

A COLLECTION OF EGYPTIAN AND EGYPTIAN-STYLE POTTERY AT BETH SHEAN

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Fig. 1 Tel Beth Shean, the mound

1. INTRODUCTION

In the renewed excavations at Beth Shean, which were carried out by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in co-operation with the Beth Shean Tourism Administration under the direction of Amihai Mazar between 1989–1995, Areas R, NA, NB, Q, and S produced well stratified Late Bronze Age assemblages (Fig. 1). In the here presented paper the author concentrates on the Egyptian material from Strata S-3 to S-5 in Area S, Strata N-3 and N-4 in

Areas NA and NB, Strata Q-1 to Q-3 in Area Q and Levels VI (Lower), VII and VIII of the past excavations of the Pennsylvania Expedition (hereafter UME [“University Museum Expedition”]), all datable to a period between the Thirteenth (or late Fourteenth) to Twelfth centuries BCE (Fig. 2).¹ All these areas produced considerable amounts of locally produced Egyptian-style pottery beside the occasional Egyptian imports. The Egyptian and Egyptian-style pottery from Areas Q, S and NB is prepared for publication by the author (MARTIN forthcoming a–c).²

2. TYPOLOGY

The Egyptian assemblage at Beth Shean is represented by a variety of types. Apart from handled cups and a two-handed storage jar (hereafter: “amphora”)³ all forms are exclusively made of local clays. The locally produced assemblage of Egyptian forms consists mainly of open shapes, namely simple bowls with straight or rounded sidewalls and a plain, everted or, occasionally, flanged rim (Fig. 3:1–5).⁴ Bases are mostly flat and, like in Egypt, often string-cut. While in New Kingdom Egypt in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties round or rounded bases prevail over the flat ones, the prevalence of flat bases at Beth Shean is paralleled at other Canaanite sites with Egyptian-style assemblages such as Tel Sera^c (MARTIN forthcoming d) and Tel Mor (MARTIN and BARAKO forthcoming). Like their Egyptian counterparts these bowls are uncoated, decorated with a red rim or red slipped on one or both sides (for the various decoration styles see, *e.g.*, ASTON 1998: 75–81). Apart from simple bowls the assemblage of Egyptian forms includes large open bowls, which generally exhibit horizontal rows of rope impressions (Fig. 3:6). These

¹ For preliminary reports of the renewed excavations, see, *e.g.*, MAZAR 1993a–b; 1997. For the results of the Pennsylvania expedition see mainly FITZGERALD 1930; ROWE 1930; 1940; JAMES 1966; JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993. For the previous excavations of the Hebrew University conducted by Yadin and Geva see YADIN and GEVA 1986.

² I would like to thank Prof. Amihai Mazar, who invited me to publish his material and allowed me to include illustrations in this paper, and to Dr. David Aston, who patiently

provided me with the tools to study Egyptian pottery. Finally, I am deeply indebted to Prof. Manfred Bietak, who always supported me on every step of my study.

³ How these jars are termed in the Egyptological literature; *e.g.* HOPE 1989: 86–117.

⁴ For parallels to the various types in Egypt and at Egyptianized “garrison”-sites in Canaan see, *e.g.*, MARTIN forthcoming a–c; MARTIN and BARAKO forthcoming.

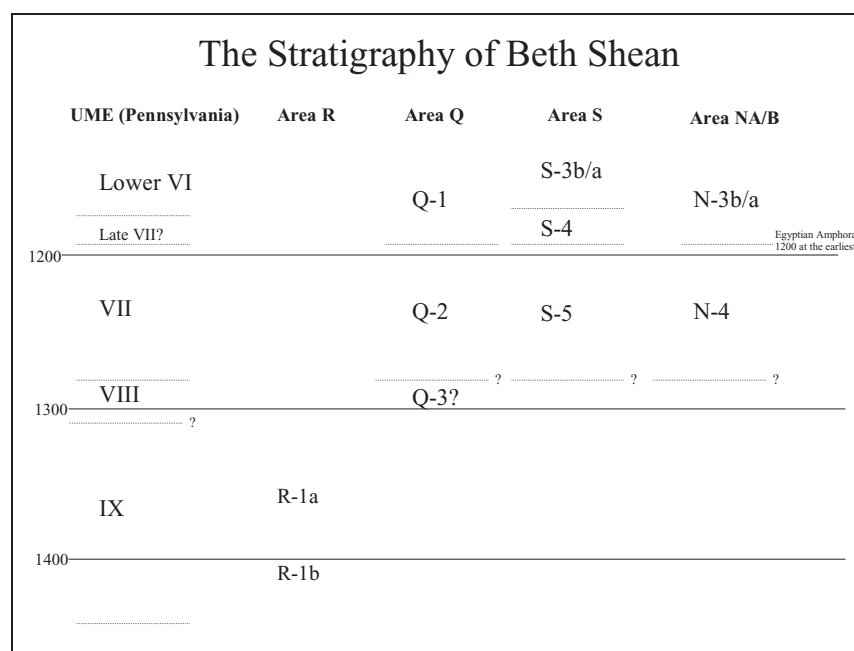


Fig. 2 Stratigraphy of the various excavation areas at Beth Shean

impressions also frequently appear on large bowls in Egypt. The ropes, which caused the impressions in the finished products, were intended to hold larger vessels together during the drying process (ARNOLD 1993: 91; ASTON 1998: 110). Vessels with an industrial function in the textile manufacture are spinning bowls with two interior handles (Fig. 3:7). To the closed vessels belong beer jars – small tall jars with short necks (Fig. 3:8). The examples from Beth Shean show the same crude manufacture as their parallels in Egypt – ribbed sidewalls, string-cut bases with superfluous lumps of clay and, generally, more or less deep fingerprints in the area around the base, which are remains of lifting the vessel from the wheel without further attempt of surface treatment (BOURRIAU and ASTON 1985: 34–35). Like in Egypt these jars are occasionally perforated at their bottom. Further closed forms include small ovoid to drop-shaped jars (Fig. 3:9a–b), funnel-necked jars (Fig. 3:10) and neck-less slender jars with rolled rim (Fig. 3:11). Apart from the beer jars, which are always undecorated, all these handle-less jars are red slipped. While the forms mentioned up to now are always locally produced, small handled cups are exclusively imported from Egypt (Fig. 3:12). The analysed examples from Beth Shean appear either in a Marl D or, rather exceptionally for this type, in a Nile B.02 fabric (cf. “Vienna system”:

NORDSTRÖM 1986: 629–634; “Tell el-Dab’a system”: BIETAK 1991: 324ff.).⁵ These cups are absent from room loci of the last Egyptianized level represented by Stratum S-3 in Area S, four rims from street loci possibly originate from the previous Stratum S-4. The trade connection to Egypt might have been cut off in the second half of the Twelfth century. Another imported type is a single example of an Egyptian amphora of Marl D (Fig. 3:13). The almost complete profile originates from Stratum N-4 in Area NA (KILLEBREW 1998: 162, Ill. III.23:2; for a chronological discussion see below).

3. WARE FABRICS

As already noted above, the Egyptian assemblage from Beth Shean comprises mostly locally produced forms. These forms reproduce the characteristic Egyptian Nile silt types, namely, everyday household wares, while typical Egyptian marl clay forms, i.e. handled cups and the amphora, are imported from Egypt and not imitated locally. The same tendency is borne out at other sites, such as Tel Aphek (MARTIN, GADOT and GOREN forthcoming), Tel Mor (MARTIN and BARAKO forthcoming) and Tel Sera^c (MARTIN forthcoming d). The following discussion of ware fabrics of the Egyptian forms at Beth Shean is largely based on petrographic analyses conducted by COHEN-

⁵ One intact example from Stratum S-4 in Area S (Figure 3:12) could not be checked by the author but was identified as “Nile B or E” in a petrographic analysis (COHEN-WEINBERGER 1998: 409).

