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## Middle Assyrian Pottery from Polish Excavations on the Site of Tell Rijim (Iraq) : preliminary Study

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## MIDDLE ASSYRIAN POTTERY FROM POLISH EXCAVATIONS ON THE SITE OF TELL RIJIM (IRAQ). PRELIMINARY STUDY

Polish excavations at the site of Tell Rijim were part of the Eski Mosul Dam Salvage Project, also called the Saddam Dam Basin Salvage Project, conducted in northern Iraq in the 1980s, in connection with the construction of a dam at the locality of Eski Mosul on the Tigris.<sup>1</sup> Explorations, directed by Piotr Bieliński, were carried out in 1984–1985 by a team from the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw. Both interim and final reports were published from this work.<sup>2</sup>

Tell Rijim, also called Tell Rijim Omar Dalle, lays approximately 25 km to the northwest of Eski-Mosul, on the western bank of the Tigris (Fig. 1). It constituted part of the “Raffan microregion”<sup>3</sup> between the Tigris on one side and Jebel Butmah on the other. The site, which covered about 2.5 ha in area, was situated on a flat natural hill rising about 28 m above the water level of the river. The hill extended alongside the riverbank; it was of oval shape, 250 m long and about 100 m wide. The western part of the mound was higher than the eastern one; only this part of the site was excavated.<sup>4</sup>

Three seasons of excavations were carried out: in the fall of 1984 and in the spring and fall of 1985.<sup>5</sup> A stratigraphic trench (C) was dug on the northern slope and the remaining trenches were situated in the central part of the tell (Fig. 2). Altogether an area of 620 m<sup>2</sup> was investigated. The digging was encumbered by several factors, most importantly by erosion of cultural layers during intervals in site occupation. This resulted in, for example, the destruction of mud brick walls. Returning settlement saw new foundations being laid on the same level as older ones, sometimes even lower, especially on the slope.<sup>6</sup> The stratigraphy was disturbed even further by burials of later date, dug 1.5–2 m deep into the shallow-lying cultural layers (trenches D, E, F, partly B). These factors had direct impact on the provenancing of finds, pottery included.<sup>7</sup>

The presence of a Middle Assyrian layer had been signaled in interim reports. Following the first season of work, P. Bieliński believed that the earlier of the two “Assyrian” layers identified in trench A could be dated “by pottery to the end of the Middle Assyrian or the very beginnings of the Neo-Assyrian Period.”<sup>8</sup> In the next

<sup>1</sup> On research within the framework of the project, see: *Researches on the Antiquities of Saddam Dam Basin Salvage and other Researches*, Baghdad 1987; M. ROAF, *Eski Mosul Dam Salvage Project*, (in:) E.M. Meyers (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, vol. 2, New York – Oxford 1997, 265–268, with further literature; A. GREEN, *The Ninevite Countryside. Pots and Places of the Eski-Mosul Region in the Neo-Assyrian and Post-Assyrian Periods*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery in Northern Mesopotamia, Northern Syria and South-Eastern Anatolia*, *Altertumskunde des Vorderen Orients* 10, Münster 1999, 92–93, with further literature. On history of settlement in the Eski Mosul region, see: F.M. FALES, *Territorial and Historical Background*, (in:) G. Wilhelm, C. Zaccagnini (eds.), *Tell Karrana 3, Tell Jkan, Tell Khirbet Salih*, *Baghdader Forschungen* 15, Mainz am Rhein, 1–8.

<sup>2</sup> P. BIELIŃSKI, *Tell Raffaan and Tell Rijim 1984–85. Preliminary Report on Two Seasons of Polish Excavations in the Saddam's Dam Project Area*, (in:) *Researches on the Antiquities...*, 13–19; idem, *Preliminary Report on the Third Season of Polish Excavations on Tell Rijim Omar Dalle, Saddam's Dam Project Area*, (in:) *Researches on the Antiquities...*, 24–32; idem, *Tell Raffaan and Tell Rijim – First Season of Polish Excavations in the Eski Mosul Region*,

*Iraq*, “*Études et Travaux*” XVI, 1992, 273–277; idem, *Tell Rijim and Tell Raffaan 1985 – Two Campaigns of Polish Excavations in Northern Iraq*, “*Études et Travaux*” XVI, 1992, 279–288; B. KAIM, *The Post-Assyrian Graves on Tell Rijim Omar Dalle*, “*Études et Travaux*” XVII, 1995, 36–41; R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim, Iraq. The Middle Bronze Age Layers*, B.A.R. International Series 837, Oxford 2000; P. BIELIŃSKI, *Ninevite 5 Burials at Tell Rijim*, (in:) E. Rova, H. Weiss (eds.), *The Origins of North Mesopotamian Civilization: Ninevite 5 Chronology, Economy, Society*, Subartu IX, Turnhout 2003, 493–511.

<sup>3</sup> For a description of the microregion, see: R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 1–2.

<sup>4</sup> A survey, described as “somewhat unsystematic”, was carried out in the eastern part of the site – R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, X.

<sup>5</sup> P. BIELIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim and Tell Raffaan 1985...*, 280.

<sup>6</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, X–XI.

<sup>7</sup> Moreover, difficulties in recognizing undisturbed contexts during the exploration repeatedly caused the finds to be mixed with objects from other contexts, such as the burials themselves, cf. R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, XI.

<sup>8</sup> P. BIELIŃSKI, *Tell Raffaan and Tell Rijim – First Season...*, 276.

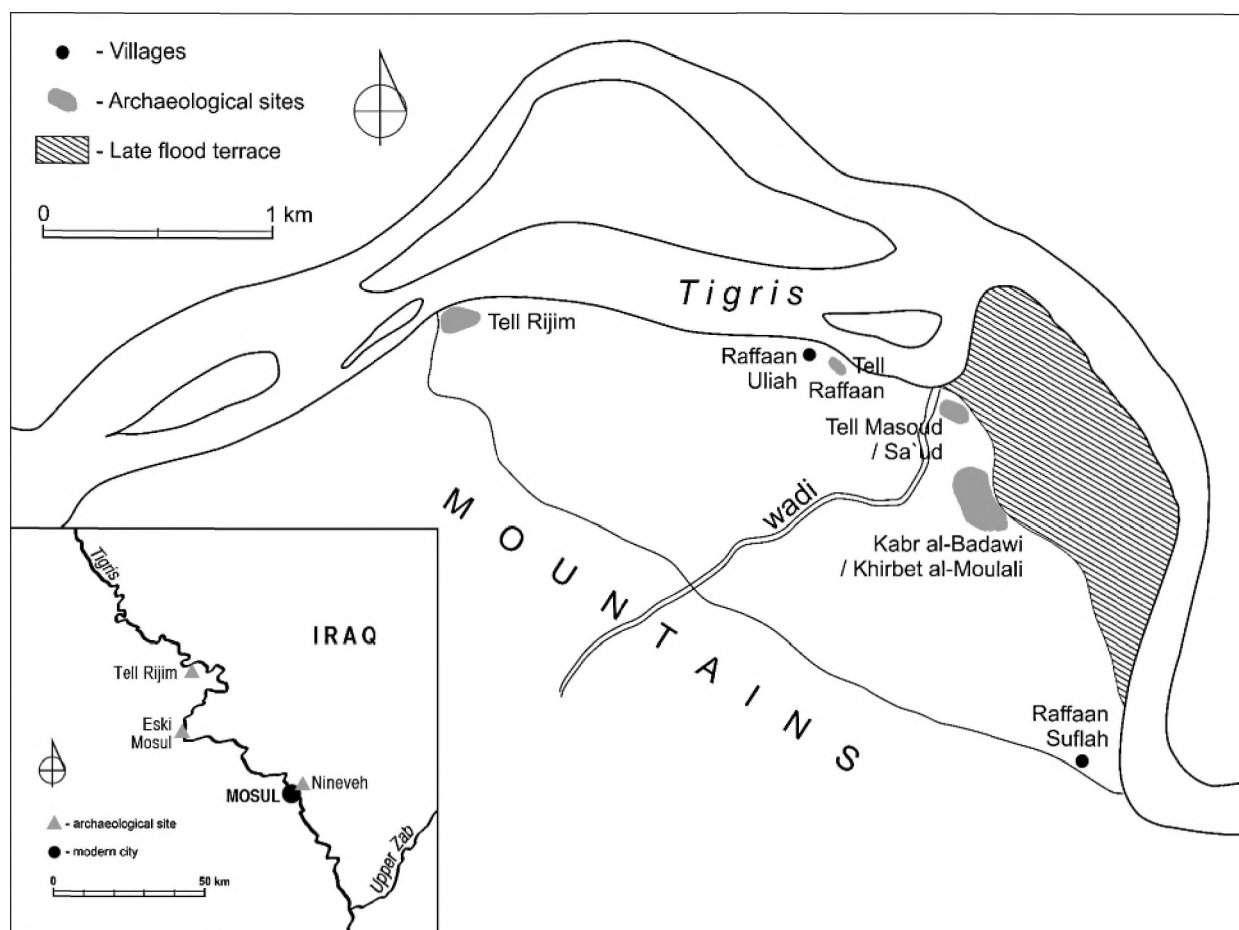


Fig. 1. Tell Rijim and Raffaana microregion (Digitizing M. Wagner after: R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, pl. 3).

Ryc. 1. Tell Rijim i mikroregion Raffaana.

report, the earlier of the two recognized Assyrian layers was assigned also to the “beginning of the Neo-Assyrian or the turn of the Middle- and Neo-Assyrian Period.”<sup>9</sup> A “Middle Assyrian” attribution appeared also in field notes as a working designation of specific features and sherds. In his publication of Middle Bronze Age levels, R. Koliński proposed a site stratigraphy in which “layer 8” represented occupation in the Middle Assyrian Period, dated to 1300–1200 BC.<sup>10</sup> Table 2 collates the presence of particular layers in the trenches; the Middle Assyrian layer was observed in trenches A, A 1, B, G, D, E.<sup>11</sup> These provisional determinations have

now been verified following a study of the architectural remains and pottery for publication of the Neo-Assyrian layers of the site.<sup>12</sup> Legible architectural complexes from the earlier period of Assyrian occupation on Tell Rijim have been distinguished and examples of Middle Assyrian pottery have been identified. It is worth noting at this point that Middle Assyrian remains were observed in the Raffaana microregion also outside of Tell Rijim, at the site of Tell Sa’ud excavated by Iraqi archaeologists. A brief interim report from these excavations exists, but the pottery from Tell Sa’ud remains unpublished.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> P. BIELIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim and Tell Raffaana 1985...*, 287.

<sup>10</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, XI, table 1. Determining the stratigraphy of the site was difficult, because trench C, in which later burials had not interfered with the deposition sequence, contained layers only from the fourth, third and second millennium BC. For later layers, the stratigraphical sequence had to be read from much more poorly preserved records in trenches A, A 1, B, E, F, cf. R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, XI–XII.

<sup>11</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, XII, table 2. See also: A. GREEN, *The Ninevite Countryside...*, 97–99 on Tell Rijim, especially the comparison of layers from particular sectors and their dating on page 98.

<sup>12</sup> Publication prepared by the present author.

<sup>13</sup> M. ABDELKARIM, *Excavations at Tell Sa’ud*, (in:) *Researches on the Antiquities...*, Arabic part, 125–128; R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 3.

For the purposes of this article it will suffice to summarize in general the architectural data, the full publication of which is pending. Middle Assyrian occupation of the tell was observed practically only in trenches A, A 1 in the form of severely damaged and scattered architectural remains. A pit in trench F should also be assigned a Middle

Assyrian date. In trench A 1 (Figs. 3, 4) the most important remains are two parallel walls, W 11 (top of stone substructure at 26.93–26.97 m) and W 12 (26.84–26.94 m) oriented SW-NE. Nothing but the stone foundations have survived, although in the case of wall W 12 some vestiges of bricks could be observed by the southern edge of trench A 1

Fig. 2. Contour map of Tell Rijim with the location of trenches (Digitizing M. Wagner after: R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, pl. 4).

Ryc. 2. Mapa warstwicowa Tell Rijim z zaznaczeniem miejsc objętych wykopiskami.

