

# The New Kingdom town on Sai Island – establishing the date of its foundation: potential and limits of ceramic studies

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## Introduction: New Kingdom settlement pottery

Since settlements and village life in Ancient Egypt are traditionally neglected by Egyptology, the current knowledge of settlement pottery is still limited. From the following New Kingdom sites ceramics associated with domestic contexts have been published in considerable quantities: Amarna<sup>1</sup>, Deir el-Ballas<sup>2</sup>, Elephantine<sup>3</sup>, Ezbet

Helmi near Tell el-Daba<sup>4</sup>, Memphis<sup>5</sup>, Qantir<sup>6</sup> and Thebes (especially Karnak and Malqata<sup>7</sup>). According to the main occupation phases of these sites only selected periods are accessible by means of published material; this is especially the Thutmoside era and the Amarna period as well as the Ramesside period (19th and 20th Dynasties). To date, no complete ceramic sequence covering the entire span of the New Kingdom was presented from settlement sites. Consequently, vessels from well-dated New Kingdom tombs

1. P. ROSE, *The Eighteenth Dynasty Pottery Corpus from Amarna*, EES EM 83, London, 2007.

2. J. BOURRIAU, "Cemetery and Settlement Pottery of the Second Intermediate period to Early New Kingdom", *BES* 8, 1986/1987, p. 47-59; *Ead.*, "The Pottery", in P. LACOVARA, *Deir el-Ballas, Preliminary Report on the Deir el-Ballas Expedition, 1980-1986*, ARCE Reports 12, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1990, p. 15-22 and 54-65 [figs.].

3. D.A. ASTON, *Elephantine XIX, Pottery from the Late New Kingdom to the Early Ptolemaic Period*, AV 95, Mainz am Rhein, 1999; A. SEILER, "Zur Formentwicklung der Keramik der Zweiten Zwischenzeit und der frühen 18. Dynastie", in W. Kaiser *et al.*, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine, 25./26./27. Grabungsbericht", *MDAIK* 55, 1999, p. 204-224; J. BUDKA, "XII. Zur Keramik des Neuen Reiches – erste Beobachtungen anhand des Materials aus der Oststraße B II", in G. Dreyer *et al.*, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine, 31./32. Grabungsbericht", *MDAIK* 61, 2005, p. 90-116, *Ead.*, "The New Kingdom pottery from Elephantine", in D. Raue *et al.*, "Report on the 37<sup>th</sup> season of excavation and restoration on the island of Elephantine", *ASAE* 84, 2010, p. 350-352; *Ead.*, "Festival Pottery of New Kingdom Egypt: Three Case

Studies", in B. Bader, M. F. Ownby (eds.), *Functional Aspects of Egyptian Ceramics within their Archaeological Context. Proceedings of a Conference held at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Cambridge, July 24<sup>th</sup>-July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009*, OLA 217, Leuven, 2013, p. 188-195.

4. D.A. ASTON, "The Pottery from H/VI Süd Strata a and b: Preliminary Report", *E and L* 11, 2002, p. 167-196.

5. J. BOURRIAU, *The Survey of Memphis IV. Kom Rabia: The New Kingdom Pottery*, EES EM 93, London, 2010.

6. D.A. ASTON, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes Q I. Teil I, Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes, Forschungen in der Ramses Stadt. Die Grabungen des Pelizaeus-Museums Hildesheim in Qantir-Pi-Ramesse*, Bd. 1, Mainz am Rhein, 1998.

7. See C.-A. HOPE, *Pottery of the Egyptian New Kingdom – Three Studies*, Victoria College, Archaeology Research Unit, Burwood, 1989, esp. p. 21-33; H. JACQUET-GORDON, *Karnak-Nord X. Le trésor de Thoutmosis I<sup>er</sup>, La céramique*, FFAO 65, Le Caire, 2012.

contexts have been used as “chronological markers”<sup>8</sup>, but with clear shortcomings<sup>9</sup>.

