

# POTTERY AND THE ECONOMY IN 8th CENTURY BEIRUT: AN Umayyad ASSEMBLAGE FROM THE ROMAN IMPERIAL BATHS (BEY 045)

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**RÉSUMÉ:** L'objet de ce poster est un dépôt de céramique qui date de la période Omeyyade (700-750). Mis au jour dans les niveaux de construction des Bains Impériaux de Beyrouth, il révèle, entre autres, la fonction continue de ces bains après la conquête arabe. Le dépôt en question témoigne de la fin de la production des amphores de Beyrouth et des amphores byzantines 'classiques' (LRA 1, LRA 4), mais il indique, surtout, la présence forte des produits égyptiens, soit des céramiques fines (EGRSA) et amphores (d'Abu Mena ; des LRA 5 et LRA 7 de pâte alluviale du Nil). Les amphores LRA 13 sont présentes avec trois types de pâtes : exemples micacés et peignés égéens similaires à celles de l'épave de Yassi Ada ; un exemple chypriote ou du nord-ouest syrien ; et plus couramment, une variante de LRA 13 dont l'origine égyptienne est maintenant confirmée par les travaux de Pascale Ballet : forme/variante 'Egloff 167'. Quant aux importations levantines, elles sont réduites à quelques amphores de Césarée Maritime et de Beth She'an.

## The Anglo-Lebanese excavations in Beirut

The post-war excavations in the Beirut Central District have been on an unprecedented scale. Various Lebanese and foreign teams have participated in the excavation of the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Classical and Medieval city.

From 1994 the Anglo-Lebanese team, under the direction of Helga Seeden (American University of Beirut) and Dominic Perring (University of York), investigated a large section of the Hellenistic and Roman-Byzantine layout, covering an area of over 3 ha. It can be said to be the largest, single, open-area excavation by modern methods and the data recovered (together with that of all the teams) should focus attention on Beirut in much the same way that the similarly international excavations of Punic and Roman-Byzantine Carthage provided a platform for the study of sites and regional trade in the Western Mediterranean.

During the Anglo-Lebanese excavations some 20,000 archaeological structures were recorded, of Late Iron Age to Ottoman date, comprising a Hellenistic cemetery, several insulae of the Classical city (streets and porticoes, houses, shops, bakeries, a fullery, inns, cisterns), part of the Roman Imperial baths, Roman quay, Medieval defences, Fatimid and Crusader occupation, and post-Medieval glass and silk workshops (Butcher, Thorpe 1997; Perring 1997-1998; Thorpe 1998).

## The post-excavation analysis of finds

As part of the post-excavation programme, a pottery typology for Beirut and the region is well advanced. Already some 400 new amphora forms have been isolated and the complex development of the Beirut amphora type through the 1st century BC to the 7th century AD is being

documented (Reynolds 1997-1998: Appendix 1). A typology of the Fatimid to Ottoman fine and coarse wares is also at an advanced stage (El-Masri 1997-1998; unpublished; El-Masri, Seeden 1999).

The publication will include a catalogue of sequences of fully quantified, key, stratified pottery assemblages and a full record of all the pottery studied will be available on CD-Rom. Relative quantities of local, regional and imported fine wares, amphorae and coarse wares will be assessed through time in order to reconstruct economic trends and understand Beirut's relationship to its hinterland and sites or specific regions of the Levant, the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, and beyond.

The overall composition of assemblages (e.g. comparative quantities of pottery to glass, to building materials and bone) will also be analysed in order to assess site-formation processes, i.e. the source of the deposits; the primary, secondary or even tertiary re-deposition of material; the systematic collection and recycling of rubbish; the re-working of lower levels; the ancient truncation, and hence loss in the archaeological record, of deposits of particular periods; the identification of periods of non-activity on the site; the identification of material derived from domestic, building, or commercial activities.

## The pottery assemblage

This poster presents preliminary observation and interpretation of the ceramic finds from a relatively large Umayyad deposit of likely early 8th century AD date found during the excavations by the Anglo-Lebanese team in the Roman Imperial baths of Beirut, site BEY 045. The deposit was a make-up layer for a floor, presumably of Umayyad date, which lay above an earlier hypocaust floor of early 5th century date. It seems likely that the baths were still

functioning, being remodelled several times, during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods.

This pottery assemblage (42 kg, with total diagnostics numbering 212 rims, bases and handles) gives us a good indication of the range and varied sources of fine wares, amphorae, and coarse wares present in Beirut in the later Umayyad period (Tables 1 and 2). The exact date is difficult to determine, but the deposit shows strong parallels with the assemblages found in levels of the late 7th and first half of the 8th century at both Pella and Jerash (Jordan). The assemblage is also, it would seem, strongly paralleled by the range of finds in the AD 749 destruction level which marks the end of Umayyad rule at Fustat (Cairo),

## Amphorae

Certain regional amphorae typical of Byzantine contexts are absent or rare by this date. The disappearance of the Beirut amphora type is striking and significant if we are to assume that the amphora contained locally produced wine (nine body sherds; the rim in Fig. 2.8 could be a residual example of a Beirut 8.1 amphora, rather than a LRA 2 variant: it should not have been placed on Fig. 2. The diameter is too large for the late 6th-7th century Beirut 8.2). Wine amphorae imported from Gaza are now also absent and LRA 1 – the classic import of the Byzantine period – carrying wine and oil from the Antioch region

