found by Petrie falls, a point already mentioned by Eriksson.⁹⁵ That the Qurneh burial could be later than Petrie supposed, however, is also indicated by the bronze cutter (linen cutting knife) found with it, which finds ready parallels within, *inter alia*, Abydos Garstang tombs E.10, E.176, E.268 and E.294.⁹⁶ That from tomb E.10 was found with a scarab of Tuthmosis III. The pottery from tombs E.10 and E.176 is so similar that E.176 must also be of the same date,⁹⁷ whilst E.258 and E.294, an intact burial in which the cutting knife was found in association with a *mechak* razor, a double kohl tube, Base Ring ware, Red Lustrous Wheel Made Ware, both contain pottery traditionally dated to the reign of Tuthmosis III. Although Petrie dated the knife found in the Qurneh burial to the Seventeenth Dynasty, he seems to have subsequently changed his mind since in a later publication he dated such knives to the reign of Tuthmosis III, pointing out that they are different to one found in a context dated to the reign of Tuthmosis I.⁹⁸ Moreover it should be noted that the pottery found with Petrie's Qurneh burial is indisputably later in style than that associated with the Seventeenth Dynasty tomb of Nubkeperre Intef located in Dra Abu el-Naga.⁹⁹ At this point it is probably significant to recall that among the relatively intact Theban tomb groups collected by Tyson Smith, none of those dated before the reign of Tuthmosis III, with the exception of Petrie's Qurneh burial, which he accepted as of Seventeenth Dynasty date, contained black rimmed pottery.¹⁰⁰ With the removal of the Qurneh burial, it is hard to pin down the earliest undoubted evidence for black rim bowls. Many can be found in tomb contexts which clearly belong to, or were last used in, the reign of Tuthmosis III, but anything which is unequivocally earlier is hard to find. A bowl with a black rim was found in Gurob tomb 26 together with a scarab of Amenophis I, which thus acts as a *terminus post quem*. Black rimmed bowls are

found in the filling material associated with tomb K93.11 at Dra Abu el-Naga,¹⁰¹ which along with tomb K93.12, is currently thought to be the original tomb of Amenophis I and Ahmose-Nofretari,¹⁰² thus if the ceramic material can be associated with the first use of this double tomb, this would be a further indication that black rims developed during the reign of Amenophis I. At best, therefore, it would seem that black rims developed sometime between the reigns of Amenophis I and Tuthmosis III. This is in keeping with the strata at Ezbet Helmi since if stratum d should be dated to the reign of Tuthmosis III, it follows that e/1.1, where the first black rims occur, should be a little earlier. At Kom Rabi'a the first black rims appear in RAT 740, just above RAT 707 with the Marl D amphora. Thus if RAT 707 should be reassigned to the early Eighteenth Dynasty (see above), then the black rims in RAT 740 would fit perfectly in sequence, since RAT 740, being above 707, should also date to the Eighteenth Dynasty – within the reign of Amenophis I at the earliest. However if we date the Marl D amphora no earlier than the previously earliest known examples (Tuthmosis I), and recall that the first ring burnishing, which at Ezbet Helmi is first found in stratum d, occurs below the first black rim, then Stratum V could indeed be considerably later.

Whilst the above arguments are perhaps only superficial, it seems to me more logical than the previously published dates for the ceramic sequence at Kom Rabi'a. Paradoxically the recent publication of the New Kingdom and Post-New Kingdom objects from Kom Rabi'a by Lisa Giddy not only strengthens the case for a re-dating of levels III–V but would seem to support the dating suggested by the material from Ezbet Helmi. She records that throughout Level III there are, in addition to that of Tuthmosis I (deposit RAT 308),¹⁰³ also scarabs of Amenophis II (RAT 423),¹⁰⁴ Tuthmosis IV (RAT 534),¹⁰⁵ and two of Amenophis III (RAT 565 and 738)¹⁰⁶ along with two finger rings of Tutankhamun (RAT 432 and 1103).¹⁰⁷ Since no matrix has yet been published for this level,

razor is of Eriksson's type 2. Eriksson had noted that the type from tomb 1389 is unknown. BRUYÈRE, 1937, 81 fig. 40 shows a double kohl tube, the razor and an ointment spoon, but the accompanying text refers only to the double kohl tube which is stated to come definitely from tomb 1389.

⁹⁵ ERIKSSON, in BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 100.

⁹⁶ GARSTANG, 1901, 12, pl. xvi.

⁹⁷ I fail to understand why GARSTANG dates E.176 to the reign of Amenophis III – GARSTANG, 1901, pls. xvi, xxvii. The tomb group has been extensively discussed by MERILLIÈS, 1968, 100, and ERIKSSON, 1993, 89–91.

⁹⁸ PETRIE, 1917, 50–51, pl. lxii:17–20.

⁹⁹ Cf. SEILER in POLZ and SEILER, 2003, 49–72.

¹⁰⁰ TYSON SMITH, 1999, 193–231.

¹⁰¹ SEILER, 2003, 338–343, and forthcoming.

¹⁰² POLZ, 1995, 217.

¹⁰³ GIDDY, 1999, 62–3, no. 990.

¹⁰⁴ GIDDY, 1999, 68, no. 1403.

¹⁰⁵ GIDDY, 1999, 70 no. 1776.

¹⁰⁶ GIDDY, 1999, 64, nos. 1779 and 2015.

¹⁰⁷ GIDDY, 1999, 105 no. 1420, 108 no. 2694.

it is possible that 432 and 1103 are higher than 565 and 738, which are higher than 534, which is itself higher than 423, which is higher than 308, thus level III could extend throughout the Eighteenth Dynasty from the reigns of Tuthmosis I to Tutankhamun. However RAT 565, with the scarab of Amenophis III is ascribed to level IIIb, thus the latest phases of level IIIb are already no earlier than the reign of Amenophis III, and RAT 423 with the scarab of Amenophis II comes from the higher Level IIIa, thus the scarabs are not in sequence. Moreover Giddy also publishes a plaque from a Level IV wall (context RAT 332) inscribed with the cartouche of Tuthmosis III (Men-Kheper-Re).¹⁰⁸ Thus if level IV continued to the reign of Tuthmosis III, and level IIIb to the reign of Amenophis III, it is clear that the Tuthmosis I scarab found in RAT 308 was an old one at the time of deposition, and can thus play no part in the dating of the pottery found with or beneath it. In addition an incomplete kohl pot with a simple cylindrical tubular hole, rather than having the interior hollowed out, was found in RAT 289 within Level V.¹⁰⁹ Such vessels with a tubular hole apparently do not occur before early Dynasty 18.¹¹⁰ It thus seems obvious that the previously proposed Kom Rabi'a dates should be brought down later in time.

The similarities between Ezbet Helmi strata d and c and Kom Rabi'a Levels IV and V cannot be ignored. From the above it is apparent that Helmi (H/VI) strata c–d are probably contemporary with RAT 308/327/334 down to 740. Since the arguments outlined above indicate that stratum d should be contemporary with the reign of Tuthmosis III, then the dating of the Ezbet Helmi strata should fall within either one or the other of the two following schemes

A) Scheme one

c	≈ Amenophis II/Tuthmosis IV
d	≈ Tuthmosis III late
e/1.1	≈ Tuthmosis III early (Hatshepsut)
e/1.2	≈ Tuthmosis I/II
e/2	≈ Ahmose–Amenophis I

B) Scheme two

c	≈ Tuthmosis III late
d	≈ Tuthmosis III early (Hatshepsut)
e/1.1	≈ Tuthmosis I/II
e/1.2	≈ Ahmose–Amenophis I
e/2	≈ Late Hyksos

In either case stratum d, and hence, incidentally, the date of the Minoan frescoes, would fall within the reign of Tuthmosis III.¹¹¹ Of the two schemes, the second is perhaps preferable since this allows time for a hiatus between c and b/3. The consequences of dating stratum d to early Tuthmosis III are immediately apparent in relation not only to the date of the levels at Kom Rabi'a, but also to the dating of Saqqara NK 3507. From what has gone before it seems obligatory to date Memphis Level III to the late Eighteenth Dynasty, Level IV to the reign of Tuthmosis III, and Level V to the Eighteenth Dynasty no earlier than the reign of Amenophis I, and no later than the reign of Tuthmosis III, and, moreover, the sand layer at Memphis would have to be dated entirely within the Eighteenth Dynasty, as Eriksson has already presumed.¹¹² If RAT 305, 365 and 530 should date to the reign of Tuthmosis III, it follows that Saqqara NK 3507 must also come later in time, and together this has an impact on the Cretan and Cypriote pottery sequence found in Egypt.

The removal of a pre-Tuthmosis I context for the Late Minoan IB bridge spouted jug from RAT 530, and a re-dating of that context into the reign of Tuthmosis III places that LMIB sherd into the (generally) accepted position that no Late Minoan IB pottery is found in Egypt before the reign of Tuthmosis III.¹¹³ It should also be pointed out that the Memphis sherd, *as long as it was dated prior to the end of the reign of Tuthmosis I* was the only secure Egyptian evidence for dating the beginning of LM IB before the reign of Tuthmosis III, since all other examples of LM IB sherds found in Egypt do not come from undeniably early contexts. In fact there is so little LM IB pottery found in Egypt, that Egypt should probably play no role in

¹⁰⁸ GIDDY, 1999, 73–74 no. 1111. Note that GIDDY suggests that the plaque could have been made in the Nineteenth Dynasty, but as she says, this would contradict the stratigraphic position of the piece. For our purpose, what is important is that the piece can obviously be no earlier than the reign of Tuthmosis III.

¹⁰⁹ GIDDY 1999, 262, pl. 57, stone vessel no. 1827.

¹¹⁰ BOURRIAU, 1981, 40–41; B.G. ASTON, 1994, 146–149.

¹¹¹ Hence the current position, BIETAK, DORNER, JÁNOSI,

2001, 44–45, following pottery analysis by Hein. Since Tuthmosis II only reigned three years, it is probably unlikely that we will ever be able to differentiate pottery of the reign of Tuthmosis II from that of Tuthmosis III, thus a dating of the frescoes into the reign of Tuthmosis II cannot be entirely excluded

¹¹² ERIKSSON, 2001a, 56.

¹¹³ WARREN and HANKEY, 1989, 138–142; ERIKSSON, in BOURRIAU and ERIKSSON, 1997, 100–101.

determining the dating of the LM IB, but nevertheless it is as well to review what little evidence there is.¹¹⁴ An incomplete LM IB baggy alabastron, was found in Sedment tomb 137,¹¹⁵ although unfortunately some confusion exists as to what was, and what was not, found in that tomb, since some of the objects (reputedly) from that tomb, now in Chicago, do not tally with the objects as recorded on Petrie's original tomb cards.¹¹⁶ The tomb group itself cannot be dated. Petrie was of the belief that this part of Sedment was not used before the reign of Tuthmosis III, and indeed a scarab of this king was found in a neighbouring tomb, 279. In their discussion of the tomb contents Kemp and Merrillees conclude that the contents of tomb 131 seem to belong to the first part of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and in any case cannot be earlier than the beginning of this Dynasty.¹¹⁷ A second sherd comes from Abydos tomb 328,¹¹⁸ but once again this tomb group is not independently datable. Moreover there is a possibility of mixing of the contents with tomb 301, since access to 328 may have been gained from 301 by means of a robbers' tunnel. Nevertheless two Egyptian pots, one from 328 and one from 301 – no others are listed on Garstang's notes – are well known types which are found both during the Late Second Intermediate Period, and during the early Eighteenth Dynasty, up to and including the reign of Tuthmosis III. A date in the Hyksos Period with Kemp and Merrillees¹¹⁹ is thus possible but not proven. No other definite LM IB pieces have been found in Egypt, though there are three other famous pieces, which, as Kemp and Merrillees rightly point out, can be considered as LM IB or Late Helladic IIA depending on the academic bias of the beholder, and are thus best left out of the discussion.¹²⁰

