

IV. SELECTED FINDS FROM SAV1 NORTH

by Julia Budka

1 GENERAL REMARKS

As observed at other Egyptian Nubian towns, e.g. Buhen⁵²⁹ or Askut,⁵³⁰ objects of Egyptian type dominate the material assemblage at Sai. However, some aspects of the material remains from the town attest to the complex nature of archaeological cultures on Sai during the New Kingdom, illustrating the dynamic settings, shifting identities and permeable borderlines between Egyptian and Nubian lifestyle on the island.⁵³¹ The rich material from SAV1 North may serve as a representative case study for Sai, although it faces several challenges.

Like the ceramics, the finds from SAV1 North cover a time period from the 18th Dynasty to Meroitic, Post-Meroitic and Christian periods, all the way to Ottoman and sub-recent times. It is not the purpose of this publication to present all of the recorded finds from SAV1 North. The focus of this chapter, like the last, is instead laid on objects deriving from the discussed building units of Level 3. A general introduction highlights the potential of a concise analysis of the material remains. It must be stressed, however, that the same problems mentioned for the pottery (shortcomings in documentation, the lack of stratified deposits, mixed material, see III.1) also apply to the assessment of objects and small finds from SAV1 North. Thus, the originally envisaged detailed contextual analysis, presenting associations and specific percentages of object

types from both a synchronic and diachronic point of view was unfortunately not feasible.⁵³²

2 CATEGORIES OF FINDS

A total of 2,405 objects have been recorded in the database for SAV1 North until 2016 (Fig. 84). In registration, the finds are labelled “SAVIN” and assigned a continuous number (starting from SAVIN 001). This sequence is dependent on the chronology of excavation and does not distinguish between Pharaonic and Post-Pharaonic finds by number.

The variability of finds derived from SAV1 North will be illustrated in the following. Of particular interest is the reconstruction of the circumstances placing the objects into the archaeological record – whether they attest a primary function as *in situ*-deposits, as primary refuse of activities or as evidence for other discard criteria.⁵³³ Deliberate refuse of objects is often the case, occurring in several variants.⁵³⁴ Similar to the ceramics, most of the objects from SAV1 North were recovered from Level 2, from disturbed contexts or fills⁵³⁵ and therefore include Post-Pharaonic material as well. Despite the problems of dating these finds, thoughts about their significance in establishing the function of structures and activities at the site will be presented, with possible considerations about its occupants.

All in all, the material from SAV1 North that can be safely dated to the New Kingdom⁵³⁶ represents a

Level	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Number of objects	685	1,309	320	76	15	2,405
Percentage	28.5	54.4	13.3	3.2	0.6	100

Fig. 84 The distribution of objects from SAV1 North according to levels

⁵²⁹ MILLARD 1979.

⁵³⁰ SMITH 2003, 101.

⁵³¹ See SMITH 2003, 97 for Askut. Cf. BUDKA 2017.

⁵³² For general aspects of the analysis of artefact distributions and assemblages in Egyptian houses, see most recently SPENCE 2014, 89–93 with further references.

⁵³³ Cf. ROSEN 1989, 564.

⁵³⁴ Cf. KEMP and STEVENS 2010b, 4–5.

⁵³⁵ For the most common circumstances under which objects entered the archaeological record in settlements cf. KEMP and STEVENS 2010b, 4–5.

⁵³⁶ Cf. EMERY, SMITH and MILLARD 1979, 94: “While some object-types can be dated from other sites with relative security, others cannot; and the pottery record is not very helpful.”

typical assemblage as attested from other Egyptian settlements, both in Egypt (e.g. Elephantine, Memphis, Amarna) and in Nubia (e.g. Askut, Buhen, Quban). For some aspects, parallels to sites in Nubia are closer than to the Egyptian ones and will be specifically highlighted in the following.

2.1 Main categories of finds

The six main categories established for finds from SAV1 North follow a modified system as developed by Lisa Giddy for Memphis.⁵³⁷

A) *Figurines and statuettes*

Manufactured in clay and mud, figurines in both human and animal shapes are attested. Especially noteworthy is a group of a dozen female figurines in low-fired clay or mud, finding close parallels in both Egypt and Nubia.⁵³⁸ Rudimentary figures in the shape of simple sticks with an incised or dotted area representing the pubic region, sometimes with dotted circles resembling breasts (e.g. SAVIN 589),⁵³⁹ are of a common Egyptian style as are the bed figurines (SAVIN 613).⁵⁴⁰ The simple hand-modelled clay sticks with indications of the female genitalia (Fig. 85) are already attested from the earliest level of SAV1 North, Level 5 (SAVIN 2306, Fig. 85 top). Well preserved examples like SAVIN 2189 (Fig. 85 middle) and SAVIN 1217 derive from Level 2. One example, SAVIN 664 (Fig. 85 bottom), was found in the wall street of SAV1 North, between Enclosure Wall N4 and Wall 18N, from a deposit of Level 3.

All together, these figurines can clearly be dated to the early to mid-18th Dynasty, both by the archaeological context from SAV1 North and through numerous parallels.⁵⁴¹ The majority at SAV1 North represent classical Egyptian types. Interestingly, some of

the figurines (e.g. SAVIN 2186) combine a typical Nubian pattern of wavy incised lines⁵⁴² with Egyptian stylistic features (see below, Fig. 94).⁵⁴³ A group of female figurines in distinctive “Nubian style”, identified at Askut,⁵⁴⁴ is currently missing at SAV1 North. However, another group – the so-called pottery fertility figurines, well-attested in Egypt and Nubia – was found at SAV1 North. SAVIN 071 and SAVIN 457 (Pls. 35–36) are two fragments preserving the upper part/head of such clay figurines, Type 3 after Geraldine Pinch.⁵⁴⁵ Though fragmentary, the head is itself a characteristic feature of these figures,⁵⁴⁶ marking them as a type common during the 17th Dynasty. The heads of these figurines are always flattened, with rudimentary facial features: a beak-like nose and slits for the eyes and eyebrows. The disc surmounting the face is always pierced with a series of holes, through which better preserved examples indicate that artificial hair was threaded.⁵⁴⁷ According to Pinch this hairstyle might suggest a Nubian origin of these figurines.⁵⁴⁸ Although more common from tomb contexts, parallels for the domestic context of SAV1 North are also found at Abydos, Deir el-Medina, Karnak and Memphis.⁵⁴⁹ SAVIN 071 has three well preserved holes for strands of hair and was found in silo N7 from Level 2. SAVIN 457 was also found in Level 2, from the area of building unit N24. The figurine again exhibits perforations for adjoining the hair, with an intact neck and the typical facial features.

The fragmentary bed figurine (SAVIN 613)⁵⁵⁰ represents a nude woman with her left hand crossed over the chest in typical Egyptian style⁵⁵¹ and is so far unique in the corpus of finds from the town of Sai. This mould-made pottery figurine seems to be a bit later in date than the rudimentary examples, probably belonging to the late 18th Dynasty or Ramesside era.⁵⁵²

⁵³⁷ GIDDY 1999. See already BUDKA and DOYEN 2013, 183–188.

⁵³⁸ DOYEN 2016, 133–157.

⁵³⁹ Cf. DOYEN 2016, pl. 7 (SAVIN 589).

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. Elephantine (KOPP 2005a, 88–90); Amarna (STEVENS 2006, 85–91, figs. II.3.7, II.3.10–11); Memphis (GIDDY 1999, 28–31, pls. 8–12); Askut (SMITH 2003, 131–133). For more parallels and a typology of the figurines from SAV1 North see DOYEN 2016, 133–157.

⁵⁴¹ See KOPP 2005a, 89, note 291 with further parallels from domestic contexts. The examples from Amarna (STEVENS 2006, 89–91, figs. II.3.10, II.3.11) date to the late 18th Dynasty. For a summary of the figurines from SAV1 North see also DOYEN 2016.