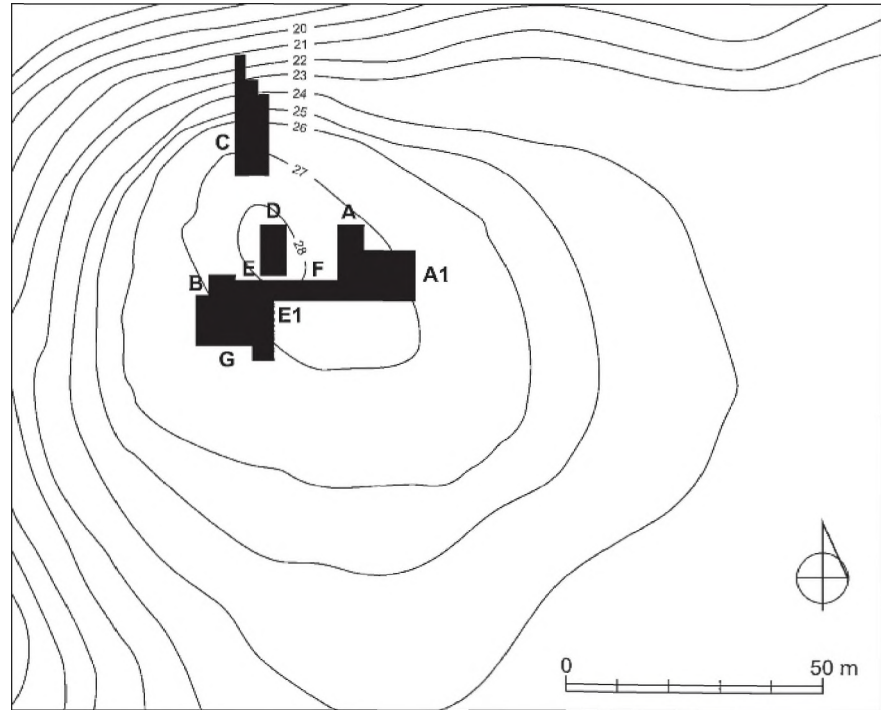


Fig. 3. Tell Rijim, trenches A, A 1, view from south (Photo A. Reiche).

Ryc. 3. Tell Rijim, wykopy A, A 1, widok od południa.



(preserved top of the structure at 27.06 m). The latter wall ran through the brick part of the so-called north-south wall from the Middle Bronze Age.<sup>14</sup> In turn, wall W 11 was sealed by a pavement from layer 9, which was found to be Neo-Assyrian. Other remains from the Middle Assyrian Period included sections of stone pavement found in different parts of the trench A, A 1. Walls W 11 and W 12 presented a different alignment than the earlier Middle Bronze wall and the walls from layers dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC.<sup>16</sup> Taking this into consideration and the fact that walls W 11 and W 12 were cut into Middle Bronze wall and were situated below the level of Neo-Assyrian walls, the most probable interpretation is that layer 8 very likely represents the Middle Assyrian Period. The presence of ceramic forms that can be assigned to the Middle Assyrian Period only strengthens this hypothesis.

Walls W 11 and W 12 extended further to the south, into the unexplored part of the site. The salvage character of the research and the limited time available excluded further exploration of Middle Assyrian levels in this part of the tell. It would have also given a more extensive assemblage of Middle Assyrian pottery, perhaps from undisturbed contexts. For the same reasons the size and character of the settlement from this period cannot be established.

### The pottery<sup>17</sup>

Koliński's publication of the work at Tell Rijim gives a count of about 58000 sherds. About 8500 were diagnostic pieces and of these 2100 were recorded.<sup>18</sup> Part of the ceramic material left in Mosul for later recording was lost during the Gulf War in 1990. Koliński characterized this set as "mainly of Ninevite 5 and Neo-Assyrian dates,"<sup>19</sup> but it is more than likely that Middle Assyrian material was also represented. It means that the material for study is hardly complete, limiting research possibilities and end results.

Moreover, for reasons described above, most of the pottery comes from disturbed contexts; hence the material is mixed and not easily assignable to specific periods of occupation of the site. Not the least, the author had access only to drawings and descriptions of the pottery, being able to examine personally only a limited group of pottery sherds kept temporarily in Warsaw.

The following presentation is restricted for the most part to forms from the few good contexts, supplemented by forms attributable to Middle Assyrian ceramics based on parallels from other sites. Special emphasis has been placed on examples of vessels with debatable, but probable Middle Assyrian dating.

In the case of these debatable fragments, ware and temper could be of importance in identification and dating, but were not for a couple of reasons. One had to do with the documentation standards during excavations on Tell Rijim, the other was more general in nature and concerns Middle Assyrian ceramics as a whole. Koliński's publication leaves no doubt that the matrix composition descriptions made during excavations were partly incorrect. This "put into doubt the results of the matrix composition descriptions."<sup>21</sup> For example, part of the substances identified in the field as mineral inclusions turned out in fact to be part of the clay matrix.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, determinations included in field descriptions need to be treated with caution, especially with regard to the mineral temper.

Plant temper which predominates in Middle Assyrian pottery and occurs in as much as 90% of the ware on some sites (pottery from Tell Sheikh Hamad, Tell Bderi and Tell Sabi Abyad)<sup>23</sup> is not exclusive in this period. Mineral temper is also present, although much less frequent. According to S. Anastasio, the predominance of either the mineral or the plant temper group is an important chronological marker, because the share of mineral temper becomes more frequent in the Neo-Assyrian ceramics but

<sup>14</sup> On this wall, see: R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 12, 20–22.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, figs. 18, 19.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. P. BIELIŃSKI, *Preliminary Report...*, 26, fig. 6.

<sup>17</sup> The author would like to thank Andrzej Reiche from the Ancient Art Department of the National Museum in Warsaw for reading an early draft of this article and for his very useful comments, as well as making available to the author a manuscript of an article on Mitannian and Middle Assyrian pottery from the site of Nemrik.

<sup>18</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 26.

<sup>19</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, X.

<sup>20</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 26, note 28.

<sup>21</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 26.

<sup>22</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 26, note 27. Similar observation, see: S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal in der Jazira zwischen dem 13. und 5. Jh. v. Chr. Die Keramik des Projektes 'Prospektion archéologique du Haut-Khabour occidental (Syrie du N.E.)'*, Firenze 2007, 116.

<sup>23</sup> Tell Sheikh Hamad, Tell Bderi – P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische und mittelassyrische Keramik. Eine chronologische, funktionale und produktionsökonomische Analyse*, Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Šeh Hamad/Dur-Katlimmu 3, Berlin 1995, 114–115; Tell Sabi Abyad – K. DUISTERMAAT, *The Pots and Potters of Assyria. Technology and Organization of Production, Ceramic Sequence, and Vessel Function at Late Bronze Age Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria*, Papers on Archaeology of the Leiden Museum of Antiquities 4, Turnhout 2008, 58–59, 66, 78, 85, 90.



Fig. 4. Tell Rijim, trenches A, A 1, view from west (Photo A. Reiche).

Ryc. 4. Tell Rijim, wykopy A, A 1, widok od zachodu.

as he notes himself, plant temper is present through the end of the Neo-Assyrian Period.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, establishing the presence of plant temper does not determine attribution of a given fragment to the group of Middle Assyrian ceramics. Moreover, Anastasio points out that data on organic versus mineral temper is of importance in the case of material from excavations, homogeneous and with clear stratigraphy. The usefulness of such data diminishes in the case of material from field surveys, especially from sites with both Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian occupation.<sup>25</sup> The pottery from Tell Rijim can be treated as another case of diminished importance of the data on temper. Occupation from both the Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian Periods was recorded on the site and most of the material was found to come from disturbed layers.

Moreover, the Middle Bronze Age ceramic assemblage from Tell Rijim is characterized mainly by fabrics with equal proportions of mineral and organic temper. But there are also a few (paste 3, 7, 8, 14), where plant temper

predominates. Indeed, according to table 8 which gives a count of the frequency of particular fabrics (only for rim fragments), it appears to be the second most frequent group (179 examples; group of fabrics with equal proportion of mineral and organic temper – 223 examples).<sup>26</sup> In effect, since many of the forms attributable to the Middle Assyrian Period came from tags with mixed content (including Middle Bronze Age ceramics), identification based on (plant) temper encounters increased difficulty.

### Vessel forms

A limited number of vessel forms and strong standardization of the shape are usually considered among the main characteristics of Middle Assyrian ceramics. Ever since P. Pfälzner's publication, certain types, that is, Standard Carinated Bowls and Cups as well as Standard Bottles, have been accepted as typical forms of the so-called Middle Assyrian administrative pottery.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 113. See also the author's comments on dating vessel bases on page 116.

<sup>25</sup> S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 117.

<sup>26</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 27, table 8.

<sup>27</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, 132–133 (“mittlassyrische Standard-Knickwandschalen”), 134 (“mittlassyrische Standard-Knickwandnäpfe”), 136–137 (“mittlassyrische Standardflaschen”);

idem, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions of the Syrian Jazirah*, (in:) M. Al-Maqdissi, V. Matoian, C. Nicolle (eds.), *Céramique de l'Âge du bronze en Syrie II. L'Euphrate et la région de Jézireh*, Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique 180, Beyrouth 2007, 250–253; cf. also S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 32–34, 36, and A. TENU, *L'expansion médio-assyrienne: Approche archéologique*, B.A.R. International Series 1906, Oxford 2009, 45–47, 111.

Tell Rijim produced a small number of carinated bowls (Ri 1078/69, Ri 224/15, Ri 3330/148, Ri 928A/64,<sup>28</sup> Ri 105/6, Ri 4044/229, **Fig. 5:1–6**; Ri 4949/279, **Fig. 6:1**), the shape of which recalls the Middle Assyrian Standard Carinated Bowls from Tell Sheikh Hamad.<sup>29</sup> Other parallels come from Khirbet esh-Shenef,<sup>30</sup> Tell Barri,<sup>31</sup> Tell Taban,<sup>32</sup> Ashur<sup>33</sup> or Tell al-Naml.<sup>34</sup> One should note, however, the bowl from Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>35</sup> dated to the Neo-Assyrian Period, which recalls the shape of the Tell Rijim bowls.

For a piece of smaller diameter (Ri 4954/279, diam. 10 cm, **Fig. 6:2**), counterparts can be found in the Middle Assyrian Standard Carinated Cups published by Pfälzner (examples from Tell Sheikh Hamad),<sup>36</sup> also known from Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>37</sup> Tell Sabi Abyad,<sup>38</sup> Tell Barri,<sup>39</sup> Tell Taban,<sup>40</sup> the Agig region and many others.<sup>41</sup>

Pfälzner's variant of the Middle Assyrian carinated bowl, "Schale mit zwei eingeritzten Linien im oberen

Wandungsabschnitt,"<sup>42</sup> has also been recorded at Tell Rijim (bowls Ri 8062/414, Ri 8450/455, Ri 1678/90, **Fig. 6:3,4**). It is distinguished by a horizontal incision at the rim and just above the carination, as well as rather high straight walls between the carination and the rim. These bowls were considered by S. Anastasio as one of the most telling forms, next to Standard Bowls and Bottles, for the Middle Assyrian Period, especially as they are entirely absent as a type from Mitannian on one hand and Neo-Assyrian on the other.<sup>43</sup> The best parallel for the Tell Rijim vessels can be found among the bowls from Tell Barri.<sup>44</sup> A. D'Agostino discusses aspects of appearance, production and dating of such bowls, and cites parallels from Tell Brak, Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>45</sup> Tell Mohammed Arab, Tell Sheikh Hamad, Giricano and Üçtepe.<sup>46</sup> The same form is represented most probably by bowls from Tell Taban, Tell Aqab and the Polish excavations on Nemrik.<sup>47</sup> Tell Barri has also produced bowls with rounded body between the carination and

<sup>28</sup> There was no serial number on the sherd in existing documentation, only tag number. Tag 64 included numbers Ri 836–928. An arbitrary number Ri 928A was assigned in this situation.

<sup>29</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 251–252; pls. XXII:259,261, XXIII:262–269.

<sup>30</sup> K. BARTL, *Khirbet Esh-Shenef. A Late Bronze Age Settlement in the Balikh Valley, Northern Syria*, "Akkadica" 67, 1990, figs. 3:14 (for Ri 224/15), 4:7 (for Ri 4949/279).

<sup>31</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *La ceramica dal pozzo medioassiro di Tell Barri (Siria): comunicazione preliminare dei dati*, "Orient Express" 2006/1, fig. 1:21 (for Ri 4949/279); idem, *Pottery Production and Transformation of the Social Structure in an "Assyrian" Settlement from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age: the Tell Barri Case*, (in:) H. Kühne, R.M. Czichon, F.J. Kreppner (eds.), *Proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 29 March – 3 April 2004, Freie Universität Berlin*, vol. 2: *Social and Cultural Transformation: The Archaeology of Transitional Periods and Dark Ages. Excavations Reports*, Wiesbaden 2008, fig. 1:19 (for Ri 105/6).