The dating of stratum d at Ezbet Helmi, and its consequent effect on the Kom Rabi'a Levels III and IV, however, does play a significant role in the dating of the Late Cypriot pottery sequence as it is found in Egypt. The sequence shown above (page 000), shows, that at Ezbet Helmi, Proto White Slip is first found in

stratum e/2 and continues into e/1. Base Ring I may occur in stratum e/1.1,¹²¹ though it is not sure that the sherd in question is really Base Ring ware, whilst White Slip I, definite Base Ring I, and Red Lustrous Wheel Made Ware first appear in stratum d, continuing into stratum c and beyond whilst Base Ring II and White Slip II first appear in stratum c. It should here be noted that the dates used by Louise Maguire in her 1995 paper which correlates the Late Cypriot wares with the Late Hyksos levels at Ezbet Helmi¹²² is based on the first preliminary dating of these levels, and must be abandoned. The presence of a possible Base Ring I in an e/1.1 context, and unquestionable Base Ring ware not before stratum d tends to favour the hypothesis of Oren and Eriksson that Base Ring Ware is not found in Egypt, until, or shortly before, the reign of Tuthmosis III (cf. above p. 000). Contra such a position, however, is the Base Ring jug found below the sand level at Kom Rabi'a and the report of a Base Ring sherd from Tell el-Dab'a area A/II stratum D/2.¹²³ The Kom Rabi'a Base Ring jug has become famous although neither the piece in question nor its context has been published.¹²⁴ Since it comes from below the sand layer it has always been dated to the Second Intermediate Period, however if the sand, as argued here, was not deposited until some time in the Eighteenth Dynasty, the vessel could be of Eighteenth Dynasty date and still lie below the sand. Moreover, Merrillees points out that the vessel comes from a rubbish dump,¹²⁵ which thus may have been tipped there just before the sand was dumped in order to make a clean foundation for the new buildings of Level IV. Moreover in a discussion of this context with Janine Bourriau and Dorothea Arnold in Vienna in 1996, the profile appears to show that this vessel comes from tip lines behind a wall which indeed were sealed by the sand, but if the tip lines were cut by the sand, then, as Dorothea pointed out, the vessel could have travelled down to its current position from a higher level. In any case until both the pot and the

¹¹⁴ Cf. KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 226–249; WARREN and HANKEY, 1989, 138–144; MANNING, 1999, 202–208.

¹¹⁵ PETRIE and BRUNTON, 1924, pls. xlviii–xlix; KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 228–231.

¹¹⁶ KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 229–231. Personally I suspect that the wooden Sons of Horus supposedly found in this tomb actually came from tomb 131 cf. ASTON, 1996, 40.

¹¹⁷ KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 231, 253.

¹¹⁸ This tomb group was not published in the report of the excavator, GARSTANG, but see KEMP and MERRILLEES 1980, 232–240.

¹¹⁹ KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 240, 253.

¹²⁰ KEMP and MERRILLEES, 1980, 240–245; WARREN and HANKEY, 1989, 144.

¹²¹ BIETAK, 2003, 26.

¹²² MAGUIRE, 1995, 63.

¹²³ MAGUIRE, 1992, 117 fig. 2.

¹²⁴ The jug is mentioned, *inter alia* by, MERRILLEES, 1992, 50–51; IDEM, 2001, 27; ERIKSSON, 1992, 169, EADEM, 2001a, 56; BIETAK, 1986, 86 n. 85; MANNING, 1999, 120 and notes 552–557; IDEM, 2001, 76, 86; BERGOFFEN, 2001, 46; BIETAK and HEIN, 2001, 172 n.5.

¹²⁵ MERRILLEES 1992, 51.

archaeological context are fully published, it seems archaeological nonsense to build chronological theories on this one pot, and it should not be considered in any discussions of Base Ring Ware found in Egypt. As for the reputed stratum D/2 Tell el-Dab^a piece, TD 5054, it comes from A/II-p/22 planum 1, in a context, K2581, which is mixed with New Kingdom sherds, and thus the date of the Base Ring fragment cannot be determined. In any case stratum D/2 on the tell lay immediately below the surface, and is not a good stratum in terms of well-dated contexts. Indeed D/2 deposits which come from the tell are probably best avoided, no matter what kind of pottery is under discussion, but in terms of Base Ring ware, it is perhaps significant that in area A/V where the D/2 strata were better preserved no Base Ring sherds were found in that stratum.¹²⁶ Thus the Ezbet Helmi evidence is strongly suggestive of the fact that Proto White Slip was already present in Egypt during the Hyksos Period, that Base Ring I Ware appeared shortly before the reign of Tuthmosis III; and that White Slip I probably did not arrive before the reign of Tuthmosis III, whence it arrived along with Red Lustrous Wheel Made Ware; and that Base Ring II and White Slip II first appeared late in the same reign. However should

Eriksson be proved right in that Base Ring II is not found in Egypt until after the reign of Tuthmosis III,¹²⁷ then stratum c must extend later in time, or Scheme One of the two proposed chronological schemes outlined on page 000 would have to be adopted. This, whilst moving the earliest Base Ring found at Ezbet Helmi into the reign of Tuthmosis III, would, however, move the Minoan frescoes well on into the same reign, something which our Aegeanist colleagues would perhaps find too hard to swallow. The hiatus between strata b and c would also come down to practically nothing, thus it seems on the whole better to assume that Base Ring II was indeed beginning to appear late in the reign of Tuthmosis III,¹²⁸ even though it may not have become common until the reign of Amenophis III. Since in overall terms the amount of Cypriote sherds found at Ezbet Helmi are numerically small, and because they are broken and therefore sherdage, it may be argued that this does not mean much.¹²⁹ However, the fact that they occur in the correct ceramic sequence is suggestive and surely cannot be mere chance. Since the same sequence for Cypriot imports can be traced in Palestine, it is probable that this also reflects both their floruit and their date of production on Cyprus itself.

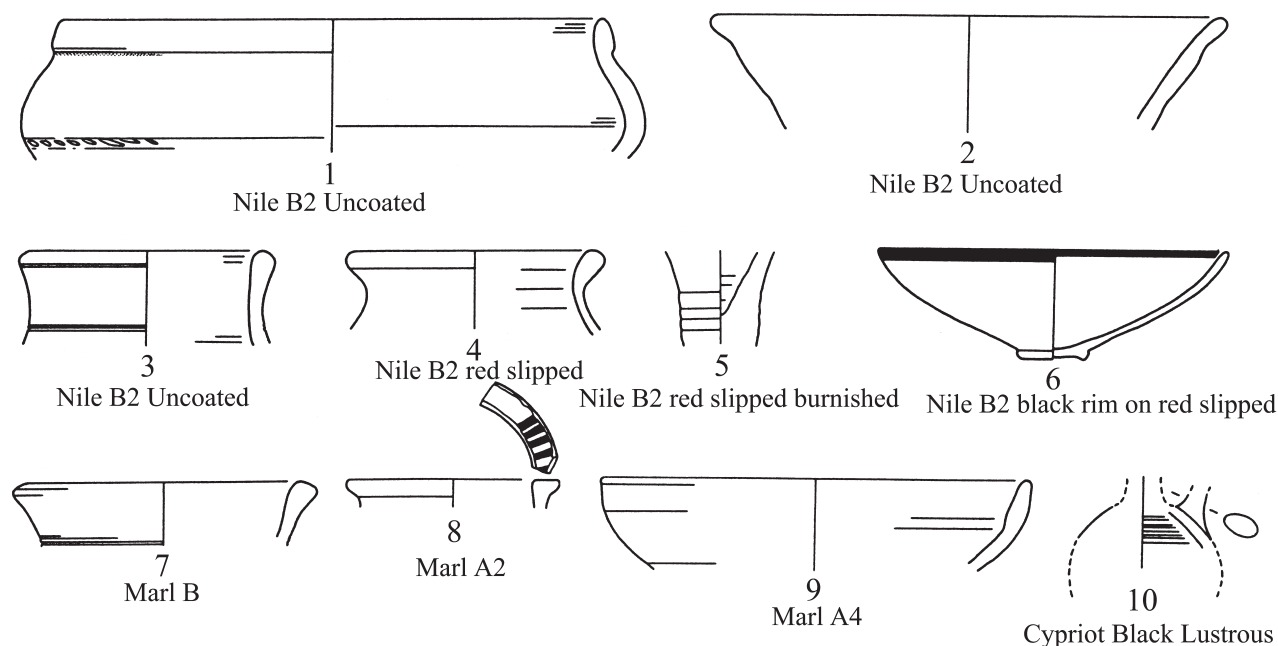


Fig. 3 Kom Rabi^a RAT 305–365, 1:4
(after BOURRIAU 1991a, 135)

¹²⁶ MAGUIRE, 1992, 117, figs. 2–3.

¹²⁷ ERIKSSON, 2001a, 65.

¹²⁸ Cf. also BERGOFFEN, 2003, 405.

¹²⁹ Cf. MERRILLEES, 2001, 28.