**Table 1. Summary of pottery by class in the BEY 045.503 deposit**

| BEY 045.503                                     | Rim count | Base count | Handle count | Wall count | Rim Gms | Base Gms | Handle gms | Wall gms |
|---|-----------|------------|--------------|------------|---------|----------|------------|----------|
| Fine Wares                                      | 27        | 3          | -            | 6          | 879     | 129      | -          | 68       |
| Amphorae  | 56        | 71         | 18           | 499        | 6250    | 3113     | 2369       | 21586    |
| Plain wares                                     | 4         | 11         | 3            | 21         | 227     | 185      | 132        | 392      |
| Coarse ware                                     | 11        | 10         | 5            | 56         | 256     | 283      | 122        | 1743     |
| CBM   | 24        |            |              | 37         | 1002    |          |            | 3238     |
| Residual ERoman                                 |           |            |              | 1          |         |          |            | 1        |
| Total weight: 41974g                            |           |            |              |            |         |          |            |          |
| Total diagnostics: = 219 RBH (not counting CBM) |           |            |              |            |         |          |            |          |

there being a marked difference in the composition of the next, Abbasid, ceramic phase on the site (see Gayraud, Table Ronde). The Fustat evidence is particularly significant given the large number of Egyptian finds in the Beirut deposit, and a date in the first half of the 8th century rather than later is proposed here.

The ceramics indicate a substantial shift in the range and sources of fine wares and amphorae in Beirut with respect to the Late Byzantine period, in the 6th-early 7th centuries.

## Fine wares

The fine wares present are all Egyptian in origin, the majority being Egyptian Red Slip Ware from Aswan (Fig. 1.1-8: all the fine wares are illustrated). The absence of fine wares from other sources, which previously regularly supplied Beirut during the Late Byzantine period is very striking: LRD from Cyprus (very common), Phocaean LRC (common) and Tunisian ARS (relatively rare in 6th century Byzantine contexts).

and from Cyprus, was very rare and probably residual in this assemblage (one rim and a few body sherds).

In contrast, new types and fabrics appear in the Umayyad repertoire. The majority falls into two categories: those imitating an Aegean amphora type (LRA 2) and those in the Palestinian bag-shaped amphora class (LRA 5-6).

a. Dominant are amphorae imitating LRA 2, a form produced in the Aegean and on mainland Greece, exported to the Western Mediterranean from the 5th century onwards, but rarely found in Beirut (Fig. 2.5-7). Similar copies of LRA 2 (but usually with combed grooving on the shoulder) formed the principal cargo of the Yassi Ada shipwreck found off the southern coast of Turkey, dating to c. 625/626 (Bass, Van Doorninck 1982; Van Doorninck Jr. 1989). Other amphorae related to this class appear to be Campanian and are found in 8th century Rome (Cipriano *et al.* 1991: 107, fig. 4; Saguí, Ricci, Romei 1997: 42, 44, fig. 6.2-3) and Naples (Arthur 1989: 87, fig. 7-8, produced at Miseno; Arthur 1993). The form Riley LRA 13 is also related (Riley 1983: 231-232, fig. 93.373-375: he illus-