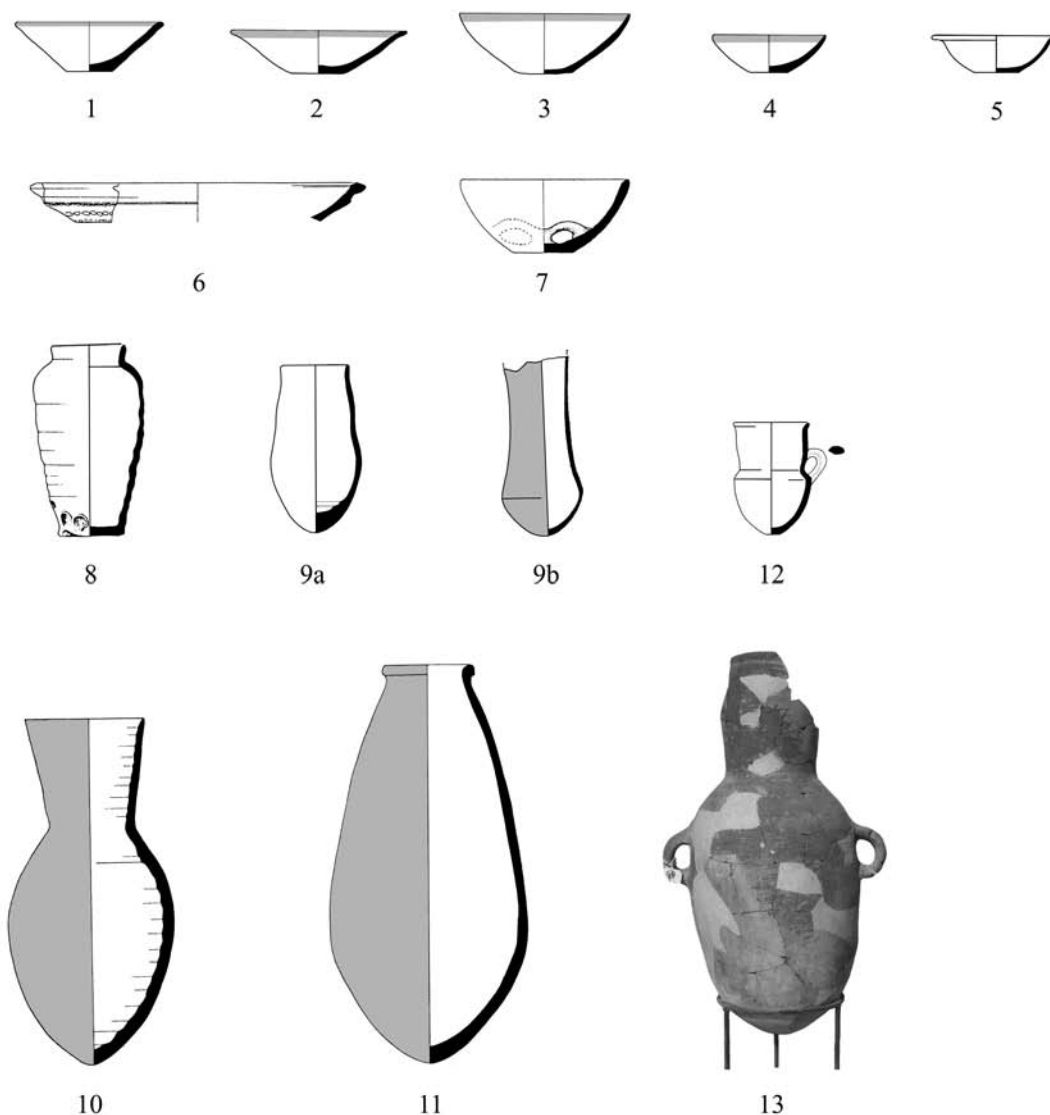


Fig. 3 Egyptian forms at Beth Shean: Simple bowls with straight walls and plain rim (1), everted rim (2), rounded walls and plain rim (3–4), and flanged (5) rim; large open bowls (6); spinning bowls (7); beer jars (8); small ovoid to drop-shaped jars (9a–b); funnel-necked jars (10); neck-less slender jars with rolled rim (11); imported handled cups (12); imported amphora (13); scale 1:10

WEINBERGER (1998) with additional remarks by the author. Most of the locally produced Egyptian forms at Beth Shean belong to a single fabric group termed the “Travertine family” by COHEN-WEINBERGER (1998: 409). Her results indicate that more than 95% of the Egyptian-style pottery can be attributed to this family. Of the local Canaanite pottery, only 75% belong to the “Travertine family” and the remaining 25% to various other petrographic classes. A preference for a single clay source is therefore attested for Egyptian forms. According to A. Cohen-Weinberger’s petrographic analyses, the clay of this fabric is car-

bonatic and contains some silty quartz particles (1–2%). Non-plastic components consist of poorly sorted travertine particles of silt-to-sand grain size, some with a pisolithic appearance. The admixture of large amounts of chopped straw into the paste is common among Egyptian forms, mainly in red-rimmed Egyptian-style simple bowls, large open bowls, and beer jars, while the rarer Egyptian-style storage jars and red-slipped simple bowls generally contain smaller amounts of organic temper.⁶ Considerable quantities of straw temper are also common in Canaanite bowls and kraters (but generally in small-

⁶ The varying amounts of added temper attested for different types show no direct correspondence to the related Egyptian Nile silt types.

er amounts than in the Egyptian-style bowls and beer jars) but not in Canaanite closed forms. Straw temper is generally visible to the naked eye as elongated, burnt-out voids in the section and on the surface or, if not burnt out, as whitish-yellowish, rod-shaped fibres rather than the voids. Burnt-out organic inclusions result in a quite porous matrix (= "coarse ware"). The clay is often soft and somewhat brittle. The more thick-walled vessels, namely large bowls and beer jars, commonly exhibit a grey to black core of varying thickness, an indication that not all the organic temper was fully oxidized.

From a functional point of view, the addition of straw raises the plasticity of the clay to make it more easily workable on the wheel, allows for a faster and more even drying process, helps to reduce shrinkage during the drying process, and saves on raw materials. The porosity provided by the straw temper enables faster and shorter firing, thereby saving fuel. Temper allows for the freer penetration of hot gases through the vessel wall, leading to a better-fired product, and for the escape of steam from the vessel to prevent bursting (ARNOLD 1993: 105).