<sup>32</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, M. SHIMBO, *Excavations at Tell Taban, Hassake, Syria (2): Report of the 1998 Season of Work*, "Al-Rafidan" XXI, 2000, figs. 7:1 (for Ri 928A/64), 8:19 (for Ri 224/15).

<sup>33</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 195:c; C. BEUGER, *Keramik der spätfrühdynastischen bis spätassyrischen Zeit aus Assur. Eine Bearbeitung unter chronologischen Gesichtspunkten*, Berlin 2007 (FUB dissertation, www.diss.fu-berlin.de/diss/receive/FUDISS\_thesis\_00000003202), pl. 22:16 ("früh neuassyrisch?") (for Ri 3330/148). For bowls similar to Ri 3330/148 see also: S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, pl. 97:2,3.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. B.S. SULAIMAN, *Irakische Ausgrabungen im Makhul-Staudammgebiet*, Heidelberg Studien zum Alten Orient 12, Heidelberg 2010, pl. 201:8 (for Ri 1078/69, slightly deeper).

<sup>35</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik der Areale A-F in Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery...*, pl. 5a:5 ("Bauphase 3" – "spätassyrisch").

<sup>36</sup> Cf. P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 77:e–g,k ("Stufe I"); cf. also: P. PFÄLZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, pl. XXIV: 275–278.

<sup>37</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, pl. 3a:26.

<sup>38</sup> P.M.M.G. AKKERMANS, I. ROSSMEISL, *Excavations at Tell Sabi Abyad, Northern Syria: a Regional Centre on the Assyrian Frontier*, "Akkadica" 66, 1990, fig. 9:29.

<sup>39</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *La ceramica dal pozzo...*, fig. 1:6,7.

<sup>40</sup> H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban, Hassake, Syria (5): Preliminary Report of the 2005 Summer Season of Work*, "Al-Rafidan" XXVIII, 2007, fig. 12:8 (late Middle Assyrian).

<sup>41</sup> R. BERNBECK, *Steppe als Kulturlandschaft. Das Agiggebiet Ost-syriens vom Neolithikum bis zur islamischen Zeit*, Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient. Ausgrabungen 1, Berlin 1993, pl. 87:n–p.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, 134.

<sup>43</sup> S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 34, where this form appears under a different name: "Knickwandschale mit stumpfkönischem Rand und Auskehlungen."

<sup>44</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *Alcune osservazioni su un gruppo di ciotole dal Grande Edificio medioassiro di Tell Barri: indizi di una differenziazione produttiva?*, "Orient Express" 2005/1, fig. 1, especially no. 17; idem, *La ceramica dal pozzo...*, fig. 1:13; idem, *Pottery Production...*, fig. 1:26. Cf. also: S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, pl. 23:3.

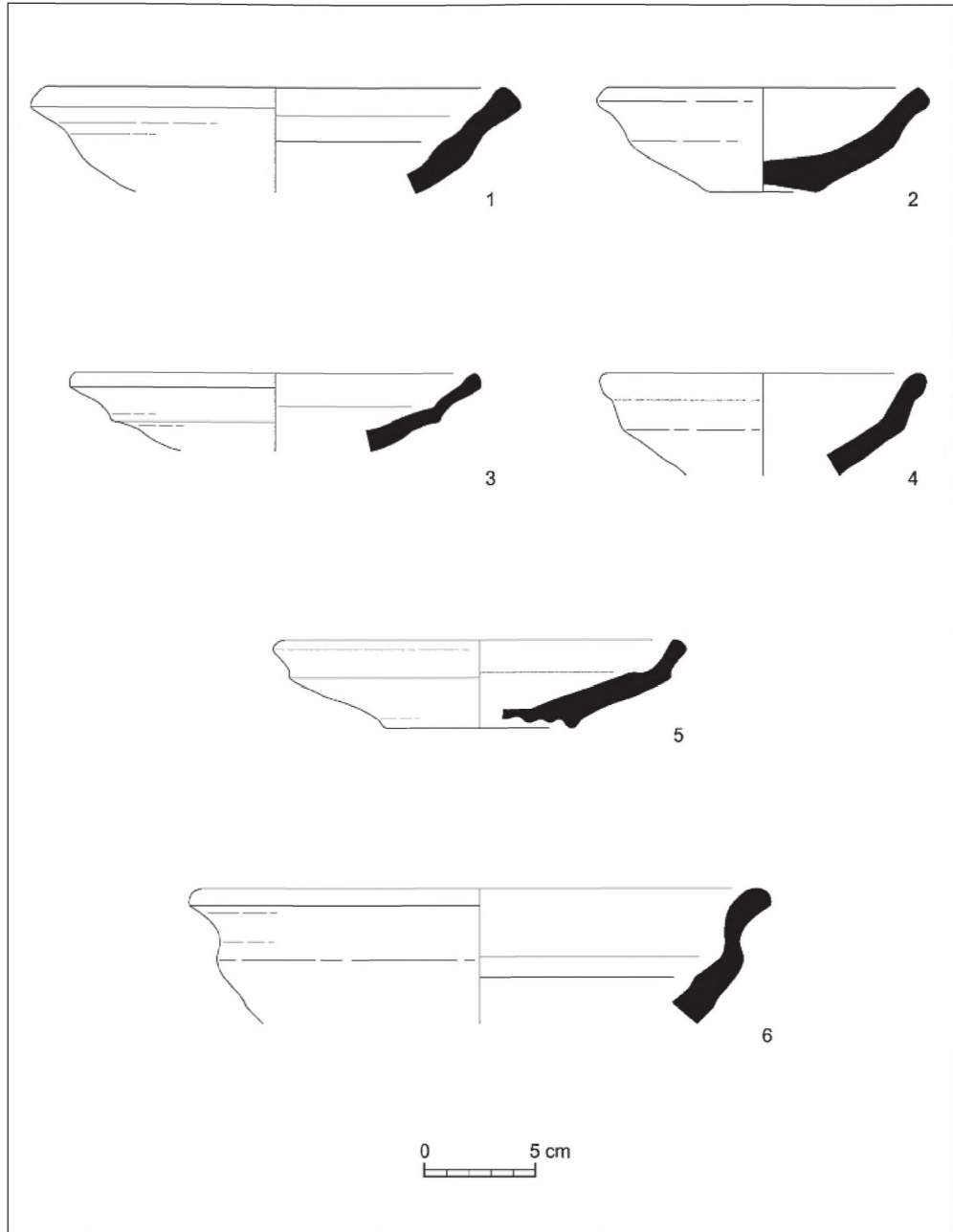
<sup>45</sup> The bowl from Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta is deeper however, see: C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, pl. 3A:12. For Ri 8062/414 and Ri 8450/455 see also: R. DITTMANN, *Untersuchungen in Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta (Tulul al-Aqar) 1986*, "Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft" 120, 1988, pl. 14: "Typ 1.2fl."

<sup>46</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *Alcune osservazioni...*, 14–20.

<sup>47</sup> Tell Taban – K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban, Hassake, Syria (3): Report of the 1999 Season of Work*, "Al-Rafidan" XXII, 2001, fig. 7:14; Tell Aqab – S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, pl. 20:2; Nemrik – A. REICHE, *Late Bronze Age Pottery from Nemrik (Northern Iraq)*, in print, fig. 16:2.

Fig. 5. Pottery from Tell Rijim – bowls: 1. Ri 105/6; 2. Ri 928A/64; 3. Ri 1078/69; 4. Ri 224/15; 5. Ri 3330/148; 6. Ri 4044/229 (Drawing M. Wagner).

Ryc. 5. Ceramika z Tell Rijim – misy.



rim, classified by D'Agostino in the type discussed above,<sup>48</sup> having parallels in Neo-Assyrian material, that is, finds from Ashur from graves dated to the late 9<sup>th</sup> – early 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC; according to D'Agostino, this is proof of the continuation of the variant in the Neo-Assyrian Period.<sup>49</sup> It is worth

noting that Tell Rijim has also produced vessels of this kind (Ri 3155/140).

Other examples of open forms are more debatable and their dating to the Middle Assyrian Period cannot be taken as certain.

<sup>48</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *Alcune osservazioni...*, 14

<sup>49</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *Alcune osservazioni...*, 17. On bowls from Ashur,

see: A. HAUSLEITER, *Graves, Chronology and Ceramics: Some Considerations on Neo-Assyrian Assur*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery...* 135–138, fig. 6:4,5.



A single example of a shallow carinated bowl with flaring rim, which narrows down slightly (Ri 7267/373, **Fig. 6:5**), features mineral temper (mixed with organic in small quantities) and slip.<sup>50</sup> The dating based on parallels is debatable, as similar forms were present in both Middle and Neo-Assyrian ceramics. In the first millennium BC, this type occurred in the pottery from Niniveh,<sup>51</sup> Ashur,<sup>52</sup> Nimrud,<sup>53</sup> Tell Rimah,<sup>54</sup> and Tell Ahmar.<sup>55</sup> The form, however, appeared already in Middle Assyrian ceramics from, for example, Tell Sheikh Hamad,<sup>56</sup> Tell Rimah<sup>57</sup> and Ashur.<sup>58</sup> It was even noted among Mitannian forms (Tell Rimah).<sup>59</sup> This is important, considering that the sherd in question came from pit 3, trench F, which also produced a beaker Ri 7263/373 (see below). Both forms are known from the Middle Assyrian ceramic repertoire; taken in conjunction with the stratigraphic position of pit 3 (top level of pit 3 measured at 26.81 m), it means that the pit and the pottery in it was very likely of Middle Assyrian date.

Bowl Ri 232/16 (**Fig. 6:6**) has a straight, almost conical shape and sharply thickened lip on the inside and outside of the rim. The lip is beveled outside with a small groove just under the top edge. A similar example comes from a Middle Assyrian layer at Tell Sheikh Hamad,<sup>60</sup>

others were recorded from Tell Taban and Tell Sabi Abyad.<sup>61</sup> Bowls with thickened rim were also found in Middle Assyrian layers at Tell Rimah.<sup>62</sup> The sherd from Tell Rijim appears to be particularly close to one of the Rimah pieces which has a similar groove beneath the rim edge.<sup>63</sup> Bowls with a beveled and thickened rim, albeit in a slightly different way, were known from the Old Babylonian Period: examples originate from Tell Rijim itself<sup>64</sup> as well as from Tell Taban, for example.<sup>65</sup> Even so, the similarity between bowls from Rijim and the vessel from Tell Rimah makes a Middle Assyrian date more than likely.

Only two of the vessels in the recorded material with possible Middle Assyrian date can be assigned to the beakers group. Vessel Ri 7263/373 (**Fig. 7:1**) is missing the rim, but the form was still recognizable. It is a shouldered beaker with globular body, narrowing toward a nipple base. Some of the nipple bases recorded from Rijim (see below) could have belonged to beakers of this type.<sup>66</sup> The S-curved neck widens gently at the top, turning probably into a slightly flaring rim with simple unaccentuated lip. The form is attested for Middle Assyrian to Post-Assyrian Periods. The Rijim vessel falls into the type described by Pfälzner as *ausladende Becher*,<sup>67</sup> which has been recorded for all the

<sup>50</sup> It may very well be self-slip in this case, see: R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 28. See also a similar remark by S. Anastasio of the pottery from B. Lyonnet's survey – S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 114. This information could not be verified because, as explained above, the author had only the descriptions and drawings of the pottery to work on.

<sup>51</sup> S. LUMSDEN, *Neo-Assyrian Pottery from Niniveh*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery...*, 5, fig. 4:2 (7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>52</sup> A. HALLER, *Die Gräber und Gräfte von Assur*, Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 65, Berlin 1954, pl. 6:p.ah – deeper example; A. HAUSLEITER, *Graves...*, figs. 8:8, 9:2 (7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>53</sup> J. OATES, *Late Assyrian Pottery from Fort Shalmaneser*, "Iraq" 21, 1959, pl. XXXVI:31. Shallow carinated bowls, with ring-base and pointed rim were also described by A. Hausleiter among the forms found at Nimrud and dated to the (8<sup>th</sup>–)7<sup>th</sup> c. BC – A. HAUSLEITER, *Neo-Assyrian Pottery from Kalhu/Nimrud with Special Reference to the Polish Excavations in the "Central Building" (1974–76)*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery...*, 28–29, with other references.

