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ABBASID BASINS FROM BIJAN ISLAND

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Abstract: The ceramic basins presented in this article come from an unpublished assemblage of finds, excavated in the early 1980s by a PCMA team, from an Islamic-period layer on the island of Bijan in western Iraq. The author defines a set of characteristics by which to identify these open-form vessels and discusses their shape and function in the context of parallels from other sites dated to the Abbasid period.

Keywords: basins, pottery, Bijan, Early Islamic coarse ware, Abbasid vessels, common ware

Ceramological literature lacks a coherent terminology as far as basins are concerned. This term is typically used to denote large vessels of a size between bowls and dishes, with an open form and flaring walls (Rice 1987: 216; Northedge 1981: 463; Kervran 1977: 80). The term “basin” is also determined by the kitchen function of these vessels. Taking into consideration the specificity of shape and size of particular vessels, the following definition

of a basin is proposed: an open-form vessel with a rim diameter larger than its bottom diameter, and not smaller than twice the height but not larger than thrice the height of the vessel.

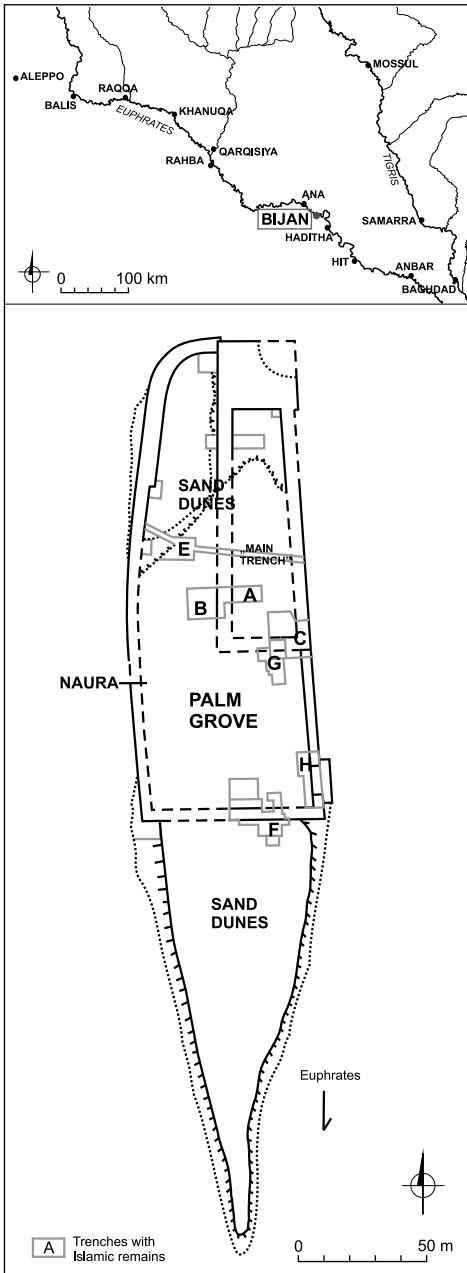
Vessels fitting this description made up a large part of an unpublished pottery assemblage excavated from an Islamic layer on Bijan Island in western Iraq. The aim of the present study is to present and to interpret the function of these vessels.

THE SITE

Dam construction on the Euphrates in the Haditha region in western Iraq in the late 1970s and early 1980s necessitated an international archaeological rescue campaign (Haditha Project) that the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw

participated in. The Bijan excavation in 1979–1983 was part of that project.

Bijan Island, now flooded by the waters of Lake Qadisiyah, was located on the Euphrates, roughly 25 km downriver from the city of ‘Ana, presently in Iraq [Fig. 1]. Dam construction deadlines put



a limit on the extent of the excavations and the presence of modern fields and date palm groves additionally restricted the area that could be investigated. Approximately 14% of the island was explored. The stratigraphy of human occupation was established in a big test trench ("Main Trench") dug across the island on an E–W axis and a number of other trenches. Four main cultural layers: Neo-Assyrian, Parthian, Roman and early Islamic (Abbasid) were distinguished (see Krogulska 1987; 1990; 1992; Krogulska, Stepniowski 1995; Gawlikowski 1983; 1985) and the early Islamic layer was subdivided into three settlement phases (Ia–c). The oldest of these (Ic) was dated to the pre-Samarra phase in the Abbasid period on the grounds of preliminary ceramic analysis. Architectural relics belonging to this phase were directly superimposed on Roman structures, but they only sporadically incorporated the Roman remains. The middle phase (Ib) comprised the Samarra horizon. This phase was best represented, and yielded some well preserved utility rooms and courtyards. Accompanying the residential structures was a rich repertoire of luxury pottery (among others, glazed pottery imported from Samarra, thinware with incised, impressed or applied decoration), as

Fig. 1. Plan of Bijan island with location of archaeological trenches; inset top, location of Bijan island on the Euphrates in Iraq (Drawing M. Barański, digitizing M. Momot, M. Mierzejewska, PCMA mission archives)

Pottery drawings M. Krogulska, M. Barański, F.M. Stepniowski; digitizing M. Mierzejewska; photos A. Reiche (PCMA mission archives).

well as common ware (among others, the basins discussed below), and kitchen ware (so-called Brittle Ware), as well as Arabic glassware (Reiche 1996), coins and stone vessels. The youngest phase (Ia) distinguished within the Abbasid period layer was shallow and mixed, with glass and pottery fragments, as well as traces of poorly preserved structures. However, due to the poor state of preservation of layer I, its stratigraphy was often difficult to discern (a comprehensive study of the Islamic settlement on Bijan will be undertaken by the present author in the course of future research).

Altogether 195 basin fragments (including only eight complete forms) originated from the excavations, from an Islamic layer found in the seven excavated sectors (A, B, C, G, F, H and the Main Trench) [see *Fig. 1*]. Most of

the basins were unearthened in trenches G, F, H [*Fig. 2*], located on the outskirts of the modern palm grove. According to a preliminary report by Maria Krogulska (Krogulska, Stepniowski 1995: 134), the unearthened rooms, courtyards, and wall fragments could have been part of a larger structure, possibly a residence(?), situated in the unexcavated, central part of the island.