While at Beth Shean the admixture of organic temper can be traced back to at least the Fifteenth century (Stratum R-2 in Area R; however, still in very small amounts), when Egyptian-style pottery is still absent, it can be observed that this temper appears in gradually increasing amounts and in more vessels towards the Twelfth century, coinciding with the increase in Egyptian influence and an increased share of Egyptian forms.⁷ The admixture of chopped straw and animal dung, especially in large amounts, is a characteristic property of Egyptian Nile clays (e.g., the Nile B, C, and E classes). Straw temper in large quantities is also common in Egyptian-style assemblages at other "Egyptianized" sites (e.g., Deir el-Balah [GOULD forthcoming], Tel Sera^c [MARTIN forthcoming d], Tel Mor [MARTIN and BARAKO forthcoming], and Tel Aphek [MARTIN, GADOT and GOREN forthcoming]). At Tel Aphek, a large Egyptian-style assemblage was found in the "Governor's residency" of Stratum X-12, roughly dated to the Thirteenth century. Massive amounts of straw temper appear in the Egyptian-style bowls, in contemporaneous Canaanite vessels straw temper is

virtually absent. At Tel Mor straw temper is almost absent in strata preceding an increased Egyptian influence (XII–X) and appears in massive amounts in Egyptian-style vessels in Strata IX–V dating from the late Fourteenth to the Twelfth centuries. Corresponding to Beth Shean large amounts of straw temper are also attested in several Canaanite bowls and, especially, in kraters of Strata VI/V (late Thirteenth to Twelfth centuries, in which the Egyptian influence is most strongly attested), a phenomenon, which most probably can be explained as Egyptian influence in the local pottery manufacture of Beth Shean and Tel Mor respectively.

Furthermore, JAMES and MCGOVERN observe that pottery artefacts, including Egyptian and Canaanite pottery forms, from the combined assemblages of Levels VIII–VII were fired at a lower temperature (500–700°C) than wares from the previous Stratum IX⁸ (1993: 245; see also COHEN-WEINBERGER 1998: 409). This decrease of firing temperature was also explained as general Egyptian influence on the pottery tradition at Beth Shean (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: 245). In Egypt, Nile silt pottery was also fired at a low temperature (600–800°C). The finer Egyptian marl pottery, on the other hand, was fired at temperatures of 800–1050°C and for a longer time (ASTON 1998: 37). It was noted above that in Canaan it is namely the characteristic (lower fired) Nile silt forms, which are locally reproduced. The author conducted no refiring studies. It can, however, be noted that at Tel Mor, Tel Aphek, as well as at Beth Shean in Strata S-5 to S-3 in many vessels large amounts of straw rods are not burnt out, suggesting a very low firing temperature for these vessels. Referring to MACKENZIE (1957), NORDSTRÖM and BOURRIAU note that in an oxidizing atmosphere the combustion of organic matter takes place at temperatures between 380–600°C (1993: 155).

Concluding it can be argued that above-described methods of clay preparation in conjunction with Egyptian forms and manufacturing techniques suggest a cultural background that goes beyond the purely functional, and can tentatively be interpreted as an imitation of Egyptian Nile clays, supporting the assumption that the potters at Beth Shean were Egyptians or, at the very least, under close Egyptian guid-

⁷ Cf. also JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: 245, who note an increased amount of organic inclusions in the Level VIII/VII vessels, explaining it as Egyptian influence on the local pottery tradition.

⁸ The material of Stratum IX was only preliminarily analysed by James and McGovern. As to firing temperatures it was, however, compared to the Late Bronze Age I material of the Beqah Valley [700–850°C] (MCGOVERN 1986).

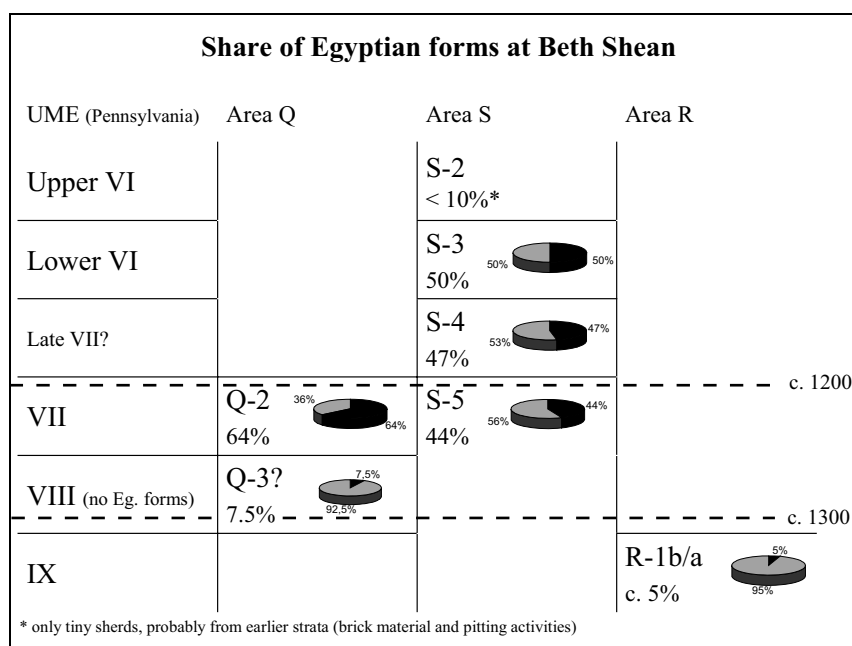


Fig. 4 Share of Egyptian and Egyptian-style vessels in Areas R, Q and S

ance (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: 244–245; COHEN-WEINBERGER 1998: 411; KILLEBREW 1998: 275).

4. STATISTICS

A statistical analysis (Fig. 4) of the collections of Areas R (courtesy of B. Mullins), S and Q mainly reveals the strong increase of Egyptian presence in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties (Strata S-5 to S-3 in Area S and Stratum Q-2 in Area Q) as compared to the Eighteenth Dynasty (Strata R-1b and R-1a in Area R combined with the evidence of UME's excavations). The notable rarity of Egyptian forms in Stratum Q-3 in Area Q might already correlate this stratum to UME's Level VIII, from which Egyptian forms also seem to be almost absent (see mainly JAMES and MCGOVERN's Level VIII plates [1993: figs. 15–19, 31–32, 35, 53–57]; JAMES and MCGOVERN also note explicitly that Egyptian-style bowls were not found in this Level [1993: 79]; for possible chronological implications see below). The share of Egyptian forms does not decrease in the Twentieth Dynasty (represented by Strata S-4 and S-3 in Area S), which reflects Egypt's – mainly Ramses' III – final attempt to maintain its rule in Canaan. Note in this connection that in the first half of the Twelfth century the share of Egyptian and Egyptian-style pottery is higher than ever before at Tel Mor (BARAKO and MARTIN forthcoming) and Tel Sera^c (MARTIN forthcoming d). In Stratum S-2 in Area S at Beth Shean, the stratum after the end of the Egypt-

ian domination in Canaan, Egyptian-style pottery almost disappears, the few remaining sherds being small and probably residual.

Fig. 5 shows the quantitative distribution among the various Egyptian types in Strata S-5 to S-3 in Area S. As already noted above, simple bowls form the vast majority of the Egyptian forms throughout all strata. Furthermore, the development of decoration styles of these simple bowls might be important for the correlation between the areas (presented below): Red slipped simple bowls are extremely common in Stratum S-5, while rare to absent in S-4 and S-3 (Fig. 6).