<sup>54</sup> C. POSTGATE, D. OATES, J. OATES, *The Excavations at Tell Al Rimah: The Pottery*, Iraq Archaeological Reports 4, Warminster 1997, pl. 55:491, although this vessel is deeper and the walls below the carination slightly bulging; fine grit was used as temper and the vessel was also burnished inside (end of 9<sup>th</sup>/beginning of 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>55</sup> S.A. JAMIESON, *Identifying Room Use and Vessel Function. A Case Study of Iron Age Pottery from Building C2 at Tell Ahmar, North*

*Syria*, (in:) G. Bunnens (ed.), *Essays on Syria in the Iron Age*, Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 7, Louvain – Paris – Sterling, Virginia 2000, fig. 2:2.4 (second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>56</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 71:a ("Stufe I," 13<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>57</sup> C. POSTGATE, D. OATES, J. OATES, *The Excavations at Tell Al Rimah...*, pl. 31:53,63.

<sup>58</sup> C. BEUGER, *Keramik...*, pl. 18:1 ("Schicht IIb4").

<sup>59</sup> C. POSTGATE, D. OATES, J. OATES, *The Excavations at Tell Al Rimah...*, pl. 33:98,104.

<sup>60</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 102:a, slightly rounded body; idem, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 250–251, 253, pl. XXVIII:324 (Middle Assyrian IIc).

<sup>61</sup> Tell Taban – K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 7:19; Tell Sabi Abyad – P.M.M.G. AKKERMANS, I. ROSSMEISL, *Excavations at Tell Sabi Abyad...*, fig. 10:40.

<sup>62</sup> C. POSTGATE, D. OATES, J. OATES, *The Excavations at Tell Al Rimah...*, pls. 36:149, 37:154.

<sup>63</sup> C. POSTGATE, D. OATES, J. OATES, *The Excavations at Tell Al Rimah...*, pl. 37:165.

<sup>64</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, pl. 18:b, form M 29.

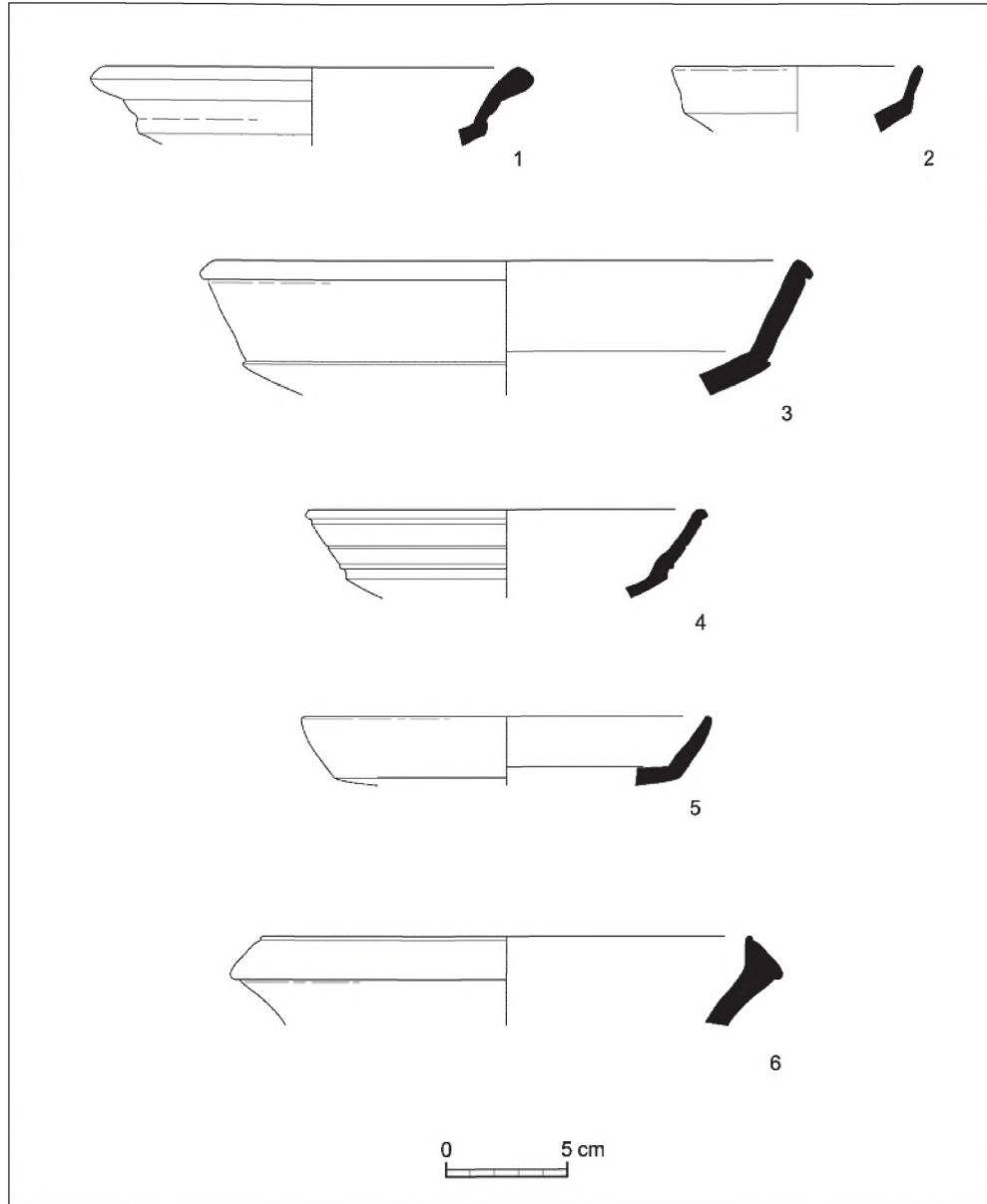
<sup>65</sup> H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 15:46.

<sup>66</sup> See: J. CURTIS, A. GREEN, *Excavations at Khirbet Khatuniyeh*, London 1997, 87 on button-based beakers from Middle and Neo-Assyrian Periods.

<sup>67</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, 135.

Fig. 6. Pottery from Tell Rijim – bowls: 1. Ri 4949/279; 3. Ri 8062/414+8450/455; 4. Ri 1678/90; 5. Ri 7267/373; 6. Ri 232/16; cup: 2. Ri 4954/279 (Drawing M. Wagner).

Ryc. 6. Ceramika z Tell Rijim – misy: 1, 3–6; czarka: 2.



Middle Assyrian phases (Middle Assyrian I–III). Middle Assyrian parallels come from Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>68</sup> Tell Sheikh Hamad,<sup>69</sup> Tell Taban,<sup>70</sup> Tell Barri and others.<sup>71</sup> Interestingly, examples of “goblets with tall neck, bulbous

body and button or small flat base”<sup>72</sup> recorded in the so-called House of Puzuruma at Terqa are very similar to the vessel from Rijim, demonstrating that the form was common in the Middle Euphrates region already earlier on (the

<sup>68</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, 76, pl. 3b:24,25 (“Bauphase 1,” Middle Assyrian).

<sup>69</sup> P. PEALZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 114:e and especially f; idem, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 253 – “common type of Middle Assyrian Fine Chaff Ware”, pl. XXVIII:318 (probably bases and lower bodies of nos. 320–321 on the same plate).

<sup>70</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 8:22.

<sup>71</sup> A. D’AGOSTINO, *La ceramica dal pozzo...*, fig. 2:37; idem, *Pottery Production...*, fig. 1:32,40 (nipple base).

<sup>72</sup> M. KELLY-BUCCELLATI, W.R. SHELBY, *Middle Euphrates Ceramics in the Third and Second Millennia: A View from Terqa*, (in:) M. Al-Maqdissi, V. Matoian, C. Nicolle (eds.), *Céramique de l’Âge du bronze en Syrie II. L’Euphrate et la région de Jézireh*, Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique 180, Beyrouth 2007, pl. VIII:63–67.

house is dated to 1750–1650 BC). Parallels from the Neo-Assyrian Period are equally numerous. They have been noted at Qasrij Cliff<sup>73</sup> and Khirbet Khatuniyeh;<sup>74</sup> outside the Eski Mosul region, this form is evidenced at Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>75</sup> Ashur<sup>76</sup> and Nimrud.<sup>77</sup> It continued to be present in Post-Assyrian times as indicated by a vessel from Khirbet Khatuniyeh, level 3.<sup>78</sup> Most probably the beaker from Tell Rijim should be dated to the Middle Assyrian Period, because it comes from the same pit 3 as bowl Ri 7267 (see above). Both forms are known from the Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian Period, but the stratigraphic position of pit 3 and the ware represented by the two vessels could indicate a date in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC.

The second vessel from this group, a small shouldered beaker (Ri 600/56, Fig. 7:2) with slightly indicated shoulders and vertical, simple rim (a large part of which has been preserved) finds parallels in Neo-Assyrian material from Nimrud<sup>79</sup> and Tell Sheikh Hassan,<sup>80</sup> but the form was present already in the Middle Assyrian ceramic repertoire.<sup>81</sup> In the case of this vessel, the find context at Rijim does not help in resolving the dating issue. It can be dated to Middle Assyrian as well as Neo-Assyrian and the second possibility is indeed more likely, considering that the temper is mineral (lime) exclusively.

Examples of vessels classified by P. Pfälzner as “Standard Bottles” are also known from Tell Rijim. One of them is rim Ri 2156/110 (Fig. 7:3). The shoulders of the vessel narrow toward the rim which is heavily thickened on the outside. Similar forms come from Tell Sheikh Hamad,<sup>82</sup> Tell Barri,<sup>83</sup> Tell Sabi Abyad.<sup>84</sup> Neo-Assyrian examples are less numerous (Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta<sup>85</sup> and Lower Khabur survey work<sup>86</sup>). According to Pfälzner rims like the one from Rijim, that is, elongated and rounded, were characteristic of Middle Assyrian I (Middle Jezirah II B) and later again Middle Assyrian III (Middle Jezirah III).<sup>87</sup> The vessel from Tell Rijim is most like the Middle Assyrian parallels in form and should be assigned to this period.

Other examples of bottles have also parallels in the Middle Assyrian material from other sites: fragment Ri 1128/20 (Fig. 7:4) in material from Tell Sheikh Hamad<sup>88</sup> and Tell Barri<sup>89</sup> and rim Ri 1557/85 (Fig. 7:5) in material from Tell Ajaja, Tell Mohammed Arab, Tell Sabi Abyad and Tell Brak.<sup>90</sup>

From Tell Rijim comes another vessel that could be dated to the Middle Assyrian Period. This jar rim belongs to the type called sometimes “jars with folded rims”. They are large straight-walled containers with thickened S-profile rims<sup>91</sup> which are often flared. Beside the much

<sup>73</sup> J. CURTIS, *Excavations at Qasrij Cliff and Khirbet Qasrij*, British Museum Western Asiatic Excavations I, Saddam Dam Report 10, London 1989, fig. 10:41,42 (8<sup>th</sup> c. BC). Curtis mentions four “related beakers,” cf. page 17; see also page 48 on beakers from Khirbet Qasrij. This type of beaker occurs in the palace ware or the “more common fabric” ware, such as the examples from Rijim or from Qasrij Cliff.

<sup>74</sup> J. CURTIS, A. GREEN, *Excavations at Khirbet Khatuniyeh...*, figs. 38:160 (level 4, 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC, see also page 89 regarding parallels), 51:269 (level 4, 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC), 58:382–384 (level 3, Post-Assyrian).

<sup>75</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, 76, pl. 3b:24,25 – “Bauphase 1,” Middle Assyrian, but form 24 occurs also in “Bauphasen 3–5,” form 25 (base) also in “Bauphasen 3, 4,” therefore, they can be dated to Late Assyrian through Post-Assyrian Period.

<sup>76</sup> A. HALLER, *Die Gräber...*, pls. 3:t, 5:c,d,f,l.

<sup>77</sup> A. HAUSLEITER, *Neo-Assyrian Pottery...*, 33, fig. 15:a,b – described as jars with conical neck, (8<sup>th</sup>–)7<sup>th</sup> c. BC.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. note no. 73. See also: J. CURTIS, *Excavations at Qasrij Cliff and Khirbet Qasrij...*, 48 on beakers from Khirbet Qasrij and their dating.