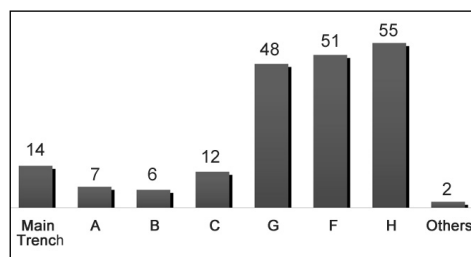


Fig. 2. Quantitative distribution of basins by sectors

TECHNOLOGY

Basins from Bijan typically were made of fabric of fine texture and considerable porosity. Fine or medium-grained inclusions of mica, limestone, and sand were the most common. A large amount of sand, characteristic also of basins from Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqa (Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: 25) and Abu Sarifa (Adams 1970: 95), was visible on the vessel outer surface, resulting in an impression of coarseness. In eight cases, similarly as at Qasr al-Hayr (Grabar 1978: 111), alongside a mineral inclusion, there was also some chaff as well. Occasionally, there was also breakstone, probably an ingredient of poorly refined clay.

After baking, a vast majority of vessels showed fabric of various hues of bronze

(65%) or beige (22%). In isolated cases, the fabric had a greenish (6%), yellowish (1%) or gray hue (6%). A number of vessels featured a surface colour different from that of their core: beige or greenish surface with a brown core and beige surface with greyish green core.

Similarly to analogous examples found on different sites (Samarra, *Excavations at Samarra* 1940: 3; Abu Sarifa, Adams 1970: 95; Dehes, Orssaud 1980: 240; Qasr-al-Hayr, Grabar 1978: 111), the surface of the basins from Bijan was not additionally treated, and therefore its texture could be slightly rough. The surface of some bottoms showed traces of kneading, and in two cases potter's fingerprints were also to be observed.

Bitumen, found chiefly on the inside walls of the basins, was typical of the Bijan assemblage, although apparently



Fig. 3. Basin with traces of bitumen

not so outside the island. Of the vessels in question, 17%, that is, 33 examples, bore evidence of pitching, and of this five had bitumen both inside and outside [Fig. 3]. Bitumen occurred sometimes also on the rim or bottom. An analogy for the application of bitumen comes in the form of a vessel from 'Ana (Northedge 1988: 102, Fig. 46.15). Moreover, vessels splashed with bitumen on their outer surface were also found on the same site, but these were storage jars (Northedge 1988: 89, Fig. 41.11).

FORMS AND CATEGORIES

Among the vessels described below there are some with a rim diameter equal to or larger than 20 cm. The largest of the unearched basins has a diameter of 60 cm (in the classification proposed by Monique Kervran (1977: 80), basins are vessels with a rim diameter between 26 cm and 50 cm).

Given the size and frequency, and including the abovementioned definition of basins, the collected material has been divided into three main categories. The first category (small-sized basins) includes basins with rim diameters of 20–30 cm; they constituted 27% of the vessels [Fig. 4]. The basin forms and rims are rather simple [Table 1].

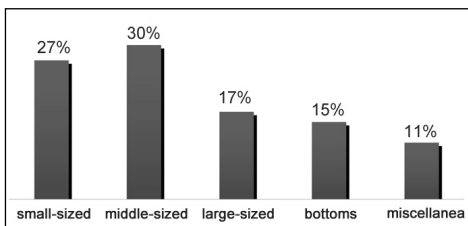


Fig. 4. Percentage share of basin categories by size

The second category (medium-sized basins) comprises basins with rim diameters of 31–40 cm; they were the most numerous (30%) and definitely the most diversified group within the vessel assemblage. This category includes vessels with very simple rims and flaring walls [Table 2:1], as well as those with out-curved rims adjoined to the basin walls [Table 2:12].

The least numerous (17%) is the third category (large-sized basins) [Table 3], consisting of vessels with rim diameters over 40 cm. Furthermore, as many as 11 basins had a rim diameter exceeding 50 cm, while the largest basin found featured a rim diameter of 60 cm. Another characteristic feature for this category is a frequent presence of bitumen on the walls of the vessels.

In each of the three categories described there were single examples of vessels with individual characteristic features with analogies on other sites (Adams 1970: Fig. 6.a; Finster, Schmidt 1976: 101, Fig. 45f; Logar 1991: Fig. 1.2

[decoration less varied, consisting of two wide-grooved waves]; Mason 1997: 60, Fig. 19.DHR06; Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 14p, r; Northedge, Falkner 1987: 171, Fig. 11.50), while on Bijan they occurred only sporadically [*Table 4*].

BOTTOMS

Due to the state of preservation of the vessels (only eight complete forms were found), the reconstruction of the bottoms was problematic, and possible only through an analysis of parallels from other sites. It seems that most of the middle- and large-sized basins found on Bijan had simple, flat bottoms. Typically, their thickness was comparable to that of vessel walls. On the basis of analogous complete forms, it is valid to say that the vessels, belonging to types II.1., II.5, II.7, III.2, III.3, featured entirely flat or slightly concave bottoms (Miglus, Stępniewski

1999: Figs 11a, 12a, 15a; Kervran 1977: 119, Figs 33.2, 33.4–5). Tell Aswad/ar-Raqa vessels, parallel to type II.2, had flat bottoms, slightly thickened at the joining with the walls (Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 17a), while in the Resafa assemblage (Logar 1991: Fig. 1.2) similar bottoms featured with vessels analogous to type III.1. Type II.3 could have had slightly concave bottoms (Frifelt 2001: 26–27, Figs 31.1, 32).

The category of small-sized basins should be linked with flat bottoms and ring bases. It seems that basins of a form similar to that of glazed vessels, namely types I.1. [*Fig. 5:3*], I.2. [*Fig. 5:5*], I.6. [*Fig. 5:13*], I.8. [*Fig. 5:16*] could have ring bases (Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Figs 18a and 18c). Type I.4 vessels [*Fig. 5:9–10*] were well preserved, hence it is possible to say that they featured flat bottoms.