5. CHARACTER OF THE ASSEMBLAGES AND ETHNICAL IMPLICATIONS

The here presented Egyptian collection as well as other evidence of Egyptian material culture leaves no doubt that there was a strong physical Egyptian presence at Beth Shean in the Thirteenth and Twelfth centuries BCE. The potters producing the Egyptian forms were most probably Egyptians or, at the least, under close Egyptian guidance, as already noted elsewhere by JAMES and MCGOVERN (1993: 245), COHEN-WEINBERGER (1998: 411) and KILLEBREW (1998: 275). This is indicated by distinct fabric properties, Egyptian technological characteristics, the fact that namely the coarse household wares are locally mass-produced, which are unlikely to be emulated by the local Canaanite pottery tradition, and the fact that apart from spinning bowls Egyptian-style pottery has vir-

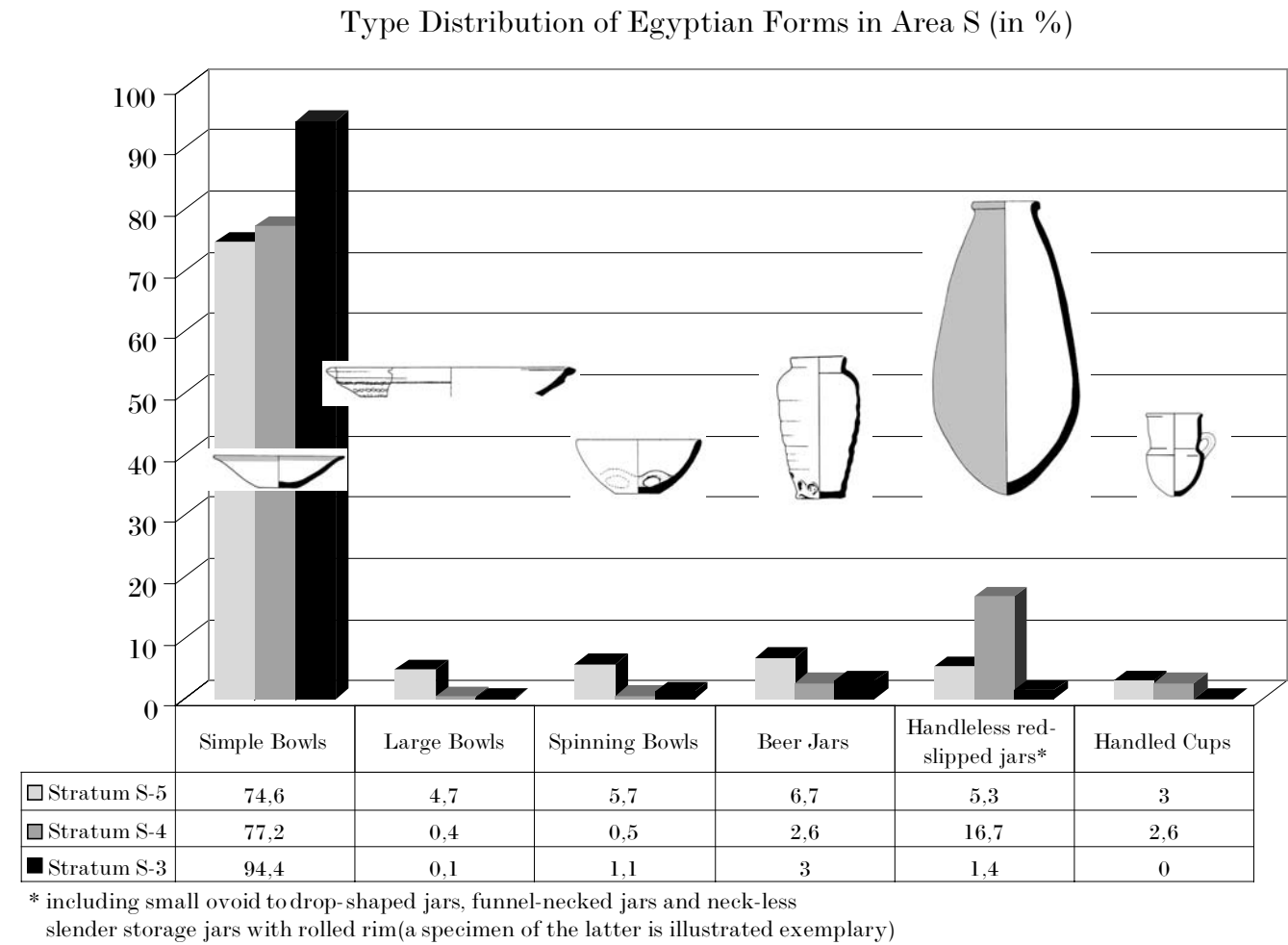


Fig. 5 Type distribution within the corpus of Egyptian forms in Area S (in percent; number of included vessel profiles and rim sherds respectively: 1689)

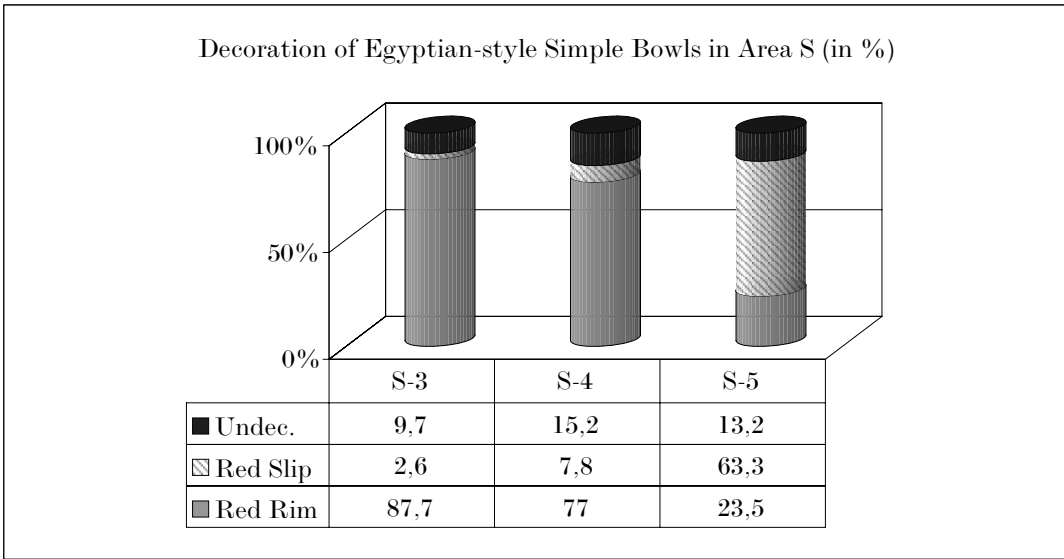


Fig. 6 Decoration of Egyptian-style simple bowls in Area S at Beth Shean (in percent; number of included vessel profiles and rim sherds respectively: 1532)

tually disappeared by the later part of the Twelfth century (Stratum S-2 in Area S; cf. also the evidence at other Egyptianized sites, such as Tel Mor [MARTIN and BARAKO forthcoming] and Aphek [MARTIN, GADOT and GOREN forthcoming]) coinciding with the end of the “Egyptian Empire” in Canaan. If Egyptian shapes would have been imitated or “emulated” by local Canaanite potters for Canaanites, one would not expect the production of these forms to cease so abruptly after the Egyptian retreat.

For a reconstruction of a cultural scenario it has to be noted primarily that Egyptian forms appear alongside Canaanite ones in virtually all loci. We therefore have to come to the conclusion that resident Egyptians beside their Egyptian forms also used Canaanite ones and, the other way around, that local inhabitants also used Egyptian forms. Note that Egyptian(ized) cooking pots at Egyptianized sites in Canaan in general are striking by their rare occurrence. The characteristic Canaanite cooking pots are *the* cooking vessel at all the examined sites (cf. also MARTIN and BARAKO forthcoming). It is interesting to compare this situation to the evidence at early Philistine sites, where “Aegean-style” cooking jugs largely supplant Canaanite cooking pots (BARAKO 2000: 523). Based on the argument that food preparation was primarily the domain of women in the ancient world (e.g. KING and STAGER 2001: 64–65; HOLAUBEK 1992: 44; WATTERSON 1991: 128–134), it can be argued that, while women were part of the Sea Peoples’ migration and settlement (BARAKO 2003), it must have been mainly men, who were sent to serve in an Egyptian garrison in Canaan. The theory that Egyptian soldiers and male administrators were living under the same roof in marriage with Canaanite women – hence the sole presence of Canaanite cooking pots – might be another appealing theory.