<sup>79</sup> J. OATES, *Late Assyrian Pottery...*, pl. XXXVII:72 (late 7<sup>th</sup>/early 6<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>80</sup> E. SCHNEIDER, *Die eisenzeitliche Keramik von Tell Sheikh Hassan (Syrien)*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery...*, 329, pl. 15:11, here with handle, classified as the “Krug” type, dated to Iron Age II–III.

<sup>81</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 256, pl.

XXXI:365 (example from Tell Bderi). See also: K. DUISTERMAAT, *The Pots and Potters of Assyria...*, fig. IV.18:f,g (Tell Sabi Abyad) and C. BEUGER, *Keramik...*, pl. 55:17b (Ashur, “Schicht IIB4”).

<sup>82</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 85:f; idem, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, pl. XXV:293.

<sup>83</sup> A. D’AGOSTINO, *La ceramica dal pozzo...*, fig. 2:40.

<sup>84</sup> K. DUISTERMAAT, *The Pots and Potters of Assyria...*, figs. IV.30:b, IV.85:d.

<sup>85</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, pl. 3b:9 – “Flasche, Bauphase 1” (Middle Assyrian), but occurring through “Bauphase 5” (Post-Assyrian); idem, *Die Keramik...*, 65.

<sup>86</sup> D. MORANDI BONACOSI, *Die eisenzeitliche Keramik der TAVO-Geländebegehung des Unteren Habur-Gebiets*, (in:) A. Hausleiter, A. Reiche (eds.), *Iron Age Pottery...*, pl. 8:c (“Topf” group D2 dated from the mid 8<sup>th</sup> to the end of 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>87</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 252–253.

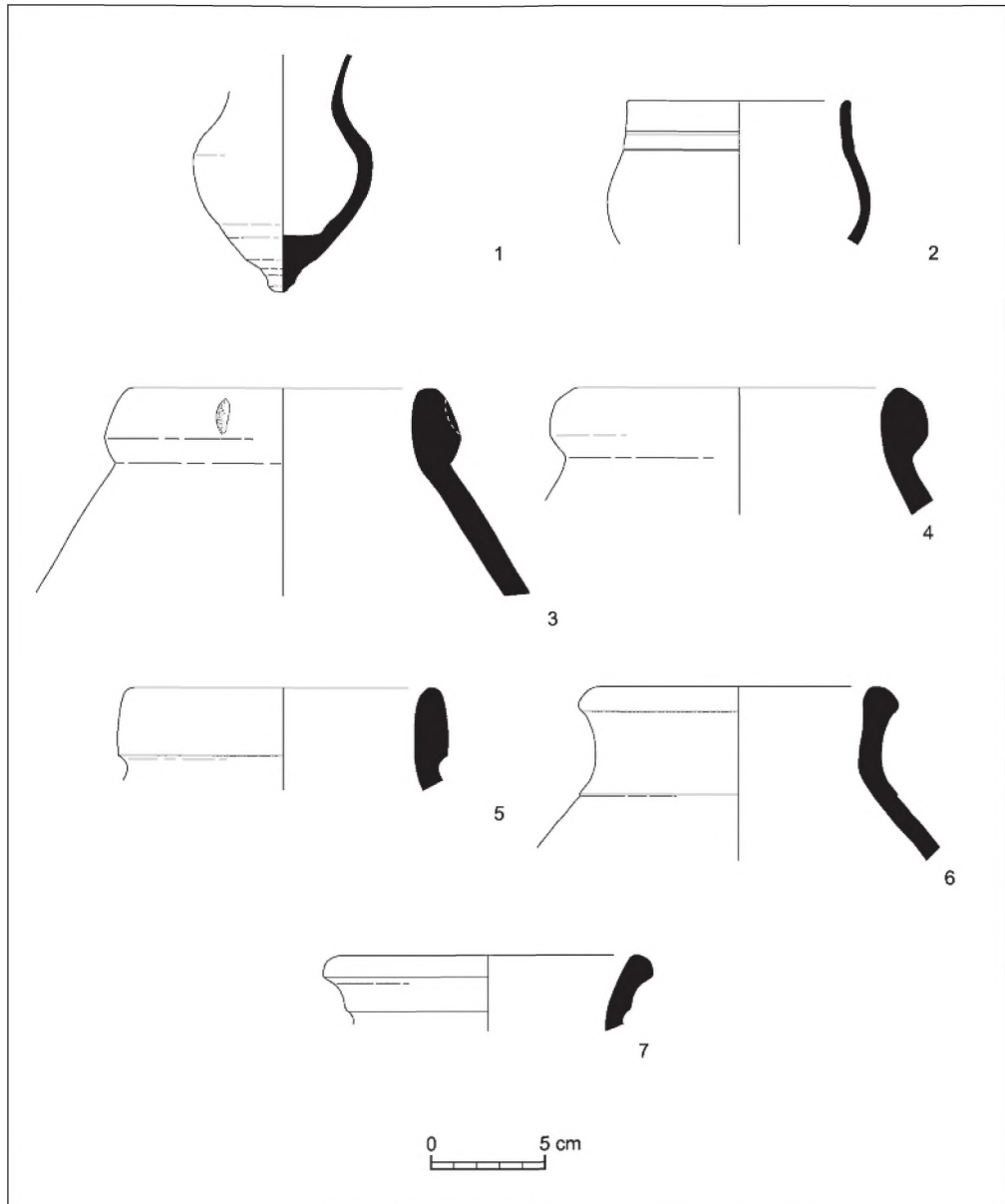
<sup>88</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 87:d.

<sup>89</sup> A. D’AGOSTINO, *Pottery Production...*, fig. 2:2.

<sup>90</sup> Tell Ajaja – P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 159:c (Mitannian/Middle Assyrian); Tell Mohammed Arab – P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 191:c; Tell Sabi Abyad – K. DUISTERMAAT, *The Pots and Potters of Assyria...*, figs. IV.81:b, IV.83:i; Tell Brak – D. OATES, J. OATES, H. McDONALD (eds.), *Excavations at Tell Brak*, vol. I: *The Mitanni and Old Babylonian Periods*, McDonald Institute Monographs, Cambridge – London 1997, fig. 183:45.

<sup>91</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 253.

Fig. 7. Pottery from Tell Rijim – beakers: 1. Ri 7267/373; 2. Ri 600/56; jars: 3. Ri 2156/110; 4. Ri 1128/20; 5. Ri 1557/85; 6. Ri 3153/140; 7. Ri 497/54 (Drawing M. Wagner).  
Ryc. 7. Ceramika z Tell Rijim – pucharki: 1, 2; dzbany: 3–7.



more numerous examples of the form dated to the Neo-Assyrian Period, Tell Rijim also produced sherd Ri 497/54 (Fig. 7:7), for which parallels can be found in the Middle Assyrian material in Tell Bderi,<sup>92</sup> Tell Sheikh Hamad,<sup>93</sup> and Tell Taban.<sup>94</sup>

Jar Ri 3153/140 (Fig. 7:6) poses another question for debate. Koliński published it as an illustration of his

type D 40.<sup>95</sup> Without questioning the validity of distinguishing this type of jars and attributing other fragments to it, it seems advisable to reconsider the dating of sherd Ri 3153. Next to other parallels Koliński cites a vessel from Tell Aqab with possible Middle Assyrian dating.<sup>96</sup> The vessel from Tell Aqab is similar to the example from Rijim because of the groove at the junction of the neck and shoulders.

<sup>92</sup> P. PEALZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 156:e (“eingezogene Flaschen”).

<sup>93</sup> P. PEALZNER, *Mittanische...*, pls. 91:b, 122:c, 123:a.

<sup>94</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 9:38.

<sup>95</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 42, 135, pl. 32:d.

<sup>96</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 42. Parallels for the form D 40 cited in the publication indicate its date between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> c. BC.

There are more parallels in the Middle Assyrian material. The Rijim sherd resembles, for example, a jar from Tell Sheikh Hamad, especially with regard to the inside hollowing of the walls of the neck and a groove on the neck.<sup>97</sup> One should note, however, the shorter neck of the Sheikh Hamad vessel and the slightly different rim. A similar form, apparently without the groove (although this may be due to the size of the surviving sherd) was noted from Tell Barri.<sup>98</sup> Grooves at the neck to shoulder interface appear to be a common feature on vessels from layers 3–5 at Tell Sabi Abyad.<sup>99</sup> In the light of these parallels, it seems possible to suggest a Middle Assyrian date for the sherd Ri 3153/140. Moreover, other fragments from tag 140 could be assigned a Middle Assyrian date: Ri 3133, Ri 3134 (see below) and Ri 3155 (Middle- or possibly even Neo-Assyrian in this case).

Reservations to the pottery presentation voiced above in the introduction are particularly valid with regard to the bases. In cases of mixed pottery assemblages, it is extremely difficult to assign the simple flat bases to particular periods, even on the basis of their fabric. Mistakes can be made in two ways: by attributing to the Middle Assyrian Period material that does not belong or by failing to assign material that actually belongs. The same can be said of some other types of bases, although to a lesser degree. The nipple and button bases, on the other hand, were in turn collected and documented with extra care (A. Reiche pers. comm.), because they were distinctive.<sup>100</sup> Thus they constituted a sizable group in the recorded and drawn assembla-

ge and are extremely likely to be “over-represented”; the actual proportions between the flat, ring and nipple/button bases in the ceramic material from Tell Rijim may have been completely different in reality. The only certain example of a flat base from Middle Assyrian times is a slightly concave base of a small carinated bowl (Ri 928A/64).<sup>101</sup> It could be dated securely because the vessel was preserved complete. Concave bottoms appear to be a common feature on vessels from other Middle Assyrian sites: Tell Sheikh Hamad, Tell Bderi, Tell Mohammed Arab, Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>102</sup> Tell Brak,<sup>103</sup> Tell Taban<sup>104</sup> and Tell Fekheriye.<sup>105</sup>

Disc bases can be distinguished in the flat bases group. Their dating is more problematic. Rijim produced a number of bases of this kind, including some from tags where some of the sherds could be dated to the Middle Assyrian Period, for example Ri 526/56, Ri 553/56, Ri 1079/69 (Fig. 8:1–3). The type appeared in the publication of pottery from the Middle Bronze Age. R. Koliński described his form 39 as “...flat bottom... The turning of walls into bottom modeled externally to resemble a ring base.”<sup>106</sup> Rightly he cited parallels not only from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, but also from Ashur of the Neo-Assyrian Period.<sup>107</sup> Koliński then concluded that the form is to be dated “from the 18<sup>th</sup> c. BC until the Neo-Assyrian Period.”<sup>108</sup> Assemblages from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC contain numerous examples of bases of this kind (Middle Assyrian – Tell Taban, Khirbet esh-Shenef),<sup>109</sup> equally so as Neo-Assyrian assemblages, e.g. Qasrij Cliff,<sup>110</sup> Khirbet Qasrij,<sup>111</sup> Khirbet Karhasan,<sup>112</sup> Ashur,<sup>113</sup>

<sup>97</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 93:b (“Stufe I”).

<sup>98</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *La ceramica dal pozzo...*, fig. 2:45. See also page 18 on inside hollowing of walls of the necks of Middle Assyrian jars.

<sup>99</sup> K. DUISTERMAAT, *The Pots and Potters of Assyria...*, 70 (“...some jars have an incision at the neck creating some sort of collar effect”), figs. IV.74:h–k, IV.75:a,b,h, IV.76:i, IV.77:a–d,f, IV.78:b,f,m,n – level 5, different rims; fig. IV.108:e,j,k,o – level 4; figs. IV.117:h,j, IV.118:g,h – level 3.

<sup>100</sup> A somewhat similar situation was described by S. Anastasio with regard to Tell Barri, see: S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 136.

<sup>101</sup> In Pfälzner's publication this form (type 82:2) is described as “Flachboden mit spitzen Ecken,” see: P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 61:a on page 69.

<sup>102</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pls. 113:c – Tell Sheikh Hamad, 139:b – Tell Bderi, 191:a, 192:a – Tell Mohammed Arab, 193:g, 194:b,c – Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta.

<sup>103</sup> D. OATES, J. OATES, H. McDONALD (eds.), *Excavations at Tell Brak...*, fig. 181:9.

<sup>104</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, M. SHIMBO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, figs. 7:2, 8:21; K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 7:1,17; H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban, Hassake, Syria (6): Preliminary Report of the 2006 Season of Work*, “Al-Rafidan” XXIX, 2008, fig. 8:8.