Despite the lack of a complete sequence from one settlement site, phases for the development of New Kingdom pottery have been proposed by Bourriau and others, taking into account material from tombs. Until recently, four major ceramic phases characterized the New Kingdom up to late Ramesside times<sup>10</sup>, but now most scholars follow a division into five phases as proposed by Aston<sup>11</sup>. Lately, the innovative and distinctive character of pottery under the long reign of Thutmose III was frequently raised<sup>12</sup>. Similarly, the reign of Hatshepsut is commonly known to mark a new phase of ceramics distinguished by several innovations. However, to ascertain a more specific date for Egyptian pottery pre-dating Hatshepsut other than “early 18th Dynasty”, meaning a time span of approximately 70 years from the reign of Ahmose to Thutmose II, is at the moment still

difficult. A labelling of pottery phases as “early-mid 18th Dynasty” comprising the period of Ahmose to Thutmose III / Amenophis II, thus more than 150 years, is therefore common<sup>13</sup>. Significant finds from Abydos<sup>14</sup> and Memphis<sup>15</sup> reveals certain characteristics of material datable to Ahmose and Amenhotep I. Furthermore, in recent years the importance of regional studies<sup>16</sup> and the potential of close comparison between sites<sup>17</sup> were highlighted.

A recent study by David Aston re-dates Theban funerary contexts of the early 18th Dynasty<sup>18</sup> – his research is another indication that there was probably a break within the ceramic tradition after Amenhotep I. According to Aston, the Thutmoside tradition might start already as early as during the reign of Thutmose I – important indirect evidence comes from the pyramid of queen Tetisheri at South Abydos illustrating a uniform character of material comprising the reigns of both Ahmose and Amenhotep I, which

8. D.A. ASTON, “New Kingdom Pottery Phases as Revealed Through well-dated Tomb Contexts”, in M. Bietak (ed.), *The Synchronisation of Civilizations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC II*, Vienna, 2003, p. 135-162; cf. also D.A. ASTON, “Kom Rabi‘a, Ezbet Helmi, and Saqqara NK 3507. A Study in Cross-Dating”, in M. Bietak and E. Černý (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilizations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC III*, Vienna, 2009, p. 207-248.

9. BOURRIAU, *The Survey of Memphis IV*, 2010, p. 2.

10. J. BOURRIAU, *Umm el-Ga‘ab, Pottery from the Nile Valley before the Arab Conquest*, Cambridge, 1981, p. 72 with additions by several authors, see e.g. ASTON, *E and L* 11, 2002, p. 177; *Id.*, in M. Bietak (ed.), *The Synchronisation of Civilizations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC II*, p. 135-162.

11. ASTON, in M. Bietak (ed.), *The Synchronisation of Civilizations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC II*, 2003, p. 135-162; *Id.*, *Untersuchungen im Totentempel des Merenptah in Theben Bd. IV, The Pottery, Beiträge zur Ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde* 17, Mainz am Rhein, 2008, p. 375; BOURRIAU, *The Survey of Memphis IV*, 2010, p. 2-3.

12. ČĚ., e.g., D.A. ASTON, “Making a Splash. Ceramic Decoration in the Reigns of Thutmose III and Amenophis II”, in E. Černý, I. Hein, H. Hunger, D. Melman, A. Schwab (eds.), *Timelines. Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak*, OLA 149.1, Leuven, Paris and Dudley, MA, 2006, p. 65-73.

13. E.g. A. WODZIŃSKA, “Pottery and chronology. Preliminary remarks on ceramic material from Tell el-Retaba”, in D. Aston *et al.* (eds.), *Under the Potter’s Tree. Studies on Ancient Egypt Presented to Janine Bourriau on the Occasion of her 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, OLA 204, Leuven, Paris and Walpole, MA, 2011, p. 1016-1019.

14. J. BUDKA, “The Oriental Institute Ahmose and Tetisheri Project at Abydos 2002-2004: The New Kingdom pottery”, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 83-120; *Ead.*, in B. Bader, M. F. Ownby (eds.), *Functional Aspects of Egyptian Ceramics*, 2013, p. 195-198.