6. CORRELATION OF THE AREAS WITH THE AID OF THE ASSEMBLAGE OF EGYPTIAN FORMS – ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY

The correlation between the various areas is somewhat hampered by the fact that not all phases produced satisfying quantities of datable pottery. However, there is still enough evidence to provide the tools to elaborate such a correlation, namely royal scarabs, imported pottery, Egyptian-style pottery and several local pot-

tery forms (Fig. 7; the correlation presented in the following was elaborated by A. Mazar with additional remarks by the author regarding the Egyptian forms): Late Mycenaean IIIB (being heirlooms, Myc. IIIA wares are of no relevance here) and Cypriote imports are attested in UME’s Level VII (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: 103–124), Strata Q-2 in Area Q and N-4 in Area NA. Stratum Q-1 in Area Q equals building 1500 of the UME excavations (JAMES 1966: 8–11 and fig. 77) and only represents the cleaning of this building. A published Mycenaean IIIC stirrup jar marks the first appearance of this ware in this stratum (JAMES 1966: fig. 49:4). A considerable collection of Mycenaean IIIC sherds comes from Strata S-4 and S-3 in Area S (Myc. IIIB and Cypriote imports are no longer attested). Another single sherd of Mycenaean IIIC from an unreliable context might originate from Stratum N-3a in Area NA.⁹ Based on the last appearance of Mycenaean IIIB and Cypriote imports a correlation between UME’s Level VII, Stratum Q-2 in Area Q and N-4 in Area NA can therefore be suggested. This is corroborated by the fact that all these strata are still mainly LB IIB in character, datable to the Thirteenth and, probably, very early Twelfth centuries BCE (see below). According to the first appearance of Mycenaean IIIC pottery, Stratum Q-1 in Area Q has to be correlated to Strata S-4 and S-3 in Area S (note that Area S-strata are domestic [likely more short-lived], while the building in Area Q is monumental in character). From UME’s Level Late VII, Stratum N-4 in Area NB and Stratum S-5 in Area S imports (be it Mycenaean IIIB and Cypriote or Mycenaean IIIC) are absent. As this absence may also be explained by the limited exposure of these strata, imports seem of no help for their correlation. We can confidently also attribute Stratum N-4 in Area NB to the last LB IIB horizon (UME’s Level VII and its correlates), a correlation strengthened by local Canaanite pottery (a carinated bowl [a type absent in S-4 and S-3 of Area S] and a red slipped biconical krater with white painted registers clearly point to UME’s Level VII). As to S-5 in Area S, based on imported wares one can only argue that this stratum cannot be earlier than Q-2, N-4 and UME’s Level VII, as S-4 is already marked by the first appearance of Mycenaean IIIC pottery, which is absent from Q-2, N-4 and UME’s Level VII (no gap is attested between S-5 and S-4).

For the correlation of S-5 and UME’s Level Late VII respectively the development of decoration

⁹ According to P. Mountjoy all Mycenaean IIIC wares at Beth Shean belong to Mycenaean IIIC:early 1 and 2 (personal communication; Second Euro-Conference SCIEM 2000, Vienna May/June 2003).

styles of Egyptian-style simple bowls might be of help. In Area S, the largest area with the by far largest ceramic assemblage, red-slipped Egyptian-style simple bowls (with plain or flaring rim) are very popular in Stratum S-5 (63% as opposed to 23% red-rimmed bowls; see above Fig. 6). In the following Strata S-4 (8% red-slipped, 77% red-rimmed) and S-3 (3% red-slipped, 88% red-rimmed) red-slipped bowls almost disappear (small sherds probably mostly originate from an earlier stratum), the red rim being the preferred decoration. In Stratum Q-2 in Area Q red-slipped bowls prevail over the red-rimmed ones (54% *versus* 46%; MARTIN forthcoming a). Red-slipped bowls further appear in considerable amounts in Stratum N-4 in Areas NA and NB. Note, however, that they also appear in Stratum N-3 of both areas. Due to the limited exposure and flimsy nature of this stratum in both areas this evidence is, however, inconclusive (as a statistical analysis as to the relative quantity of red-slipped bowls is of no help). In UME's Level VII red-slipped bowls are well known (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: 79; e.g. figs. 12:9, 12:12, 36:3, 41:2; in the published material appear 9 red-slipped versus 6 red-rimmed bowls), while they are absent from the few Level Late VII loci, in which red-rimmed bowls are very popular (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: figs. 48–51; of 42 Egyptian-style bowls 36 are red-rimmed). Also in UME's Level VI (Lower) red-rimmed bowls appear to be popular and red-slipped bowls are entirely or almost entirely absent (JAMES 1966: 27; pls. 49–58).¹⁰ In YADIN and GEVA's Stratum 4 (which correlates to S-3 in Area S) among the few published Egyptian-style bowls only red-rimmed variants appear (1986: fig. 22; of 9 examples 5 are red-rimmed and the others undecorated).

The popularity of red-slipped Egyptian-style bowls in Q-2, N-4 and UME's Level VII and their rarity or absence in UME's Late VII, S-4/3, UME's Level (Lower) VI and Yadin and Geva's Stratum 4 favour a correlation of S-5 with UME's Level VII and its correlates (or a later part of this horizon respectively)

and of UME's Level Late VII with S-4 in Area S (or its first half respectively). The fact that red-slipped bowls still occasionally appear in N-3 in Areas NA and NB somewhat hampers this correlation to be straight-forward. Assuming that the distribution of red-slipped bowls has no relative chronological value, the possibility remains that S-5 post-dates UME's Level VII and correlates to UME's Level Late VII. From both strata imported Mycenaean (be it IIIB or IIIC) and Cypriote wares are absent. However, the author clearly favours the correlation presented first, as otherwise three strata in Area S (S-5 to S-3) would postdate UME's Level VII and its correlates. While this is theoretically possible due to the domestic character of Area S, it seems rather unlikely. Both, Strata S-4 and S-3 are substantial phases, which must have endured a considerable amount of time. The accumulation of Stratum S-4 averaged half a meter in depth with minor rebuilds and floor raisings attested. Also the subsequent Stratum S-3 must have endured a considerable amount of time, as two substantial subphases (S-3b and S-3a) were encountered in many places. We know from the evidence of an Egyptian imported amphora that UME's Level VII and its correlates ended c. 1200 at the earliest but probably even later (see below). Considering the last royal name appearing at Beth Shean (Ramses IV [1153–1147] – JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 165:8) as approximate date for the end of the Egyptian presence at Beth Shean, we would be left with only 50 years at the most for three strata. While it is without any doubt very well possible that the Egyptian garrison at Beth Shean outlived Ramses IV (see below), based on archaeological data it does not seem reasonable to push its end too far.

Another evidence that might argue for a contemporaneity of Q-2 in Area Q and S-5 in Area S is finally the appearance of Egyptian-style simple bowls in a distinct ware fabric (WF 78 in the Beth Shean system; cf. MARTIN forthcoming a) in these strata and their absence in this fabric in the large assemblages of Strata S-4 and S-3.