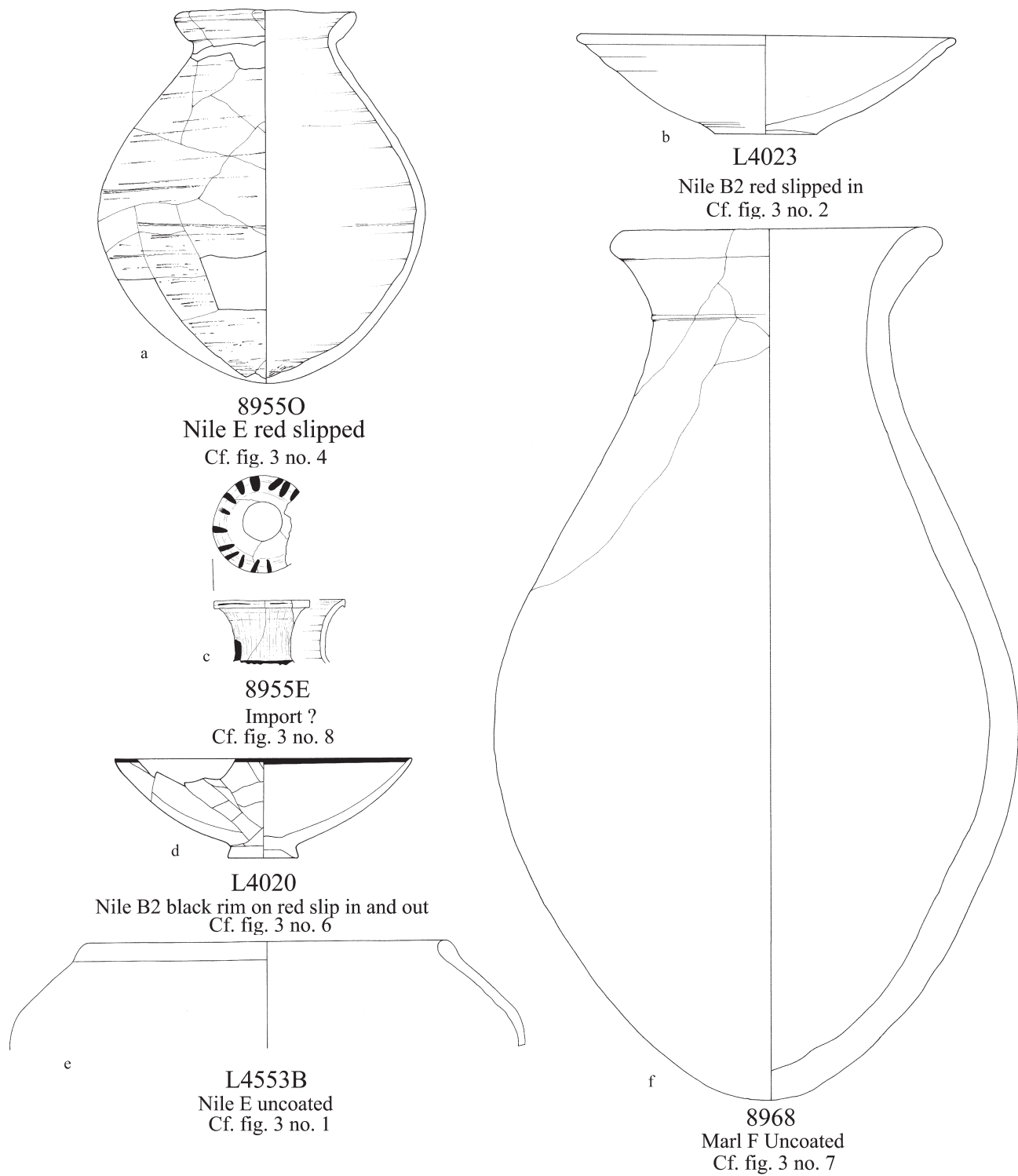


Fig. 4 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4

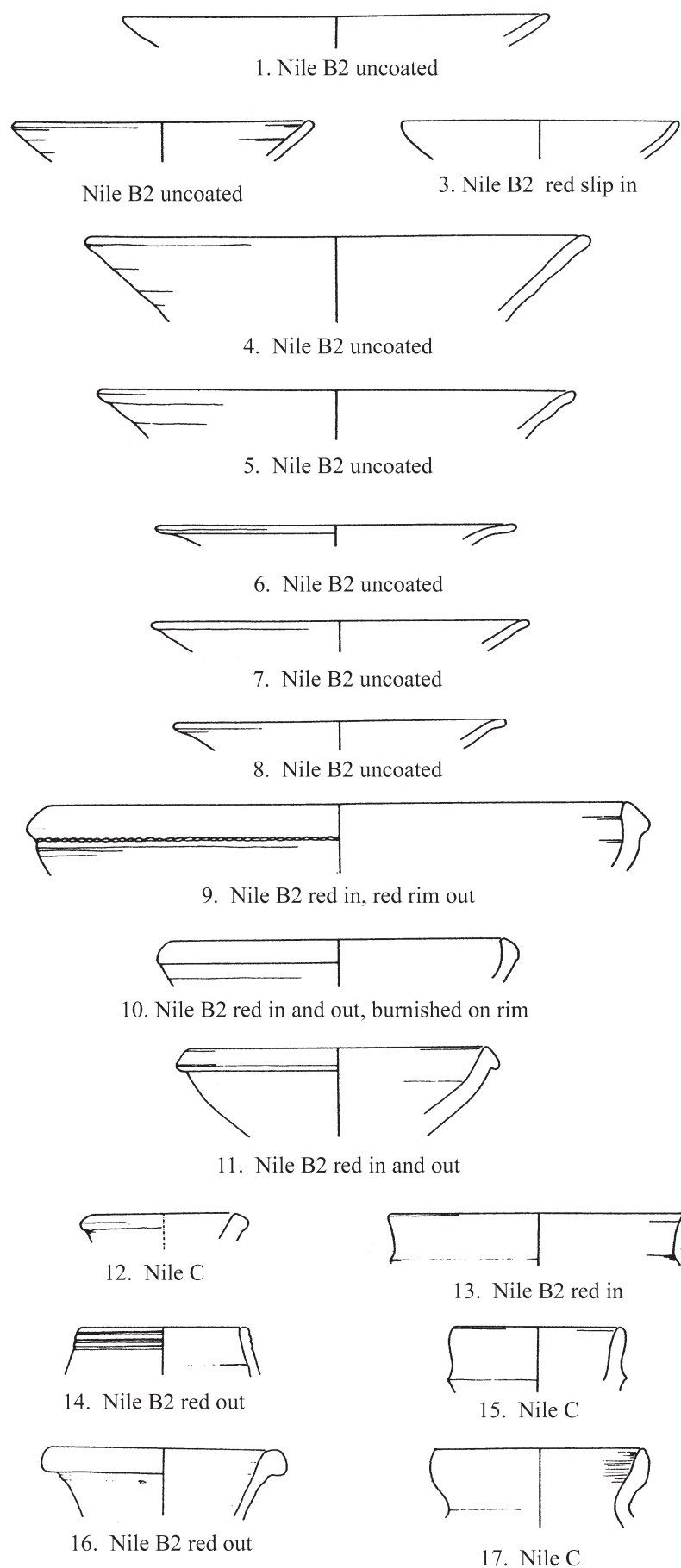


Fig. 5 Tomb Group NK 3507 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 118)

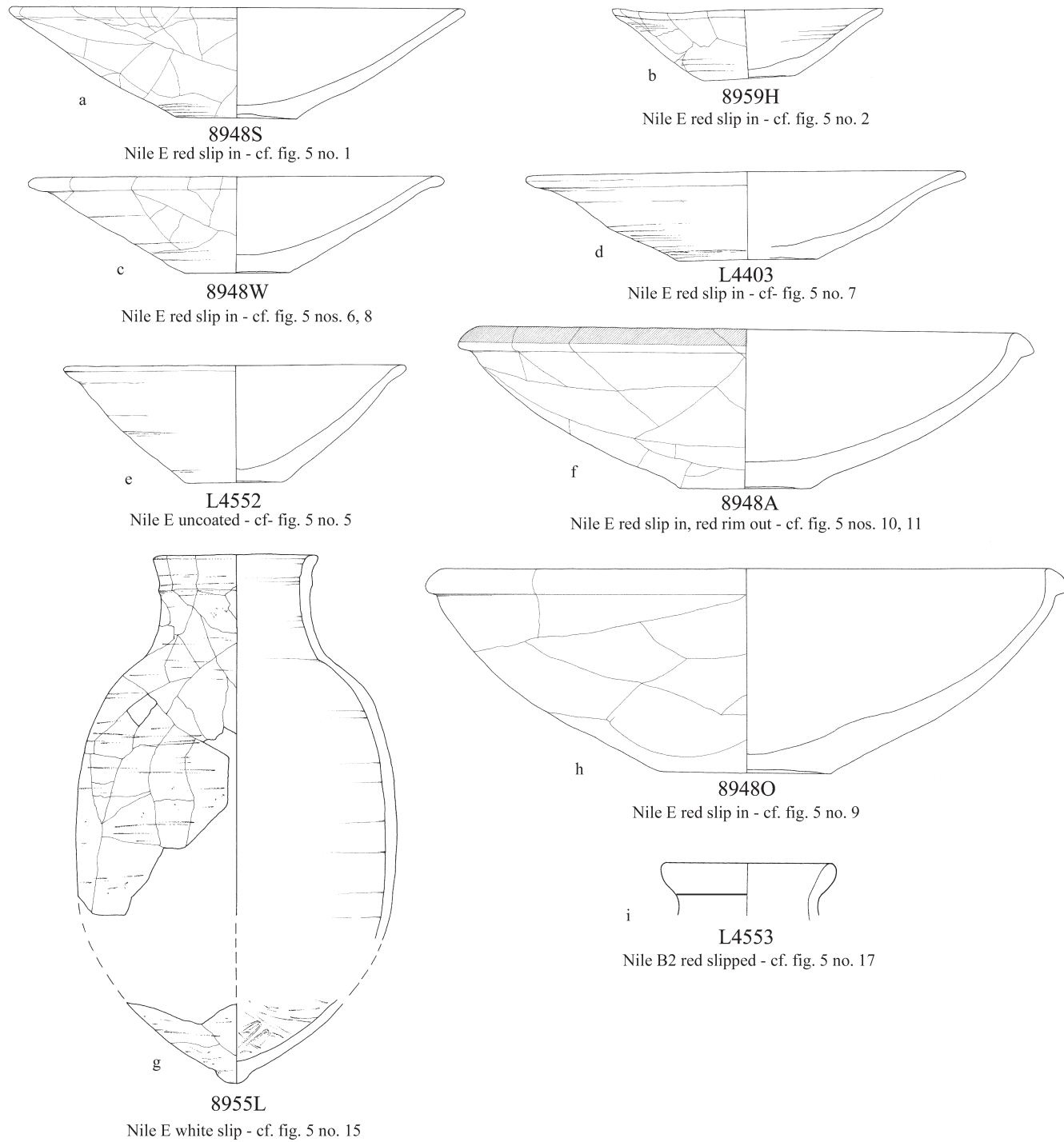
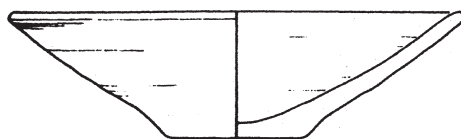
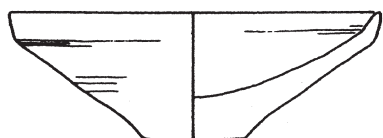


Fig. 6 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4



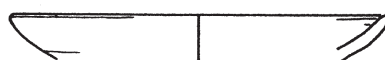
1. Nile B2 uncoated



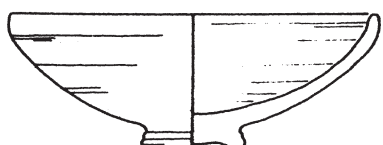
2. Nile B2 red slip in and out, ring burnished in



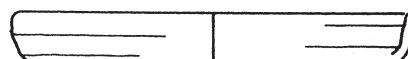
3. Nile B2 black rim on red slip in and out



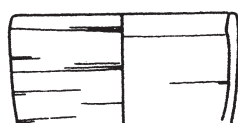
4. Marl B uncoated



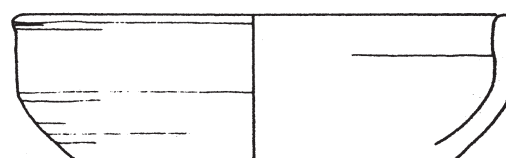
5. Nile B2 red slip in and out



6. Nile B2 red slip in and out, burnished in



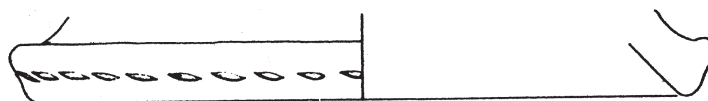
9. Nile B2 uncoated



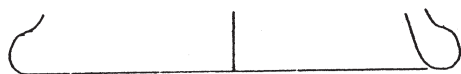
7. Nile B2 red rim on uncoated



8. Nile B2 uncoated - base to 7



10. Nile C uncoated

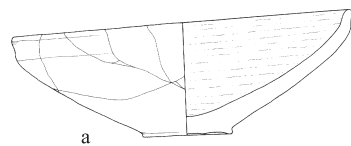


11. Nile C uncoated

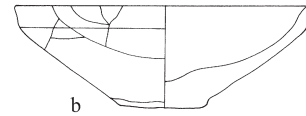


12. Nile B2 red slip out

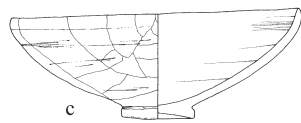
Fig.7 Kom Rabi'a RAT 452 Purposive sample 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 119)



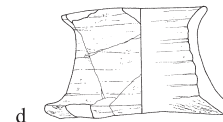
a
8945M
Nile B2 red slip, ring burnished in
cf. fig. 7 no. 6



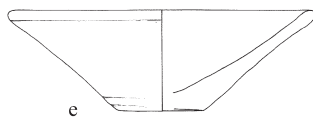
b
8951
Nile B2 red slip in and out
- cf. fig. 7 no. 2