DECORATION

Decorative elements on the Bijan basins are very rare. However, it is possible to discern several uncomplicated decorative motifs, executed in traditional, centuries-old methods. In 14 cases there were simple geometric elements, that is, grooved horizontal lines, single or multiplied (although no more than three). They could appear on the central part of the body, as well as on its lower or upper part. A more complex decoration combined single grooved wavy lines interspaced with [*Fig. 5:14*] or overlapping [*Fig. 6:7*] horizontal lines, or even wavy lines overlapping one another [*Fig. 7:5*]. Some of the wavy lines were executed with a comb, resulting in multiplication of the decorative element.

Apart from various lines and waves, the basins sporadically featured "finger-impressed" decoration. The impressions were of ellipsoidal shape, their edges rounded to a varying extent. They were oriented vertically or horizontally. This type of decoration could be executed on the basin body [*Fig. 8:11*], as well as on the upper edge of the rim [*Figs 7:3; 8:3*].

More elaborate decorations combined all three abovementioned elements and created a sort of a pattern. In one case, the body of the vessel was decorated with a grooved wavy line, below which there was a single, deeply grooved horizontal line. There was also a row of elongated ovals in the lower part of the pattern [*Figs 8:11; 9*].

The richest decoration was found on a fragment of a ring base. It consisted of short and narrow, slanted incisions (probably made with a thin knife). Below, there were four similar incisions, and three elongated ovals.

Horizontal lines grooved relatively often on the upper or outer edges of the rims represent a separate motif. Single lines were the most common, but two [Figs 5:7,15; 8:1] and three lines [Fig. 8:4,6] occurred as well.

Decoration present on the Bijan basins, although relatively simple, is consistent with the decorative style of the basins found on other sites. Grooved straight horizontal lines are present on vessels from Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqa (Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Figs 73a, 73e). Also the 'troughs', that is, horizontal lines on rims,

are a decorative element typical of many vessels from the latter site.

Wavy-line decoration appears on vessels from Qasr al-Hayr (Grabar 1978: 135, Figs A3.6, A3.9), Resafa (Logar 1991: Figs 1.2, 1.6), Susa (Kervran 1977: 119, Fig. 33.11), Bahrain (Frifelt 2001: 27, Fig. 32) and even Pella (McNicoll, Edwards *et alii* 1986: 185, Fig. 8.1 30). Type II.7 basins [Fig. 6:10] correspond both in form and decoration to a vessel found during a field survey around Samarra (Northedge, Falkner 1987: 171, Fig. 11.1), while similar "combed" decoration is also present on a basin from Susa (Kervran 1977: 129, Fig. 33.1).

Incised decoration in the form of elongated ovals can be found on basins from Nippur (Gibson, Armstrong, McMahon 1988: 34, Fig. 17.4).

FUNCTION

Basins had a wide range of uses in the kitchen, determined by their shape and size as well as the material of which they were made. Vessels of smaller size, particularly those of bowl-like form [Fig. 5:2-3] were probably used, similarly as bowls, to prepare or serve food [Fig. 5:9,10,14]. Basins with walls pronouncedly flaring [Fig. 5:8] could have been used as mortars (Orssaud 1980: 242). Sometimes the inside surface of these vessels was coarsened additionally. Small basins of considerable depth and common form could have served as containers for storing small amounts of some product [Fig. 5:6] (Frifelt 2001: 22).

The most numerous group was that of middle-sized vessels with rim diameter exceeding 30 cm. Basins of this category were used most often in food preparation

(Kervran 1977: 80). For this purpose, it was necessary for the vessels to be carried around easily. Since they had no additional handles in principle, these basins were sometimes fashioned with protruding and outturned rims [Fig. 6:5,7,8] to ensure easy grip. Furthermore, the exterior walls of such vessels were occasionally ribbed [Fig. 6:1] or simply coarsened, quite possibly to prevent the hands from slipping on a smooth surface.

Deep vessels with straight, only slightly flaring walls and flat bottoms [Figs 5:12; 6:3] could have been used as vases (Kervran 1977: 80). Also in the case of these vessels, the need to make them easy to carry was crucial, therefore they could not have been either too heavy or too large.

The largest and heaviest basins with rim diameters over 60 cm were not moved

because of their size and weight [Fig. 7:1]. Their purpose must have been to store large quantities of products (Kervran 1977: 80 and 119 Fig. 33; Frifelt 2001: 23 and 26 Fig. 31).

A separate question is the function of basins with the walls waterproofed inside with bitumen. Despite the fact that only one complete vessel was found with bitumen spread over the entire inside surface [Fig. 5:9], it is very likely that at least some of the basins with traces of bitumen were treated in similar manner.

It is all the more probable given the fact that bitumen was found on the rims [Fig. 7:2] as well as bottoms of other incomplete vessels. Pitching of the entire inside of a vessel would suggest a function connected with storage of water or other liquids, or perhaps dishwashing.

Judging by the frequent repairs attested on these vessels, they must have constituted a group of extremely useful domestic utility pots. Mending was demonstrated in the form of fragmentary traces of bitumen and small oval holes along the break.

CONCLUSIONS

The basins found on Bijan display a great similarity to vessels from various Early Islamic sites. It seems that the shape repertoire of middle-sized and in particular large-sized vessels was uniform over a very wide area. Some of the forms were present also at Samarra, a manufacturing centre of great importance at the time, and at Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqā, another important pottery manufacturing site. Moreover, these shapes occurred on less significant sites as well, such as Tell Shahin or Tell Sheikh Hassan. It should also be emphasized that some of the basin forms present on Bijan were found at the far ends of the Abbasid Caliphate. For instance, parallels to type I.7 were unearthed at Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqā, Resafa, and Ras al-Khaimah. A similar situation pertains to type I.2 vessels, analogies for which were found at Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqā, Resafa, Susa, Ras al-Khaimah, and also at Ramla. This testifies to the popularity of certain earthenware forms throughout the area under Abbasid influence. Nevertheless, there was also a wide repertoire of forms typical only of Bijan and its vicinity,

pointing to the existence of a local tradition of potmaking.

The frequency of parallels between vessels from Bijan and Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqā is unusually high, especially with regard to the largest examples. Similarities are visible not only in the form, but also in the material from which the vessels were made. It is all the more surprising that these analogies are decidedly more frequent than those from 'Ana, a site situated much closer to Bijan. It is also noteworthy that relations with Samarra, despite the distance and transportation problems (route through the desert), were also well attested in the analysed material. Nonetheless, it was the Euphrates that facilitated the distribution of products (Northedge 2006: 338) and the pottery from Tell Aswad/ar-Raqqā travelled by river to distant places.