¹⁰ In the published plates of Level VI of the UME appear 12 Egyptian-style bowls, of which 6 are decorated with a red rim and 2 with a red slip. Note, however, that both red-slipped examples might come from unreliable contexts; one comes from Locus 1342, in which also scarabs of Thutmose III and Ramses II were found (JAMES 1966: fig. 57:4) and one from Locus 1343 at the edge of the tell (fig. 58:5). While the evidence of the plates is rather flimsy and not satisfactory in nature (JAMES notes that only a fraction of

the ceramic material was published in her report [1966: 2–3]), it might be significant (for an argument that red-rimmed bowls largely prevail), what JAMES notes about the Level VI pottery (1966: 27): “*Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Level VI pottery is the large number of Egyptian forms. The vast majority of these Egyptianizing forms fall in the small bowl category.*” These bowls are “*likely to have a band of red wash around the rim, inside or out, or both*” (emphasis mine).

Correlation of Strata and Absolute Chronology at Beth Shean

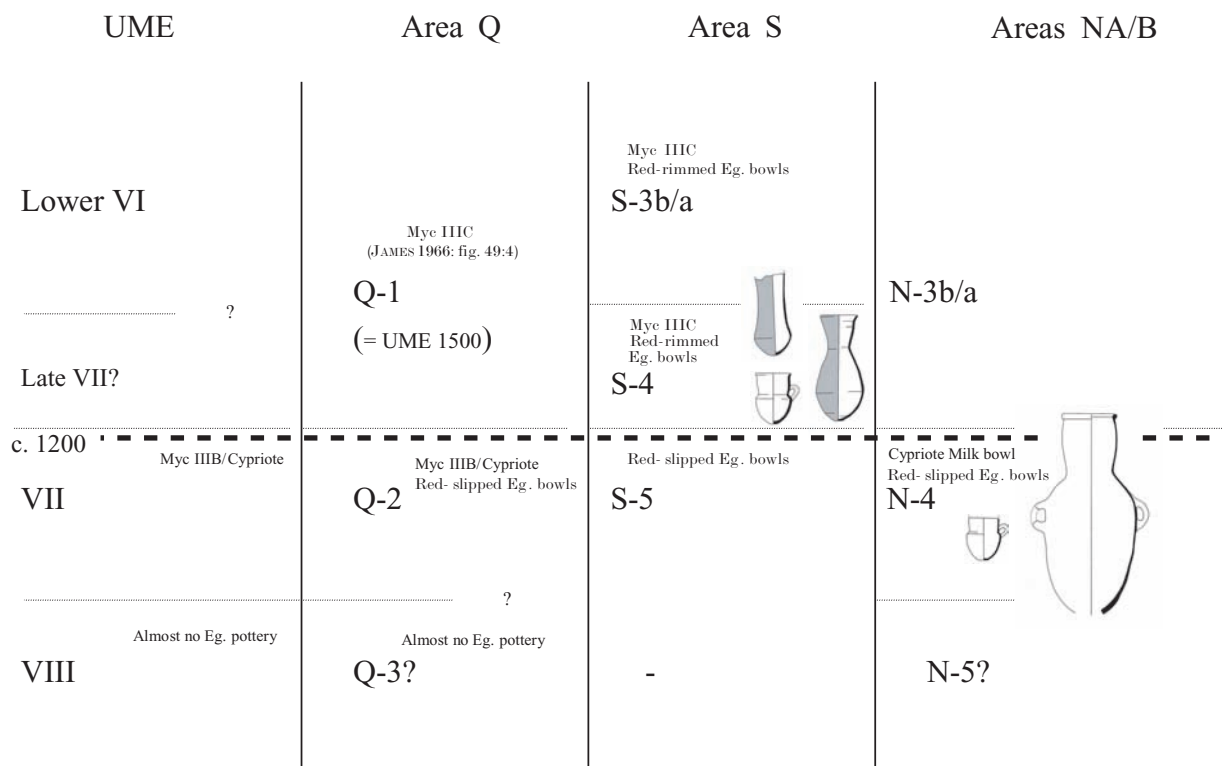


Fig. 7 Correlation between the various areas and absolute chronology at Beth Shean (based on the evidence of material culture in general and on Egyptian and Egyptian-style vessels in particular)

To conclude, the correlation of Stratum Q-3 in Area Q remains. Basically, Q-3 might correlate with an earlier part of UME's Level VII or, more probably, already with UME's Level VIII. In Stratum Q-3 Egyptian forms are rare (7.5%), while they are very popular in Q-2 (64%; MARTIN forthcoming a). A similar development might be borne out in the assemblage of UME's excavations, where Egyptian forms appear to be almost absent in Level VIII (see above section 4), while they are common in Level VII. While the low percentage of Egyptian forms in Stratum Q-3 might be explained as spatial variation in the distribution of Egyptian and local Canaanite forms, the flimsy evidence from Stratum N-5 in Areas NA and NB, where sherds of Egyptian-style vessels also seem to be conspicuously rare, speaks against this assumption.

Bearing in mind the correlation elaborated above,

following are the main chronological anchors from sides of the Egyptian pottery (Fig. 7): A *wide-bodied Egyptian amphora* of Marl D from Stratum N-4 in Area NA (Room 10429/98417, sealed by destruction debris),¹¹ as imported marl vessel a finer tool for dating than the Nile silt types, which are the ones that are locally reproduced at Beth Shean (Fig. 3:13). Apart from fragments of a collared rim jar and other vessels, this amphora was found in context with a very late Cypriote milk bowl. Although part of the base is missing, it is clear that it belongs to a round-based type of Egyptian amphorae typical for phase 4 of the Egyptian pottery sequence, which evolves between 1200 and 1185 (ASTON and PUSCH 1999: 41; for the division in phases cf. BOURRIAU 1981: 72–72; 1990: 19*). This type of jar appears with carinated base in the Nineteenth Dynasty. In the time between Sethos II (1200–1194)¹² and Tausret (1188–1186)¹³ it evolves

¹¹ This vessel is illustrated in KILLEBREW 1998: 162, Ill. III.23:2.

¹² Chronology after KITCHEN 2000: 49.

¹³ The change definitely takes place after Merenptah and has fully evolved by Ramses III.

