

FASSUTA, HORBAT PEZELET:
THE POTTERY ASSEMBLAGE FROM BURIAL 116 AND TOMB 126

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Jar Burial 116 and stone-built Tomb 126 were unearthed in Area A at Horbat Pezelet in Fassuta and ascribed to Stratum 3 (see Bron and Smithline 2020: Figs. 5–10). They contained the remains of eight deceased, accompanied by numerous grave goods, including 25 pottery vessels (Figs. 1–3); one juglet (Fig. 3:13) was found in the jar burial, and the rest were in the stone-built tomb. These vessels—eight bowls (Fig. 1), a jar/krater (Fig. 2), a single jug base (Fig. 3:1) and eleven fragmentary piriform juglets (Fig. 3:2–12), one of which is a complete ellipsoid juglet (Fig. 3:2), as well as two complete cylindrical juglets (Fig. 3:13, 14) and two complete dipper juglets (Fig. 3:15, 16)—comprise a small, homogeneous assemblage, which can be dated to the Middle Bronze Age I. This date is consistent with the date of the bronze dagger found in Tomb 126 (see Bron and Smithline 2020: Fig. 15). The assemblage is discussed typologically.¹

Open Bowls (Fig. 1:1–4).— Two of the open bowls have flattened bases (Fig. 1:1, 2), and the other two have disc bases—a flat one (Fig. 1:3) and a convex one (Fig. 1:4). The rim of the bowl in Fig. 1:1 is externally beveled, while its edge is slightly inverted. The bowl in Fig. 1:2 has a square rim, whose lower exterior edge is prominent beyond the rim's outline. The interior of the bowl in Fig. 1:1 is puckered, and the wall of the bowl in Fig. 1:3 is slightly depressed before the rim begins. The rims of the bowls in Fig. 1:3, 4 are internally beveled; both rims have a groove on the exterior, but the bowl in Fig. 1:4 has an additional groove along the center of the rim's top. Open bowls are usually plain (Fig. 1:1–3), having no slip or other coating. A very thin slip, which is radially burnished on the interior, is applied to the bowl in Fig. 1:4. It appears that the bowl received such coating after it was panned, probably due to excess clay.

The externally beveled rim was the most common and frequent form in open bowls during the Middle Bronze Age. Comparisons to the bowl in Fig. 1:1 from the vicinity of Fassuta are found in Sasa Tomb 1 upper level (Ben-Arieh 2004: Fig. 8:1), Kefar Veradim Cave 3 (Getzov and Nagar 2002: Fig. 21:1), Kabri Tomb 498 (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Fig. 5.31), Ginosar

¹ I wish to extend my sincere thanks to Enno Bron for inviting me to study and publish this assemblage.