15. BOURRIAU, *The Survey of Memphis IV*, 2010, *passim*.

16. E.g. A. SEILER, “The Second Intermediate Period in Thebes: Regionalism in pottery development and its cultural implications”, in M. Marée (ed.), *The Second Intermediate Period (Thirteenth-Seventeenth Dynasties). Current Research, Future Prospects*, OLA 192, Leuven, Paris and Walpole, MA, 2010, p. 39-53.

17. E.g. B. BADER, *Tell el-Dab‘a XIX. Auaris und Memphis im Mittleren Reich und in der Hyksoszeit: Vergleichsanalyse der materiellen Kultur*, *UZK* 31, Vienna, 2009. See also D.A. ASTON, “Kom Rabi‘a, Ezbet Helmi, and Saqqara NK 3507. A Study in Cross-Dating”, in M. Bietak, E. Černý (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilizations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC III*, 2007, p. 207-248.

18. D.A. ASTON, “TT 320 and the *ky* of Queen Inhapi – A Reconsideration Based on Ceramic Evidence”, *GM* 236, 2013, p. 7-20.

is still markedly different in character from the “Thutmoside style”<sup>19</sup>.

All in all, several matters regarding settlement pottery of the New Kingdom are still unsolved – these include chronological issues, especially for the beginning of the 18th Dynasty, but also the general sequence and life span of significant types (i.e. of possible “chronological markers”) as well as the characterization of the material culture of the New Kingdom in specific regions, raising the issue of regional traditions. The most promising sites with much potential to answer these pressing questions are Abydos, Elephantine and Egyptian sites in Upper Nubia like Sai Island, Sesebi and Amara-West.

The material from recent German and Swiss excavations in the New Kingdom town on Elephantine, currently under the responsibility of the author<sup>20</sup>, derives from layers datable from the early 18th Dynasty until the Late Ramesside Period. This corpus of stratified material is of major importance and provides the keys to a more detailed understanding of settlement pottery. Other than ceramic material from tombs, settlement pottery indicates daily activities and offers information on functional use in domestic contexts. Furthermore, as vessels from settlements are likely to have shorter life spans than pots used for burials, the sequencing of types in combination with stratigraphic information may prove to be highly valuable for dating evidence and for establishing concise “chronological markers”.

This paper will focus on the limits and the potential of dating issues connected with material unearthed in the Pharaonic town on Sai Island<sup>21</sup>. The close parallels to both published and

unpublished material from Elephantine will be highlighted and various questions deriving from this comparison will be raised. The significance of the material from the Tetisheri pyramid at South Abydos, of late Ahmose to Amenhotep I date and not yet of Thutmoside character, will be stressed as well<sup>22</sup>. As work on the ceramics from Sai Island is still in progress, this paper has a preliminary character. Selected contexts for each level of occupation will be presented. Excavations within the New Kingdom town on Sai scheduled for the upcoming years will provide further evidence and a full assessment of the pottery must await these future results. Already at this early state, the ceramics underline the key role the New Kingdom town on Sai holds for our understanding of the so-called “reconquest of Nubia” in the 18th Dynasty<sup>23</sup>.

### *The Pharaonic town on Sai Island*

The period of the Egyptian New Kingdom was one of the glory days of the large island of Sai in Upper Nubia, located just at the southern end of the Batn el-Hagar<sup>24</sup>. The fortified settlement

22. For now see BUDKA, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 108-112, figs. 19-20; a publication presenting the complete evidence is in preparation.

23. For this “reconquest” see L. TÖRÖK, *Between Two Worlds: The Frontier Region between Ancient Nubia and Egypt 3700 BC - 500 AD*, PdÄ 29, Leiden, 2009, p. 157-169; for the importance of Sai cf. J. BUDKA, “The early New Kingdom at Sai Island: Preliminary results based on the pottery analysis (4<sup>th</sup> Season 2010)”, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 23-33.