⁵⁴² See, e.g., a net-weight found at Elephantine in Nubian fabric and with un-Egyptian incised decoration; see VON PILGRIM 1996a, 276, fig. 120b.

⁵⁴³ BUDKA and DOYEN 2012, 183.

⁵⁴⁴ SMITH 2003, 131–134, fig. 5.31.

⁵⁴⁵ PINCH 1993, 201–203.

⁵⁴⁶ PINCH 1993, 201–202.

⁵⁴⁷ PINCH 1993, 202.

⁵⁴⁸ PINCH 1993, 202.

⁵⁴⁹ PINCH 1993, 229, List 3.

⁵⁵⁰ DOYEN 2016, pl. 6.

⁵⁵¹ Cf. STEVENS 2006, 85–88, fig. II.3.7; WARAKSA 2009, 25–26, Type 2; TEETER 2010, 41–48, Type C, pls. 10–11. Such figurines have been found at Quban, see EMERY and KIRWAN 1935, fig. 32.

⁵⁵² Cf. KOPP 2005a, 89 for stratified examples from Elephantine (oldest examples from the late 18th–19th Dynasty; but more common in the 20th–21st Dynasties); for Memphis see GIDDY 1999, 31 (mid-18th–20th Dynasties); for Medinet Habu see TEETER 2010, 41–48 (all from the Third Intermediate Period).

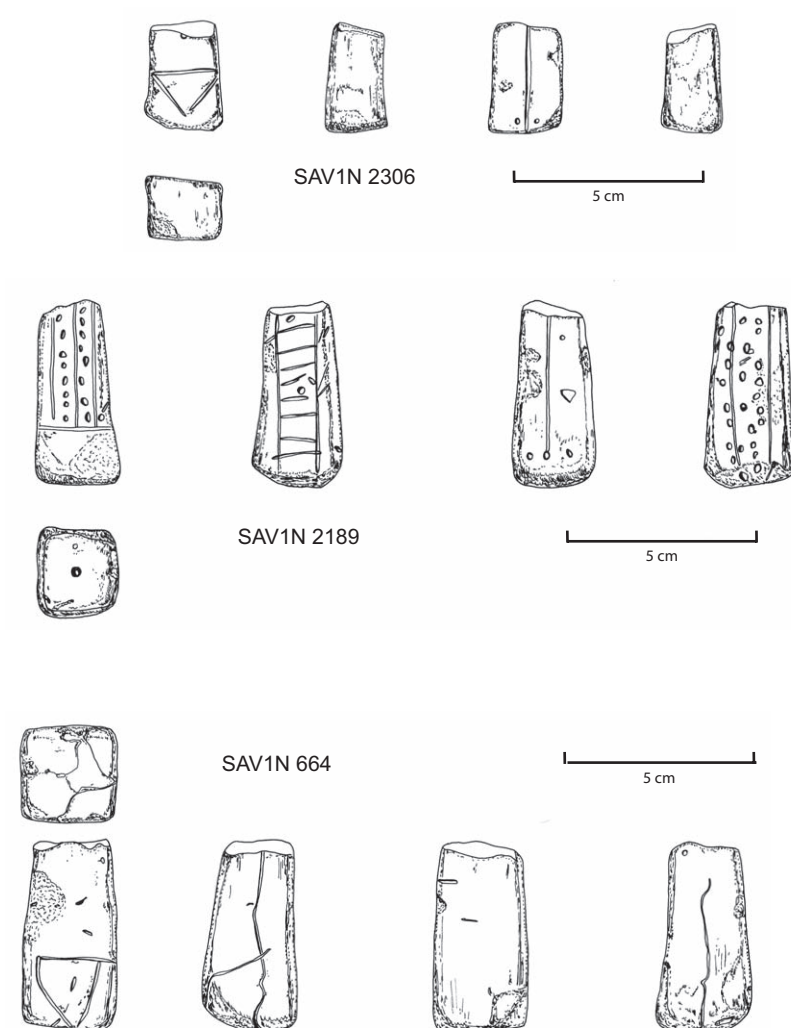


Fig. 85 Rudimentary female figurines from SAV1 North (SAV1N 2306, 2189 and 664)

Among the hand-modelled animal figurines of poorly fired clay,⁵⁵³ small ram statues appear, possibly depicting the god Amun (SAV1N 2221).⁵⁵⁴ The clay figurines of bulls, on the other hand, might fall into a well-attested Nubian tradition of cattle representations (e.g. SAV1N 588).⁵⁵⁵

B) Personal adornment

Beads are attested in various shapes (disc/ring, conical, drum-, barrel- and tube-shaped) and in a range of

materials (49 in faience; 30 in other materials, including clay and bone).⁵⁵⁶ Some examples are quite large and of irregular shape, possibly representing pendants. At present, all of the beads seem to be Egyptian in style,⁵⁵⁷ and the small number of the amulets from SAV1 North probably postdates the New Kingdom. Only four scarabs were found at SAV1 North, one of which is from Level 1 and is probably Post-New Kingdom in date. Two pieces derive from Level 2, leaving only one scarab originally attributed to Level

⁵⁵³ Cf. GIDDY 1999, 307–315, pls. 68–70. See also some figurines from Buhen, MILLARD 1979, 146–148, pl. 52.

⁵⁵⁴ Cf. STEVENS 2006, 61, 110.

⁵⁵⁵ Cf. cattle representations from Quban: EMERY and KIRWAN 1935, fig. 33 and Askut: SMITH 2003, 132, fig. 5.32. At Amarna, over 70 figurines were unidentifiable, but might have included cows (STEVENS 2006, 110).

⁵⁵⁶ For cylindrical pottery beads see GIDDY 1999, pl. 25.

⁵⁵⁷ Cf. SMITH 2003, 106–110 who differentiated a Nubian from the Egyptian style for the personal adornments at Askut. For a selection of Egyptian beads from New Kingdom funerary contexts in Nubia with parallels for SAV1 North see WILLIAMS 1992, 123–130, fig. 17.



Fig. 86 Basin SAV1N 2313 from Level 3

3. The latter, SAV1N 693 ($16 \times 12 \times 7$ mm), shows a symmetric floral design on its base and should be 18th Dynasty in date (Pl. 37). This scarab was documented as found north of Wall 035N, placing it just outside building unit N27. However, during the post-excavation processing this wall was established as being younger than Level 3. All in all, none of the scarabs can be archaeologically associated with the 18th Dynasty at SAV1 North. However, SAV1N 615 (Pl. 38), a well-preserved steatite scarab ($1.6 \times 1.2 \times 0.8$ cm) shows the royal name of Thutmose III on its base. Though it was excavated in Level 2, leaving some doubts about its date,⁵⁵⁸ the discovery of good parallels for its design on seal impressions from SAV1 East (Feature 15)⁵⁵⁹ make it almost certain that SAV1N 615 is a relic of the period of Thutmose III.⁵⁶⁰

C) Household items

Stands and supports appear at SAV1 North primarily as pottery vessels and are very common (see

III.4.5). Large rectangular stands and basin-like installations are present as well (e.g. SAV1N 2313, Level 3, in burnt clay, Fig. 86). One fragment of a small unfired clay table or other piece of furniture has survived (SAV1N 720).⁵⁶¹ Some pieces of large, tubular-shaped ovens were found, circular in diameter and in coarse, low fired Nile silt ware, but unfortunately come from fills rather than closed contexts.⁵⁶² Sixteen mud stoppers for various vessels were recorded and are mostly of the common conical type or hemispherical (Fig. 87).⁵⁶³ SAV1N 418, from Level 3 in Square 180/2270, is a partly broken conical stopper ($10.4 \times 9.6 \times 6.6$ cm, Fig. 87). Its front side shows traces of a rectangular stamp, unfortunately illegible, but confirming that the Egyptian practice of using stamped jar stoppers, mostly for wine jars, was also present at Sai.