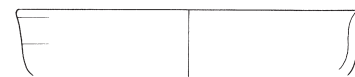
c
8953H
Nile E red slip in and out
cf. fig. 7 no. 5



d
8952S
Nile E uncoated - cf. fig. 7 no. 12



e
8945Q
Nile E uncoated - cf. fig. 7 no. 1



f
L4379
Nile E red slip in and out
- cf. fig. 7 no. 7



g
L4023
Nile E black rim on red slip in and out
- cf. fig. 7 no. 3



h
L4379
Nile E uncoated - cf. fig. 7 no. 9

Fig. 8 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4

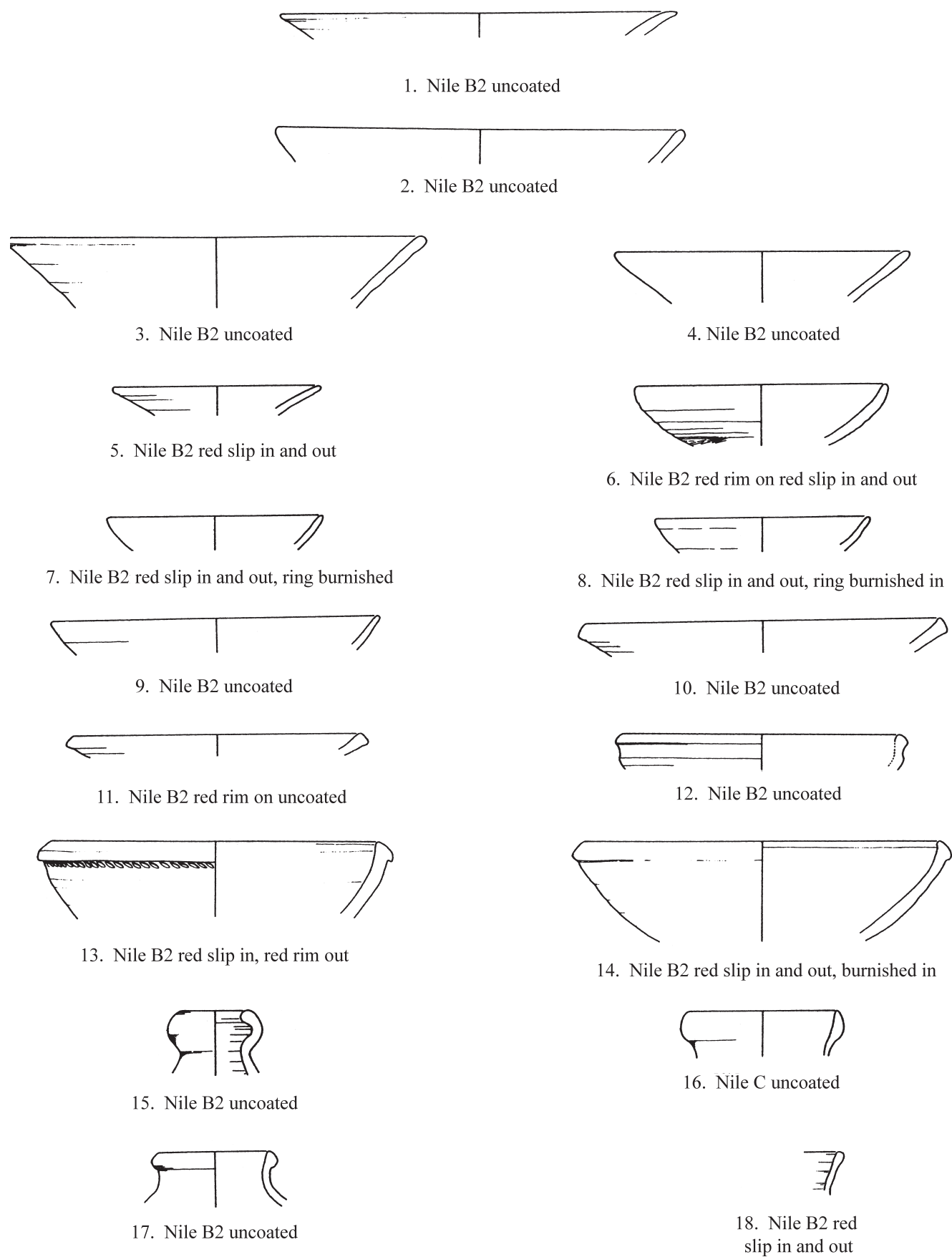


Fig. 9 Kom Rabi'a RAT 530 Random sample 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 114)

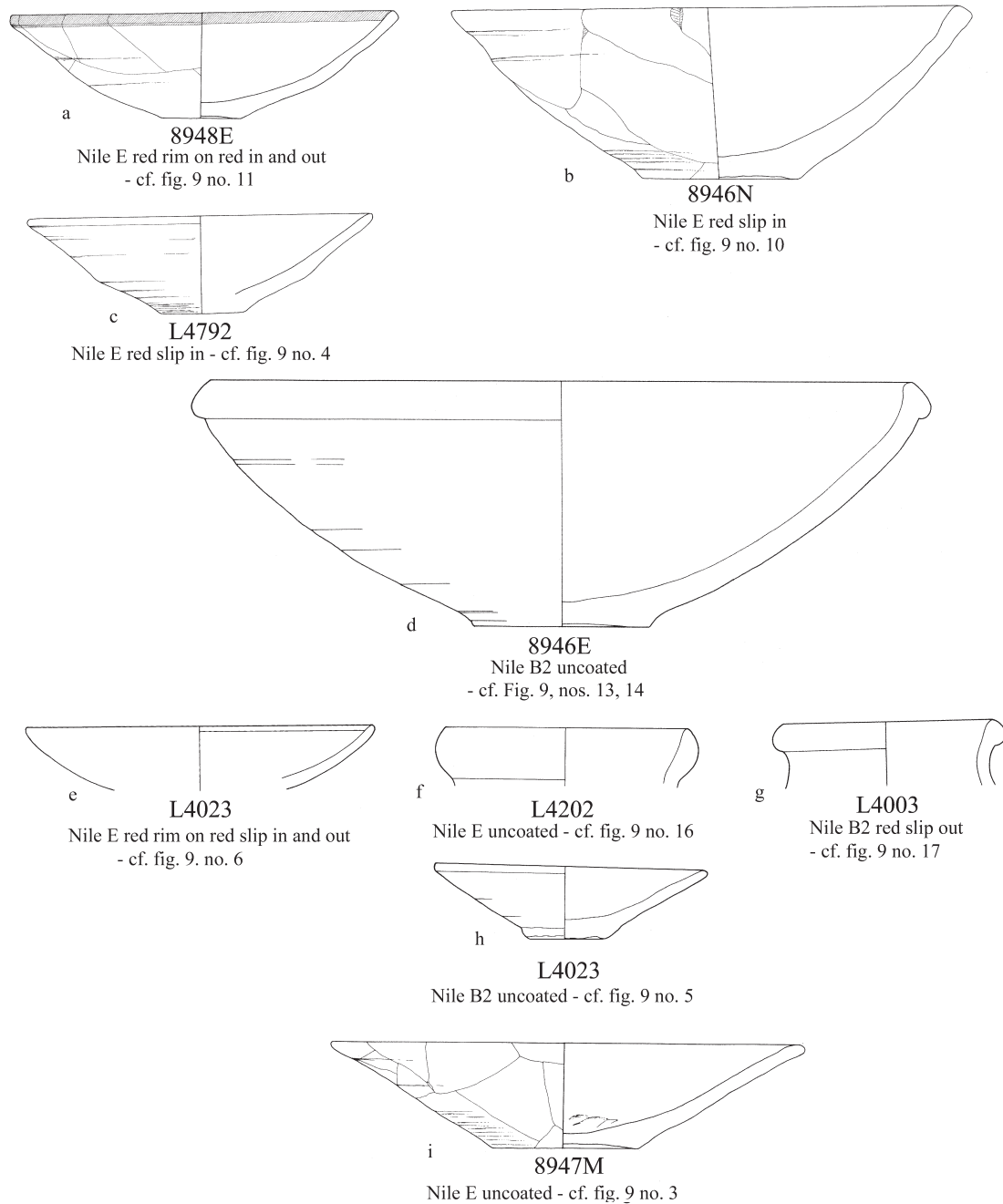


Fig. 10 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4

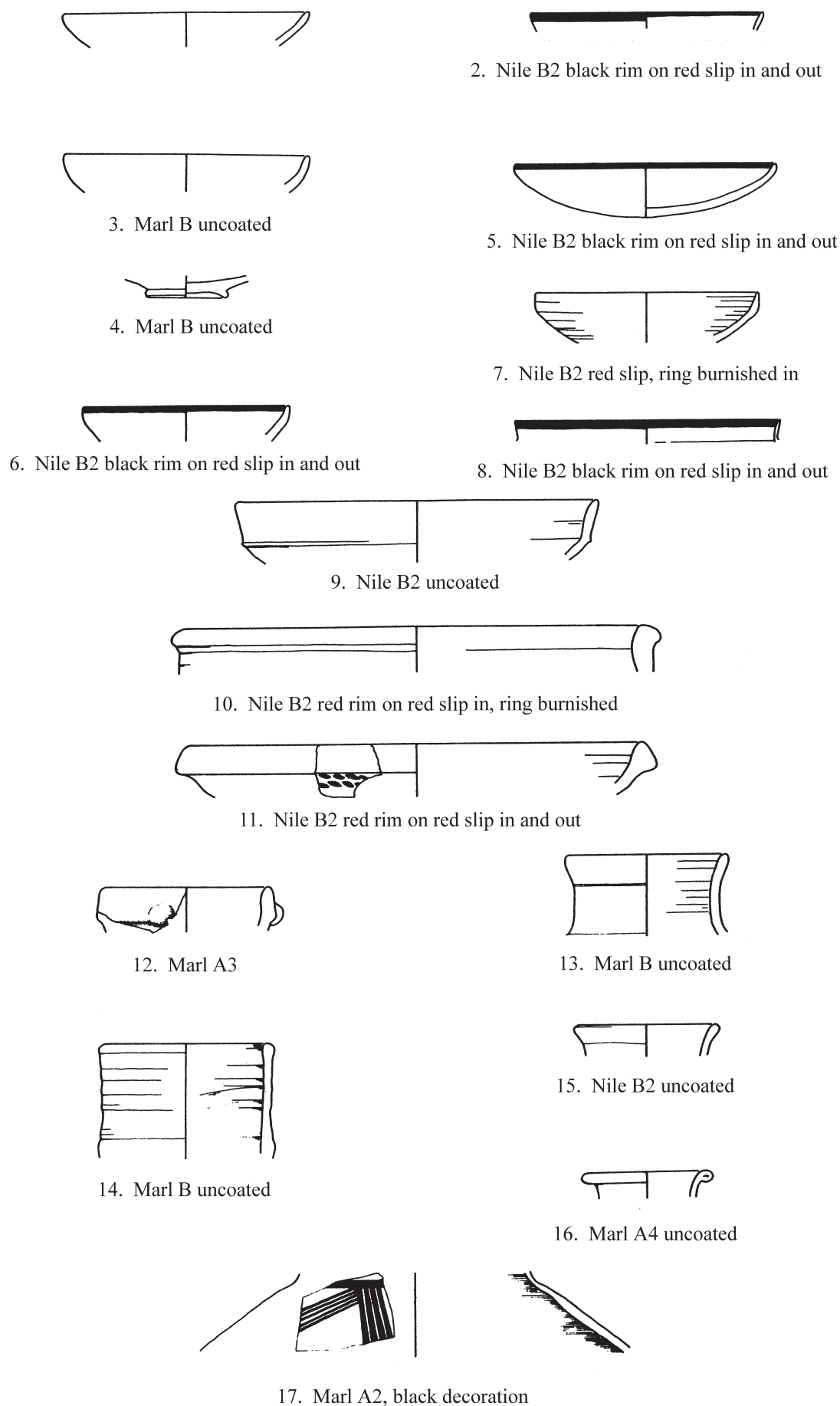


Fig. 11 Kom Rabi'a RAT 530 Purposive sample "New Kingdom Style" 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 116)