into its round-based variant (ASTON and PUSCH 1999: 41, 45).¹⁴ Examples of this later type were found at Qantir,¹⁵ Tell el-Yahudieh,¹⁶ at Thebes in the Valley of the Kings¹⁷ and as far as Hala Sultan Tekke¹⁸ in a Late Cypriote IIIA1 context dated to 1190–1175 BCE. Based on the evidence of this Egyptian amphora, the end of Level N-4 and its correlates – UME's Level VII, Stratum N-4 in Area NB, Q-2 in Area Q and, probably, S-5 in Area S – therefore dates to 1200 at the earliest, but possibly 10–20 years later. Also an *Egyptian handled cup* from the same Stratum N-4 in Area NA (KILLEBREW 1998: III. III.21:2) seems to corroborate an end of this horizon only in the Twelfth century. Although not preserved completely – the rim was cut away, the vessel exhibits several features that would well fit into the Twentieth Dynasty: a slender body and an handle attached very low at the neck, resulting in a ring-like section; most important is the vessel's fabric, Egyptian Nile B2. While handled cups are a classical marl type, their occasional production in Nile silts until now does not seem to evolve before the Twelfth century (pottery phase 4). Note that in the probably contemporaneous Stratum S-5 two fragmentary handled cups are made of a Marl D fabric, the N-4 cup therefore being the first Nile silt example. Apart from the amphora and the handled cup the general chronological horizon for the end of the last LB IIB phase at Beth Shean is mainly indicated by a faience plaque of Merenptah (1213–1203) found “*near or north of the steps*” of the Level VII temple (L1068), which was regarded as *terminus post quem* for (or being contemporaneous with) the end of this level and its correlates in the other areas (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: 6–9; fig. 165:6; KILLEBREW 1998: 73). Note that the plaque was found in context with or in immediate vicinity to four other plaques, which bear the name of a Ramses – Ramses I according to ROWE (1936: 157, pl. 17) and Ramses I and/or II according to WEINSTEIN (1993: 221). PORTER excludes the attribution to Ramses I and, on the basis of a brief survey, suggests Ramses IV as the most likely candidate, with Ramses III a slight possibility (1994–5: 65). Consequently he resumes ROWE's interpretation (1930: 24; 1940: 9) of the various plaques as belonging to foun-

dation deposits of the above-lying Level VI temple (PORTER 1994–5: 66), which would render the Merenptah-plaque irrelevant for the dating of the end of UME's Level VII. However, based on several lines of evidence, B. Brandl evaluates Porter's interpretation as highly unlikely (personal communication).

The following phase, which is represented by Stratum S-4 in Area S, is characterized by a new urban plan, and has to fall within the reign of Ramses III (1184–1153). The Egyptian presence at Beth Shean during the time of Ramses III is well attested by inscriptive and monumental evidence, such as the basalt statue of this pharaoh retrieved from Lower Level V (L1024, northern temple; ROWE 1930: 36–38, pl. 51; JAMES 1966: 35 fig. 81:3; see, recently, HIGGINBOTHAM for the theory of an usurpation of a divine statue of the Nineteenth Dynasty [1999]), and the Level VI door lintel of the official Ramses-weser-khepesh kneeling in adoration before this king (JAMES 1966: 4–8; figs 92:1, 93:1; WARD 1966: 161–163, 167–169). That Ramses' III last attempt to secure holdings in Canaan, to push back the Sea Peoples' attacks, and, evidently, also to exploit the natural resources of the country, is much more than a *swan song*, is suggested by Papyrus Harris I (pHarris I, 9:1–3),¹⁹ where an inauguration of a temple in Gaza under this king (see most recently WIMMER 1990: 1086–1089) is mentioned, by the harvest tax as evidenced by hieratic Ostraca, such as at Tel Sera^c and Lachish (*e.g.* GOLDWASSER 1984), and by the bronze plaque bearing the cartouche of Ramses III in the gate area at Lachish (USSISHKIN 1983: 168–170; 1985). In Stratum S-4, Mycenaean IIIB and Cypriote imports are absent and Mycenaean IIIC wares make their first appearance. One can assume that the relatively long-lived Stratum S-4 covers a large part of the reign of Ramses III. Egyptian and Egyptian-style vessels of S-4 confirm that we are dealing with a clear Twentieth Dynasty horizon: A *funnel-necked jar* finds its best comparanda in the Twentieth Dynasty (Fig. 8:1). The closest parallels were found at Qantir Area Q-I, in Stratum B1, dated to the Twentieth to Twenty First Dynasties (Fig. 8:2; ASTON 1998: no. 2457), at Tell el-Yahudiyeh in a context dated between Ramses III and Ramses VI

¹⁴ Some examples were stated to appear in Nineteenth Dynasty contexts, but none of these contexts are closed. Cf. ASTON 1996a: 66; ASTON 1997: 43–66; ASTON and BADER 1998; ASTON and PUSCH 1999: 45.

¹⁵ ASTON and PUSCH 1999: no. 49; ASTON 1998: nos. 2498, 2511, 2513.

¹⁶ GRIFFITH 1890: pl. XIV:5.

¹⁷ ASTON, ASTON and BROCK 1998: nos. 335, 383–384, 392–399.

¹⁸ ERIKSSON 1995: 201.

¹⁹ For a hieroglyphic edition of Papyrus Harris see ERICHSEN 1933, for a translation of the relevant passage PRITCHARD 1955: 260–261.

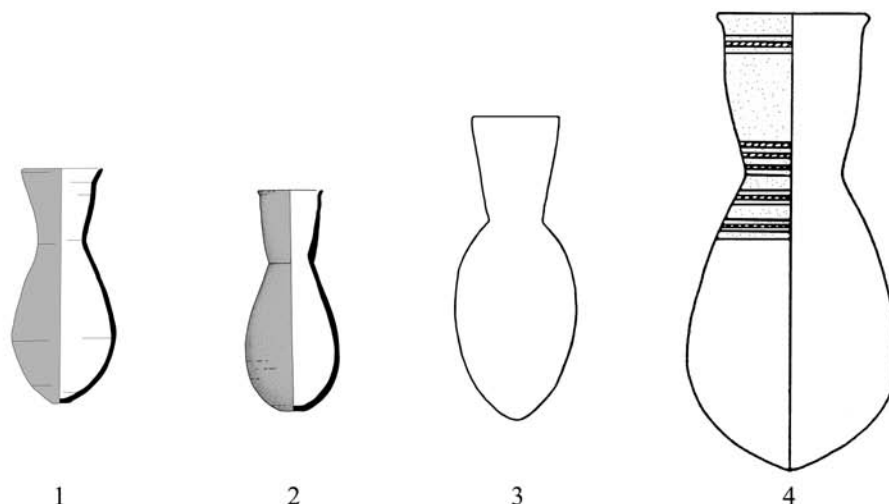


Fig. 8 Funnel-necked jars from the Twentieth Dynasty from Beth Shean Stratum S-4 in Area S (1), Qantir (2), Tell el-Yahudiyeh (3), and Tanis (4); scale 1:10

(Fig. 8:3; GRIFFITH 1890: pl. XIV:6) and, though larger and with a less slender body, at Tanis (Fig. 8:4; BRISSAUD 1987: 99 no. 273) in a context dated to the Twentieth Dynasty. The Twentieth Dynasty date of the Beth Shean example and its Egyptian counterparts is mainly indicated by the very tall neck in relation to the vessel's height (Figs. 8:1–4), but also by the slender body (Figs. 8:1–3), the slight flare of the rim (Figs. 8:1–2, 4), as well as by the slightly flattened base (Figs. 8:1–2), all common features on these jars in the Twentieth Dynasty. Small *drop-shaped jars* of Stratum S-4 and the following Stratum S-3 mostly have a very low maximum body diameter, a common trait in the Twentieth Dynasty in Egypt (Fig. 3:9b). Also the slight carination in the profile seems to be characteristic for this period (cf. hereto an earlier example of Level VII with higher maximum body diameter and more rounded profile; Fig. 3:9a). Another chronological anchor of Stratum S-4 is a *handled cup* of “Nile B or E” (according to a petrographic analysis conducted by COHEN-WEINBERGER [1998: 409]). The Twelfth century date of Nile silt cups was already discussed above.