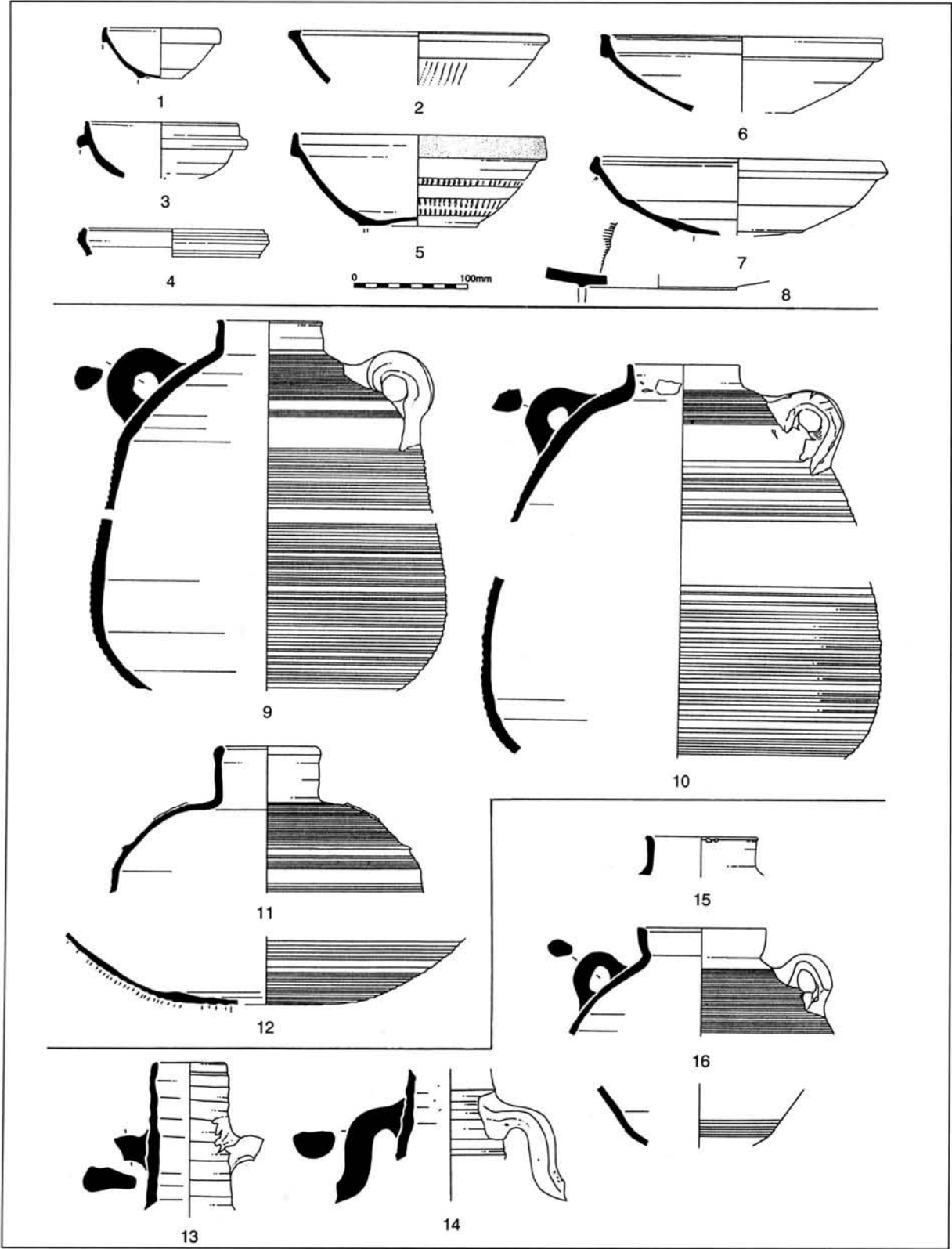


Fig. 1. Beirut Umayyad deposit (BEY 045). Fine wares and amphorae: 1-8. Egyptian Red Slip Ware. 9-10. Caesarea? LRA 5 (coarse quartz and lime). 11-12. Beth She'an LRA 6 (black surface). 13-14. Egyptian, coarse organics, Nile silt LRA 7. 15-16. Egyptian, fine organics, Nile silt LRA 5.

Table 2. Summary of pottery in the BEY 045.503 deposit

| BEY 045.503           | R | B | H | W  | Min No. | Comments   |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|----|---------|--|
|                       |   |   |   |    |         | FAM = Amph fabric; CWF = Coarse ware fabric; v = variant   |
| Residual              |   |   |   | 2  | 2       | Hellenistic-early Roman.   |
| Intrusive MED         | 1 |   | 1 | 2  | 4       | One thin walled sgraffiato present.  |
| Abbasid?              | 1 |   | 1 | 1  | 3       | Later type of small thick-walled LRA 5 (typical of later level 045.486). Organics. Abbasid? Later (12/13th), cf. sgraffiato? |
| <b>Fine wares</b>     |   |   |   |    |         |  |
| EGRSA                 | 6 |   |   |    | 6       |  |
| EGRSA                 |   | 2 |   | 2  | 4       |  |
| EGRSA                 |   |   |   | 2  |         |  |
| EGRS                  | 1 |   |   |    | 1       |  |
| EGRS                  |   | 1 |   |    | 1       |  |
| <b>Amphorae</b>       |   |   |   |    |         |  |
| Late Byz Beirut       |   |   |   | 9  | 1+      | Body sherds only. Residual likely.   |
| Beirut 8.1?           | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 2.8. 503. 53. ?Beirut 8.1 (residual). Not LRA 2v? Diam. 9 cm.   |
| Tunisian              |   |   |   | 5  | 2?      | Residual?  |
| LRA 1                 | 1 |   |   | 1  | 2       | Rim/N/Hfr. 503.18.   |
| LRA 2v/AM 210         | 1 | 1 | 2 | 48 | 1       | Fig. 2.5. Complete profile. <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> of vessel recovered.   |
| LRA 2v/AM 210         | 5 |   | 5 |    | 10      | Many body sherds not quantified on table. Prob one complete.   |
| LRA 2v/AM 210         |   |   | 1 | 73 | 1       | 503.62/188. Fired chocolate. Large part/almost complete?   |
| LRA 2v/AM 273         | 1 |   |   | 18 | 1       | Fig. 2.6. Rim and grooved shoulder. FAM 98D.   |
| Mica LRA 2v           |   |   |   | 12 | 1       |  |
| LRA 2v                |   |   |   | 1  | 1       |  |
| LRA 2v/FAM 98F)       |   |   |   | 1  | 1       | 045.503.75. Combed band lower shoulder. Organics.  |
| LRA 2v/FAM 100        | N | 2 |   |    | 2       | 503.76. (29 frags, same vessel). Cilician?   |
| LRA 2v/FAM 98H        |   | 2 |   |    | 2       | Fig. 2.7. One is 503.163. Heavy, fossil shell fabric.  |
| AM 213                | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 2.9. 503.52. Flattened rim.   |
| Beth She'an reduced   | 1 | 1 |   | 2  | 4       | Fig. 1.11-12.  |
| Fine Egyptian LRA 5   | 2 | 1 | 1 | 12 | 4       | Nile silt. Fig. 1.15-16.   |
| Fine Egyptian LRA 5   |   | 3 |   | 13 | 13      | Form as above, variant fabrics.  |
| Coarse Egyptian LRA 7 | 1 |   | 2 | 3  | 6       | Fig. 1.13-14.  |
| Egyptian? FAM 99F     |   |   |   | 1  | 1       | 503.175.   |
| Abu Mena LRA 5?       | 1 | 6 |   | 1  | 6       | Fig. 2.1-2. Abu Mena? Fine buff fabric, lime. Soapy surfaces, with white skin.   |
| FAM 98J.2/LRA 5.11    | 1 |   |   | 12 | 1       | Fig. 2.9. Buff surf, hard fired pale red fabric. Lime eruptions. Cf. Kellia. NW Egyptian likely.                             |