A comparably small number of fragments of uninscribed seals were documented, which may have been primarily used for sealing small box-

⁵⁵⁸ The scarab was excavated in 2010 in the area of N27 – where exactly, remains unclear; only “west of Wall 36” was noted.

⁵⁵⁹ These seal impressions will be published elsewhere; for the find circumstances see BUDKA 2015b, 44–45.

⁵⁶⁰ For the general broad date range of scarabs with the name Menkheperre of Thutmose III see JAEGER 1982; lately see also LOHWASSER 2013, 229.

⁵⁶¹ Cf. the more common stools and tables in stone, GIDDY 1999, pls. 31–34; PRELL 2011, 94–95.

⁵⁶² For examples of ovens of this type see Elephantine (*in situ* evidence) and South Abydos (BUDKA 2006, 114 with references for Elephantine).

⁵⁶³ Cf. e.g. SEILER 2005, 118–119, fig. 58.

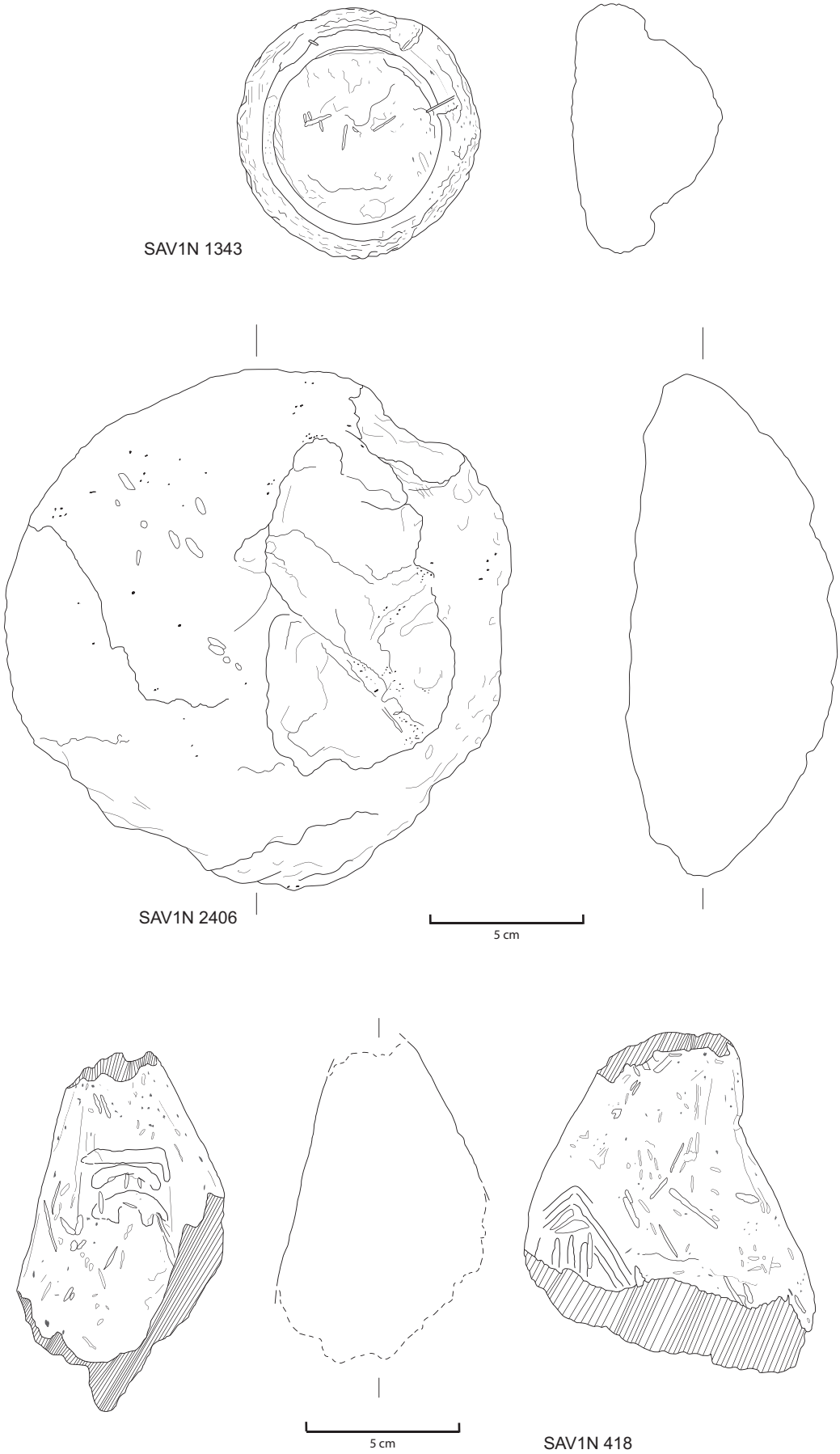


Fig. 87 Mud stoppers (SAV1N 1343, SAV1N 2406 and SAV1N 418) from Level 2 and Level 3

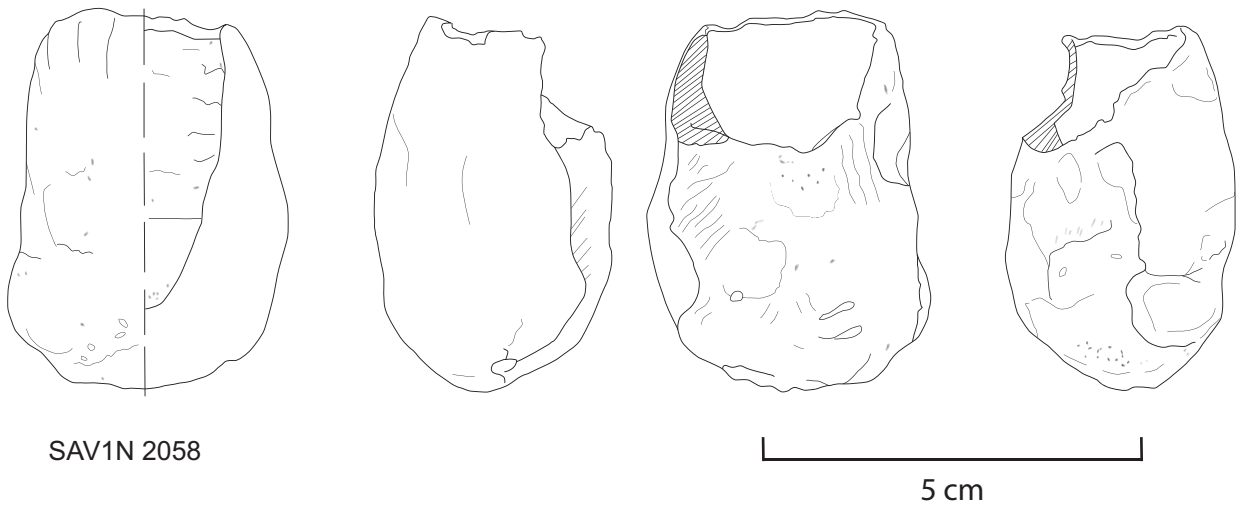


Fig. 88 Sealing (or miniature vessel?) SAVIN 2058, Level 3

es (27 pieces, including uncertain fragments, cf. Fig. 88). SAVIN 2058, found in Level 3 just north of building unit N12, is a hand-made mud object that seems to have previously held closed some kind of object (Fig. 88). During the course of excavation at SAV1 North by SIAM, no fragments of seal impressions were found (cf. end of this section).