<sup>105</sup> A. PRUB, B. ABD AL-MASIH, *Tell Fekheriye. Bericht über die erste Kampagne der deutsch-syrischen Ausgrabungen 2001*, “Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft” 134, 2002, pl. 6:b.

<sup>106</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 53–54; to this type belong 6 items.

<sup>107</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI cited one example from Ashur, see: A. HALLER, *Die Gräber...*, pl. VI:au3. This is a mistake for it should be “at3.”

<sup>108</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 54.

<sup>109</sup> Tell Taban – K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, M. SHIMBO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 7:7; K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 7:16; Khirbet esh-Shenef – K. BARTL, *Khirbet Esh-Shenef...*, pl. 10:9,11.

<sup>110</sup> J. CURTIS, *Excavations at Qasrij Cliff and Khirbet Qasrij...*, fig. 10:45 (8<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

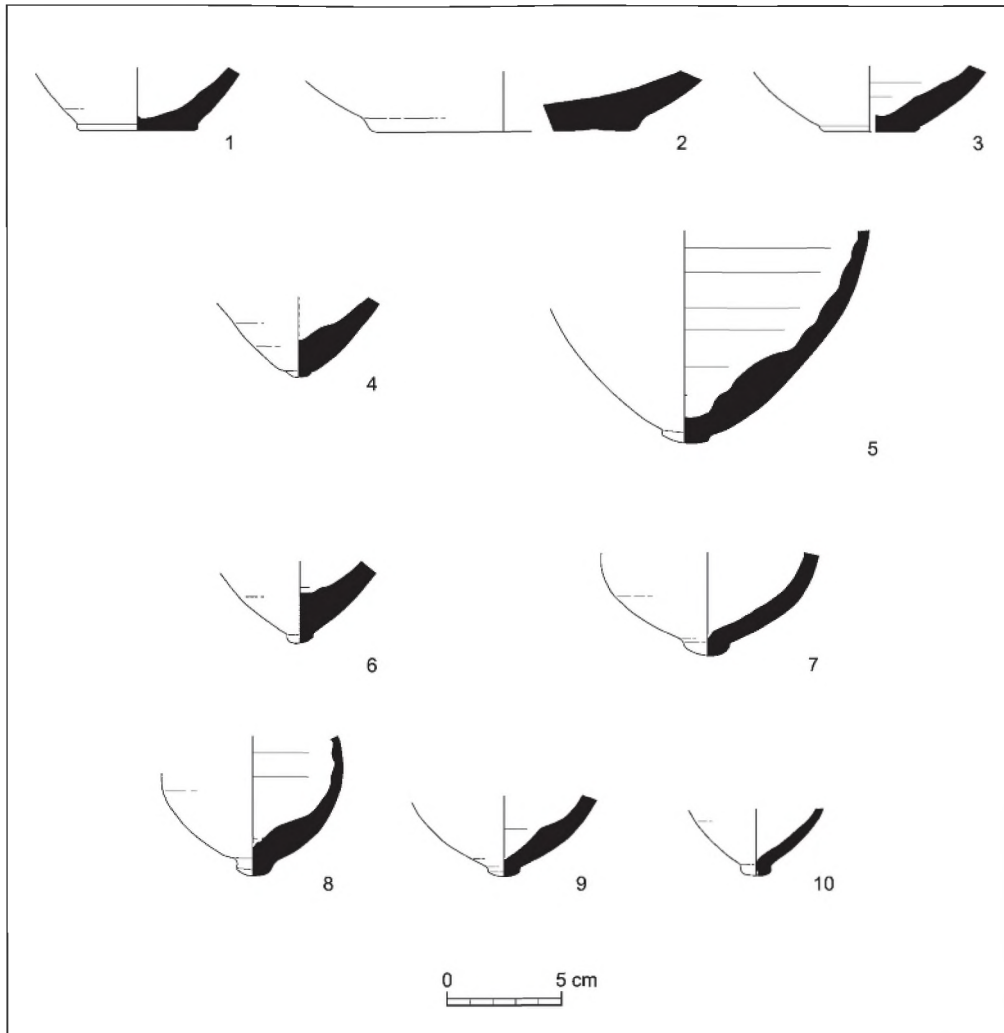
<sup>111</sup> J. CURTIS, *Excavations at Qasrij Cliff and Khirbet Qasrij...*, fig. 23:9,10 (end of 7<sup>th</sup>/beginning of 6<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>112</sup> A. GREEN, *The Ninevite Countryside...*, fig. 8:14.

<sup>113</sup> A. HAUSLEITER, *Graves...*, pls. 7:1,4–6, base of beaker (“late 9<sup>th</sup> – early 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC or slightly earlier”), 8:7, 9:5 (7<sup>th</sup> c. BC); P.A. MIGLUS, *Das Wohngebiet von Assur. Stratigraphie und Architektur*, Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 93, Berlin 1996, pl. 55:As 19330a (Neo-Assyrian, “vor Salmanassar III”).

Fig. 8. Pottery from Tell Rijim – bases: 1. Ri 526/56; 2. Ri 553/56; 3. Ri 1079/69; 4. Ri 244/20; 5. Ri 1937/103; 6. Ri 10/1; 7. Ri 1090/69; 8. Ri 1470/79; 9. Ri 2249/113; 10. Ri 2271/113 (Drawing M. Wagner).

Ryc. 8. Ceramika z Tell Rijim – denka.



Tell Knedig,<sup>114</sup> Tell Abu Hafur East,<sup>115</sup> Shiukh Fawqani.<sup>116</sup> Bases of this type from Rijim could be dated therefore quite broadly from the Old Babylonian through the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC. Some of them assuredly could be of Middle Assyrian date, but the contexts from which they derive preclude an unquestioned attribution to this time.

Similarly as in the case of flat bases, the only surely Middle Assyrian ring base belongs to a completely preserved bowl Ri 3330/148 (Fig. 5:5). The underside of the base has slight thickenings that are concentric and look like small rings. This kind of finishing of the base does not find parallels in the known ceramic material from the Middle Assyrian Period.

<sup>114</sup> E. KLENGEL-BRANDT, S. KULEMANN-OSSSEN, M. LUTZ, *Tall Knedig. Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen des Vorderasiatischen Museums Berlin in Nordost-Syrien von 1993 bis 1998*, Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 113, Saarwellingen 2005, pls. 103:m–o,q–s,v,w, 113:h,n, 114:c, 115:c–e, 116:b,c, 117:a, 118:a–c (second half of 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>115</sup> A. REICHE, *Tell Abu Hafur 'East'. Neuassyrische Besiedlung in der Umgebung von Hassake (Nord-Ost Syrien)*, (in:) H. Waetzold, H. Hauptmann (eds.), *Assyrien im Wandel der Zeiten. XXXIX<sup>e</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Heidelberg 6.–10. Juli*

1992, Heidelberger Studien zum Alten Orient 6, Heidelberg 1997, pl. 5:e (8<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>116</sup> M. MAKINSON, *La stratigraphie générale et l'occupation de l'Âge du Fer (architecture et matériel)*, (in:) L. Bachelot, F.M. Fales (eds.), *Tell Shiukh Fawqani 1994–1998*, vol. I, History of Ancient Near East/Monographs VI/1, Padova 2005, pl. 29:195,196 (7<sup>th</sup> c. BC); M. LUCIANI, *The Iron Age Productive Area (Period IX) and the Inhumation Cemetery (Period X)*, (in:) L. Bachelot, F.M. Fales (eds.), *Tell Shiukh Fawqani 1994–1998*, vol. II, History of Ancient Near East/Monographs VI/2, Padova 2005, pls. 28:316, 59:674 (8<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

For reasons explained above, nipple bases (like button bases) constitute a numerous group among Assyrian pottery bases from Tell Rijim. Some differentiation among them has been noted, from barely marked nib/nipple (Ri 244/20, Ri 1937/103, **Fig. 8:4,5**), through a more distinct nipple (Ri 10/1, Ri 1090/69, Ri 1470/79, Ri 2249/113, Ri 2271/113, Ri 1428/78, **Fig. 8:6–10, Fig. 9:1**), to nipples separated from the body by a slight constriction (Ri 2260/113, **Fig. 9:2**). Two bases: Ri 1615/86 (**Fig. 9:3**) and Ri 12/1 (**Fig. 9:4**), stand on the borderline between nipple and button forms.

Button bases usually have a marked constriction between the nib and the body walls. The nib itself could be slightly pointed at the bottom (Ri 346/48, Ri 9/1, Ri 2099/108, Ri 1169/16, Ri 3133/140, Ri 242/20, **Fig. 9:5–10**); it could also be rounded (Ri 4112/232, Ri 3134/140, Ri 2094/108, **Fig. 10:1–3**). One example shows an elongated button, clearly distinguished from the lower body of the vessel (Ri 271/29, **Fig. 10:4**); one other example has an elongated button, slightly narrowing toward the tip, with a ridge at the base (Ri 2301/114, **Fig. 10:5**); finally, two buttons are shaped in an entirely different manner with a hollow on the underside (Ri 1616/86, **Fig. 10:6**, and Ri 6781/339).<sup>117</sup>

The ambiguity of the terms “nipple” and “button” bases has been raised already.<sup>118</sup> Button bases, according to Henrickson and Cooper, had a “pronounced, shaped, circular nib” or “button,” while nipple bases had a “less pronounced, less extended nib.” The borderline between pronounced and less pronounced is naturally not distinct and largely intuitive; hence definitions of this kind cannot resolve questions of ambiguous designations in various archaeolo-

gical publications. The division into nipple and button bases proposed here is based on the above definitions with full awareness of the fact that it could be put into doubt.

Nipple/button bases appeared already on Mitannian shouldered beakers.<sup>119</sup> Very often they are also found on the so-called Middle Assyrian administrative pottery.<sup>120</sup> Numerous Middle Assyrian examples come from Ashur,<sup>121</sup> Tell Taban,<sup>122</sup> Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>123</sup> Tell Sabi Abyad.<sup>124</sup> They were also common in Neo-Assyrian ceramics, having been recorded at a large number of sites including Nimrud,<sup>125</sup> Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta,<sup>126</sup> Tell Abu Dhahir,<sup>127</sup> Ashur,<sup>128</sup> in layers 8/7–3 from Khirbet Khatuniyeh, dated from Middle Assyrian (?) through Post-Assyrian Period,<sup>129</sup> Qasrij Cliff,<sup>130</sup> Khirbet Qasrij<sup>131</sup> and at Tell Yemniyeh.<sup>132</sup>

It is difficult to date with certainty bases of the nipple and button type from Tell Rijim. Ri 1169/16 (**Fig. 9:8**), 242/20 (**Fig. 9:10**), 244/20 (**Fig. 8:4**), 271/29 (**Fig. 10:4**), 346/48 (**Fig. 9:5**), 2094/108 (**Fig. 10:3**), 2099/108 (**Fig. 9:7**), Ri 4112/232 (**Fig. 10:1**) and base of beaker Ri 7263/373 (**Fig. 7:1**) can be considered as Middle Assyrian owing to a discovery context. Ri 2301/114 (**Fig. 10:5**) also finds good parallels in Middle Assyrian material (Tell Taban, Tell Sheikh Hamad).<sup>133</sup>

The next problematic group is constituted by the solid foot bases. These bases are fairly thick and small in diameter (2.8–3.2 cm) and probably belonged to beakers or goblets. Examples from Rijim (Ri 2700/129, Ri 2701/129, Ri 6306/330, **Fig. 10:8–10**) recall bases of the so-called Kassite Goblets from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. The form seems to have been continued in the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, as suggested by parallels from Tell Yemniyeh<sup>134</sup> and Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Base Ri 6781/339 was too fragmentary to be shown.

<sup>118</sup> R.C. HENRICKSON, L. COOPER, *The Pottery of Yemniyeh*, (in:) Ch. Kepinski, O. Lecomte, A. Tenu (eds.), *Studia Euphratica. Le moyen Euphrate iraquien révélé par les fouilles préventives de Haditha*, Travaux de la Maison René-Ginouvés 3, Paris 2006, 296.

<sup>119</sup> P. PFÄLZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 246; pl. XVI:163–166.

<sup>120</sup> Tell Sheikh Hamad – P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pls. 97:e,h,k, 114:a,b,e.

<sup>121</sup> A. HALLER, *Die Gräber...*, pl. 2:af,ag,ah,ao,aq.