Table 2. Summary of pottery in the BEY 045.503 deposit

| BEY 045.503             | R | B | H | W  | Min No. | Comments  |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|----|---------|---|
| FAM 98J.2               |   |   |   | 2  | 2       | 1 = lower wall wide convex ribbing. Abundant lime eruptions.                                    |
| Buff (FAM 98J.2?)       |   | 1 |   |    | 1       | Fig. 2.4. 045.503.72. Rounded base. Ware related to LRA 5.11? (i.e. Fig. 2.9).                  |
| LRA 5/FAM 110           | 3 | 6 | 1 | 2  | 11      | Fig. 1.9-10. Coarse sandy, lime rich pale orange. Caesarea?                                     |
| LRA 5/FAM 110           |   |   |   | 15 |         |   |
| Large LRA 5             |   | 2 |   |    |         | Coarse sand (but not FAM 110). 503.193; 503.205. Cf. Pieri Type 3.                              |
| Uncl imports            |   | 2 |   | 1  | 3       | 503.177: LRA 5 or LRA 2v; 503.187; 503.119 (bag-shaped).  |
| Uncl local/regional     |   |   |   | 4  | 4       |   |
| <b>Coarse wares</b>     |   |   |   |    |         |   |
| <b>Plain and closed</b> |   |   |   |    |         |   |
| Tyre? water flask 1     | 2 |   | 2 |    | 3?      | Not necessarily Tyre product. Fig. 3.12, right and bottom.                                      |
| Tyre water flask 2      | 1 |   |   |    | 1 2     | Fig. 3.12, left. Larger version. Normal Tyre fabric.  |
| Tyre? water flask       | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Well made rim.  |
| CWF 28 jug ?Abu Mena    | 1 | 1 |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.10. 503.103. Lightweight porous with mod organics.                                       |
| Plain import            |   |   |   |    | 1 1     |   |
| Palestinian?            |   | 1 |   |    | 1       | 503.125.  |
| Jug, ring base. CWF 25  |   | 1 |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.11. 503. 92. Patina, reduced surface. Cf. "Bekaa" ware.                                  |
| <b>Cooking vessels</b>  |   |   |   |    |         |   |
| Cook pot 2A. Local      | 1 |   | 1 |    | 1       | Fig. 3.3. 503.104. Seems to be local fabric.  |
| Cook pot 2B/CWF 25      | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.1. 503.84. Rim bent in. Misfired. Large quartz, rounded oxide lumps. Probably not local. |
| Cook pot 2C/CWF 25      | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.2. 503.86. Quartz and oxide. Probably not local.   |
| Casserole/CWF 25 likely | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.4. 503.129. Probably not local.  |
| CWF 25                  |   | 1 | 1 |    | 2       |   |
| Cook pot 2/CWF 25?      |   |   | 1 |    | 1       | 503. 82. Not local. Bekaar?   |
| Beth She'an ware        |   |   |   | 1  | 1       | Reduced.  |
| Local                   |   | 5 | 1 | 18 | 5       |   |
| Thin sliced rim lid     | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.5. 503.107. Imported brittle ware?   |
| Lid (imported CWF 29)   | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | 503.109. Gold mica present.   |
| Casserole               | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.6. Thick, sliced rim.  |
| CW import               |   | 1 |   |    | 1       | 503.112. Thick walled. Mica and organics. Related to LRA 2v.                                    |
| <b>Other CW</b>         |   |   |   |    |         |   |
| Closed imported         |   |   |   | 2  | 2       | 503.114-116.  |
| Basin (imported)        | 1 |   |   |    | 1       | Fig. 3.9. 503.111. Gold mica and organics.  |
| Storage jar (imported)  |   |   |   | 2  | 2       | Large storage jar. Volcanics and mudstone. Ras al Basit?  |
| Storage jar or oven     |   |   |   | 1  | 1       | Local.  |