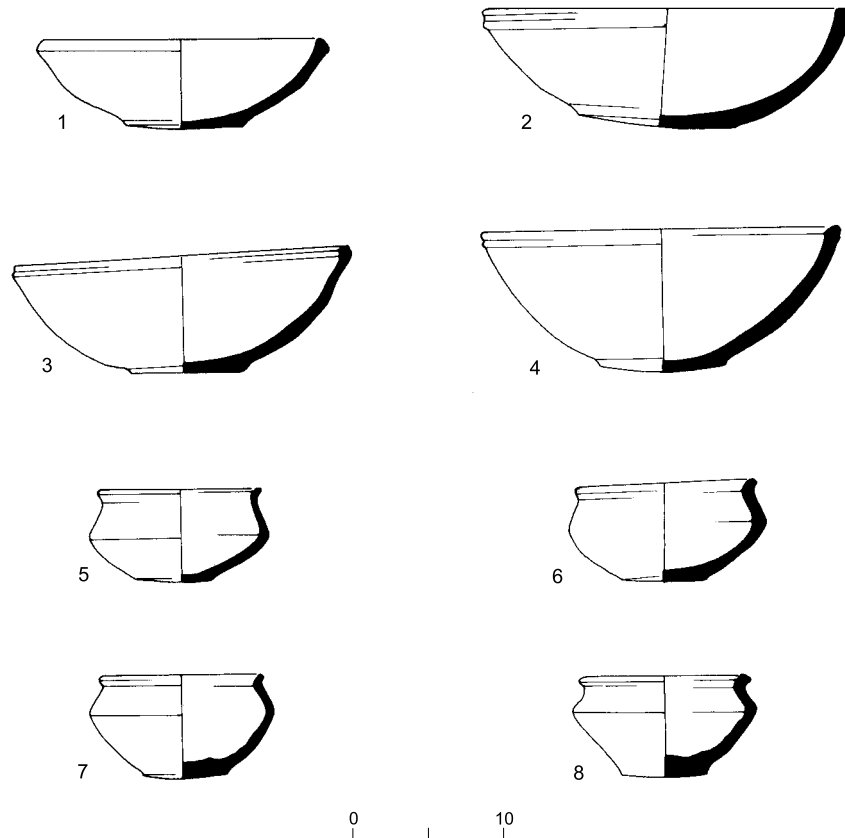


Fig. 1. Bowls from Tomb 126 (L126).

No.	basket	Munsell Reading
1	1082	Brownish surface (5YR 7/6)
2	1075/2	Brownish surface (5YR 7/6)
3	1080, 1064	Brownish surface (5YR 7/6)
4	1083	Brownish surface (5YR 7/6)
5	1079/3	Brownish interior and slip (5YR 7/6–6/6)
6	1081	Light brown surface and interior (7.5YR 7/4)
7	1068	Light brown interior (5YR 7/4); brownish slip (5YR 6/6)
8	1088	Brownish interior and slip (5YR 7/6–6/6)

Tomb 4 (Epstein 1974: Fig. 7:2), and Kh. Minḥa Tomb 641 (Ferembach, Perrot and Furshpan 1975: Fig. 2:9). The square rim (Fig. 1: 2) is rather extinct; variations on the theme appear in Ginosar Tomb 2/3 (Epstein 1974: Fig. 9:9) and Phase 4 at Tell el-Hayyat (Falconner and Magness-Gardiner 1984: Fig. 14:1). Internally beveled rims are extant, but not prominent; comparisons can be cited from Kabri Tomb 498 (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Fig. 5.32:15), a Middle Bronze Age burial cave in Zefat (Damati and Stepanski 1996: Fig. 4:4), a Middle Bronze Age tomb at Kefar Szold (Epstein 1974: Fig. 4:2) and farther south, in Stratum A XIVb, L442 at Afeq (pre-palace phase; Beck 2000: Fig. 10.12:10).

Carinated Bowls (Fig. 1:5–8).— The flat disc base, whose exterior center can be occasionally convex or flattened, is common to all four carinated bowls, which are all of the closed type, i.e., the diameter of the rim is smaller than the maximum diameter of the vessel. However, the difference is minor, since the rim diameter is c. 90% of the maximum diameter in the bowls in Fig. 1:5, 6, going up to c. 99% in the bowl in Fig. 1:8; only the bowl in Fig. 1:7 has the more classical rim–diameter ratio, being c. 80% of the maximum diameter. The rim in all four bowls is everted, with minor variations. It is externally beveled in the bowls of Fig. 1:6, 8, although Bowl 6 is flattened on the interior, and Bowl 8 has a groove which can be regarded as a residual gutter. The rim of the bowl in Fig. 1:5 has a rounded edge and is indented on the interior, while the rim of the bowl in Fig. 1:7 has a flat edge and is sunken on the interior. The bowls in Fig. 1:5, 7, 8 have a brownish slip, which is burnished horizontally on the shoulder and vertically on the body. The shape of the bowl in Fig. 1:6 is somewhat distorted, being more lentoid than round, and it bears no slip.

Similar bowls were found in Dan Tomb 1025 (Ilan 1996: Fig. 4.104:10), Kefar Veradim Caves 1 and 3 (Getzov and Nagar 2002: Figs. 7:5, 6; 20:3), Kabri Tomb 498 (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Fig. 5.32:5, 6) and Kh. Minḥa Tomb 641 (Ferembach, Perrot and Furshpan 1975: Fig. 4:8, 9).