<sup>122</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, M. SHIMBO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, figs. 7:12–16, 8:26–32.

<sup>123</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, pl. 3b:24,25 – “Bauphase 1,” no. 24 occurs also in “Bauphasen 3–5,” no. 25 in “Bauphasen 3, 4,” thus Neo-Assyrian and Post-Assyrian Periods.

<sup>124</sup> P.M.M.G. AKKERMANS, I. ROSSMEISL, *Excavations at Tell Sabi Abyad...*, figs. 9:18,19,22, 11:44.

<sup>125</sup> J. OATES, *Late Assyrian Pottery...*, pl. XXXVI:40–42 (7<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>126</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, pl. 4:16 (“Bauphase 2”), pl. 5b:35–37 (“Bauphase 3”), pl. 6b:29,32 (“Bauphase 4”) thus Neo-

-Assyrian and Post-Assyrian Periods).

<sup>127</sup> A. GREEN, *The Ninevite Countryside...*, fig. 5:23.

<sup>128</sup> A. HALLER, *Die Gräber...*, pls. 2:ba,bc,bp,bq,bs, 3:t, 5:c,d,f; A. HAUSLEITER, *Graves...*, figs. 5:8,9, 6:1,2, 7:10 (end of 9<sup>th</sup>/beginning of 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>129</sup> J. CURTIS, A. GREEN, *Excavations at Khirbet Khatuniyeh...*, fig. 29:37, level 8–7 – “Middle Assyrian?” (see also page 87); fig. 32:78, level 6; fig. 51:271–274, level 4; fig. 58:384, level 3.

<sup>130</sup> J. CURTIS, *Excavations at Qasrij Cliff and Khirbet Qasrij...*, fig. 10:42 (8<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>131</sup> J. CURTIS, *Excavations at Qasrij Cliff and Khirbet Qasrij...*, figs. 40:268, 43:323 (end of 7<sup>th</sup>/beginning of 6<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

<sup>132</sup> R.C. HENRICKSON, L. COOPER, *The Pottery of Yemniyeh...*, fig. 14:a–d (10<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> c. BC).

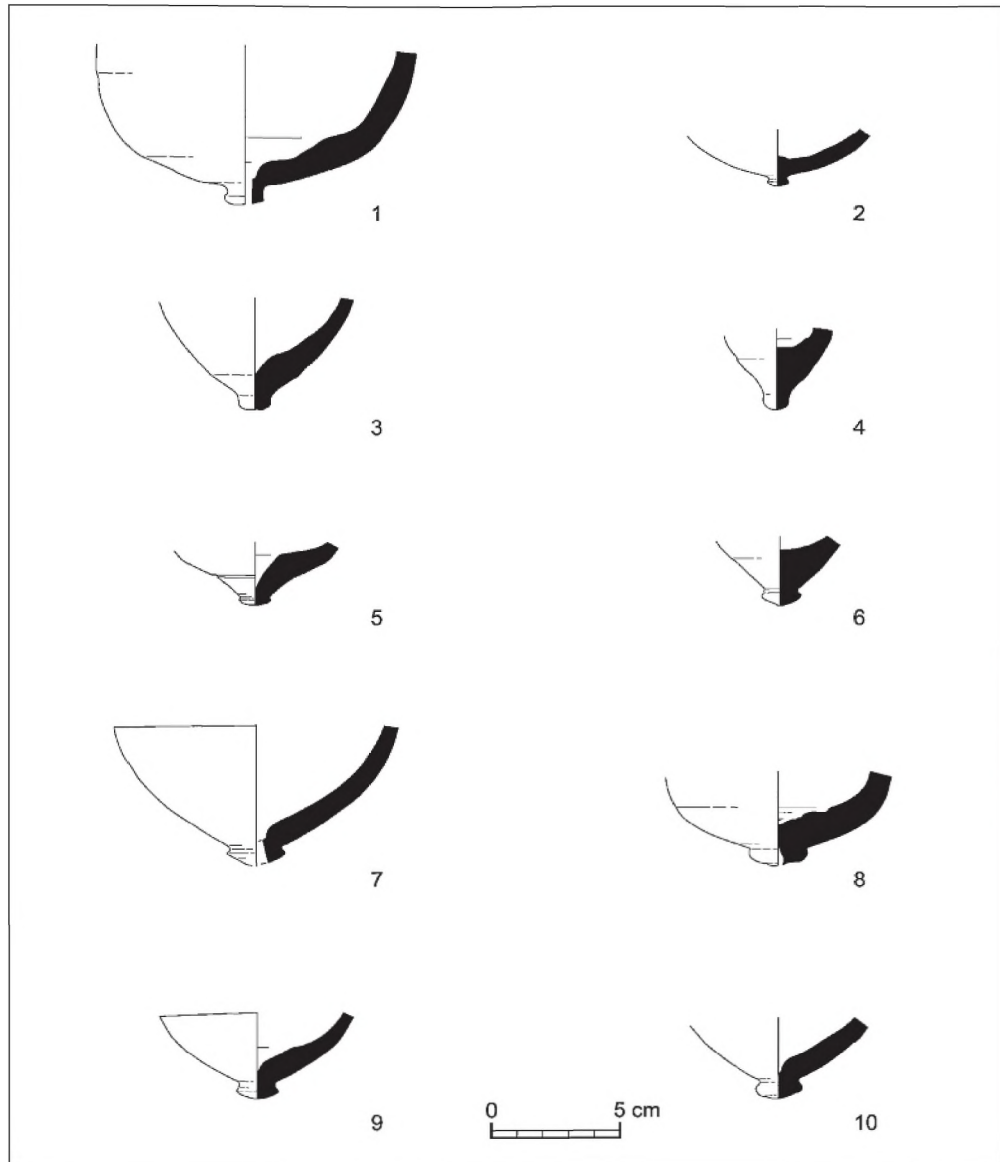
<sup>133</sup> Tell Taban – K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, M. SHIMBO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 8:30; Tell Sheikh Hamad – P. PFÄLZNER, *Mittanische...*, pl. 130:e.

<sup>134</sup> R.C. HENRICKSON, L. COOPER, *The Pottery of Yemniyeh...*, fig. 15:61c,d.

<sup>135</sup> C. SCHMIDT, *Die Keramik...*, pl. 5b:42 (“Bauphase 3”).

Fig. 9. Pottery from Tell Rijim – bases: 1. Ri 1428/78; 2. Ri 2260/113; 3. Ri 1615/86; 4. Ri 12/1; 5. Ri 346/48; 6. Ri 9/1; 7. Ri 2099/108; 8. Ri 1169/16; 9. Ri 3133/140; 10. Ri 242/20 (Drawing M. Wagner).

Ryc. 9. Ceramika z Tell Rijim – denka.



Two other examples of similar bases (Ri 1635/86, Ri 4947/279) were published by R. Koliński as his form S 43.<sup>136</sup> They are distinguished by a slightly concave bottom. Koliński cited among other references (Billa, Brak, Nuzi, Rimah) a parallel of Middle Assyrian date from Ashur and concluded with dating form S 43 to the 18<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> c. BC. The context of fragment Ri 4947 (i.e. tag 279) encompassed material from a layer dug arbitrarily “to the top” of a Middle Bronze Age wall, hence it could also be of Middle Bronze Age date. However, since this context also produ-

ced forms referring to Middle Assyrian carinated bowls and cups (Ri 4949, **Fig. 6:1**, and Ri 4954, **Fig. 6:2**) and since a fragment of Middle Assyrian wall (W 12/A 1) was discovered on the top of the Middle Bronze Age structure, it is tenable to consider a Middle Assyrian date for the base Ri 4947/279. Middle Assyrian parallels for bases with concave bottom can be found, for example, in Tell Taban,<sup>137</sup> Tell Barri<sup>138</sup> and Tell Aqab.<sup>139</sup> Pfälzner considered them typical of beakers of Younger Khabur Ware. Indeed, he described them in slightly different fashion as “ring bases...

<sup>136</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, 54, 187, pl. 46:g (Ri 4947/279).

<sup>137</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, M. SHIMBO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 7:17 (Middle Assyrian); see also: fig. 10:41 (Mitannian).

<sup>138</sup> A. D'AGOSTINO, *Pottery Production...*, pl. 3:36.

<sup>139</sup> S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, pl. 20:8.



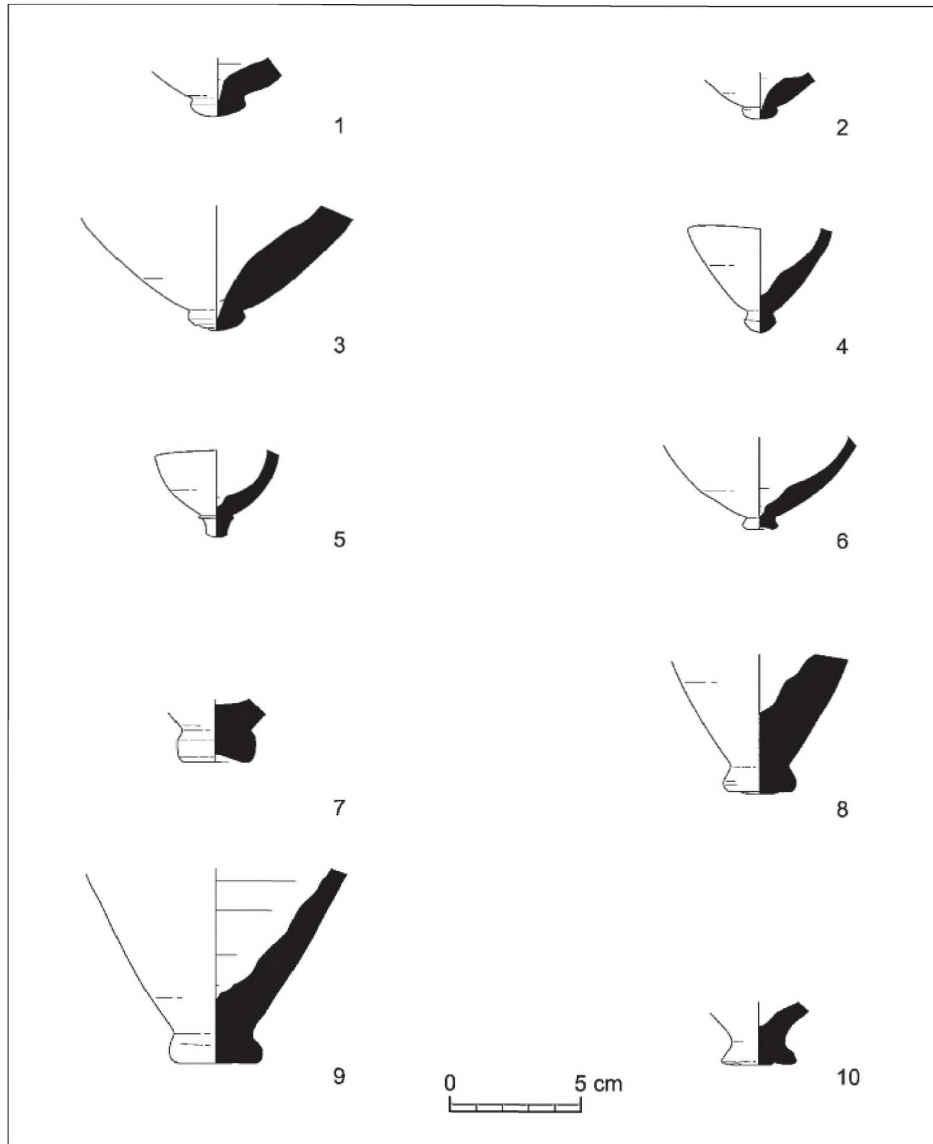


Fig. 10. Pottery from Tell Rijim – bases: 1. Ri 4112/232; 2. Ri 3134/140; 3. Ri 2094/108; 4. Ri 271/29; 5. Ri 2301/114; 6. Ri 1616/86; 7. Ri 1635/86; 8. Ri 2700/129; 9. Ri 2701/129; 10. Ri 6306/330 (Drawing M. Wagner).

Ryc. 10. Ceramika z Tell Rijim – denka.

sometimes so small that they can be designated as flat knob bases with concave bottom.<sup>140</sup> The issue of whether the other solid foot bases from Tell Rijim (i.e. Ri 2700/129, Ri 2701/129, Ri 6306/330) could be dated to the Middle Assyrian Period or should rather be considered a continuation of 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC forms in the Neo-Assyrian Period remains debatable, especially as the tags from which these sherds derive contained mixed material. It should be remarked that the second fragment attributed by Koliński to his type S 43, Ri 1635/86 (Fig. 10:7), does not quite fit

the description of the type. Moreover, it also finds parallels in Middle Assyrian material (Tell Taban)<sup>141</sup> and should most probably be dated to Middle Assyrian Period.