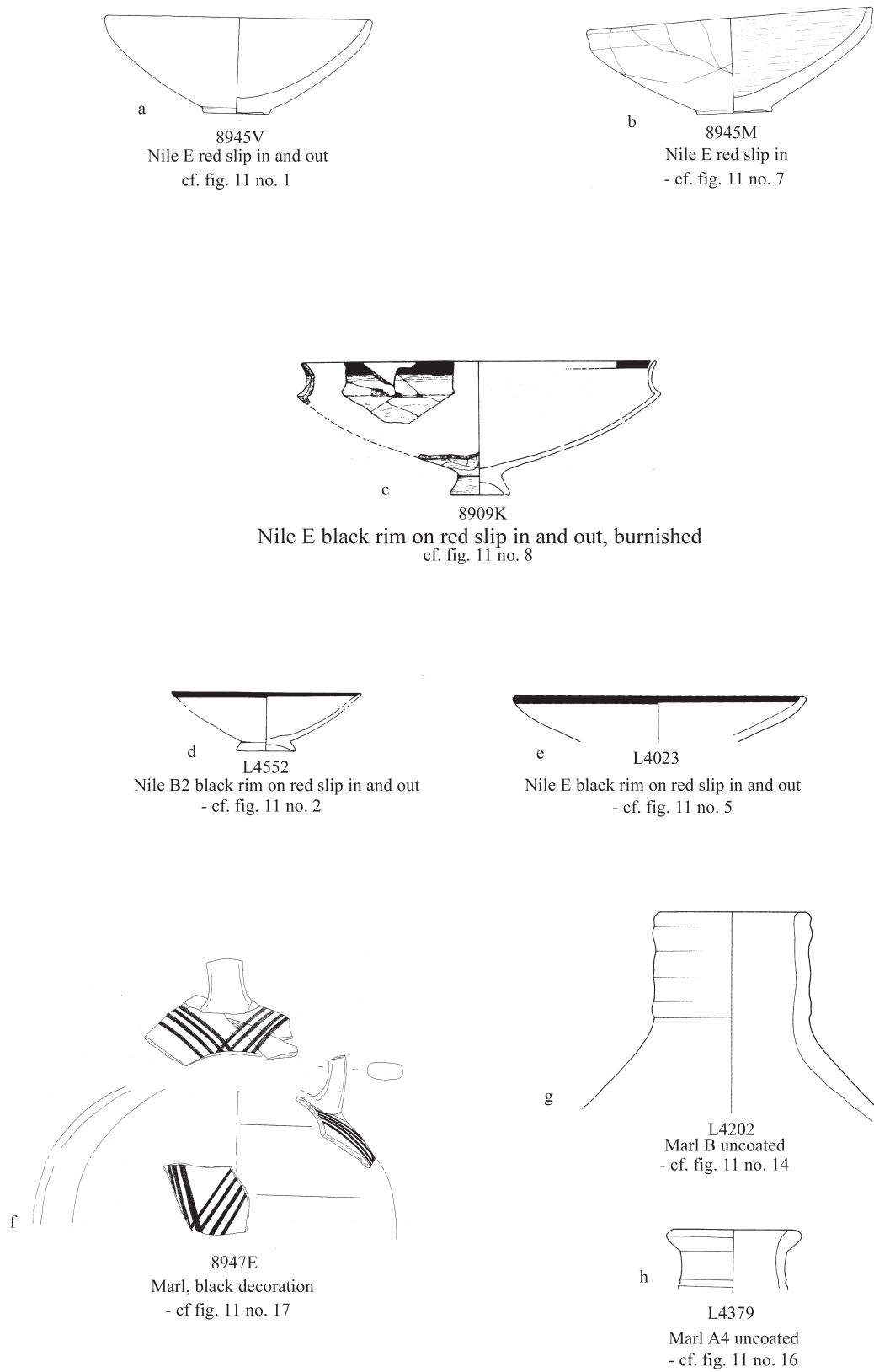


Fig. 12 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4

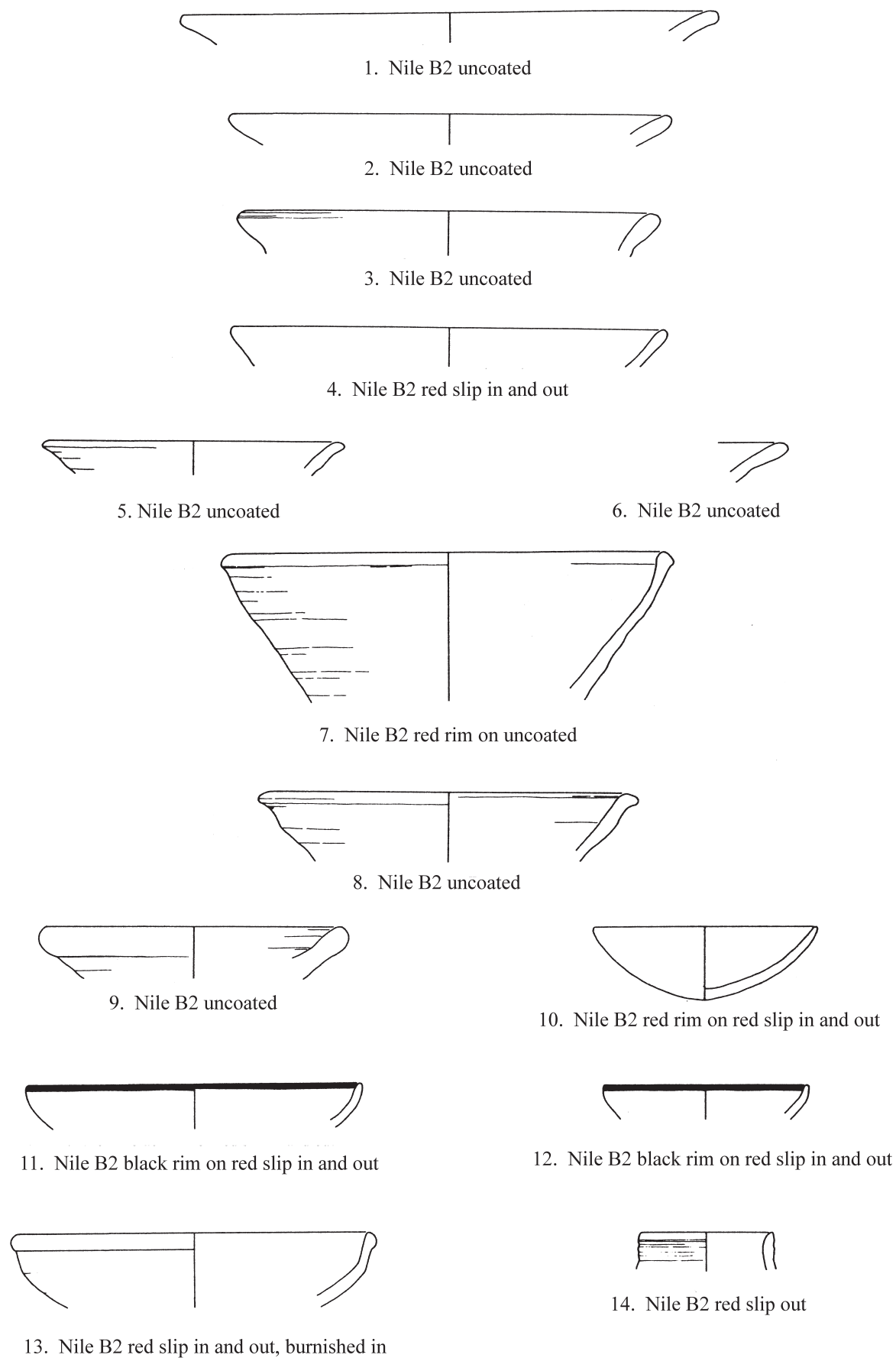


Fig. 13 Kom Rabi'a RAT 530 Random sample 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 112)

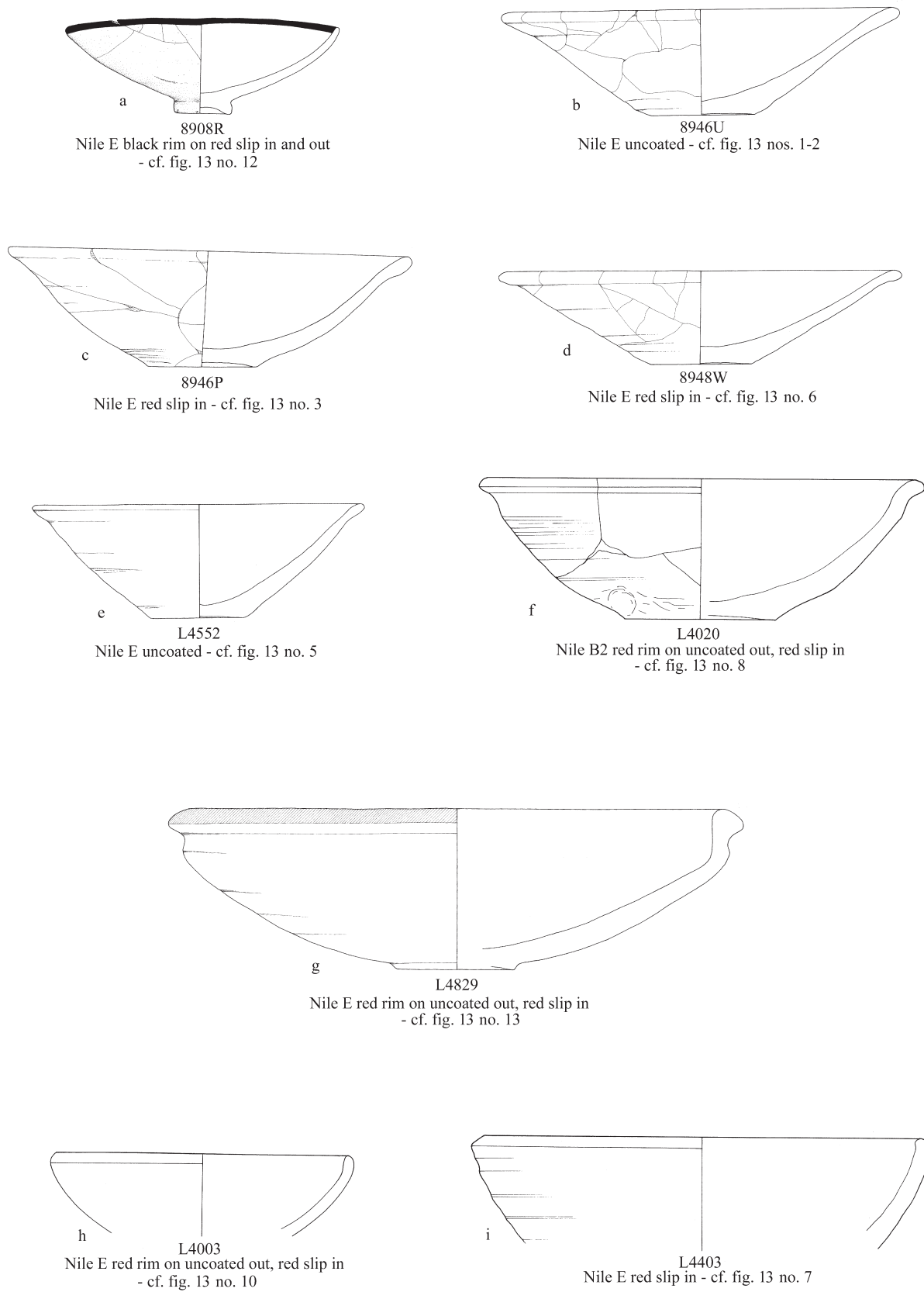
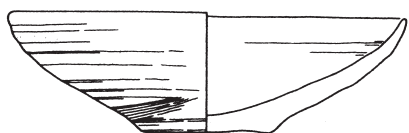
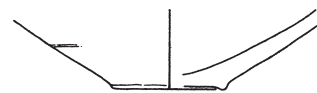


Fig. 14 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4



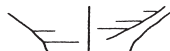
1. Nile B2 red rim on red slip in and out



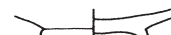
2. Nile B2 red in, ring burnished



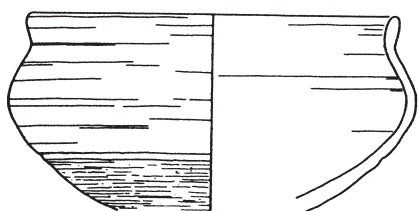
3. Marl B uncoated



4. Nile B2 uncoated



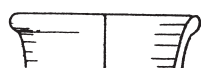
5. Nile B2 red slip burnished



6. Nile B2 red slip out



7. Nile B2 red rim on red slip out



8. Marl A4 uncoated



9. Marl A2 dark red decoration



10. Nile B2 red slip



11. Marl A2 black decoration



12. Marl A4 black decoration



13. Nile B2 uncoated



14. Nile B2 uncoated



15. Nile B2 uncoated

Fig. 15 Kom Rabi'a RAT 536 Purposive sample 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 113)