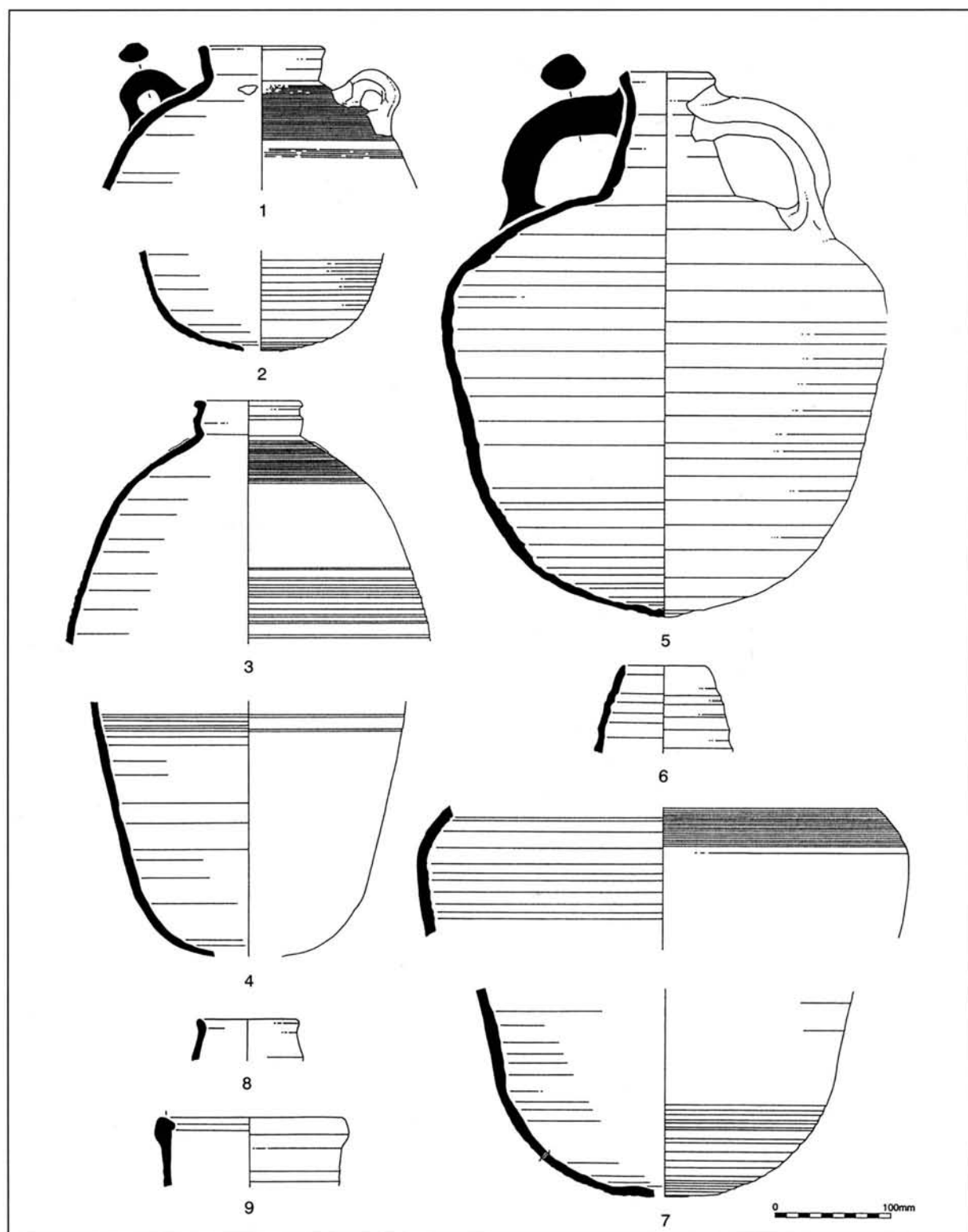


Fig. 2. Beirut Umayyad deposit. Amphorae: 1-2. Abu Mena LRA 5? 3. Abu Mena? Or Palestinian (fine greenish buff fabric, v. fine organics, fine gold mica and fine oxide). 4. Unclassified. Similar fine buff clay with fine organics to Fig. 3. 5. LRA 13v. Sandy fabric and common organics. 6. Rim and shoulder (same vessel). Micaceous fabric. Unclassified. 7. Base of LRA 13v. Coarse, sandy, fossil shell fabric. Cypriot or Amrit region. 8-9. Unclassified. Heavy? local fabric, cf. Table Ronde, Lebanon, coarse wares, Fig. 5.2-3.



trates three quite different amphorae, no. 373 being close to Saguí, Ricci, Romei 1997: fig. 6.2). Closer to home, LRA 13 variants are now known to have been produced in south-western Cyprus in the Paphos region on the same kiln sites as those (formerly) producing LRA 1 (see Demesticha, in this volume).

The Beirut LRA 2/13 variants occur in several fabrics, all characterised by the presence of organic inclusions. One example, with a grooved shoulder, is close to the Yassi Ada examples in fabric (finely sandy and micaceous) and may be Aegean in origin (Fig. 2.6: the distinctive rim above is probably the same vessel). Another two bases have fossil shell fabrics paralleled by that of Roman amphorae probably produced in the region of Amrit, on the north-western coast of Syria, though a Cypriot origin is also possible (if evidence emerges for fossil shell in some regionally specific Cypriot clays) (Fig. 2.7).