24. Cf. M. AZIM, “Quatre campagnes de fouilles sur la Forteresse de Saï, 1970-1973. 1<sup>re</sup> partie: l’installation pharaonique”, *CRIPEL* 3, 1975, p. 91-125; Fl. DOYEN, “The New Kingdom Town on Sai Island (Northern Sudan)”, *Sudan et Nubia* 13, 2009, p. 17-20; A. MINAULT-GOUT, Fl. THILL, *Saï II. Le cimetière des tombes hypogées du Nouvel Empire (SAC5)*, FIFAO 69, Cairo, 2012; Fl. DOYEN, “Sai Island New Kingdom Town (Northern Sudan): 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Seasons (2009-2010)”, in J. Anderson, D. Welsby (eds.), *Proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies, British Museum London, 1<sup>st</sup> August – 6<sup>th</sup> August 2010*, Leuven, British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan, Leuven, 2014, 367-375; J. BUDKA, Fl. DOYEN, “Living in New Kingdom towns

19. J. BUDKA, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 108-112.

20. Cf. BUDKA, *MDAIK* 61, 2005, p. 90-116; *Ead.*, *ASAE* 84, 2010, p. 350-352; *Ead.*, in B. Bader, M.F. Ownby (eds.), *Functional Aspects of Egyptian Ceramics*, 2013, p. 188-195.

21. This study was started in 2011 and includes results up to the field season 2013.

from Pharaonic times, approximately 34 000 sqm in size, is located on the eastern bank of Sai Island. During its previous archaeological investigation by a French Mission in the 1950s to 1970s, six levels of occupation from Pharaonic to Islamic times were identified, including textual references for building activity by Thutmose III<sup>25</sup>. Associated with the town are several nearby cemeteries forming an integral part of the New Kingdom constructions on the island; the main burial ground of the New Kingdom has already been published<sup>26</sup>.

Sai Island as the second largest settlement of the Kerma culture after Kerma city itself<sup>27</sup> represented a drawback for any Egyptian expansion towards the South, for example for the Nubian campaigns under king Ahmose<sup>28</sup>. Textual sources from Sai, of which the most prominent object is an inscribed royal sandstone statue<sup>29</sup>, refer to Ahmose who is commonly assumed as the founder of “Sai city”<sup>30</sup>. However, the dating of Ahmose’s statue has been discussed (as posthumous rather than contemporaneous) and there is a range of possible interpretations of

in Upper Nubia – New evidence from recent excavations on Sai Island”, *E et L* 22-23, 2013, p. 167-208.

25. See J. VERCOUTTER, in Br. Gratién, *Saï I. La nécropole Kerma*, Paris, 1986, p. 7-17; M. AZIM, *CRIPÉL* 3, 1975, p. 91-125.

26. MINAULT-GOUT, THILL, *Saï II*, Cairo, 2012.

27. For the rich funerary evidence on Sai Island see Br. Gratién, *Saï I. La nécropole Kerma*, passim; J.W. YELLIN, “Sai Island”, in M.M. Fisher *et al.* (eds.), *Ancient Nubia. African Kingdoms on the Nile*, Cairo/New York, 2012, p. 330.

28. E.F. MORRIS, *The architecture of imperialism. Military bases and the evolution of foreign policy in Egypt’s New Kingdom*, *PdÄ* 22, Leiden and Boston, 2005, p. 70-71. Recent summary of Ahmose’s activities: D. KAHN, “The History of Kush – an Outline”, in F. Jesse, C. Vogel (eds.), *The Power of Walls – Fortifications in Ancient Northeastern Africa. Proceedings of the International Workshop held at the University of Cologne, 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> August 2011*, *Colloquium Africanum* 5, Cologne 2013, p. 17-18 with references.

29. A. MINAULT-GOUT, “Les installations du début du Nouvel Empire à Sai: un état de la question”, in Br. Gratién (ed.), *Mélanges offerts à Francis Geus*, *CRIPÉL* 26, 2006-2007, p. 280-281.

30. E.g. TÖRÖK, *Between Two Worlds*, 2009, p. 159.

the epigraphical sources from Sai<sup>31</sup>. The material remains like the ceramics might answer some of the questions concerned with the foundation of the Pharaonic settlement on Sai. At present, we are not able to identify the actual founder of the Egyptian town on the island with certainty. Amenhotep I has left a statue like his father and several other inscribed pieces<sup>32</sup>; Thutmose I is responsible for a rock inscription dated to his second year<sup>33</sup>. So all in all, at the latest with Amenhotep I an Egyptian presence can be reconstructed on the island. The difficulty is to assess the nature of this presence and here ceramics can offer useful data.