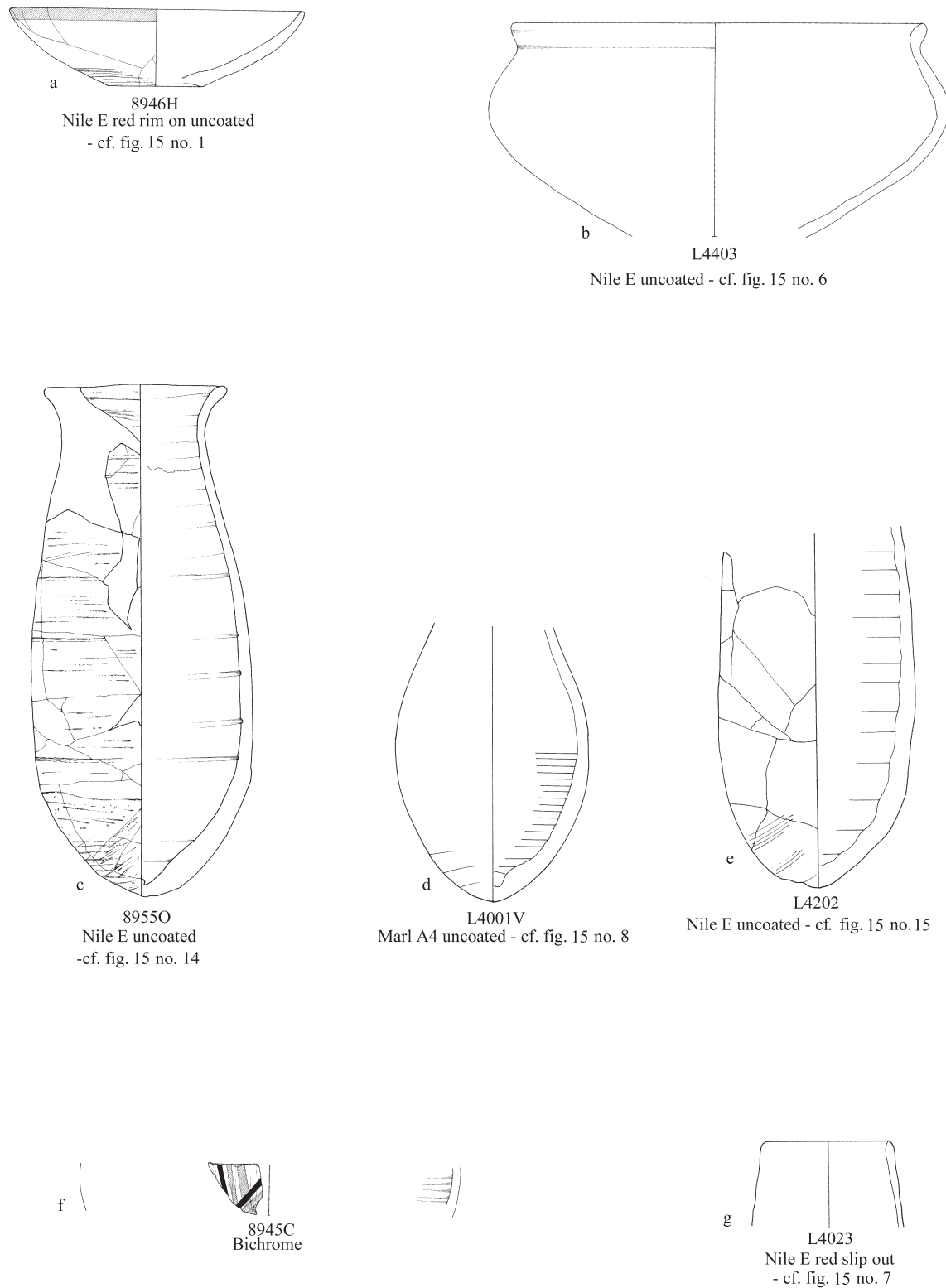


Fig. 16 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4

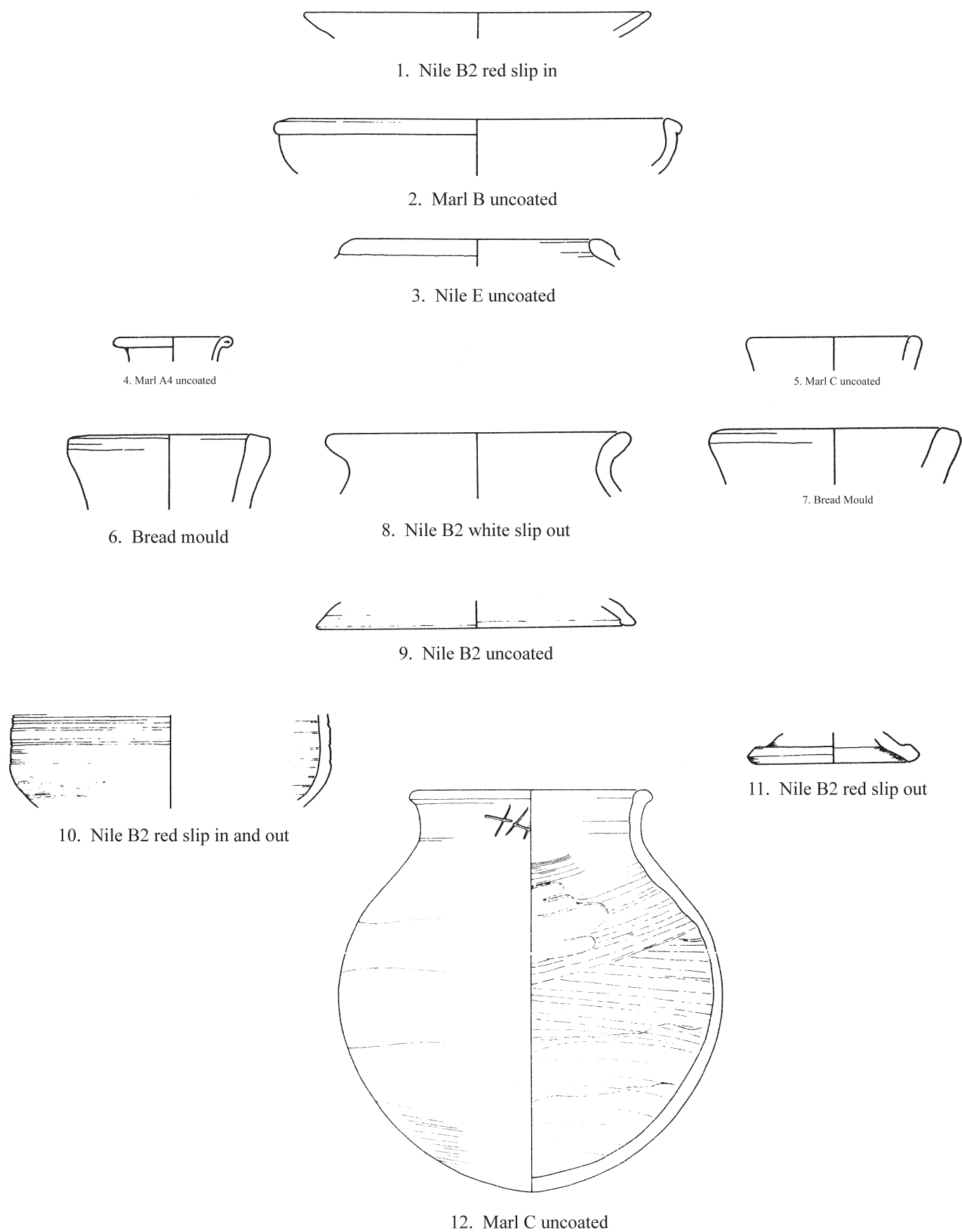


Fig. 17 Kom Rabi'a RAT 531, Random and purposive samples 1:4 (after BOURRIAU/ERIKSSON 1997, 110–111)

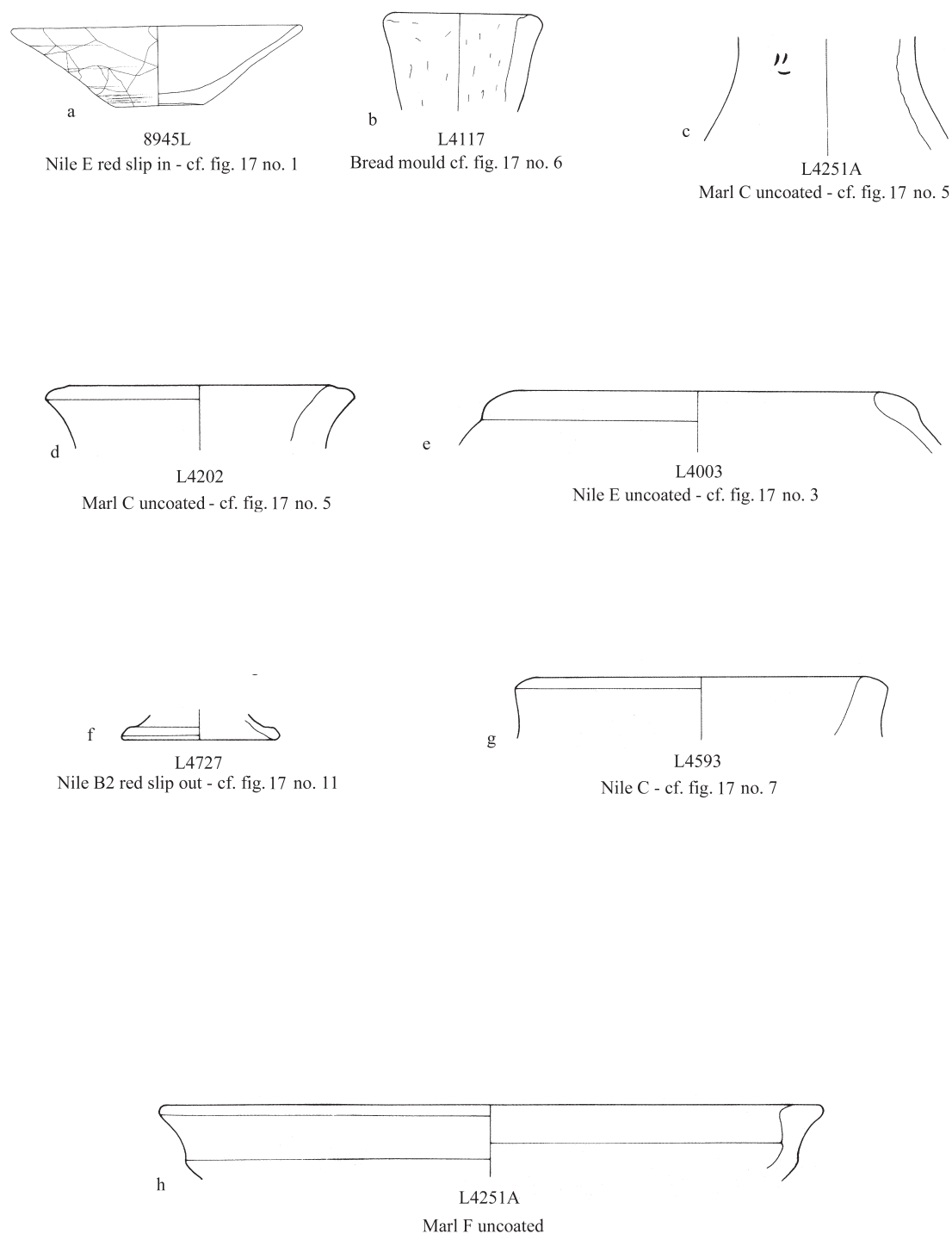


Fig. 18 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – various contexts 1:4