D) Tools and instruments

The largest group of tools at SAV1 North is those made of stone and comprises weights, querns,

grinders, hammer stones, pounders and pestles, polishers and burnishers, a small number of possible whetstones and finally miscellaneous and/or multi-functional stone tools (see IV.3).⁵⁶⁴

Another small category of tools is the cosmetic instruments of typical Egyptian types, especially small palettes, grinders and dishes. A completely preserved example of a small granite dish with strong traces of use is SAVIN 323 (from Square 180/2270, Level 2, Fig. 89.1). A New Kingdom date for this rectangular palette (13.1 × 8.4 × 3cm) is

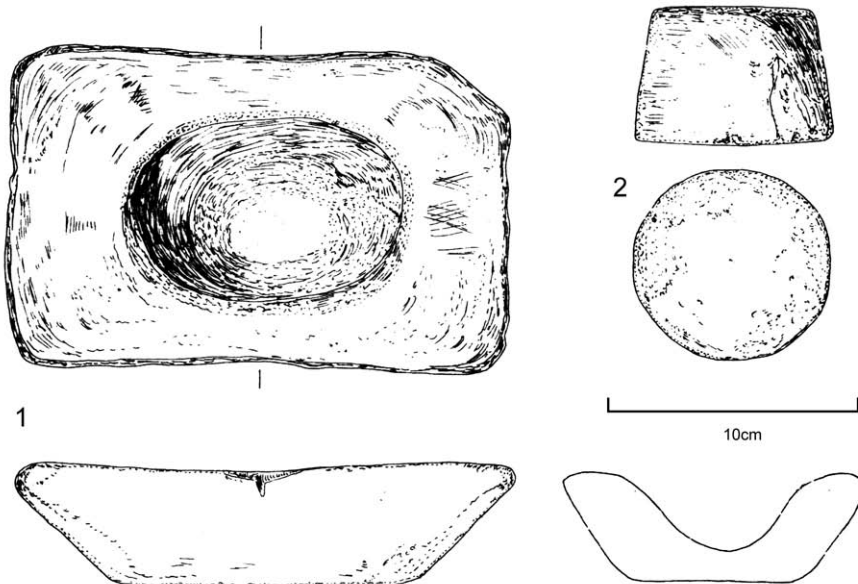


Fig. 89 Cosmetic palette SAVIN 323 (1) and grinder SAVIN 761 (2)

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. GIDDY 1999, pls. 39–50; PRELL 2011, passim.

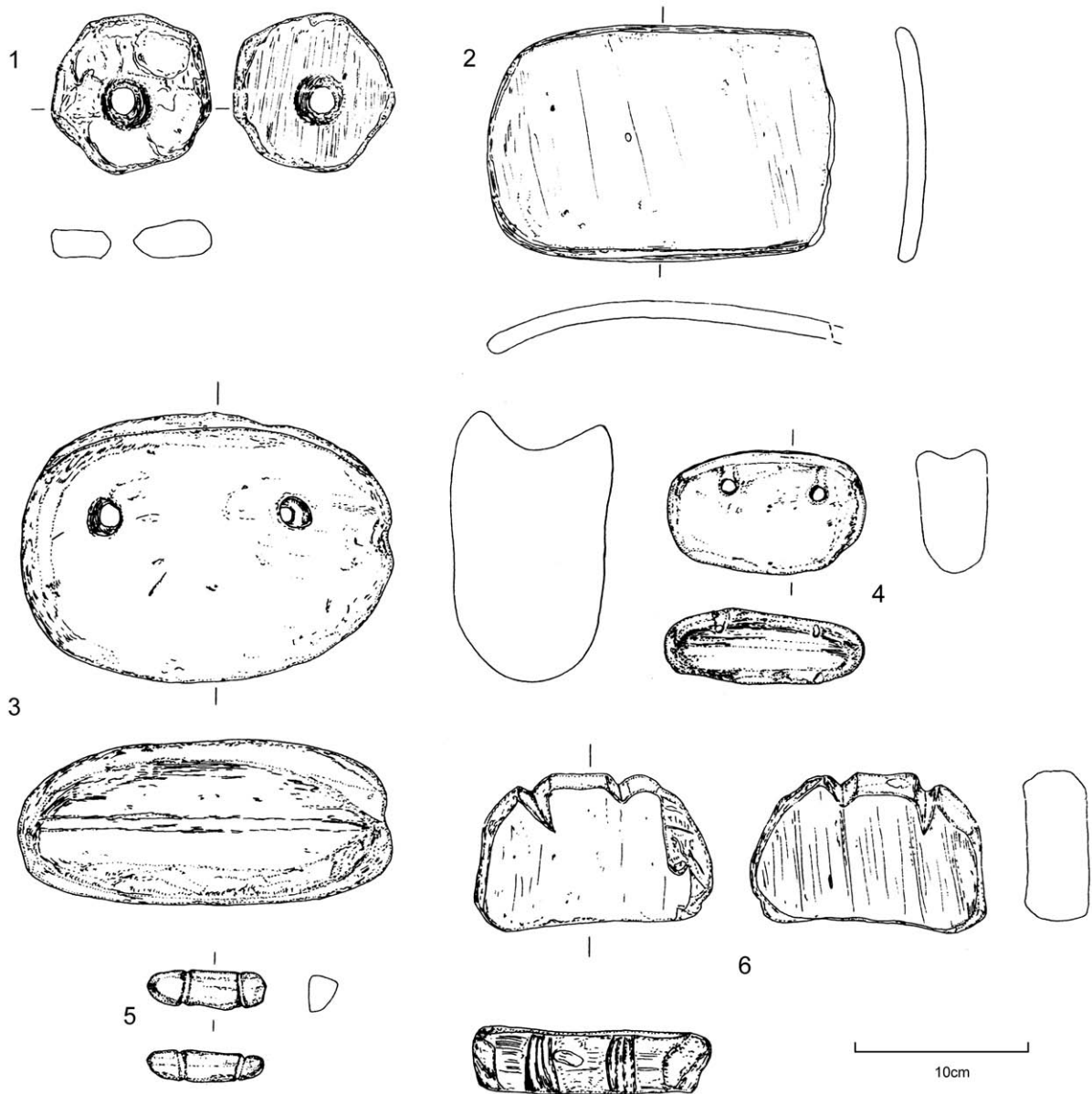


Fig. 90 Re-cut pot sherds and weights from SAV1 North

likely, with parallels at Elephantine⁵⁶⁵ and Askut,⁵⁶⁶ but with slight variation: its inner depression is not rectangular like the cited comparisons, but ovoid. Such a shape for the outline is also attested at Sai for another cosmetic dish, SAVIN 1655.⁵⁶⁷ This example is much smaller in size than SAVIN 323 and may be in a local Nubian style, as proposed for similar pieces from Askut.⁵⁶⁸ For actually grinding material on palettes or dishes like SAVIN 323, a device like SAVIN 761 (Fig. 89.2) was possibly

used, which again finds comparisons at Askut.⁵⁶⁹ As an object from Level 3, SAVIN 761 is significant for reconstructing cosmetic tools of the mid-18th Dynasty on Sai.

38 objects were classified as weights, many of which are made of baked clay or re-used pottery sherds (21 objects, Figs. 90.3–4). Most common are clay axe head types, which were interpreted as net-weights at Elephantine (18 pieces of Cornelius von Pilgrim's Type A).⁵⁷⁰ This is also the most like-

⁵⁶⁵ VON PILGRIM 1996a, 171–172, fig. 74, pl. 30b (from House H 46a, larger in size than SAVIN 0323).

⁵⁶⁶ SMITH 2003, 111, fig. 5.15E.

⁵⁶⁷ BUDKA and DOYEN 2013, 185–186, fig. 14.