### Sector SAVIN

Since 2008, new fieldwork along the northern enclosure of the Pharaonic town in an area called SAVIN was carried out by the Sai Island Archaeological Mission (SIAM) of the University Charles-de-Gaulle, Lille<sup>34</sup>. Five archaeological levels have been identified within SAVIN<sup>35</sup> and various domestic structures, partly with storage facilities, ovens and grinding implements, have been excavated during the work by SIAM (2008-2012)<sup>36</sup>. Especially storage pits and silos yielded large amounts of ceramic material.

Joining SIAM in 2011<sup>37</sup>, I was able to demonstrate that there is ceramical evidence

31. Cf. L. GABOLDE, “Réexamen des jalons de la pré-ence de la XVIII<sup>e</sup> dynastie naissante à Saï”, *CRIPÉL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 118-122.

32. Recently summarized by GABOLDE, *CRIPÉL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 118-129.

33. See GABOLDE, *CRIPÉL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 131 with further references. The present location of the inscription is unknown.

34. DOYEN, *Sudan and Nubia* 13, 2009, p. 17-20; *Ead.*, in J. Anderson, D. Welsby (eds.), *Proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies*, 367-375.

35. BUDKA, DOYEN, *E and L* 22-23, 2013, p. 171-182.

36. Cf. BUDKA, DOYEN, *E and L* 22-23, 2013, p. 182-198.

37. Prior to my engagement, the responsibility for the ceramics from SAVIN lay in the hands of Laurianne Miellé,

for Egyptian presence at the site pre-dating Thutmose III<sup>38</sup>. In 2012, the earliest level in SAVIN, level 5, was identified as already early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in date, thus confirming the foundation of the town in the New Kingdom. Some sherds attest to early Ramesside activity, but as yet they cannot be associated with structures<sup>39</sup>. For now, the precise history of Sai in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Dynasties and its relation to Amara West remains uncertain<sup>40</sup>. The present paper is therefore focusing on levels datable to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty only.

### *Ceramics from SAVIN*

The ceramic material from SAVIN finds ready parallels not only in other Egyptian foundations in Lower and Upper Nubia<sup>41</sup>, but also at various New Kingdom sites in Egypt<sup>42</sup>, especially at

Elephantine<sup>43</sup>, Abydos<sup>44</sup> and Deir el-Ballas<sup>45</sup>. However, a local component and site-specific features are present on Sai Island<sup>46</sup>.

The ceramic analysis of SAVIN faces several difficulties – first of all, there are still few closed deposits, the majority representing mixed material ranging in date from the early to late New Kingdom including post-Pharaonic material. This holds especially true for the upper levels 1 and 2. Within levels 3 and 4, post-New Kingdom material was found more randomly.

In all levels, material from the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty predominates, even in the uppermost layer. This situation clearly reflects the peak of activity at the site, but renders finer dating more difficult (*Figs. 1-2*). As easy as it is to attest a certain period within the New Kingdom material, it is much more complex to connect the ceramic material with specific structures and to give an absolute date to the various phases and levels. *Fig. 1* illustrates as examples carinated dishes derived from mixed fillings of levels 1-3 which are all datable to the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Very common are Thutmoseid carinated Marl clay vessels with painted decoration, attested again in large numbers in levels 2 and 1 (see, e.g., *Pl. 1*). Fortunately, in 2011 a deposit of almost complete vessels was uncovered in square 180/2270 that can be clearly attributed to level 4 and proved to be very significant for the early history of the site<sup>47</sup>.

see her preliminary report L. MIELLÉ, "La céramique pharaonique de la ville fortifiée (SAV1 N) de l'île de Saï", *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 173-187; unfortunately with considerable shortcomings (without precise fine dating and with mistakes regarding the identifications of fabrics and wares, e.g. figs. 5.3 and 5.4 are not Marl A3 vessels, but not ceramic at all: these sherds are secondary burnt faience vessel fragments).

38. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2012, p. 23-33.

39. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2012, p. 24.

40. There are some inscribed monuments from Late Ramesside time as well as ceramics of this date, also from the cemeteries; cf. Fl. THILL, "Les réoccupations « (pré)napatéenes » dans le cimetière égyptien 8B5/SAC5 de Saï", in Br. Gratién (ed.), *Mélanges offerts à Francis Geus*, *CRIPEL* 26, 2006-2007, p. 353-369.

41. Cf. R. HOLTHER, *New Kingdom Pharaonic Sites. The Pottery*, *SJE* Vol. 5:1, Lund, 1977. See also MIELLÉ, *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 173-187.

42. Cf. J. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, p. 23-33; *Ead.*, "Neues zur Siedlung des Neuen Reiches von Sai Island: Splitter einer pharaonischen Lebenswelt im Sudan", *Isched, Journal des AegyptenForum Berlin e.V.* 2/2011, p. 29-39.

43. SEILER, *MDAIK* 55, 1999, p. 204-224; BUDKA, *MDAIK* 61, 2005, p. 90-116, *Ead.*, *ASAE* 84, 2010, p. 350-352.

44. BUDKA, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 83-120; *Ead.*, "V. Die Keramik des Osiriskults: Erste Beobachtungen zu Formen, Datierung und Funktion", in U. Effland, J. Budka, A. Effland, "Studien zum Osiriskult in Umm el-Qaab/Abydos – Ein Vorbericht", *MDAIK* 66, 2010, p. 42-58.

45. BOURRIAU, in P. Lacovara, *Deir el-Ballas*, 1990, p. 15-22 and p. 54-65 [figs.].

46. Cf. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2012, p. 23-33.

47. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2012, p. 25-29.