### Dating

Most of the parallels cited for the Middle Assyrian forms from Tell Rijim are dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> c. BC. Standing in support of the dating are examples from Tell Sheikh Hamad dated to Middle Assyrian IIa and IIb (1200–

<sup>140</sup> P. PEALZNER, *The Late Bronze Ceramic Traditions...*, 243, pl. VIII:85.

<sup>141</sup> K. OHNUMA, H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban...*, fig. 8:24,35; H. NUMOTO, *Excavations at Tell Taban, Hassake, Syria (4)...*, fig. 10:29.

1170/60 BC), Tell Barri and Tell Sabi Abyad. Earlier forms in the Tell Rijim material are paralleled by finds from Khirbet Esh-Shenef and Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> c. BC. There also occur forms which can be dated to the end 12<sup>th</sup> and early 11<sup>th</sup> c. BC (parallels with pottery from Tell Taban and Tell Sheikh Hamad, Middle Assyrian III). Considering that only one phase of occupation attributed to the Middle Assyrian Period was recorded on the site and in view of the dating of most of the ceramic parallels, it should be concluded that in all likelihood the Middle Assyrian occupation of Tell Rijim occurred in the 12<sup>th</sup> c. BC. Consequently, the dates given in Koliński's publication, who placed Middle Assyrian occupation of Tell Rijim in 1300–1200 BC<sup>143</sup> would stand in need of revision. On the other hand, the limited excavation area containing architectural remains which could be dated to the Middle Assyrian Period needs to be taken into consideration as well, as does the generally small assemblage of surely dated Middle Assyrian pottery identified during the excavations. The modest amount of pottery coming mostly from disturbed contexts calls for caution as far as more precise dating is concerned. One should also keep in mind S. Anastasio's opinion that Middle Assyrian ceramics generally lacked distinctive markers of chronological development, which limits a potential of precise dating of pottery from a given site.<sup>144</sup>

The most important effect of the study of the architecture and pottery is the ultimate confirmation of the occupation of Tell Rijim in the Middle Assyrian Period.<sup>145</sup> The presence of forms like the Standard Bowls and Cups and Standard Bottles, as well as a few others confirms this beyond any doubt. On the other hand, the debatable examples demonstrate the difficulties of dating specific fragments coming from mixed contexts, especially from site with both Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian occupation. The Rijim pottery complements to some extent the general picture of Middle Assyrian ceramics from the Eski Mosul region. About 20 sites have been found to contain layers from the Middle Assyrian Period, but knowledge of Middle Assyrian ceramics is still very limited. Assemblages published so far are limited to the pottery from Tell Mohammed Arab,<sup>146</sup> Khirbet Hatara<sup>147</sup> and a study of pottery from Nemrik, which is in print.<sup>148</sup> Tell Rijim is the fourth site from the Eski Mosul region to produce data in published form also on the Middle Assyrian ceramics from the heartland of Assyria.<sup>149</sup>

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#### CERAMIKA Z OKRESU ŚRODKOWOASYRYJSKIEGO Z POLSKICH WYKOPALISK NA STANOWISKU TELL RIJIM (IRAK). OPRACOWANIE WSTĘPNE

Prowadzone w latach 1984–1985, pod kierownictwem prof. P. Bielińskiego, polskie wykopaliska na stanowisku Tell Rijim były częścią projektu Eski Mosul Dam Salvage Project, zwanego inaczej Saddam Dam Basin Salvage Project, prowadzonego w latach 80. XX wieku

w północnym Iraku, w związku z budową tamy na Tygrysie.

Tell Rijim, leżący ok. 25 km na północny zachód od Eski-Mosul, na zachodnim brzegu Tygrysu, stanowił część obszaru nazwanego „mikroregionem Raffan” (Ryc. 1). Stanowisko o powierzchni ok. 2,5 ha znajdowało się na

<sup>142</sup> S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 65; A. TENU, *L'expansion...*, 128–129.

<sup>143</sup> R. KOLIŃSKI, *Tell Rijim...*, table 1 (on page XI), 2.

<sup>144</sup> S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 35–36.

<sup>145</sup> See for example discussion in: A. GREEN, *The Ninevite Countryside...*, 97–99, and A. TENU, *L'expansion...*, 86–87.

<sup>146</sup> M. ROAF, *A Report on the Work of the British Archaeological Expedition in the Eski Mosul Dam Salvage Project from November 1982 to June 1983*, “Sumer” 39, 1983, 68–77; idem, *Excavations*

*at Tell Mohammed 'Arab in the Eski Mosul Dam Salvage Project*, “Iraq” 46, 1984, 141–156.

<sup>147</sup> Middle Assyrian pottery from this site is limited to vessels from one grave – T1, see: S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 81–82.

<sup>148</sup> A. REICHE, *Late Bronze Age Pottery...*

<sup>149</sup> Cf. S. ANASTASIO, *Das Obere Habur-Tal...*, 31 on the modest data on ceramics from Assyria proper. Apart from the sites mentioned above, one should also note Khirbet Khatuniyeh, where the pottery from layer 7 is dated to the Middle Assyrian/Neo-Assyrian Period.

płaskim naturalnym wzgórzem, wyniesionym ok. 28 m ponad poziom rzeki (Ryc. 2). Łączny obszar przebadany w wyniku trzech sezonów badań wykopaliskowych to około 620 m<sup>2</sup>. Prace były utrudnione z powodu znacznego zniszczenia warstw kulturowych, spowodowanego erozją stanowiska w okresach przerw osadniczych, a także z powodu późniejszych pochówków, wkopanych we wcześniejsze warstwy kulturowe. Spora część znalezisk, w tym ceramika, została znaleziona w warstwach zakłóconych. Przy opracowywaniu publikacji pozostałości zabudowań oraz ceramiki z okresu nowoasyryjskiego okazało się, że na stanowisku można wydzielić czytelne przykłady budowli oraz ceramiki środkowoasyryjskiej. Tym samym potwierdzone zostały formułowane w raportach i wcześniejszych opracowaniach wnioski na temat istnienia osadnictwa na stanowisku Tell Rijim także w tym okresie.

Zachowane ślady zabudowy z okresu środkowoasyryjskiego ograniczają się do odsłoniętych w północno-zachodniej części badanego obszaru pozostałości dwóch równoległych względem siebie murów, z których zachowały się prawie wyłącznie kamienne podbudowy i – w jednym przypadku – część ceglanej nadbudowy (Ryc. 3, 4). Prawdopodobnie do okresu środkowoasyryjskiego należy też przypisać jamę odkrytą w jednym z wykopów.

Przyporządkowanie fragmentów naczyń z Tell Rijim do okresu środkowoasyryjskiego opierało się tylko w niewielu przypadkach na kontekście znalezienia, najczęściej jednak na dobrze stratyfikowanych analogiach z północnej Mezopotamii. Osobna grupa to przykłady naczyń, których datowanie jest bardziej dyskusyjne a analogie niejednoznaczne. Ograniczona rola w przypadku opracowania i datowania zespołu ceramiki z Tell Rijim przypadła takim czynnikiem, jak na przykład rodzaj domieszki schudzającej. Z jednej strony powodem są niedoskonałości opisu fragmentów ceramiki sporządzanych na stanowisku i brak możliwości ich weryfikacji. Z drugiej strony obecność domieszki roślinnej, uważanej za cechę charakterystyczną dla ceramiki środkowoasyryjskiej, nie może być w pełni wykorzystana w przypadku ceramiki z Tell Rijim, pochodzącej w dużej części z zaburzonych kontekstów. Domieszka roślinna jest bowiem obecna zarówno w części mas ceramicznych stosowanych do wyrobu ceramiki ze środkowego okresu epoki brązu, jak też, mimo wzrastającej roli domieszek mineralnych, w ceramice z okresu nowoasyryjskiego.

Ceramika z Tell Rijim wykazuje małą różnorodność form naczyń. Formy otwarte reprezentowane są przede wszystkim przez typowe dla okresu środkowoasyryjskiego karynowane misy (Ryc. 5:1–6, 6:1) i czarki (Ryc. 6:2), spotykane praktycznie na wszystkich stanowiskach z tego czasu. Wśród nich wyróżnia się kategoria mis z podcięciem poniżej wylewu oraz bezpośrednio powyżej karynacji i o prostym przebiegu ścianek pomiędzy podcięciami (Ryc. 6:3,4). Kolejne dwa przykłady mis (Ryc. 6:5,6) mogą być prawdopodobnie datowane na okres środkowoasyryjski w oparciu o analogie z innych stanowisk oraz kontekst znalezienia (misa Ri 7267/373, Ryc. 6:5).

Pucharek Ri 7263 (Ryc. 7:1), mimo że uszkodzony (nie zachował się wylew), przypomina naczynia środkowo- i nowoasyryjskie. Zabytek ten pochodzi z tego samego kontekstu co misa Ri 7267, co sprawia, że bardziej prawdopodobne jest datowanie go na okres środkowoasyryjski. Tej pewności brak w przypadku kolejnego pucharaka (Ryc. 7:2), dla którego analogie znaleźć można wśród naczyń datowanych zarówno na okres środkowo-, jak i nowoasyryjski.

Bardzo typową formą dla okresu środkowoasyryjskiego, poza misami karynowanymi, są pozbawione szyjek flasze z pogrubionymi wylewami. Wśród naczyń pochodzących z Tell Rijim znajduje się kilka przykładów tej formy (Ryc. 7:3–5).

Datowanie dwóch kolejnych dzbanów jest bardziej dyskusyjne. Analogie dla wylewu dzbanu Ri 497/54 (Ryc. 7:7) można znaleźć zarówno wśród naczyń z okresu środkowo-, jak i nowoasyryjskiego. Dzban Ri 3135/140 (Ryc. 7:6) został ujęty w opracowaniu ceramiki z Tell Rijim ze środkowego okresu epoki brązu. Jednak na podstawie analogii można go datować na okres środkowoasyryjski.

Trudności w jednoznacznej przypisaniu fragmentów naczyń, zwłaszcza z niepewnych kontekstów, do okresu środkowoasyryjskiego objawiają się w pełni w przypadku denek (Ryc. 8–10). Nawet przy opracowywaniu bardzo charakterystycznych form, tzw. denek guzkowych/guzikowych, nie zawsze możliwe jest przypisanie konkretnego fragmentu do okresu środkowoasyryjskiego, ponieważ występują one także w okresie nowoasyryjskim. Stopki naczyń (Ryc. 10:8–10), na podstawie analogii ze stanowisk z północnej Mezopotamii, można prawdopodobnie datować na okres środkowoasyryjski. Dotyczy to także tych przykładów (Ryc. 10:7), które we wcześniejszej publikacji wyników badań na stanowisku zaliczono do ceramiki ze środkowego okresu epoki brązu.

Bardziej precyzyjne określenie chronologii ceramiki z Tell Rijim jest trudne, choć większość form znajduje odpowiedniki na innych stanowiskach, datowane na XII w. p.n.e. Może to sugerować konieczność zmiany proponowanego dotąd datowania (XIII w. p.n.e.) osadnictwa asyryjskiego w Tell Rijim. Ograniczony obszar, na jakim odsłonięto pozostałości z tego okresu, i niewielka liczba pewnie datowanych fragmentów naczyń nakazują jednak daleko posuniętą ostrożność w formułowaniu takich wniosków.

Dość szczupły ilościowo zespół ceramiki środkowoasyryjskiej potwierdza przede wszystkim istnienie osadnictwa z tego czasu w Tell Rijim. Jest to także jedno z niewielu stanowisk w rejonie Eski-Mosul, z których ta kategoria zabytków została opracowana. Publikowane studium, choć wstępne, poszerza tym samym naszą wiedzę o ciągle niezbyt dobrze udokumentowanej ceramice środkowoasyryjskiej z terenu rdzennej Asyrii. Przykłady naczyń o dyskusyjnym, trudnym do ustalenia datowaniu, ilustrują z kolei problemy z chronologicznym przyporządkowaniem znalezisk pochodzących z niepewnych kontekstów, zwłaszcza na stanowiskach o długiej historii zasiedlenia, jak w przypadku Tell Rijim.