Jar/Krater (Fig. 2).— The jar/krater is a closed vase with three loop legs and two loop handles, which are positioned at its maximum diameter (c. 20 cm). It has an ovoid body that ends in a flattened base and a stepped, everted rim that is grooved along the center. It is, in fact, a jar to which three looped legs were added. No adequate comparisons to this vase could be traced; nevertheless, there are known parallels to several of its features. Grooved krater rims are classified as Type K VIb at Tel Qashish and appear toward the end of the in the Middle Bronze Age (Bonfil 2003:282); Maeir (2007:256) suggests that this is not a very common rim type in Middle Bronze Age contexts. Three looped legs occur on various kraters of this period, for example a shallow krater from Stratum R-4 at Bet She'an (Maeir 2007: Pl. 26:1), or a deep krater from Stratum R-3 at the same site (Maeir 2007: Pl. 34:12). The two loop handles attached to the vase at its maximum diameter are identical to those of jars of this period, for example those from Kefar Veradim Cave 2 (Getzov and Nagar 2002: Fig. 15:1, 2), Kabri Tomb 498 and L492 (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Figs. 5.28:10–12; 5.46:14) and Dan Tomb 902b (Ilan 1996: Fig. 4.103:2).

Jug (Fig. 3:1).— The flat disc base fragment (base diam. 6.75 cm) belongs to a jug. Such bases are known in this period, for example in Naḥal Yeḥi'am Cave 16 (Getzov and Nagar 2000: Fig. 30:12).

Piriform Juglets (Fig. 3:2–12).— The single complete juglet of this type (Fig. 3:2) is joined by four upper-part fragments of such juglets, which include a rim and a handle (Fig. 3:3–6), two handles (Fig. 3:7, 8), three bases and lower parts (Fig. 3:9–11) and a juglet top and body that do not join (Fig. 3:12).