⁵⁶⁸ See SMITH 2003, 111, fig. 5.15A citing parallels from Adindan.

⁵⁶⁹ SMITH 2003, 111, fig. 5.15F.

⁵⁷⁰ VON PILGRIM 1996a, 275–276, fig. 120.

ly classification for the pieces from SAV1 North, though at other sites such items have been labelled as loom weights or as multi-functional devices.⁵⁷¹ Weights in stone are rare from SAV1 North (six pieces) though one example is the elongated piece SAV1N 1173, made in steatite (Fig. 90.5).⁵⁷² No dating can be proposed since it derives from Level 1, but it falls into von Pilgrim's Type B of net-weights.⁵⁷³ Von Pilgrim's Type C is represented at SAV1 North by only three pieces of re-cut pottery sherds (e.g. Fig. 90.6).⁵⁷⁴ The small number of this type of weight is interesting, as it is typically very common in Egypt.⁵⁷⁵ The preference on Sai for the clay axe head type might indicate centralised organisation for the distribution of these objects, rather than *ad hoc* production like Type C. A similar situation at Askut was interpreted by Smith as reflecting a "centralized system of food production."⁵⁷⁶ One might add here that, according to the Nauri decree, fishing rights in Nubia were owned by temples⁵⁷⁷ and restricted access to fishing devices could correspond to this.

Of the 46 artefacts classified as re-used pot sherds, most were probably used as scrapers (Fig. 90.2). Re-cut pot sherds are common tools with multiple functions at New Kingdom domestic sites, attesting to material-saving recycling processes within Pharaonic culture (e.g. at Qantir⁵⁷⁸ and Elephantine⁵⁷⁹). Such re-use of ceramics is also attested in Nubian cultures, e.g. for cosmetic palettes.⁵⁸⁰ Three examples of the 46 re-cut sherds from SAV1 North are made from Nubian wares. SAV1N 594 (Fig. 90.2) is a body sherd from a Canaanite amphora, recycled as scraper at Sai. The sherd selected for this piece probably held some advantages for both its future use and the production as a tool: a hard fabric with low porosity, a thin wall thickness and a convenient bend for a good grip of the scraper.

In addition to authentic tools, further re-shaping of ceramics is notable in SAV1 North for the pro-

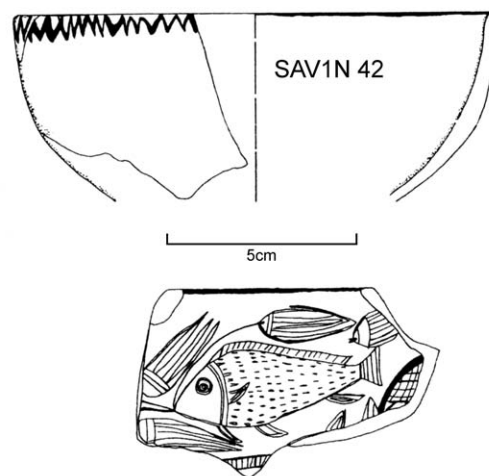


Fig. 91 Nun bowl SAV1N 42

duction of lids. As is commonly known from Egypt, dishes and plates were sometimes re-cut to be used as lids or covers (see SAV1N 2312 from building unit N12, Pl. 45).

E) Non-ceramic vessels

A small number of stone (twelve) and faience (eleven of various types + 49 Nun bowls) vessels were excavated in fragmented condition at SAV1 North. Especially noteworthy is a small calcite beaker with a ledge (SAV1N 0064), which finds parallels in both Egypt and Egyptian sites in Nubia.⁵⁸¹ Six lids for small cosmetic vases (kohl vases) were recorded (see SAV1N 2194 from N12D, Pl. 46).⁵⁸² Within the group of faience vessels, several fragments represent Nun (or marsh) bowls (Fig. 91) which are common from the 18th Dynasty to the Late New Kingdom. Unfortunately, almost all of the 49 such pieces come from the uppermost Levels 1 and 2 and are therefore not conclusively datable. Only a single piece was derived from Level 3 and is clearly of 18th Dynasty date (SAV1N 465, a small body-herd with a geometric pattern). The best preserved rim sherd is SAV1N

⁵⁷¹ E.g. GIDDY 1999, 193; MILLARD 1979, 127 and pl. 103. For loom weights, which are different in shape, see e.g. KEMP and VOGELANG-EASTWOOD 2001, 392–403.

⁵⁷² Cf. BUDKA and DOYEN 2013, 186, fig. 15.5.

⁵⁷³ VON PILGRIM 1996a, 276–278, fig. 121, especially fig. 121c.

⁵⁷⁴ VON PILGRIM 1996a, 278, fig. 121.

⁵⁷⁵ VON PILGRIM 1996a, 279, fig. 123.

⁵⁷⁶ SMITH 2003, 101.

⁵⁷⁷ Cf. MORKOT 1995, 177.

⁵⁷⁸ RAEDLER 2007; PRELL 2011, 92.

⁵⁷⁹ Cf. KOPP 2005b; see also BUDKA 2010c. For Third Intermediate material from Tanis see BRISAUD and COTELLE 1987.

⁵⁸⁰ See WILLIAMS 1993, 45 with note 49.

⁵⁸¹ SMITH 2003, 111, fig. 5.15B.

⁵⁸² Such cosmetic items are common burial gifts; see on Sai cemeteries SAC4 (GRATIEN 1985, pl. IVa) and SAC5 (MINAULT-GOUT 2004; MINAULT-GOUT and THILL 2012). For further kohl pots in New Kingdom tombs in Nubia see e.g. WILLIAMS 1992, *passim*.



Fig. 92 Clay balls from Level 3, SAV1N 2176 (N27) and SAV1N 2198 (N12)

042, regrettably coming from Levels 1 and 2 in Square 190/2270 (Fig. 91), but clearly datable to the 18th Dynasty on stylistic grounds. Nun bowls like SAV1N 042 attest to the Egyptian tradition of these vessels connected with regeneration in the domestic context of SAV1 North.⁵⁸³

F) Models, games and unidentified pieces

16 small tokens or pottery discs of unclear function⁵⁸⁴ and twelve miniature balls in both fired and unfired clay (possibly to be identified as game stones) fall into this category.⁵⁸⁵ The miniature clay balls (Fig. 92) find exact parallels from Egyptian sites like Amarna and are probably related to the ritual of the first haircut.⁵⁸⁶ Two pieces from Level 3 derive from building units discussed in Chapter II, SAV1N 2176 (N27) and SAV1N 2198 (N12) (see IV.4), and are datable to the mid-18th Dynasty.

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Implications of the most common objects for reconstructing activities at SAV1 North, especially for weaving, fishing and grinding corn, were already discussed elsewhere.⁵⁸⁷ An interesting aspect that should be emphasised related to the location of Sai in Upper Nubia is the scarcity of textual evidence within the categories of small finds. Jar docketts are extremely rare,⁵⁸⁸ as are traces of sealing practices – no seal impressions are so far documented from SAV1 North and only four scarabs represent these objects, which are usually numerous at Egyptian domestic sites of the period.⁵⁸⁹ However, analysis of this situation must be cautious due to the excavation technique: sieving was not conducted for the deposits in SAV1 North, while systematic sieving of fill from pits, silos and cellars at SAV1 East and SAV1 West has resulted in the discovery of numerous seal impressions.⁵⁹⁰ Thus, seal impressions are likely to have been also part of the material remains of SAV1 North.

Another aspect of the material culture from SAV1 North contrasting to contemporaneous sites in Egypt is that moulds for small faience objects are missing.⁵⁹¹ One may conclude that, unlike the

⁵⁸³ For the domestic context of marsh bowls cf. GIDDY 1999, 267; STEVENS 2006, 178–180. For Nun bowls in New Kingdom tombs in Nubia see e.g. WILLIAMS 1992, 131.