Unlike luxury pottery, which was subject to cultural change, basins were a kind of vessel with regard to which functionality took priority over the user's fancy. Therefore, the well tested forms could have been used and replicated for

Table 1. *Small-sized basins* [Fig. 5]

Characteristic	Parallels
I.1 [Fig. 5:1–3] Straight, almost vertical or somewhat flaring walls, slightly concave in the lower part. The shape is not unequivocal and could be classified as a bowl (for a definition of the shape, see Rice 1987: 216) as well as a basin.	Wilkinson 1973: 17; Kervran 1977: 25, Fig. 36.9; Rousset 1994: 44, Fig. 11, Nos O65, O67; Tonghini, Henderson 1998: Figs 4d, 6a; Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: 31 and Fig. 18j–m (most of these vessels were glazed)
I.2 [Fig. 5:4–5] Characteristic rounded rim tops and flaring walls. Similar to plates in shape, also the glazed ones (Kennet 2004: 106, Fig. 9 no. K699), but considerably deeper.	Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: Figs 15l and 18o; Rosen-Ayalon 1972: 199, fig. 62.6; Sion 2010: Figs 8.5, 8.8
I.3 [Fig. 5:6–8] Straight, flaring walls, often with additionally ribbed outer surface, and rims with slightly bevelled top on the outside, rounded, concave or flattened.	Rousset 1994: 25, Fig. 2.H59; Volynsky 2009: Fig. 3.1; Tonghini 1995: 200, Fig. 6a (glazed vessel). Moreover, this basin type finds an analogy in one of the vessels unearthed on Bijan, featuring an Aramaic inscription (Gawlikowski 1990: 138, Fig. 1).
I.4 [Fig. 5:9–10] Slightly outcurling rims, bevelled inner rim edge, flaring walls and flat bottoms.	Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: Fig. 11a
I.5 [Fig. 5:11] Thickened rims, with their inner edges bevelled and slightly flattened. Walls cylinder-like, flaring indistinctly.	Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: Fig. 15l
I.6 [Fig. 5:12–13] Thickened, rounded, outward-projecting rims with bevelled inner edges. Walls could be straight, cylinder-like or slightly flaring, rounded in the lower part of the body.	Grabar 1978: Fig. A3.2; Tonghini 1995: 199, Fig. 4j (glazed vessel)
I.7 [Fig. 5:14–15] Thickened, outward-projecting rims with rounded top. One or two grooves on the top of the rim. Walls flaring.	Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: Figs 12g, 12h, 13j; Logar 1991: Fig. 1.3; Kogan-Zehavi, Hadad 2012: 109, Fig. 28.2
I.8 [Fig. 5:16] Thickened, tapered-outcurling rims. Walls straight, flaring.	Hakimian, Salame-Sarkis 1988: 52, Fig. 18.3; <i>Excavations at Samarra</i> 1940: Figs 90.1–2; Northedge 1988: 85, Fig. 39.2. Form very typical of glazed pottery (Tonghini 1995: 199, Fig. 5a)