The most common variant, however, is not combed or grooved as the typical Aegean copies of LRA 2. It has a non-micaceous, compact, sandy fabric with medium-sized organics (Fig. 2.5). The marked ribbing on the interior of the vessels is distinctive. Surfaces can be pale orange or red brown to yellow ochre, sometimes on the same vessel, with a "sandwich" core. The example shown bears post-cocturam graffiti on the shoulder (not illustrated here), recalling the examples on the Yassi Ada wreck. The origin of these products is still problematic. Some Beirut amphorae, particularly the Beirut 8.1s I have illustrated (Table Ronde, Lebanon, Fig. 1.3-4), do have a very similar fabric, but this may be coincidental. A good parallel for this variant is an example found at Salamis, Cyprus (Diederichs 1980: 57, fig. 261). The fabric of Beirut example, however, does not recall that of numerous examples of LRA 1 that I have seen in Beirut, so a Cypriot-Tarsus-Antioch source is unlikely. A connection with a non-Aegean source producing Levantine-style cooking wares and amphorae is clear: cf. the sliced rim casserole (Fig. 3.6), which is in the same ware; cf. post-Umayyad LRA 5 variants, narrow bodied with ring handles pulled upwards into an oval profile, that occur also in a later phase of the Imperial baths (Abbasid?) with very similar fabric.

This could indicate a Levantine or Egyptian origin (rather than Cypriot). The absence of the form in the publications of the Abu Mena and Kellia repertoires suggests that though these sites produced sliced-rim casseroles and, of course, amphorae in the Palestinian tradition, the form did not derive from that region of Egypt. Gempeler (Gempeler 1992) has published an example of LRA 2v/13 with combed bands from Elephantine, but this appears to be imported (Gempeler 1992: 199, pl. 129.2, K 765: this is close to the Yassi Ada examples; Riley 1983: fig. 93.373). Bonnet, on the other hand, working on the survey material from Kellia, has published a LRA 2/13 variant which has a brown, "Nile silt-type" fabric and is dated to the late

7th-early 8th centuries, so production of this class of amphora in Egypt is possible (Bonnet 1983: 446, no. 98). Perhaps we should look a little further south, as quite different "marl" clays rich in quartz and lime are typical of Memphis, Saqqara and Amarna (Bourriau, Nicholson 1992). Clarification is clearly needed and would be most welcome.

One rim (Fig. 2.9) may be another imitation of LRA 2. Its fabric is particularly close to the "heavy" variety of fabric noted in Beirut amphorae (see Table Ronde, Lebanon, note 2). Again this may be coincidental.

**b.** Amphorae following the formal lines of the bag-shaped Palestinian LRA 5 type with small ring handles comprise the other major class of amphorae in the deposit, again from several regional sources.

Caesarea may be the origin of one type of LRA 5 (Fig. 1.9-10). The fabric is very sandy, pale orange, and lime-rich. It is the direct descendant of a product occasionally imported from the 2nd century AD in Beirut but which is more common from the 4th century onwards (see Reynolds: Table Ronde, Lebanon, in this volume). These examples do not bear white-painted decoration as the earlier, Byzantine versions in the same fabric.

There are fragments of several vessels of the distinctive dark grey, hard-fired Beth She'an version of the Palestinian shape (Fig. 1.11-12. Apparently the wide base of no. 12 is typical of Umayyad levels in Fustat: Roland Gayraud, pers. comm.).

Egypt is the source of two small versions of LRA 5 in this deposit. One, present in two variant rim types, has a fine dark brown fabric with fine gold mica and organics (Nile silt fabric) (Fig. 1.15-16). The type is close to examples produced at the kiln site of Kôm Abou Billou on the left branch of the Nile Delta (e.g. Ballet 1994: fig. 13, in the case of my no. 16. My thanks to Dominique Pieri for this reference; see also Engemann 1992: 155, fig. 5 = Egloff Kellia 187, apparently also in the Nile silt clay).

Abu Mena, west of the Nile Delta, is possibly the source of another small version (Fig. 2.1-2; cf. Engemann 1992: e.g. figs. 11-12). It has pale salmon to buff clay with somewhat soapy surfaces and common fine lime. Another vessel may be classed under Egloff Kellia 186 (Fig. 2.3). It is in a different ware, hard-fired, thin-walled, with a pale red core and buff surfaces, lime, some erupting on the surface, with fine organics and occasional very fine gold mica. It has a distinctive rim with a sharply concave inner collar and concave step on the outer face. The body is fairly globular, with sharp, fine combing and is paralleled by rims found at Abu Mena and Kellia (Engemann 1992: 154ff., fig. 4: Kellia examples, especially nos. 80 and 84 (from Bonnet 1983: pl. 152); Abu Mena examples: fig. 8, especially 90.56, 4 and 77, far right column). There is considerable debate as to the origin of these Egloff 186 variants – Abu Mena or Lake Mareotis to the north (Engemann 1992: 154ff.; see also Ballet 1994: 355, 357).