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. GIDDY 1999, pls. 72–73.

⁵⁸⁵ Cf. a large number of model balls from Amarna, of which some are similar to the ones from SAV1 North; STEVENS 2006, 112–115.

⁵⁸⁶ See ARNST 2006.

⁵⁸⁷ BUDKA and DOYEN 2013, 198–201.

⁵⁸⁸ BUDKA and DOYEN 2013, 198–199. Cf. also the small amount of docketts (two) from the complete material of The Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Sudanese Nubia (both from the cemetery of Fadrus, site 185), see HOLTHOER 1977, 58, 82.

⁵⁸⁹ Cf. GIDDY 1999, 54–76, pls. 15–17, 64. Cf. the same number of scarabs (four) found in New Kingdom levels at Askut (SMITH 2003, 113). Smith proposed a direct link between this phenomenon and changing organisational patterns of Egyptian control, in contrast to the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period. For scarabs from tomb contexts on Sai, see: Second Intermediate Period examples from cemetery SAC4, GRATIEN 1985, pl. IV; New Kingdom and Napatan pieces from SAC5, THILL 2004.

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. BUDKA 2015b, 45.

⁵⁹¹ Only a single mould (SAV1N 1823) was recorded from Level 2 and is of unclear date, most probably Post-Pharaonic. For faience moulds common at Egyptian sites see GIDDY 1999, 243–250, pls. 53–54 with diverse parallels.

main residential sites in Egypt like Memphis and Amarna, no faience production was carried out in the New Kingdom town of Sai. However, the presence of faience beads from SAV1 North, including “double ring beads”, may attest to a local bead production on a small scale (see IV.4.4).

3 MACROLITHICS FROM SAV1 NORTH⁵⁹²

The variety of types and materials of stone tools found in SAV1 North is limited, mainly to pounders or hammers, grindstones, handmills, whetstones and abrasive stones. Some of these objects were likely also multi-purpose tools. The most common materials noted here are natural quartz boulders, sandstone and quartzite (silicified sandstone).

3.1 Pounders/hammers

The outline and sections of pounders/hammers from SAV1 North are often naturally oval, round, plano-convex or bar-shaped. The natural surface of the objects is typically smooth and even, an important factor for good handling. Concentrations of percussion marks attest to the use as a tool. According to the shape of the boulder, these marks can be arranged circumferentially, especially if the poulder was used over a longer period. Some well-worn pieces have only small remains of the original surface of the boulder left, while other examples were barely used and show only few small concentrations of percussion marks.

The large quantity of hammer stones (320 pieces) from SAV1 North finds close parallels at Qantir⁵⁹³ and Amarna⁵⁹⁴. The functional use of these hammer stones was recently discussed by Andreas Tillmann, who suggests an industrial use in relation with metal production.⁵⁹⁵ While this is possible for material found at Qantir, at SAV1 North another function is more likely – hammer stones were also used for napping the surface of smoothed grindstones.⁵⁹⁶ At SAV1 North, this functional use might explain the large quantity of pounders, their association with numerous grindstones/querns (444 pieces)⁵⁹⁷ and

their provenance of domestic structures with silos and grinding emplacements (cf. IID.1).

3.2 Whetstones

Whetstones, of which a minimum of 19 pieces were found at SAV1 North, are mainly made from sandstone (white, yellow, red),⁵⁹⁸ a material on which sharpening stone knives does not produce grooves.⁵⁹⁹ Whetstones that do contain the distinctive grooves, like SAV1N 2174 and SAV1N 2031 (see IV.4.1), likely result from use with metal tools or fish hooks.⁶⁰⁰ Since no metal objects dating to the New Kingdom were documented at SAV1 North, this remains tentative. In addition, with only three pieces exhibiting grooves, evidence from SAV1 North is rather scarce. A minimum of six abrasive stones in quartzite were documented from SAV1 North, deriving mostly from Level 2. As Silvia Prell has demonstrated for the material from Qantir, “Schleifsteine” made of quartzite are a distinctive group of abrasive stones.⁶⁰¹ The material resulted in smooth and almost polished surfaces, which differs from the rough surfaces of whetstones made in sandstone.

3.3 Grindstones

The 440 grindstones known from SAV1 North are mainly made from quartzite (red, yellow, white, pinkish), showing a medium to coarse graininess; only a few examples are made of sandstone. The outline of the grindstone is often ovoid, while the grinding surface can be flat or concave.⁶⁰²

3.4 Handmills

Like the grindstones, the 122 handmills from SAV1 North are mainly manufactured from quartzite, with a small number of sandstone examples. The outline is again often ovoid and the grinding surface can be flat, convex or concave according to the wear. Sections from the handmills are predominately plano-convex. They come in a variety sizes and can be quite large, making it difficult to distinguish them

⁵⁹² I wish to thank Silvia Prell, who studied the macrolithics from SAV1 East and SAV1 West in 2015 as part of the ERC project AcrossBorders. Unfortunately, the complete material from SAV1 North was no longer available for study subsequent to construction work on the magazine of the French excavation house in the fall of 2015. The following is therefore of preliminary character, as more detailed analysis of the originals could not be undertaken.

⁵⁹³ TILLMANN 2007, 50–55; PRELL 2011, 31–40.

⁵⁹⁴ BOYCE 1995.

⁵⁹⁵ TILLMANN 2007, 50–55.

⁵⁹⁶ TILLMANN 2007, 55 (“Aufrauung glattgeschliffener Mahlsteinarbeitsflächen”) with literature and parallels. Cf. also PRELL 2011, 31 for various functions of hammer stones.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. PRELL 2011, 72–79.

⁵⁹⁸ Cf. KEMP and STEVENS 2010b, 436–441; PRELL 2011, 50–53.

⁵⁹⁹ PRELL 2011, 48–52; KEMP and STEVENS 2010b, 443–444.

⁶⁰⁰ Cf. KORHONEN 2014.

⁶⁰¹ See PRELL 2011, 44–72.

⁶⁰² Cf. PRELL 2011, 72–73.

from grindstones.⁶⁰³ However, differentiation is possible by the nature of the surface treatment of the back: the convex back of handmills is always smoothed, at least at the raised parts, to facilitate the grip. Several pieces from SAV1 North are much worn and only a few centimetres thick.

4 SELECTED OBJECTS FROM LEVEL 3

Similar to the ceramics, only fragmented information is currently available for the objects discovered in the building units of Level 3. Most of the material is associated with structure N12.

4.1 Finds from building unit N24

The objects from Level 3 in building unit N24 are at the first glance rather insignificant. Two stone tools were found south of Wall 8N: a small fragment of a much eroded sandstone grindstone (SAVIN 297, 8.9 × 8.9 × 4.3cm) and a schist hammer (SAVIN 299, 9.4 × 7.3 × 5.4cm). Close by, west of Wall 08W, a large double-handed stone pounder (SAVIN 2427, 21.3 × 11.3 × 9cm) was found, broken at one end. Its use is attested by percussion marks at the preserved end (Pl. 39).

Most interesting, however, are the four grindstones and two handmills discovered along Wall 08W during fine cleaning in N24. One of these grindstones (SAVIN 2432, 30.7 × 17.4 × 11cm, Pl. 40, see IIB.3.4.1) was almost intact and set perpendicular to the wall. It is a large fragment of a sandstone grindstone with a smooth, flat top surface through use, while the remaining sides are roughly shaped. Below SAVIN 2432, covered by a 3cm thick occupational deposit, was a second, more fragmentary example (18 × 16 × 5cm),⁶⁰⁴ which was found lying parallel to the western wall. Two additional broken sandstone grindstones were found nearby and are complemented by the fragment of a handmill, SAVIN 2430, which is broken at both ends. The top surface of the handmill is flat and somewhat rough, while the base is rounded and slightly smoother – perhaps the mill was not well used. Another handmill, SAVIN 2428 (Pl. 41), was found in a slightly higher position along Wall 08W.⁶⁰⁵ It is largely complete and almost rectangular in shape. It was well used, as it is smooth and flat on the top and bottom surfaces while rough around the circumference.