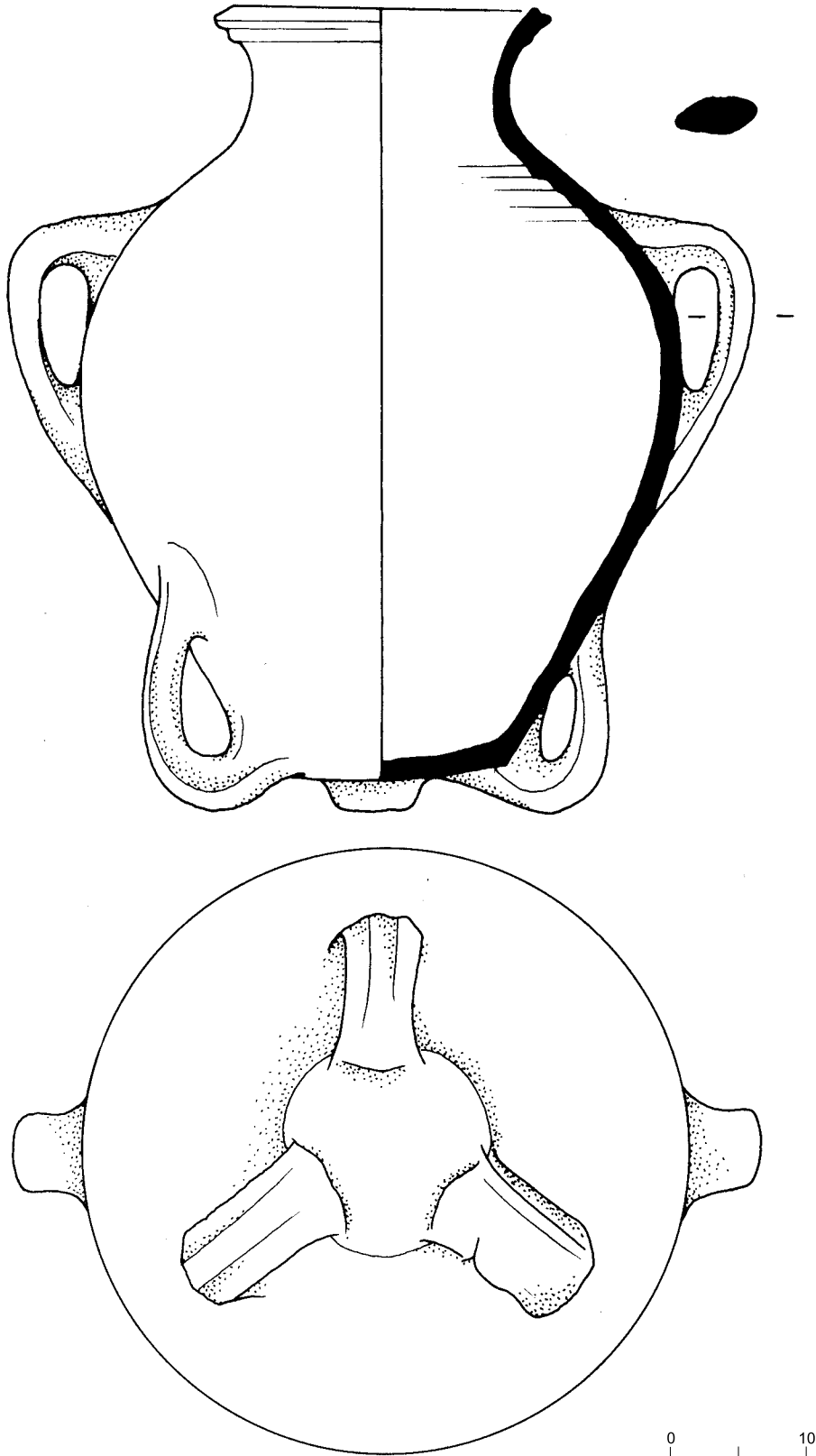


Fig. 2. Jar/krater (L122, B1075/3); Munsell Reading—Light brown slip (7.5YR 7/4).

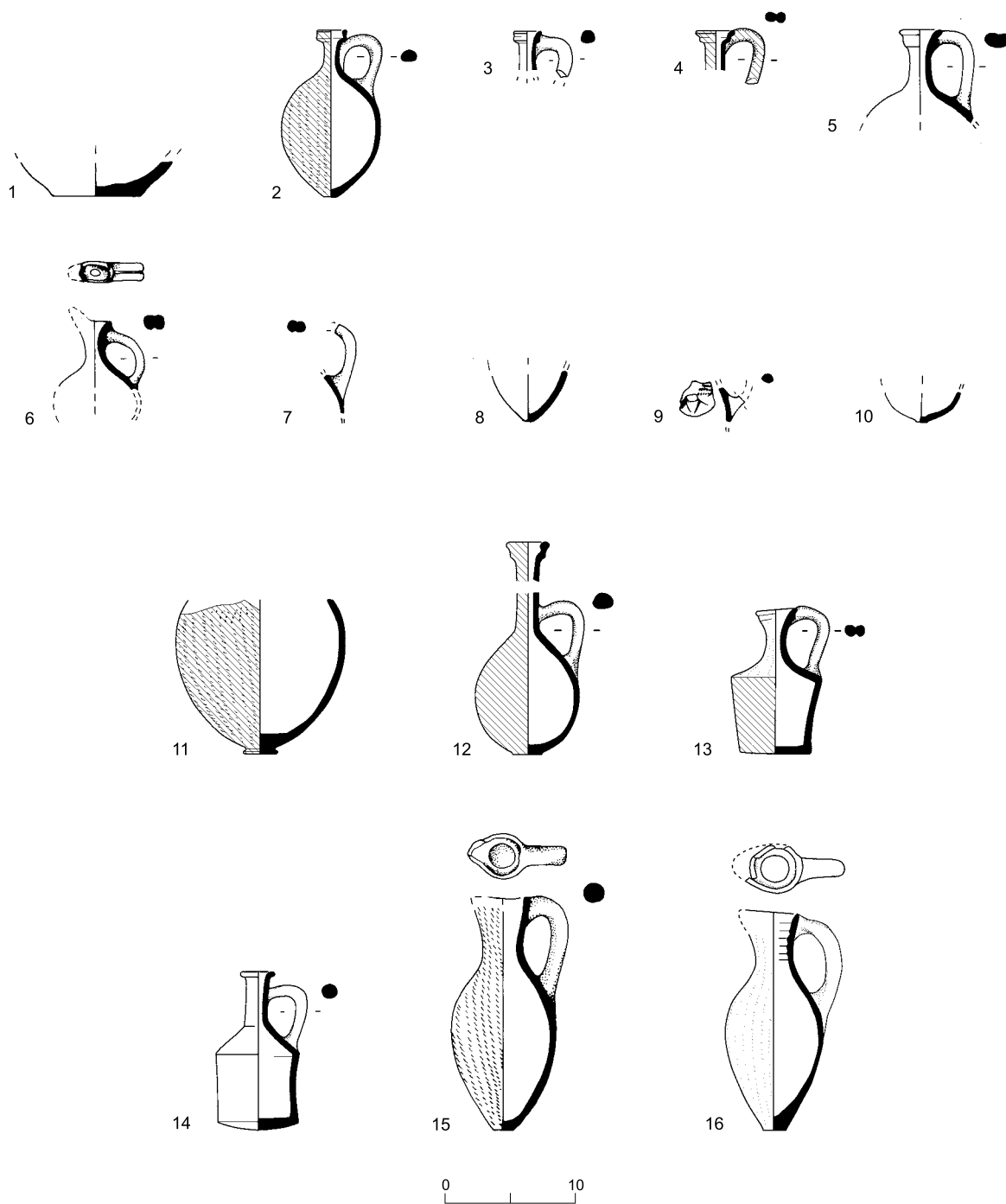


Fig. 3. Jug and juglets from Tomb 126.