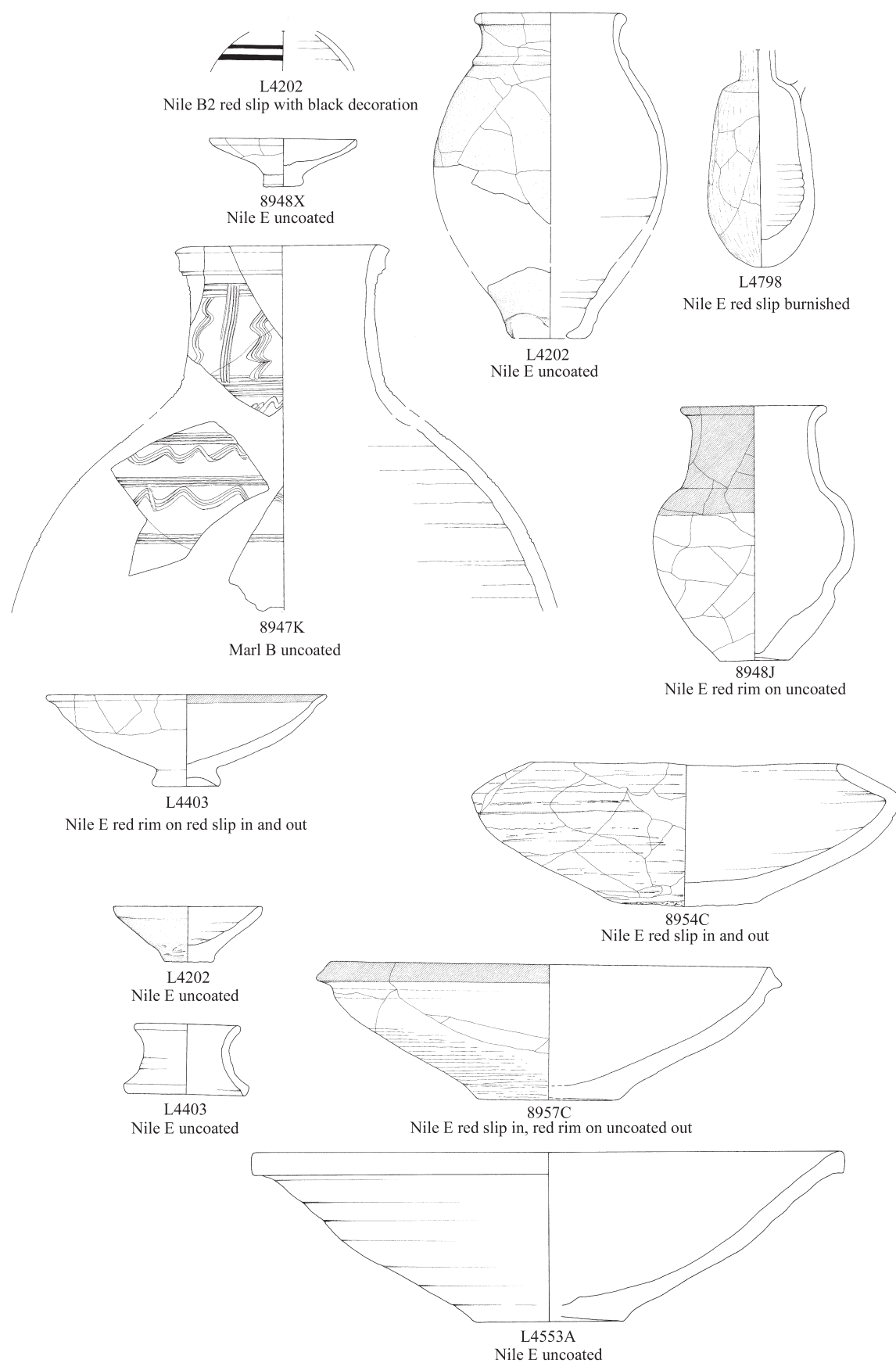


Fig. 19 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – more typical vessels, various contexts 1:4

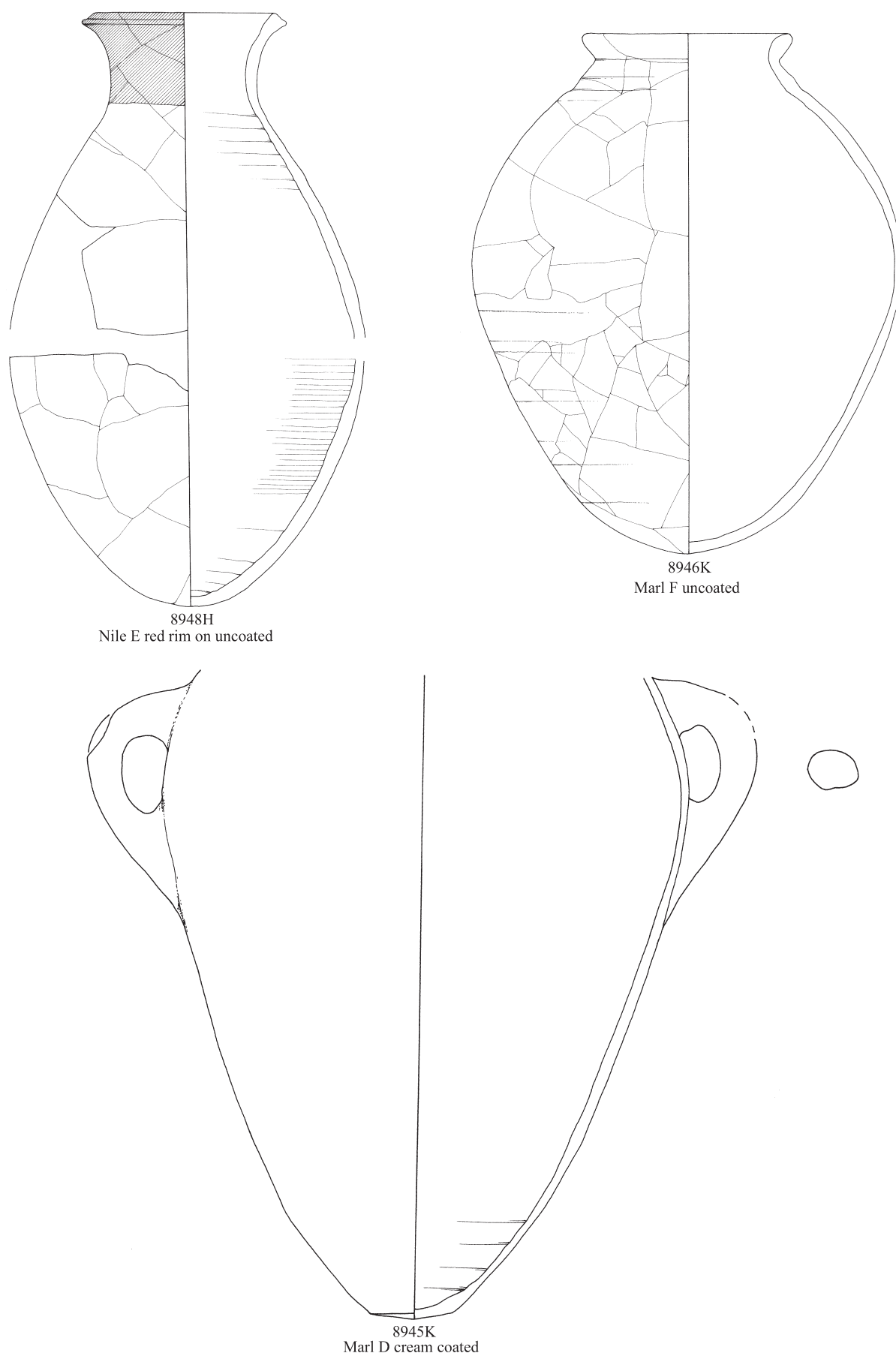
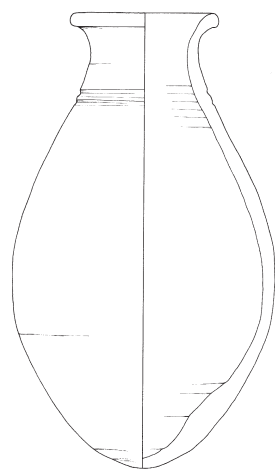
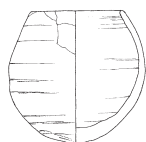


Fig. 20 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – more typical vessels, various contexts 1:4



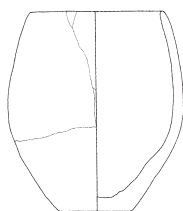
8945O
Marl A4 uncoated



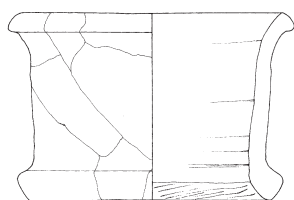
8959K
Nile E uncoated



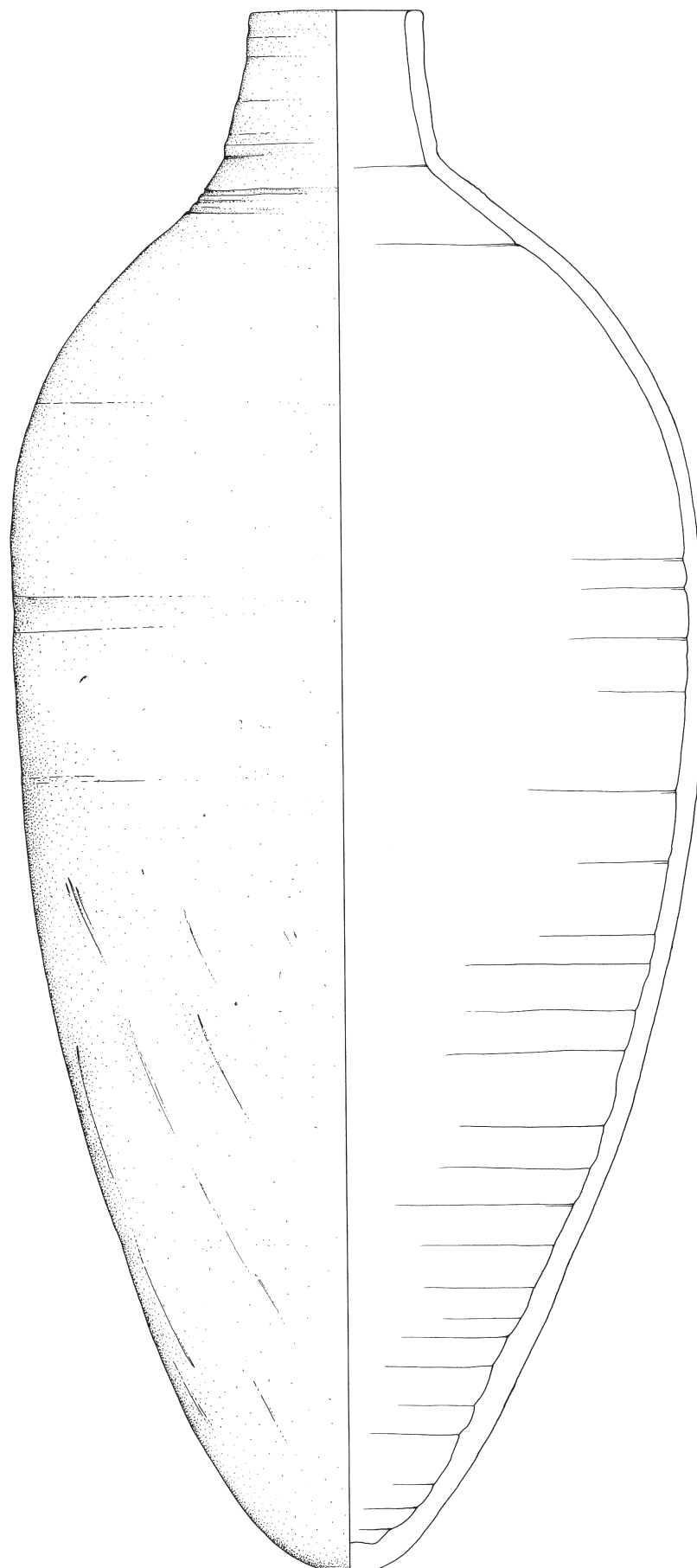
8959J
Nile E uncoated



8947Y
Nile E red slip out



8946G
Nile E uncoated



8908S
Marl B uncoated

Fig. 21 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum c – more typical vessels, various contexts 1:4