These macrolithics from N24, which attest to grinding activities within the structure and clearly belong to its early phase of use, are complemented by an adornment piece. Within Installation N24A, a small faience disc bead with a diameter of 8mm was found at the bottom of the installation, along Wall 07S (SAVIN 2426, Pl. 42).

4.2 Finds from building unit N12

Within N12, no differentiation was made for which part of the building unit the objects were found, making a functional interpretation impossible. In addition, similar to the pottery, the objects recovered from the area of N12 are numerous, but often associated with the upper levels, especially Level 2. For example, sandstone fragment SAVIN 2031 (8.2 × 7.3 × 4.1cm) comes from the interior of N12, but at Level 2. This fragment has one smooth surface, interrupted by two grooves that intersect off-centre. This object finds a parallel from Level 3, west of Wall 53, also from the interior of N12: SAVIN 2174 is a similar sandstone piece (4.7 × 6.4 × 2.7cm) with two intersecting grooves on a smoothed surface (Pl. 43). Both objects could be whetstones – a similar piece from the delta site Tell el-Retaba was labelled as tool sharpener⁶⁰⁶ and some of the whetstones from Qantir also possess grooves (see above).⁶⁰⁷ Prell has stressed that sandstone is well suited for whetting and sharpening metal tools, such as knives and adze.⁶⁰⁸ Otherwise well attested at New Kingdom settlement sites in Egypt and Nubia, no fishing hooks or other metal tools were found at SAV1 North, making any connection to these whetstones tentative.⁶⁰⁹

Besides SAVIN 2174, 38 other objects from the interior of N12 can be dated to the early to mid-18th Dynasty according to parallels (Fig. 93). Most common are the macrolithics, mainly in sandstone and quartz: three pestles, two palettes, nine grindstones, one handmill, four hammer stones and one possible polishing stone. In combination with the quern emplacement, these objects confirm grinding activities within N12. The remaining finds from N12 show more variety, with two beads, two axe head type of clay weight (SAVIN 2045, Fig. 90.3 and SAVIN 2046, Pl. 44), one seal (SAVIN 2270; 8.1 × 5.15 × 5.1cm) very similar to SAVIN 2058 (Fig. 88), three small mud balls (e.g. SAVIN 2198, see Fig. 92) and

⁶⁰³ Cf. PRELL 2011, 77–78.

⁶⁰⁴ Its top was levelled at 159.93m, its base at 159.88m, lying over the gravelled ground.

⁶⁰⁵ Its top was levelled at 159.99m, its base at 159.96m.

⁶⁰⁶ RZEPKA et. al. 2013, 267–268, figs. 34–35.

⁶⁰⁷ PRELL 2011, 48 and 52–53.

⁶⁰⁸ PRELL 2011, 48, 50 and 52.

⁶⁰⁹ Cf. SMITH 2003, 101–103, fig. 5.5.

Excavation number	Object type	Material
SAVIN 1896	artefact	sandstone
SAVIN 1910	artefact	clay
SAVIN 1936	artefact/weight?	sandstone
SAVIN 2167	artefact	sandstone
SAVIN 2174	whetstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2201	artefact	clay
SAVIN 2312	re-used pot sherd (lid)	clay
SAVIN 2273	lid	mud
SAVIN 2156	ball	mud
SAVIN 2197	ball	clay
SAVIN 2198	ball	clay
SAVIN 2034	pestle	quartz
SAVIN 2035	pestle	sandstone
SAVIN 2275	figurine? (leg of animal?)	clay
SAVIN 2284	animal figurine?	clay
SAVIN 1871	pestle?	sandstone
SAVIN 1894	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 1895	grindstone	stone
SAVIN 2043	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2054	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2061	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2063	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2131	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2140	grindstone	quartz
SAVIN 2150	grindstone	sandstone
SAVIN 2044	handmill?	sandstone
SAVIN 2062	palette?	sandstone
SAVIN 2179	palette?	shist
SAVIN 2024	hammer stone	sandstone
SAVIN 2026	hammer stone	shist
SAVIN 2050	hammer stone	quartz
SAVIN 2141	hammer stone?	stone
SAVIN 1903	bead	faience
SAVIN 2155	bead	clay
SAVIN 2181	polishing stone?	quartz
SAVIN 2045	weight	clay
SAVIN 2046	weight	clay
SAVIN 2270	sealing	mud

Fig. 93 List of finds from building unit N12, Level 3

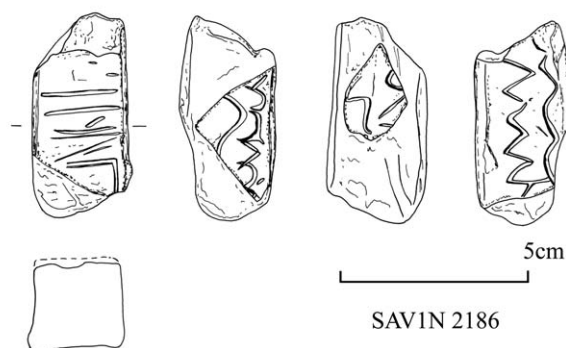


Fig. 94 Female figurine SAVIN 2186 from silo N12D

two very small, undiagnostic fragments of clay animal figurines. The re-used ring base of a pottery dish, SAVIN 2312 (Pl. 45), re-worked to function as a lid, is well dateable to the early to mid-18th Dynasty.

N12D

A total of twelve objects were documented from N12D (Fig. 95), the silo that also yielded a large amount of pottery. Six of these are stone tools: one pestle, one hammer stone, two grindstones and two handmills. These finds correspond nicely to the functional interpretation of building unit N12 connected with bread making and grinding (IID.1).

The other objects from N12D include one fragment of a small animal figurine (possibly a bull), a fragmented lid of a kohl pot in calcite (SAVIN 2194, Pl. 46), one rudimentary female figurine, a faience bead and a fragmented axe type net-weight (see IV.2.1). The rudimentary female figurine (SAVIN 2186, 5.48 × 2.48 × 2.6cm) is especially noteworthy, despite its broken state of preservation, because it combines a typical Nubian pattern of wavy incised lines⁶¹⁰ with Egyptian stylistic features (Fig. 94).⁶¹¹ Similar rudimentary figurines with comparable decoration were found at Buhen.⁶¹²

4.3 Finds from building unit N26

Nine objects were recovered from Level 3 in building unit N26. Of these, two fragments of leather, SAVIN 2202 and 2212, are clearly of Post-New Kingdom date (probably quite recent) and attest to the dis-

⁶¹⁰ See, e.g., a net-weight found at Elephantine in Nubian fabric and with un-Egyptian incised decoration; see VON PILGRIM 1996a, 276, fig. 120b.

⁶¹¹ BUDKA and DOYEN 2012, 183.

⁶¹² E.g. MILLARD 1979, no. 747, pl. 53.