Egyptian LRA 7, in a (Middle Egyptian?) dark brown Nile silt fabric with coarse organics, present in Byzantine contexts, continues to be imported in this period (Fig. 1.13-14). The variants here are identical to those in the late Umayyad levels of Fustat (see R. Gayraud, in this volume).

### Plain and coarse wares (Fig. 3)

These are relatively rare in this deposit. The most common plain form is a large, circular flask, similar to a modern day water flask (Fig. 3.12). It is probably a product of Tyre. Other, thinner versions are in a different buff fabric. The form is well paralleled (perhaps also in fabric) with examples found in deposits of the first half of the 8th century at Pella (Fig. 3.13; Watson 1992: 243, Ware N). It could be said that these flasks are a special feature of Arab assemblages/culture. Are these hip flasks for use on horseback or camels, and a reflection of the frequency of long distance travel by individuals? One buff jug form, lightweight with organics, is imported and may also be an Abu Mena product, on the basis of its fabric (Fig. 3.10).

Local and imported cooking pots are of a similar type, strap handles springing from a short vertical, but concave collar rim (Fig. 3.1-3). The form is paralleled by late 6th-7th century Byzantine cooking pots from Cyprus and the Beirut region (see Table Ronde, Lebanon, Coarse wares and Fig. 5.11; Catling 1972). These variants are in what appears to be a non-Beirut city, well-fired fabric identical to some examples of the same form and some Beirut amphorae found in post-551 Byzantine contexts in Beirut. The bowl/casserole (Fig. 3.4) (unparalleled in Byzantine levels?) and jug base Fig. 3.11 are in the same ware.

There is one large, rather thick-walled, deep casserole with a sliced rim – a shape well paralleled in Umayyad contexts in Jordan and at Abu Mena (Fig. 3.6; cf. Fig. 3.7: from Abu Mena; cf. Fig. 3.8: from Pella). The fabric here would appear to be the same as that of the LRA 2 amphora variant I have mentioned (i.e. Fig. 2.5). There is just one thin-walled, sliced-rim lid, in a fine, probably Palestinian “brittle ware” fabric (Fig. 3.5). The shape is typical in 6th and 7th century Byzantine levels in Beirut.

Finally there is an imported large bowl/basin form in a slightly micaceous organic-rich fabric which may be Egyptian (it may well be related to the post-Umayyad LRA 5 and LRA 2/13 variants found in Beirut, noted above. Here the fabric seems to be more clearly Egyptian) (Fig. 3.9).

### CONCLUSIONS

By the 8th century significant ruptures and shifts in the sources of both foodstuffs and fine wares with respect to the Late Byzantine period can be gauged by this assemblage.

The absence of Gazan amphorae in Umayyad groups published in Jordan suggests that Gaza may also have ceased production of its celebrated wine, but not before the early 7th century as the product is fairly common in Marseille at that date. The form was still present, but was notably rare in contexts of the late 6th-early 7th centuries in Beirut, indicating, it would seem, an interesting difference in the supply of Gaza wine to sites in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean in this period. By the 8th century it is likely that LRA 2/LRA 13 variants had replaced LRA 1 as the “Byzantine” container *par excellence* (for wine or oil), so its rarity in this assemblage is expected.

Instead the emphasis was clearly on several other major sources. Egypt supplied three regional amphora types, perhaps four, if the LRA 2/LRA 13 variant (Fig. 2.5) is Egyptian, and fine wares – EGRS replacing LRC and especially LRD. Northern Palestine was another major source of amphorae. There was notably no break in continuity with two Palestinian sources that had supplied Beirut in the Byzantine period (Caesarea and Beth She'an). Given the proposed contrast in the fortunes of Gazan and Beirut production, some regions in the Levant appear to have been affected, more than others, following the Arab conquest.

The relative importance in the assemblage of imitations of what was an Aegean form rarely imported in the Byzantine period – LRA 2 – is striking. The widespread imitation of LRA 2 is a phenomenon of regions within or in close contact with the Byzantine world – Cyprus, Samos (Steckner 1989), Rome, Naples.

In the case of the Beirut examples, though some are micaceous Aegean or Turkish products, others appear to be products of the north Syrian coast or Cyprus. The identification of the source of the most common import in this assemblage (Fig. 2.5), is crucial as this amphora represents a major contact between Umayyad Beirut and a source following a Byzantine mode of production (as at Paphos or Samos). The links between this product and “Levantine” shapes should rule out its production in the Aegean. Furthermore, there is clear continuity in the supply of amphorae of this class in Beirut where similar amphorae in the same fabric, again with large organics, are typical finds in 12th-13th century levels (drains also are found in the same ware). One is reminded here that the use of organics, once a characteristic feature of Egyptian products, is now more widespread: cf. the organics in the buff, Medieval amphorae of Otranto/Puglia (Arthur 1992: 206-207, particularly his Type 2) and the Propontis (Günsenin 1989: Type 3; Arthur 1989: 90). All will become clear once the source of Fig. 2.5 and its successors is identified.