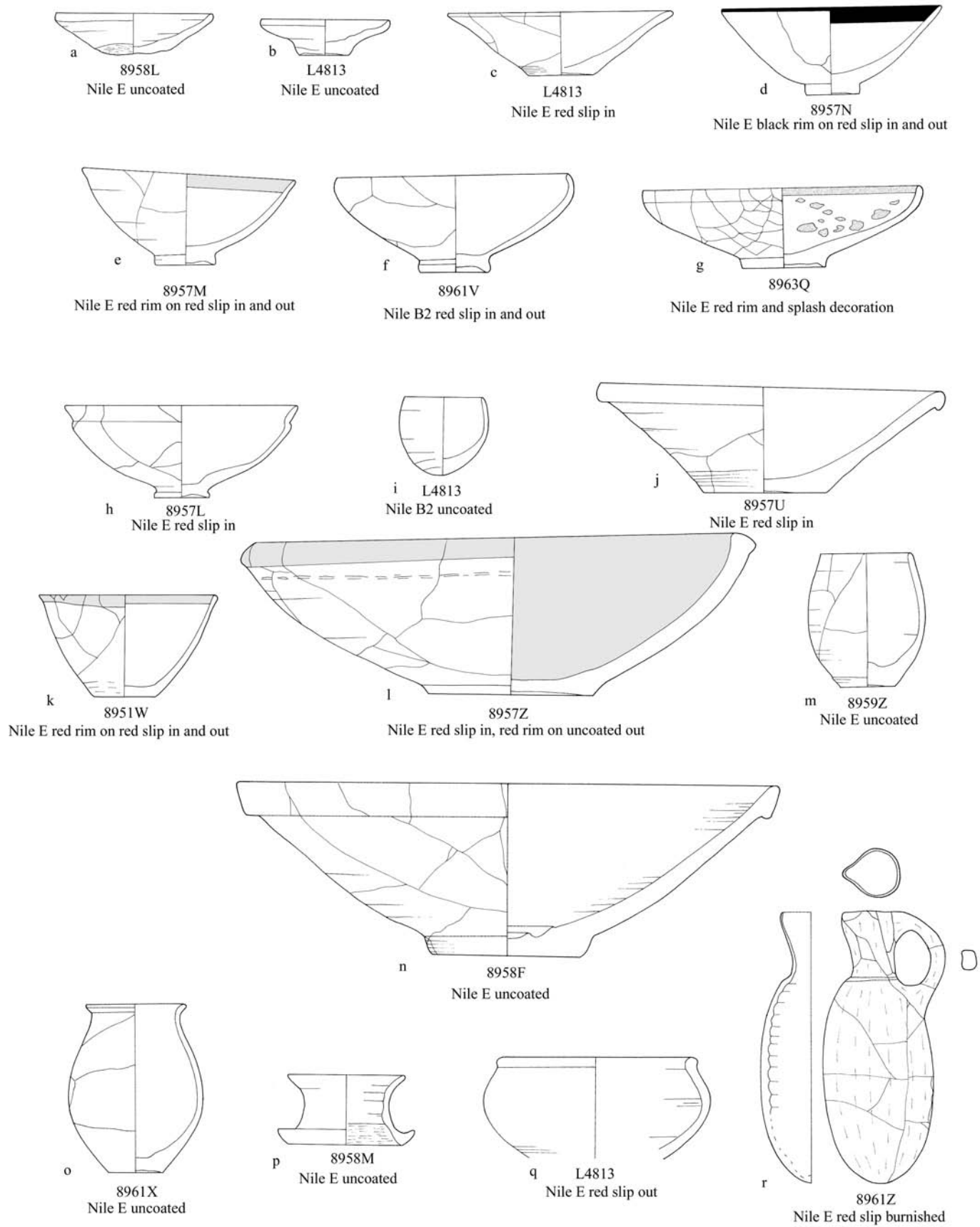


Fig. 22 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum d – typical vessels, 1:4

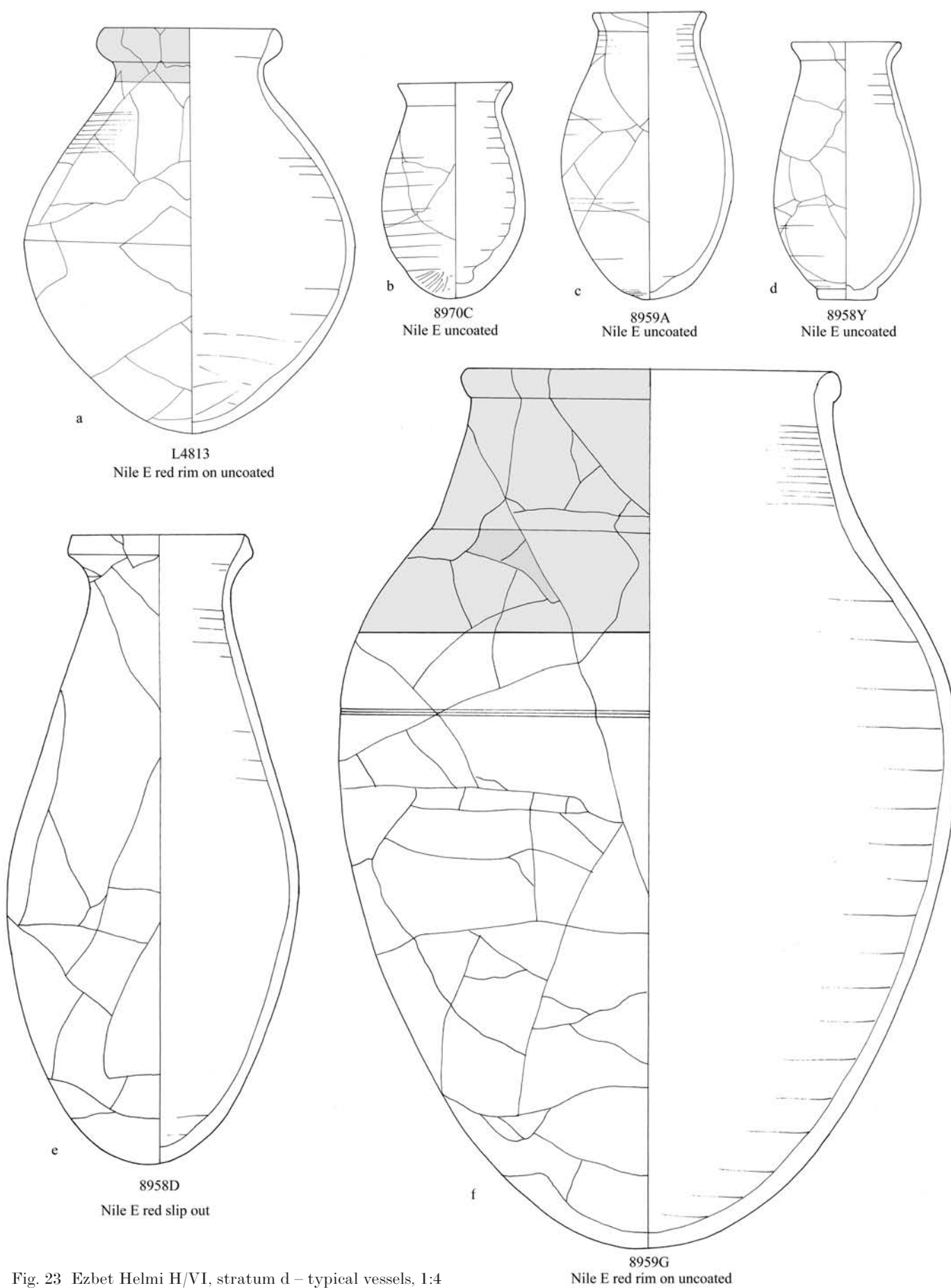


Fig. 23 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum d – typical vessels, 1:4

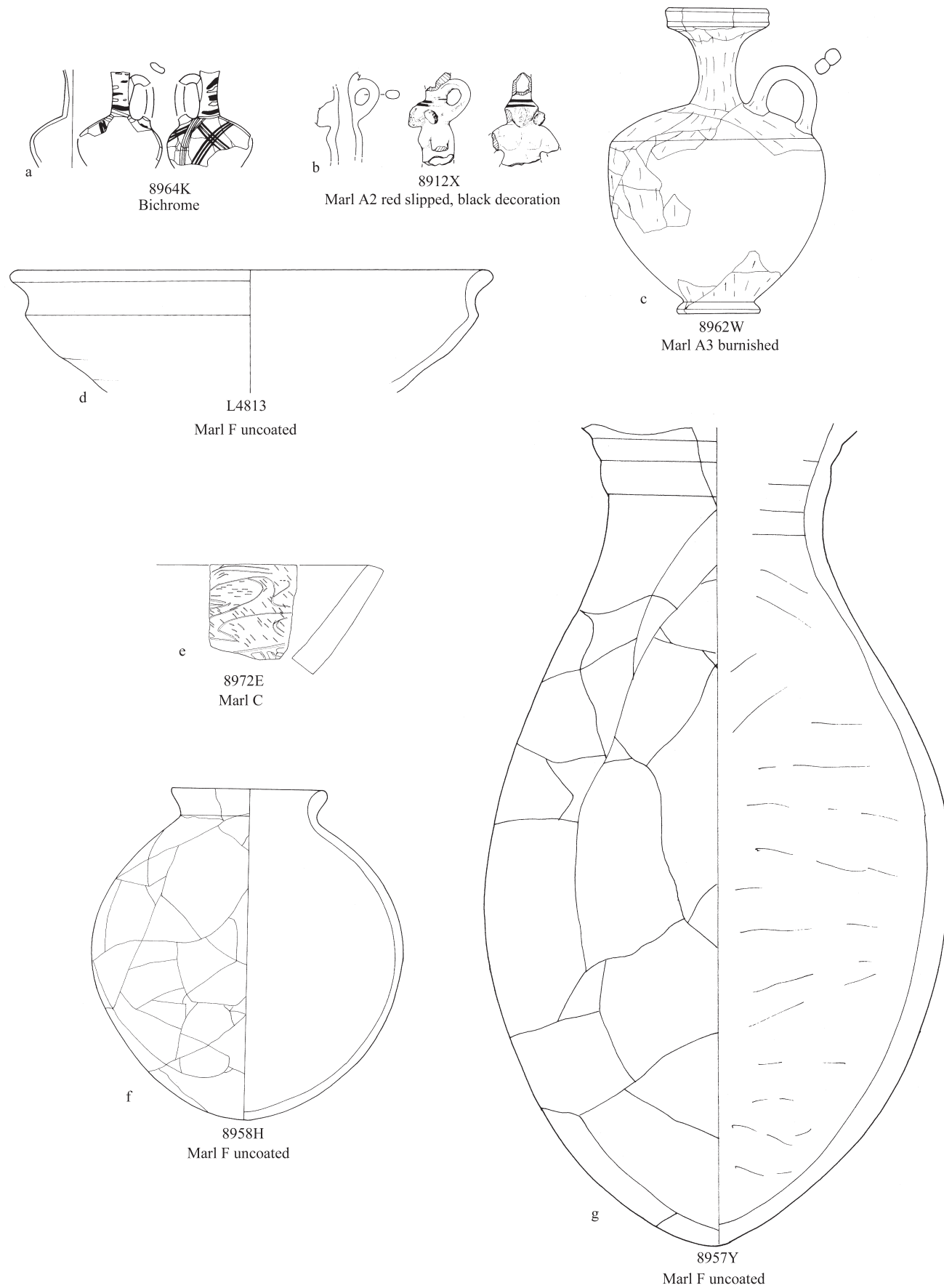


Fig. 24 Ezbet Helmi H/VI, stratum d – typical vessels, 1:4

POSTSCRIPT

In writing this article I ignored, perhaps too cavalierly, the fact that pottery styles changed at different times in different parts of the country so that, for example, new pottery fashions at Kom Rab^cia could have evolved earlier than they did at Ezbet Helmi. There is surely no doubt among ceramicists that pottery of the Tuthmosid era developed from a southern (Upper Egyptian) tradition, and thus, from a purely diffusionist point of view this new style ought to have reached Kom Rab^cia before it reached Ezbet Helmi. If this new (New Kingdom style) pottery arrived at Kom Rab^cia, say one generation before it was adopted at Ezbet Helmi, then

one could accept an earlier date for the Kom Rab^cia levels and a later date for those levels with the same material at Ezbet Helmi, thus justifying the preliminary dating given to both sites. However, whilst this might satisfactorily explain the similarities between the native Egyptian ceramics, it does not work when one considers the imported pottery, since one would have to postulate that the Cypriot pottery types found, both at Kom Rab^cia and Ezbet Helmi, also reached Kom Rab^cia one generation before they reached Ezbet Helmi. For this reason I believe that the Kom Rab^cia and Ezbet Helmi levels are contemporary with one another whether, in real time, that is the high chronology of Kom Rab^cia or the low chronology of Ezbet Helmi.

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