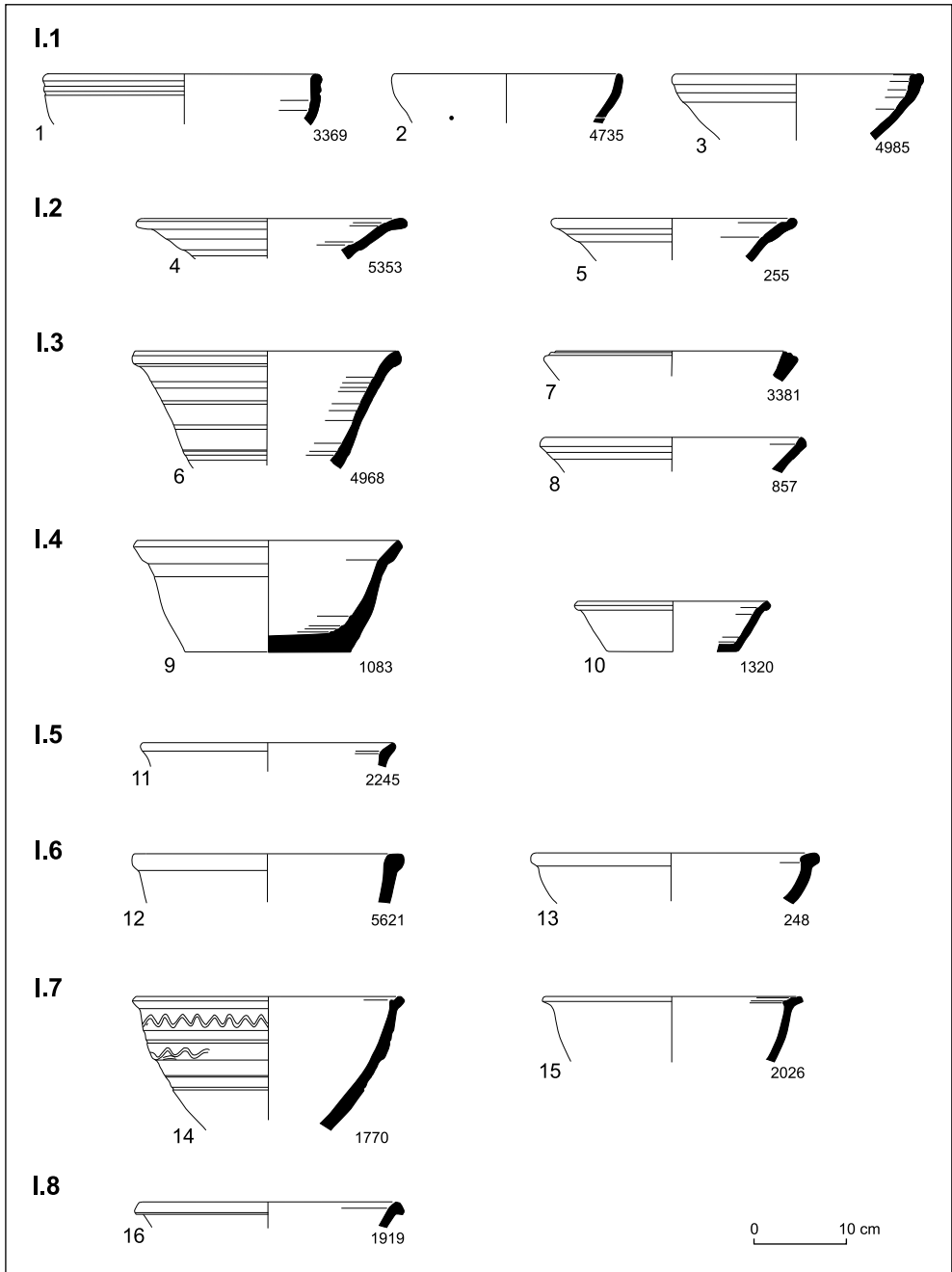


Fig. 5. Small-sized basins from Bijan (for descriptions, see Table 1)

Table 2. Middle-sized basins [Fig. 6]

Characteristic	Parallels
<p>II.1 [Fig. 6:1–2]</p> <p>Rim with slightly flattened top, occasionally with an additional shallow horizontal 'trough'; walls straight, flaring, somewhat thickened in the upper part, merging smoothly with the rim.</p>	Hakimian, Salame-Sarkis 1988: 52, Fig. 18.1
<p>II.2 [Fig. 6:3]</p> <p>Thickened rim, rounded and slightly protruding; walls straight, cylinder-like.</p>	Miglus, Stępniewski 1999; Figs 16b, 17a; <i>Excavations at Samarra</i> 1940: Fig. 17.6
<p>II.3 [Fig. 6:4]</p> <p>Thickened, tapered-outcurling rim; walls flaring.</p>	Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 15k; Adams 1970: Fig. 6ah; Orssaud 1980: 242, Fig. 305.3; Shalem 2002: 155, Fig. 6.1
<p>II.4 [Fig. 6:5]</p> <p>Thickened, rounded and outward-projecting rim, the upper edge pronouncedly flattened; walls flaring, often ribbed in their upper part.</p>	Northedge, Falkner 1987: 172, Fig. 12.55; Torgë 2009: Fig. 6.1. Similar basins on other sites are glazed (Logar 1991: Fig. 4.11; Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 14r).
<p>II.5 [Fig. 6:6–8]</p> <p>Rounded, protruding rim, outcurving in varying degree. Inner rim edges slightly or pronouncedly bevelled; in some cases, additionally flattened. Walls flaring, straight or slightly convex. Bottoms always flat.</p>	Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 12h; Northedge 1988: 85, Fig. 39.3; Tonghini 1995: 200, Fig. 6g; Rousset 1994: 42, Fig. 10.086; Logar 1991: Fig. 1.6; Logar 1995: Fig. 7.12 (glazed vessel); Frifelt 2001: 87, Fig. 142 (vessel from Late Abbasid layers)
<p>II.6 [Fig. 6: 9]</p> <p>Rim slightly thickened and rounded, with protuberant ridges directly below the rim. Walls flaring. This type of basin is very rare.</p>	Baramki 1944: 95, Fig. 12.1
<p>II.7 [Fig. 6:10–11]</p> <p>Wide, slightly thickened and rounded rims; outer rim edges cut vertically and flattened. Walls slightly flaring, sometimes convex. Occasionally decorated.</p>	Similar decoration on basins from Samarra and Susa, although walls are definitely less flaring than those of the basins from Bijan (Northedge, Falkner 1987: 171, Fig. 11.39; Kervran 1977: 119, Fig. 33.1). No. 11 [Fig. 3] has interesting analogies in the glassware assemblage from Bijan (Reiche 1996: 18, Fig. 7.8)
<p>II.8 [Fig. 6:12]</p> <p>Rounded, outcurved rim; additionally, outer rim edges coiled downwards, joining the external surface of the basins. Walls slightly flaring.</p>	None attested.
<p>II.9 [Fig. 6:13]</p> <p>Thickened rim with outer edges vertically cut and flattened; narrow troughs visible on rounded tops of the rims.</p>	Hakimian, Salame-Sarkis 1988: 52, Fig. 18.6 (site dated to late Abbasid period)