The subsequent Stratum S-3 in many places was subdivided into two substantial subphases (S-3b and S-3a). One might date the destruction of S-3a somewhere in the later part of the Twelfth century. As already mentioned above, the last royal name attested at Beth Shean is the one of Ramses IV (1153–1147), which appears on a scarab (JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 165:8). The piece was found in an unreliable Level VII locus near the edge of the tell (L1253) and is likely intrusive from Level VI above. As the scarab provides only a *terminus post quem*, the end of the Egyptian garrison at Beth Shean might

also be pushed more towards the last third of the Twelfth century, maybe even to its end. However, the later the date one considers, the less likely it will be, as the problem of the lack of royal names after Ramses IV (*e.g.* Ramses VI) becomes more and more immanent. Favouring a later date, one could, however, argue that the absence of royal names later than Ramses IV can be explained by the hypothesis that Beth Shean was possibly cut off from Egypt in this time, a theory based on the absence of Egyptian imports in the last Egyptianized stratum (S-3 in Area S; MARTIN forthcoming b). Anyhow, relying on the present evidence, it is most reasonable to reconstruct an end of the Egyptian garrison at Beth Shean in the time of Ramses IV or shortly afterwards, maybe in the time of Ramses VI (1143–1136).

Finally, a word should be said about the date of UME's Level VIII: JAMES and MCGOVERN tentatively date this level into the reign of Sethos I (1294–1279), possibly beginning with Ramses I (1295–1294) (1993: 5 and 235–236). ASTON, on the other hand, argues for a dating in the late Eighteenth Dynasty (and consequently re-assigns the two Sethos I-stelae from Beth Shean to Level VII; 1996b: 226–228). He bases his argumentation mainly on following lines of evidence: (1) JAMES and MCGOVERN's dating is mainly based on the two monumental stelae of Sethos I, both of which come from later contexts and therefore could have originated also in Level VII (1993: 236). (2) In his treatment of the scarabs, plaques, seals, and rings of Levels VIII and VII at Beth Shean WEINSTEIN notes that the Level VIII material does not offer direct support for its dating specifically to the early Nineteenth Dynasty and that one could reasonably assume that

Level VIII belongs primarily to the Fourteenth rather than the early Thirteenth century BCE. Five royal name pieces retrieved from Level VIII mention pharaohs not later than Amenophis III (Thutmosis III, Hatshepsut, Amenophis III; 1993: 224). (3) In her treatment of the Mycenaean pottery HANKEY shows that the majority of the material of Level VIII dates to Late Mycenaean III:A2 and early Late Mycenaean III:B (the bulk of the material belonging to III:A2; 1993: 103–110). Late Mycenaean III:A2 fully belongs into the Eighteenth Dynasty (c. Amenophis III – Haremhab). Mycenaean IIIB already starts before the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty (HANKEY 1993: 109). Dating Level VIII in the early Nineteenth Dynasty one would expect more Mycenaean IIIB pottery and not early within this phase. This discrepancy can only be explained by defining the vast majority of Mycenaean pots as heirlooms. (4) Finally ASTON notes that, while the local Canaanite pottery is clearly LB II in character, it is not exclusively LB IIB, which is what it should be if Level VIII is no earlier than the Nineteenth Dynasty (1996b: 228). LB IIA forms also occur, which would also point to a Fourteenth rather than Thirteenth century BCE date.

Assigning Level VIII to the late Eighteenth Dynasty and the stelae of Sethos I to Level VII would well fit to the evidence of the Egyptian-style pottery. One could then reasonably explain the scarcity of Egyptian forms in Level VIII and Q-3 in Area Q (see above section 4) by associating it with a period towards the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, in

which Egypt has regional difficulties in Canaan (WEINSTEIN 1981: 15–17). The marked increase of Egyptian forms in UME's Level VII and its correlates in the various areas of the renewed excavations (see above Fig. 4) could then be connected to the activities of Sethos I and his successor, Ramses II. The historical aspect of this scenario might be borne out in the Sethos-stelae from Beth Shean themselves. In the first Sethos-stela, which is dated to the first year of this king, we hear about an enemy, who is in the town of Hamath and seizes the town of Beth Shean (*KRI* I, 12:7–14). The king dispatches three army units to oppose this threat. The entire operation is told to have been accomplished within the course of one day. The second Sethos-stela, which does not provide us with a date formula, reports upheavals near Beth Shean caused by 'Apiru tribes (*KRI* I, 16:91–4). Again, Sethos I sends his troops, who finish their mission in two days time. Both stelae clearly reflect local unrest in and near Beth Shean, which Sethos I claims to have restored. We might therefore associate Level VIII at Beth Shean with a period of upheaval, which endured an undefined time, before Sethos I took initiative. The scarcity of Egyptian forms in Level VIII could reflect this period, in which the Egyptians temporarily might have only had a loose grip on Beth Shean. The marked increase of Egyptian-style pottery in Level VII could then be result of a reinforcement of locally stationed Egyptian troops in the aftermath of Sethos' I successful military activities.

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Fig. 1 Tel Beth Shean, the mound: MAZAR 1997: 64 (plan)

Fig. 2 Stratigraphy of the various excavation areas at Beth Shean

Fig. 3 1) Vessel no. 108031/11, Locus 98852 Stratum S-4 (Area S), unpublished, courtesy of A. Mazar; 2) JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 50:2; 3) JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 48:5; 4) JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 48:6; 5) JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 51:2; 6) Vessel no. 887043/15, Locus 78740 Stratum S-3 (Area S), unpublished, courtesy of A. Mazar; 7) Vessel no. 288053, Locus 28811 Stratum S-3 (Area S), unpublished, courtesy of A. Mazar; 8) COHEN-WEINBERGER 1998: fig. 2:6; 9a) JAMES and MCGOVERN 1993: fig. 13:14; 9b) Vessel no. 108043/2, Locus 10809 Stratum S-4 (Area S), unpublished, courtesy of A. Mazar; 10) COHEN-WEINBERGER 1998: fig. 2:7; 11) COHEN-WEINBERGER 1998: fig. 2:8; 12) Vessel no. 988135/1, Locus 88866 Stratum S-4 (Area S), courtesy of A. Mazar; 13) Vessel no. 184038/3, Locus 10429 Stratum N-4 (Area NA); the illustrated vessel is not yet finally published (for a drawing see: KILLEBREW 1998: Ill. III.23:2); the author got the permission to include a photo; courtesy of A. Mazar

Fig. 4 Share of Egyptian and Egyptian-style vessels in Areas R, Q and S

Fig. 5 Type distribution within the corpus of Egyptian forms in Area S (in percent) – included are vessels and fragments with a preserved rim taking the size of the preserved part of the rim into consideration (for this method cf. MARTIN forthcoming b)

Fig. 6 Decoration of simple bowls in Area S (in percent) – included are vessels and fragments with a preserved rim taking the size of the preserved part of the rim into consideration (for this method cf. MARTIN forthcoming b)

Fig. 7 Correlation between the various areas and absolute chronology at Beth Shean (based on the evidence of material culture in general and on Egyptian and Egyptian-style vessels in particular); the handled cup from Area NA (no. 104289 in Locus 98417 Stratum N-4; for a drawing see: KILLEBREW 1998: Ill.21:2) like the amphora (see above Fig. 3:13) is not finally published; the author got the permission to include a small drawing of both vessels; courtesy of A. Mazar

Fig. 8 1) Beth Shean: Vessel no. 888320/1, Locus 88866 Stratum S-4 (Area S); courtesy of A. Mazar; 2) Qantir: Area Q-I Stratum B/1; ASTON 1998: no. 2457; 3) Tell el-Yahudiyeh: GRIFFITH 1890: pl. XIV:6; 4) Tanis: BRISSAUD 1987: 99 no. 273

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