◀ Fig. 3.

No.	Type	Locus	Basket	Munsell Reading
1	Jug	126	1080/1	Brownish interior and slip (5YR 6/6–7/6)
2	Piriform juglet (ellipsoid)	126	1079/2	Reddish brown surface (2.5YR 6/4); red slip (2.5YR 4/6)
3	Piriform juglet	122	1080/2	Reddish brown surface (5YR 6/4); gray slip (5YR 5/2)
4	Piriform juglet	126	1075/1	Light brown surface (5YR 7/4); reddish slip (10R 6/4)
5	Piriform juglet	126	1080/4	Gray interior (7.5YR 5/1); reddish brown surface (2.5YR 6/6)
6	Piriform juglet	126	1080/3	Brownish interior (7.5YR 6/3); dark gray surface and slip (7.5YR 5/1–4/1)
7	Piriform juglet	126	1080/5	Light gray interior (5YR 6/2); brownish surface (5YR 7/6); red slip (5YR 4/6)
8	Piriform juglet	126	1087/1	Light gray interior (5YR 6/2); brownish surface (5YR 7/6); red slip (5YR 4/6)
9	Piriform juglet	123	1060	Brown interior (5YR 6/4); dark gray slip (5YR 5/1)
10	Piriform juglet	126	1087/2	Light brown interior (7.5YR 6/3); gray surface and dark gray slip (7.5YR 6/1–5/1)
11	Piriform juglet	126	1090a, 1090b	Reddish brown surface (2.5YR 6/4); red slip (10R 4/4)
12	Piriform juglet	126	1080	Gray interior (2.5YR 4/1); red slip (2.5YR 6/6)
13	Cylindrical juglet	116	1063	Brownish surface (5YR 6/6); reddish slip (10R 5/6)
14	Cylindrical juglet	126	1086/1	Gray-brown surface (7.5YR 5/2); dark gray slip (7.5YR 4/1)
15	Dipper Juglet	126	1086/2	Brownish slip (5YR 6/6)
16	Dipper Juglet	122	1070	Light brown slip (10YR 7/4)

The complete juglet (Fig. 3:2), which is red-slipped and burnished, has an ellipsoid body; a truncated pointed base; a single handle, which extends from the base of the neck and curves down below the rim to the shoulder; a short neck; and a profiled candle-stick rim. Unlike the candle-stick rim as it was defined by Epstein (1974:2*),² which was rightly re-termed ‘a stepped rim’ (e.g., Ilan 1991), a genuine candle-stick type rim did not exist during the MB I,³ as can be seen in a jug from Ginosar Tomb 4 (Epstein 1974: Fig. 15:8), a juglet from Kabri Tomb 498 (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Fig. 5.40:2), another juglet from a burial cave in Jatt (Getzov and Nagar 2002: Fig. 3:13)⁴ and several juglets from the late palace phase at Afeq (Beck 2000: Fig. 10.16:13–16), which Beck (2000:195) describes as having a “rim folded outwards to create a funnel-shaped mouth.”

The top fragment of the juglet in Fig. 3:3 has a stepped rim and a single handle that extends from the step toward the shoulder; the fragment is gray-slipped and was probably burnished, although no traces are visible. The top fragment of a juglet in Fig. 3:4 also has a stepped rim, and its two-strand

² Epstein (1974) attributed two different rim types to her candle-stick type terminology. The first was the one changed into the stepped-rim type, whereas the second is truly a candle-stick type rim and should retain its title.

³ The terminology in this article uses MB I for MB IIA and MB II for MB IIB, following Dever 1980.