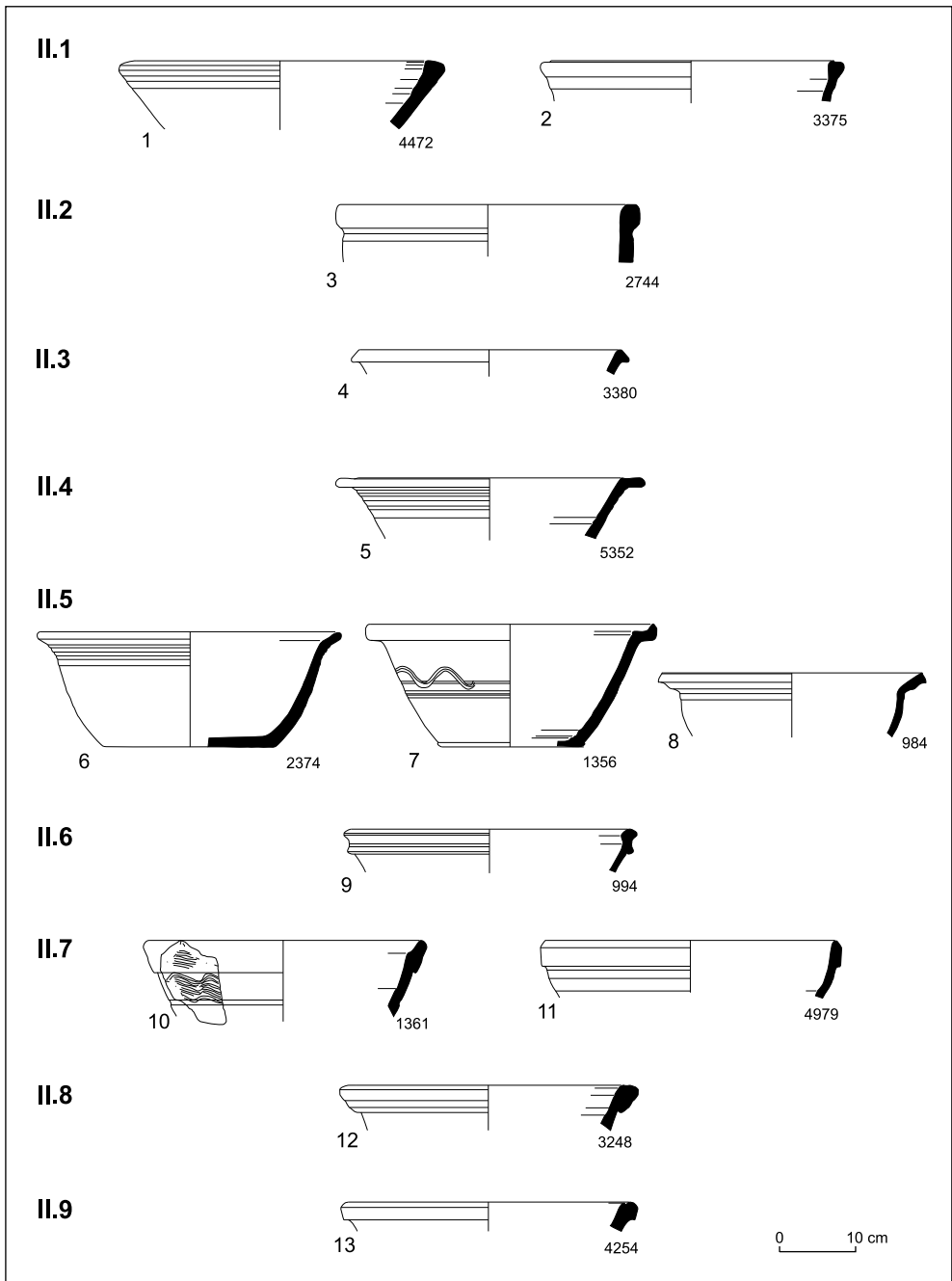


Fig. 6. Middle-sized basins (for descriptions, see Table 2)

Table 3. *Large-sized basins [Fig. 7]*

Characteristic	Parallels
III.1 [Fig. 7:1–2] Thickened and rounded rim, projecting outwards indistinctly; top of rim somewhat flattened. Walls straight and flaring. Traces of bitumen, mainly on the inside, on more than half of the vessels.	Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: Fig. 12m; Grabar 1978: 135, Fig. A3.2; François, Shaddoud 2013: 59, Fig. 13.2; Kletter 2005: 70, Fig. 13.7
III.2 [Fig. 7:3–4] Wide, thickened rim with flattened upper edges; more or less distinct single 'troughs' visible on the rim top.	Miglus, Stepniowski 1999: Fig. 14b; Bartl 1994: 11, Fig. 4.7 (vessel not decorated); Grabar 1978: 135, Fig. A3.5
III.3 [Fig. 7:5] Rim thickened, rounded and indistinctly outward-projecting; outer edge of rim slightly bevelled, featuring shallow 'troughs'. Walls straight and flaring.	Orssaud 1980: 242, Fig. 305.8; François, Shaddoud 2013: 59, Fig. 13.3
III.4 [Fig. 7:6] Rim, coiled downwards and joined to exterior walls.	None attested.