Excavation no.	Object type	Material	Findposition
SAVIN 2159	artefact	faience	Level 3, from the interior of N12D
SAVIN 2183	pestle	stone (schist?)	
SAVIN 2128	handmill	schist	
SAVIN 2132	handmill	sandstone	
SAVIN 2194	lid	calcite	
SAVIN 2168	animal figurine	clay	
SAVIN 2186	female figurine	clay	
SAVIN 2180	grindstone	sandstone	
SAVIN 2250	grindstone?	sandstone	
SAVIN 2135	hammer stone	quartz	
SAVIN 2200	bead	faience	
SAVIN 2267	net-weight	clay	

Fig. 95 List of finds from silo N12D

turbed state of the deposits in N26. A small bead, SAVIN 2256, is also of unclear date. The other objects here are mostly stone tools: two pounders, one handmill and one polishing stone. Finally, a small clay ball (SAVIN 2176, Fig. 92) and a jar stopper of hemispherical shape (SAVIN 2256) were also found.

4.4 Finds from building unit N27

Only two small items from building unit N27 were documented as Level 3. SAVIN 730 is a sherd of Medieval date that was recut to a disc (possibly as a token or game piece), illustrating that mixed and disturbed contexts are also found in Level 3 (cf. III.1). SAVIN 2154 is two adjoined faience ring beads (8 × 4.1mm). Although this is clearly not a sealed context, a New Kingdom date is likely for these beads and they could attest to local faience production, despite the lack of moulds from SAV1 North (see IV.2.1).

5 FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF FINDS FROM SAV1 NORTH

In general, objects known from New Kingdom settlements in Nubia cover a large spectrum of functions, from personal items and tools, to storage and food production, and references to fertility and religious acts.⁶¹³

Several groups of objects from Sai fall into the category of rebirth, fertility and well-being, comparing nicely to finds from Amarna in Egypt.⁶¹⁴ Firstly, rudimentary female figurines, faience Nun bowls and specific ceramic vessels like duck-bowls and feminoform vessels can be highlighted.⁶¹⁵ All of these objects are known from domestic, funerary *and* temple contexts.⁶¹⁶ Interestingly, several domestic contexts of the 18th Dynasty (Memphis, Amarna, Elephantine and Sai Island) show female figurines archaeologically associated specifically with Nun bowls.⁶¹⁷ Nude female figurines are not only connected with sexuality and childbearing, but with a complex ideology that is difficult to define in the modern mind-set.⁶¹⁸

Regeneration is also closely related to ancestor cult and the commemoration of individuals. At Amara West and Sesebi, anthropoid busts attest to the invocation of ancestors within the houses,⁶¹⁹ while domestic shrines have been identified at Askut and Mirgissa.⁶²⁰ No such installations have been identified to date at Sai, though pot stands and footed bowls with a gypsum-coating found at SAV1 North⁶²¹ might be related to such shrines.⁶²²

All in all, the functional aspects of finds from SAV1 North seem to correspond to their counterparts at Elephantine and Amarna. However, there

⁶¹³ BUDKA and Doyen 2012–2013, 200–201.

⁶¹⁴ STEVENS 2006; cf. BUDKA and Doyen 2012–2013, 183–187.

⁶¹⁵ See BUDKA 2016a.

⁶¹⁶ Cf. BUDKA 2016a with references.

⁶¹⁷ See GIDDY 1999, 28–31, 267, pls. 8–12; STEVENS 2006, 178–179.

⁶¹⁸ Cf. WARAкса 2009; BUDKA 2016a, 77–78; DOYEN 2016.

⁶¹⁹ SPENCER 2014b, 49.

⁶²⁰ Cf. SMITH 2003, 124–133.

⁶²¹ BUDKA and DOYEN 2013, 201.

⁶²² Cf. SMITH 2003, 127, fig. 5.25; STEVENS 2006, 193–194.

are elements of private religion specific to sites like Sai, with Egyptian votive objects appear side by side with Nubian style objects, as well as hybrid-types that combine both traditions.⁶²³ This local aspect of a complex mixture of lifestyles finds parallels in other Egyptian sites located in Nubia, for example at Askut,⁶²⁴ and corresponds with the ceramic evidence from SAV1 North (cf. Chapter III). The local style of some objects and pottery vessels seems to suggest that both Egyptians and Nubians settled at SAV1 North. However, “postulating hybridity from changes in the material culture”⁶²⁵ generally faces considerable problems. Taking Amara West as case study, Neal Spencer has recently argued that individual choices and group dynamics may sometimes be more significant than cultural identities.⁶²⁶ This probably also holds true for SAV1 North and underlines how little we still know about the occupants of this sector of the New Kingdom town of Sai.

6 THE CHARACTER OF THE MATERIAL CULTURE FROM SAV1 NORTH

Even though only part of the material from SAV1 North could be processed, the information gained from the objects is significant for the reconstruction of certain activities, which may also be relevant for the function of the architecture and buildings. As mentioned in Chapter II, the building units of SAV1 North at Level 3 are frequently associated with grinding activities. The large quantity of stone tools found here – querns, pounders and hammer stones – find comparisons in Egypt, but are also known in the indigenous Nubian tradition. The attested quern emplacements at SAV1 North are typical Egyptian, as is the surrounding architecture.

The very high number of grindstones (444 from SAV1 North) indicates that these were used for more tasks than just cereal grinding: some of the grindstones are probably connected with extracting gold from quartz stones⁶²⁷ and others show traces of pigments.⁶²⁸ The numerous pounders/hammers (320 from SAV1 North) are perhaps associated with the cutting and trimming of the grindstones.⁶²⁹ It must be stressed that pounders/hammers of the same types as those from SAV1 North are also frequent

at the Christian sites on Sai,⁶³⁰ making an exclusive New Kingdom date for all of the material from SAV1 North very unlikely.

The assumption that grindstones were used at SAV1 North for purposes other than grain seems to be supported by the insignificant number of functional ceramics associated with bread. Conical bread moulds are nearly absent, whereas the quantity of flat bread trays is larger (see III.4.5). The abundance of conical bread moulds recently excavated at SAV1 East clearly illustrates that this type of functional pottery was common within the town, but not in SAV1 North. Since these bread moulds are more common for temple and ritual contexts,⁶³¹ it is likely that SAV1 East represents the place of use/deposition of these cones in connection with Temple A. However, it cannot be ruled out that the actual bread was produced somewhere else. Other than building unit N12, no rooms suitable for baking were found in SAV1 North, again supporting the idea that it was not grain that required such numerous grinding tools at the site.

In summary, the material remains from SAV1 North demonstrate that life in a New Kingdom Egyptian town in Upper Nubia included a variety of activities besides the common household tasks like cooking, bread making, fishing and spinning. The artefacts and pottery found here cover a large spectrum of functions, from personal items, games, cosmetic instruments and tools, to storage, food production and consumption, with additional references to fertility, regeneration, feasting and religious acts.

Household and cooking devices should always be considered in context, here within their find spot and architectural framework in the New Kingdom town of Sai. As demonstrated by the contrasting examples of SAV1 East and SAV1 North, the architectural remains of sectors within the town of Sai can differ considerably in size – for example, in the wall thickness of the buildings – but compare well for the material remains (pottery, stone tools, small finds),⁶³² though with certain dissimilarities regarding the quantities and proportions. This suggests that the prime usage of distinct areas within a town is not always reflected clearly in the material evidence, but may be diluted in the archaeological record.

⁶²³ This can also be observed for the official cult in the Egyptian temples set up in Nubia, see TÖRÖK 2009, 228–229.

⁶²⁴ Cf. SMITH 1995; SMITH 2003, 101–135.

⁶²⁵ PAPPÀ 2013, 36.

⁶²⁶ SPENCER 2014b, 47. Cf. also SPENCER 2014a.

⁶²⁷ Cf. KLEMM and KLEMM 2013, 8–11.

⁶²⁸ Cf. STOREMYR et al. 2013, 230.

⁶²⁹ Cf. BUDKA and DOYEN 2013; STOREMYR et al. 2013, 230.

⁶³⁰ Personal observation, Sai Island 2013.

⁶³¹ Cf. ROSE 2007, HC 2, 288.

⁶³² BUDKA 2017.