⁴ Getzov erroneously compares the juglet from Jatt to a juglet from Sasa (Golani and Yogev 1996: Fig. 3:8), which is of the stepped-rim type rather than the candle-stick rim type. The juglet from Tomb 502 in Kabri is also a bad example since it has simply an everted rim with a triangular cross-section (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Fig. 5.20:7).

handle extends from the rim, rising slightly above it, down to the shoulder; its red slip was probably burnished. The upper part of the juglet in Fig. 3:5 has an everted rim, with a rounded edge and a slight swelling below it, which is not a step. Like the juglet in Fig. 3:4, its two-strand handle extends from the rim down to the shoulder. The exterior surface is heavily incrustated, and no slip could be discerned. The juglet in Fig. 3:6 has a partly broken rim; nevertheless, the remaining bit indicates that the rim was of the cut-away type, which was prevalent throughout MB I, mostly in the north of the country. It has a burnished, dark gray slip and a two-strand handle that extends from below the rim down to the shoulder.

The handle in Fig. 3:7 belongs most likely to the same vessel as does the base in Fig. 3:8. Both fragments are similar in ware and coating: the two-strand handle and the truncated pointed base are red-slipped and burnished; the markings on the base are vertical. The second handle (Fig. 3:9) is a shoulder fragment with the beginning of a single handle of a Tell el-Yahudiyeh juglet, undoubtedly of local production. The brown-ware potsherd has a dark gray slip, which was probably burnished, but this is not evident any longer due to wear. Two standing triangles are incised below the handle, and parts of three punctured horizontal rows are found above the handle's attachment. The fragment is too small to allow a visualization of the complete design of the juglet.

The small, flat and shallow button base of the juglet in Fig. 3:10 has a very thin cross section. Its dark brown fabric bears a burnished, dark gray slip.

The juglet's body in Fig. 3:11 has a rather wide ellipsoid shape with a wide and flat button base. It is red-slipped and burnished. Remains of a punctured decoration on the shoulder may have formed an offset-inset band.

The juglet body in Fig. 3:12 is ellipsoid with a flat and shallow button base. The single handle extends from the lower part of the narrow cylindrical neck to the shoulder. It has a red slip that is vertically burnished. The top, which does not join the body but appears to belong to it, has a stepped rim, whose edge is folded-in, and an indentation on the exterior side of the rim's base.

The body shape and the base of the complete juglet in Fig. 3:2 has an analogy in Grave 39 at Sasa (Ben-Arieh 2004: Fig. 19:4), but the Sasa juglet has a simple, everted rim, unlike the candle-stick rim of our juglet. The stepped rim of the juglets in Fig. 3:3, 4, 12 (initially referred to as a candle-stick rim; see above) was seen as a development of the MB I collarete rim and has been regarded as a representative of the transition period between MB I and MB II (Epstein 1074:13–14). Maier (1997:301) seems to suggest that this affiliation is accurate, but Ilan (1991:233–235) has proposed that this rim type was not confined to the MB I–II transition period, but rather continued to appear into the MB II. Beck (2000:214–215) convincingly proved that the stepped rim bears no morphological relations to the collarete rim, and hence no chronological dichotomy can be applied to these rim types. At the same time, what is considered as a stepped rim in late MB II contexts (Ilan 1991: Fig. 2:1; 1996: Fig. 4.96) is a far cry from the stepped rim proper (Beck 2000:215), and thus it cannot serve as a valid indication that this rim type continued late into the MB II. The stepped-rim juglets from Tomb 126 indicate that this rim type appears with ordinary, ellipsoid-shape, slipped and

burnished juglets that are equipped with a button, pointed or truncated base, as well as a single- or a two-strand handle.

The rim of the juglet in Fig. 3:5 recalls a juglet from Tomb 1025 at Dan (Ilan 1996: Fig. 4:105), which is regarded as having a stepped rim (Ilan 1991: Fig. 1:5); however, the rim of the Dan juglet seems more like a vestigial ridge that only remotely resembles a stepped rim.

The reconstructed cut-away rim of the juglet in Fig. 3:6 is common to the MB I in the north of the country. Numerous jugs and juglets with such rims were found in Kabri Tomb 498 (Kempinski, Gershuny and Scheftelowitz 2002: Figs. 5.25–5.27), and they are dated strictly to the MB I (Kempinski 1989:31). The juglet of this type which was found in the palace phase at Afeq (Beck 2000: Fig. 10.16:17) is probably the most southern appearance of these juglets in Canaan. Those found at Tell ed-Dab'a (Bietak 1996: Fig. 29) most likely originated somewhere along the northern Mediterranean coast.