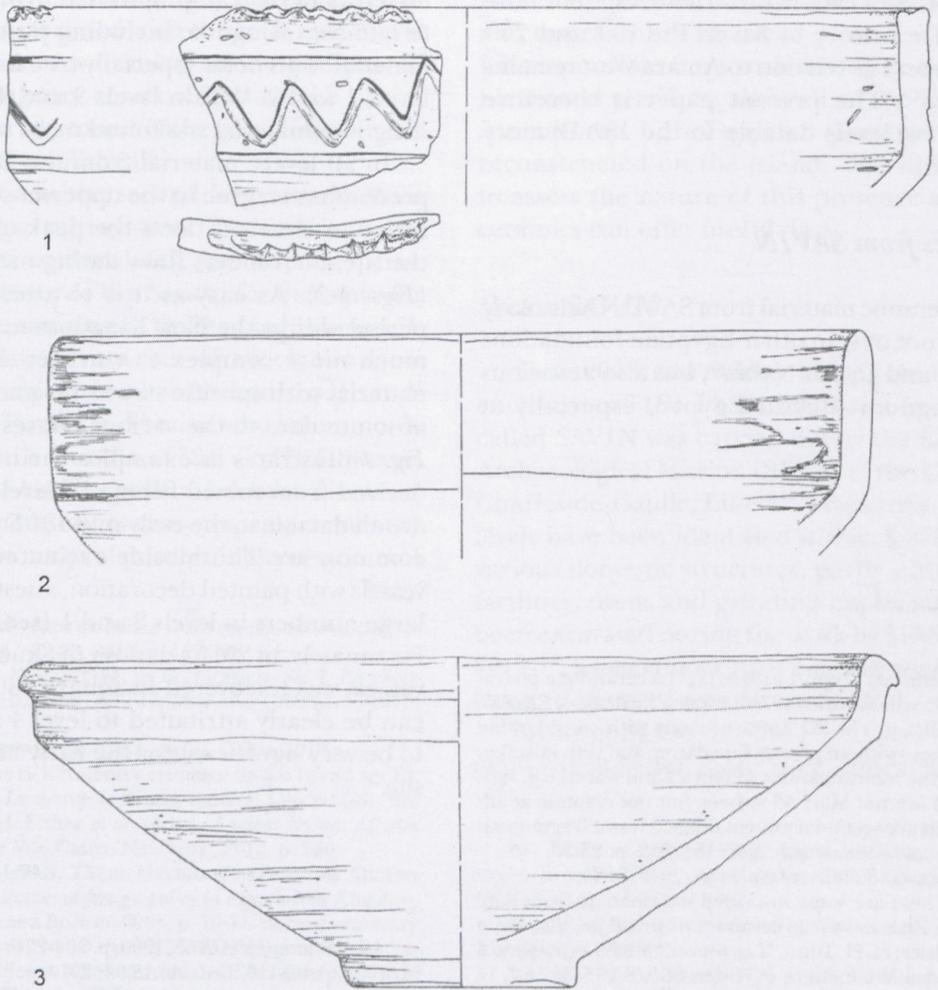


Fig. 1 : Carinated dishes from SAVINorth. Scale 1:2.

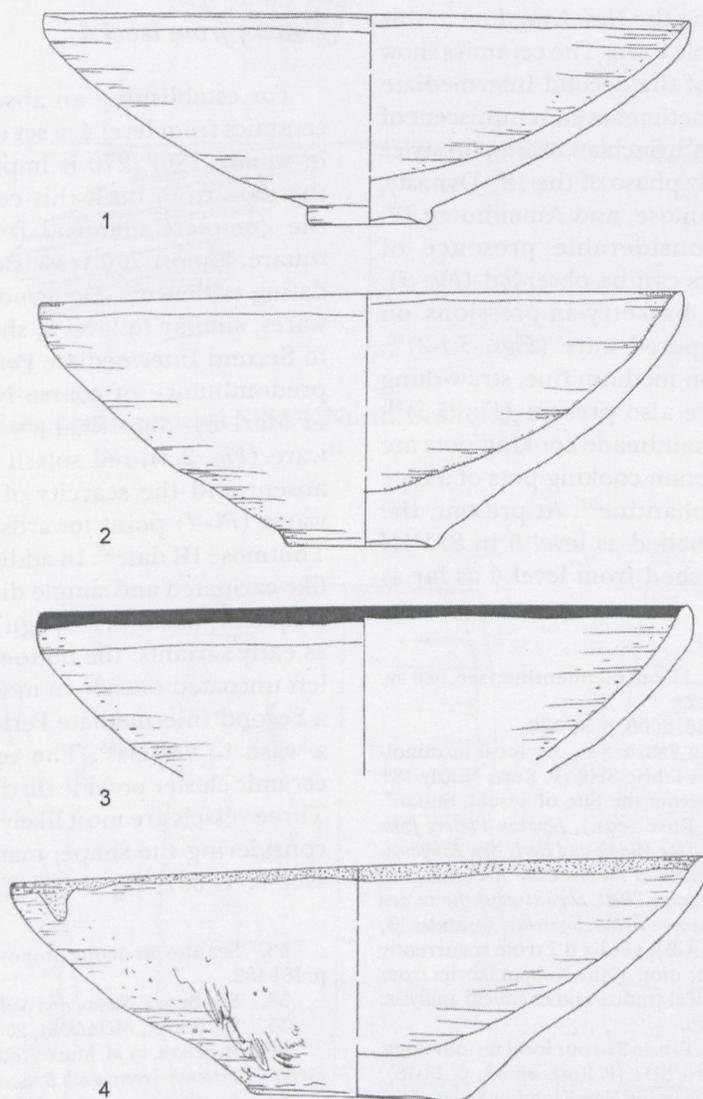


Fig. 2 : Simple dishes from SAVINorth. Scale 1:2.