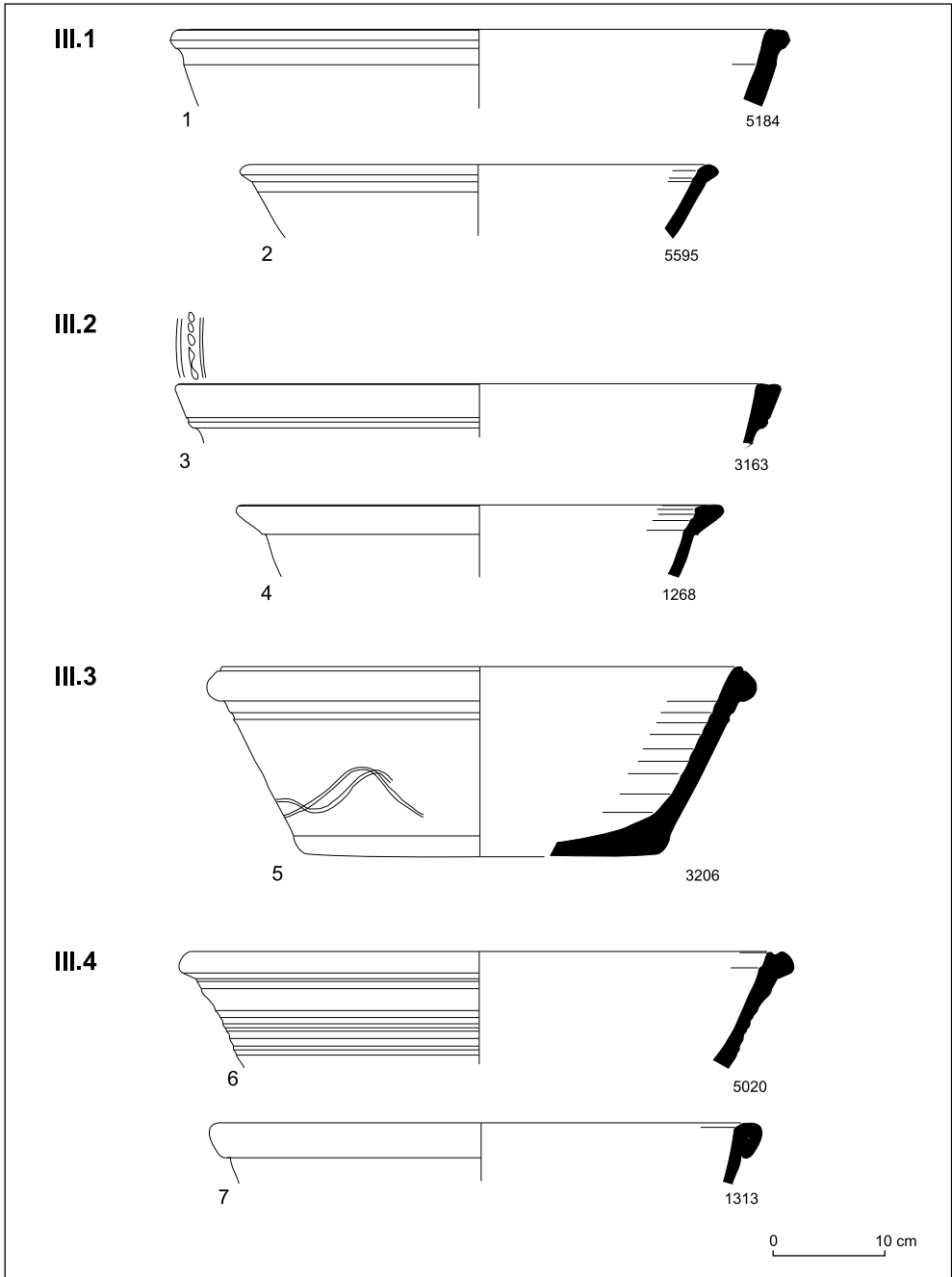


Fig. 7. Large-sized basins (for descriptions, see Table 3)

Table 4. *Miscellanea* [Fig. 8]

Characteristic	Parallels
Small-sized [Fig. 8:1–2]	
1. Rim thickened, pronouncedly projecting outwards. Rim top flattened. A characteristic handle projects straight out of the rim. Walls ribbed and flaring.	Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 14r
2. Thickened rim, projecting outwards. Rim top flattened, featuring two wide and deep 'troughs'. Walls straight in their upper part and convex and ribbed in their lower part.	None attested.
Medium-sized [Fig. 8:3–8]	
3. Rim edge rounded. Outer part of the rim is wider, projecting, and slightly coiled downwards, creating a handle. Rim top features "finger-impressed" decoration. Walls straight, slightly flaring. Bottom flat, somewhat thickened at the joining with the walls.	None attested.
4. Thickened and rounded rim, pronouncedly projecting inwards. Rim top is slightly bevelled and features three troughs. Walls are somewhat convex, featuring "incised" decoration of evenly spaced elongated ovals and a shallow, grooved horizontal line.	None attested.
5. Rim thickened and rounded. Outer rim edge slightly bevelled. Walls somewhat flaring.	Adams 1970: Fig. 6ao
6. Rim thickened and rounded, projecting outwards. Its inner edge is slightly bevelled. Rim top features three 'troughs'.	Miglus, Stępniewski 1999: Fig. 14p
7. Rim thickened and rounded, slightly coiled downwards. Walls flaring, slightly concaved just below the rim.	Mason 1997: 60: Fig. 19.DHR06
8. Rim thickened, projecting slightly outwards and pronouncedly inwards. Inner rim edge rounded. Rim top flattened. Walls slightly convex, only slightly concaved just below the rim.	Logar 1991: Fig. 5.15; Finster, Schmidt 1976: 101, Fig.45f
Large-sized [Fig. 8: 9–11]	
9. Rim top bevelled. Walls straight, flaring, thickening in the upper part.	None attested.
10. Rim thickened and rounded, projecting outwards. Rim top flattened. Walls ribbed, flaring, slightly rounded at the joining with the bottom.	Northedge 1988: 171: Fig. 11.50
11. Rim thickened, rounded, projecting outwards. Inner rim edge bevelled, featuring two shallow troughs. Walls flaring, slightly ribbed, decorated with a single grooved wavy line, below which there is a shallow grooved line and a row of incised elongated ovals. Walls somewhat thickened at the joining with the bottom. Bottom somewhat concave, thinner than walls.	Logar 1991: Fig. 1.2