The handle in Fig. 3:9 and the juglet in Fig. 3:11—both bearing traces of punctured decoration—represent the local variety of Tell el-Yahudiyeh Ware juglets, the likes of which were recovered from the potter's refuse pit at 'Afula (Zevulun 1990:174–175) and from another Middle Bronze Age tomb in Fassuṭa (Gershuny and Aviam 2010: Fig. 8:7, 8). Zevulun (1990:188, note 22) suggested that the Tel el-Yahudieh juglets were produced as regular red-slipped vessels, whose exterior black or dark gray color was achieved by a final, brief reduction firing and not by an application of a dark gray slip. This contention does not seem to suit our two vessels. The juglet in Fig. 3:11 has a dark gray-fired interior and section, whereas a red slip is clearly applied to its darker body surface. The handle, on the other hand, has a red-brown-fired interior and section, while a dark gray slip is clearly applied to its exterior. Hence, it is suggested that each juglet should be judged independently, and whatever may be true for one site, could be the complete opposite at another.

Cylindrical Juglets (Fig. 3:13, 14).— The two complete cylindrical juglets have a concave-profiled body and an angular shoulder. The juglet in Fig. 3:13 has a flat base and a narrow, short neck that opens into an everted, stepped rim. A two-strand handle extends from the rim, curving slightly above it, and ends at the shoulder. The juglet in Fig. 3:14 has a flattened convex base. Its cylindrical, high neck ends in an everted rim with a rounded edge. A two-strand handle extends from mid-neck to shoulder.

Cylindrical juglets with concave-sided bodies are probably the earliest of their kind to appear in Middle Bronze Age contexts, as they first appear toward the end of MB I. A juglet of this type, with a broken rim, was found in Kefar Veradim Cave 1 (Getzov and Nagar 2002: Fig. 7:12), which is dated to the end of MB I (Getzov and Nagar 2002:8). Another juglet, decorated with bands of a zigzag line between two plain border lines, comes from Dan Tomb 1025, which was also dated to late MB I (Ilan 1996:208, Fig. 4.106:4). A similar juglet was attributed to the pre-palace phase at Afeq (Beck 2000: Fig. 10.6:2); Beck (2000:181) claimed that this is the earliest of the cylindrical juglets, and that it is exclusive to MB I.

Dipper juglets (Fig. 3:15, 16).— The two intact dipper juglets are very similar. The juglet in Fig. 3:15 has an ellipsoid-shaped body, with a flat base, a short and wide neck, a rather vertical rim that is pinched at one end, and a single, circular handle that extends from the rim to the shoulder. The juglet in Fig. 3:16 has a narrower ellipsoid body, with a smaller and thicker flat base, a short and wide neck, a slightly everted rim that is pinched at one end, and a single circular handle extending from rim to shoulder. The flat bases of dipper juglets are most common in MB I contexts (Amiran 1969:106), and only seldomly do they appear in later contexts. A dipper juglet with a small flat base and a moderately sloping shoulder was found in Kefar Veradim Cave 1 (Getzov and Nagar 2002: Fig. 7:8).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The small, homogenous assemblage from Jar Burial 116 and Tomb 126 exhibits clear features typical of the Middle Bronze Age I, as well as a few oddities. All the vessels in the assemblage are burnished, except for the open bowls and the vessels that are heavily incrustated. The burnished red slip occurs on some vessels, but it is not dominant. The burnish on the carinated bowls is horizontal on the shoulder and vertical on the body, below the carination angle. The concave cylindrical juglets, the flat-based dipper juglets, the closed carinated bowls, the cut-away rim juglet are all proven features of MB I, yet the Tell el-Yehudiyeh-type fragments and the stepped-rim juglets point to the late phase of this period.

The most visible oddity within this assemblage is the jar/krater with the triple loop legs. This unusual and distinct combination of a jar with an element that is solely known in bowls and kraters can only be regarded as a momentary whim of the potter who produced the vessel. It certainly was not an attempt to hide production mistakes, as this vessel is well made, slipped and burnished. It may have been a request of the customer for whom it was made. Whatever the reason behind this combination vase, the end result is worthy and distinct.

To conclude, this tomb and its contents are dated to the final phase of MB I, as do other burial caves and tombs in the vicinity of Fassuta.

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