Umayyad Beirut was in this way both unusual in the Levant and distinct to Jordan (and Jerusalem also) in having a more Aegean and Byzantine connection in the case



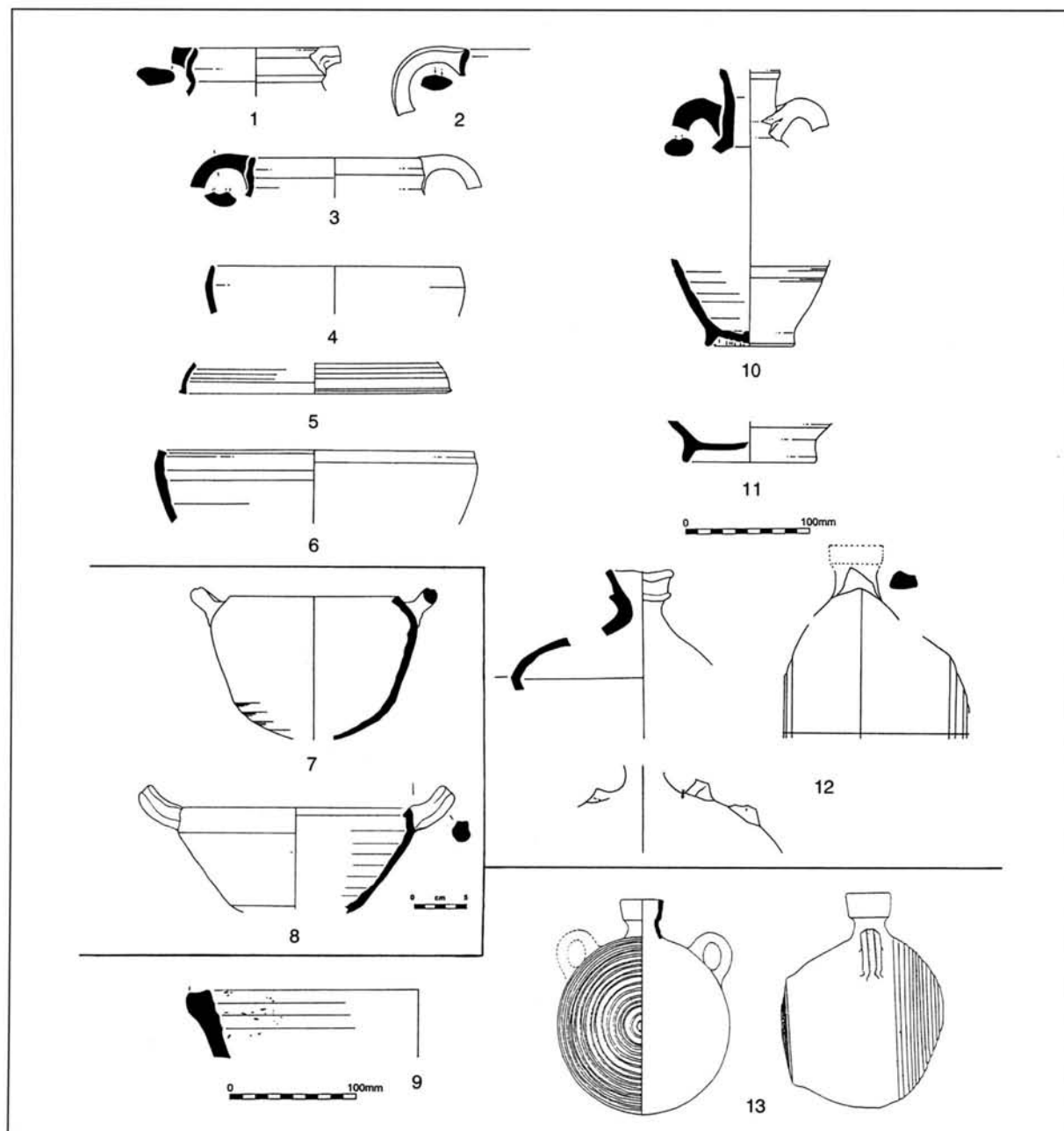


Fig. 3. Beirut Umayyad deposit. Coarse wares. 1-3. "Cypriot" style cooking pots. Probably not local. 4. Bowl. Ware as cooking pots above. 5. Brittle ware lid. 6. Sliced rim casserole. Fabric related to LRA 13v (Fig. 2.5). 7. Abu Mena. Sliced rim cooking pot. Engemann 1992: fig. 13. 8. Pella. Sliced rim cooking pot. Watson 1992: fig. 1.4. 9. Basin. Common organics. Egyptian? 10. Jug. Tyre? Or Abu Mena? 11. Base of jug. Not a Beirut product (as 1-4). 12. Water flasks. Buff fabric. Tyre products? 13. Water flask, c. AD 720. Pella. Mc Nicoll et al. 1982: pl. 141.1.

of its amphora types. Perhaps we should see this against the historical background of treaties and reciprocal exchanges of goods and cash established between Byzantium and the Arab caliphate. Cyprus was "shared" between these two powers for several centuries and Beirut lay on the fringe of this activity (Treadgold 1997).

The relatively large quantities of EGRS also underlines Beirut's equally strong, probably sea-borne, links southwards, with Egypt. Beirut's links with Egyptian sources were also stronger than those encountered in Jordan, where Egyptian amphorae were imported but EGRS was far rarer.

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