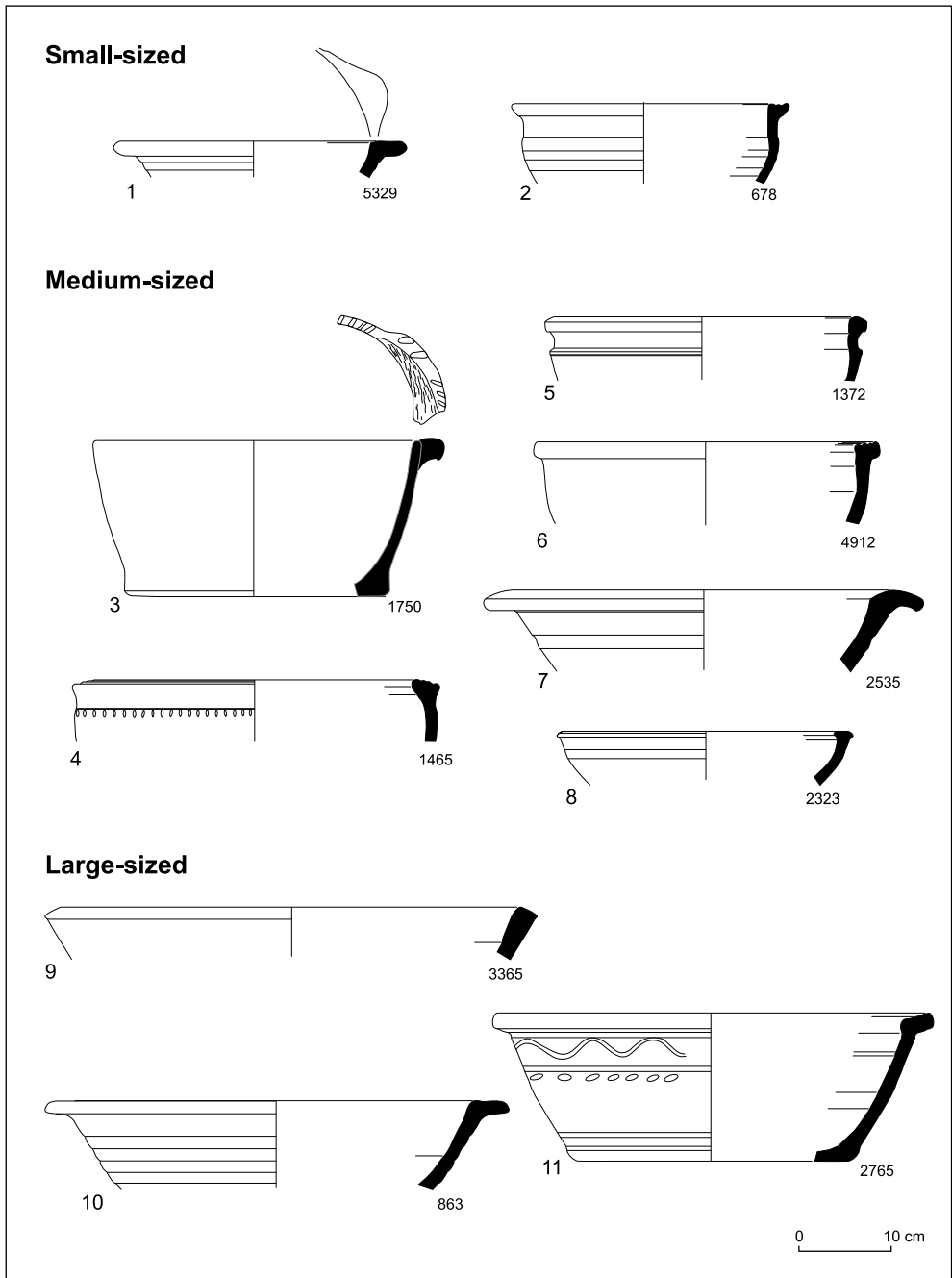


Fig. 8. Miscellaneous forms of basins from Bijan (for descriptions, see Table 4)

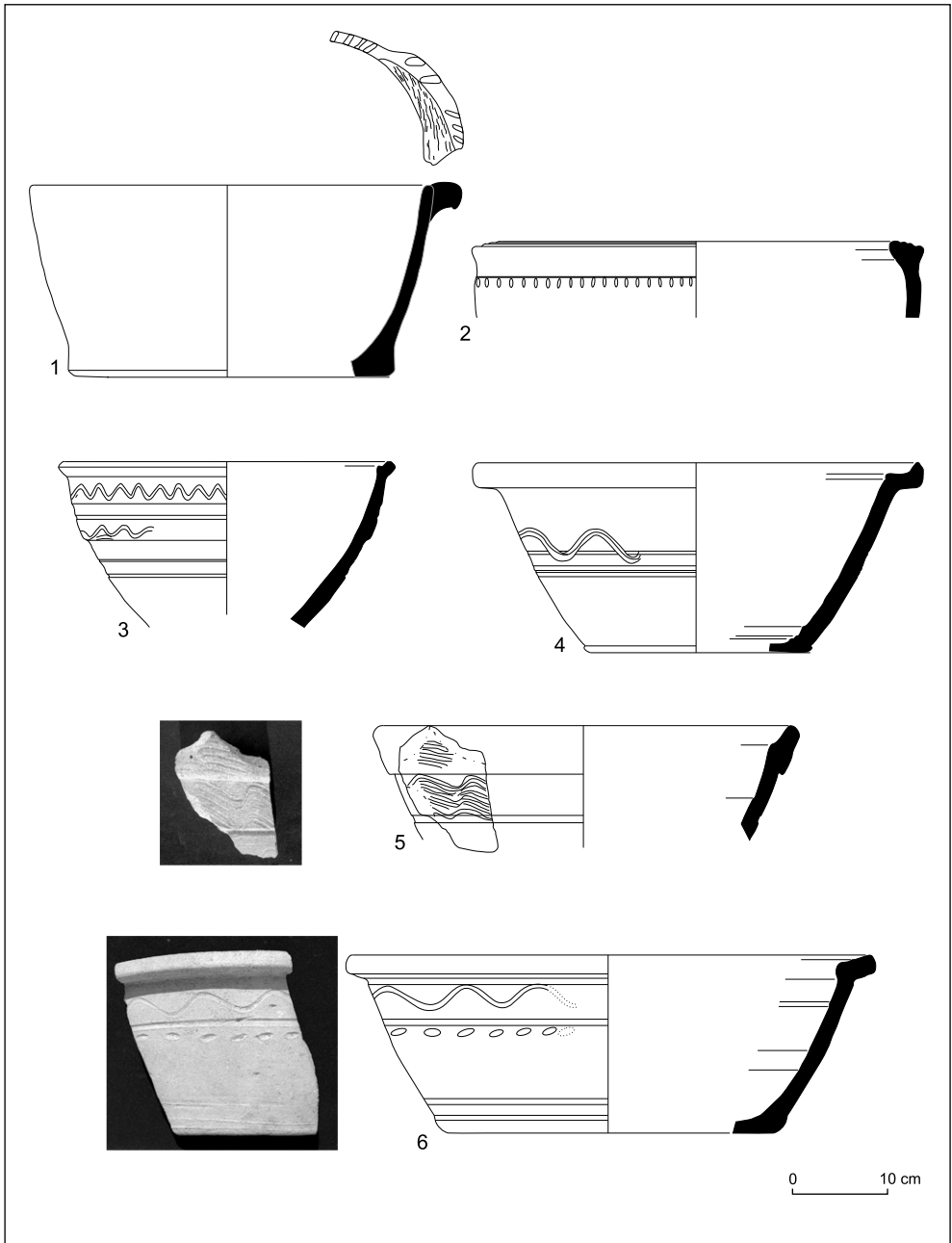


Fig. 9. Decoration on various categories of Abbasid basins from Bijan: 1, 2, 6 – miscellanea (see Fig. 8); 3 – Type I.7 (see Fig. 5); 4, 5 – Type II.5 and II.7 (see Fig. 6)

several generations. Time intervals for the presence of particular types of basins can be established only by comparative studies of material from other Early Islamic sites. Most of the basins from Bijan should be dated to the 9th–11th century, although some of the forms appeared as early as the second half of the 8th century. Moreover, analogous vessels were found on sites dated to the 12th or even 13th century, confirming A. Reiche's observation concerning the sporadic occurrence of late Abbasid artifacts on Bijan (Reiche 1996: 198)

The discussed vessel assembly fully corresponds with the repertoire of domestic utility wares used not only in the Euphrates basin, but throughout the Abbasid Caliphate.

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