### Pottery from level 5

The first evidence of activity in the area of SAVIN, level 5, can firmly be associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. There is no testimony of an earlier occupation pre-dating the New Kingdom in this sector of the Pharaonic town. The ceramics show partly still features of the Second Intermediate Period tradition, sometimes even reminiscent of the Middle Kingdom<sup>48</sup>. Such an overlap in styles is typical for the early phase of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, in particular for Ahmose, and Amenhotep I<sup>49</sup>. Furthermore, a considerable presence of Nubian cooking pots can be observed (Fig. 3). Most common are basketry impressions on a coarse, chaff tempered ware (Figs. 3.1-2)<sup>50</sup>; incised decoration on medium fine, straw-dung tempered fabrics are also present (Fig. 3.3)<sup>51</sup>. Interestingly, these handmade cooking pots are associated with Egyptian cooking pots of a type well attested at Elephantine<sup>52</sup>. At present, the random remains labelled as level 5 in SAVIN cannot be distinguished from level 4 as far as

48. Cf. Bauschicht 11 on Elephantine; see SEILER, *MDAIK* 55, 1999, p. 205-223.

49. BUDKA, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 83-120.

50. Labelled Nubian Fabric 3 in our local terminology, comparable to Rose's fabric SH2 (P. ROSE, "Early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Nubian Pottery from the Site of Sesebi, Sudan", in I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose (eds.), *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom. Proceedings of a Workshop held at the Austrian Archaeological Institute at Cairo, 1-12 December 2010, Ergänzungshefte zu den Jahreshften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes* 13, Vienna, 2012, p. 14, figs. A-B). Giulia d'Ercole is currently working on a finer classification of the Nubian fabrics from Sai, based on petrographical studies and chemical analysis; publication in preparation.

51. Labelled Nubian Fabric 2 in our local terminology, comparable to Rose's fabric SH1 (P. ROSE, *op. cit.*, p. 14-18).

52. See J. BUDKA, "Life in the New Kingdom town of Sai Island: Some new perspectives", in N. Spencer, A. Stevens, M. Binder (eds.), *Nubia in the New Kingdom: Lived experience, pharaonic control and indigenous traditions. Proceedings of the 2013 conference, London, British Museum, British Museum Publication on Egypt and Sudan*, British Museum Publication on Egypt and Sudan, Leuven, forthcoming.

the ceramic is concerned<sup>53</sup>. It is still too early to propose an absolute dating, but it has to be stressed that level 5 does not pre-date the New Kingdom.

### Pottery from level 4

For establishing an absolute dating of the ceramics from level 4, a set of vessels discovered in square 180/2270 is important. Combining the data from both this ceramic deposit and the complete material from level 4 in this square, almost 700 vessels can be regarded as dating evidence<sup>54</sup>. The general character of the wares, similar to level 5, shows a close affinity to Second Intermediate Period traditions (e.g. predominance of coarse Nile C variants and of Marl B). Significant wares like black rim ware (Fig. 2.3), red splash ware (Fig. 8.2) are absent and the scarcity of Marl A decorated wares (Pl. 1) point towards a Pre-Hatshepsut/Thutmose III date<sup>55</sup>. In addition, common types like carinated and simple dishes with ring bases frequently occur in a design that identifies them as early variants: the bottom of the ring base is left uncoated outside in most cases – this is still a Second Intermediate Period style of applying a wash to vessels<sup>56</sup>. The vessels found in the ceramic cluster provide further interesting clues. Three vessels are most likely of 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty date considering the shape, manufacture and ware (see N/C 652, Fig. 4.1)<sup>57</sup>. The others (see, e.g.

53. See also my dating proposed in *E and L* 22-23, 2013, p. 181-182.

54. See BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 29, table 2.

55. Cf. BUDKA, *MDAIK* 61, 2005, p. 97.

56. A. SEILER, in M. Marée (ed.), *The Second Intermediate Period (Thirteenth-Seventeenth Dynasties)*, 2010, p. 49.

57. Another vessel of pre-18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty character is the large Nubian storage jar (N/C 650). It is of Classical Kerma tradition and falls into Br. Gratién's type C IX (Br. Gratién, "La nécropole SAC 4 de l'île de Saï : L'occupation Kerma", in Fr. Geus, Fl. Thill (eds), *Mélanges offerts à Jean Vercoutter*, Paris, 1985, Pl. 5c ; GRATIEN, *Saï I. La nécropole Kerma*, 1986, p. 434-435, Fig. 324c). Cf. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 27.

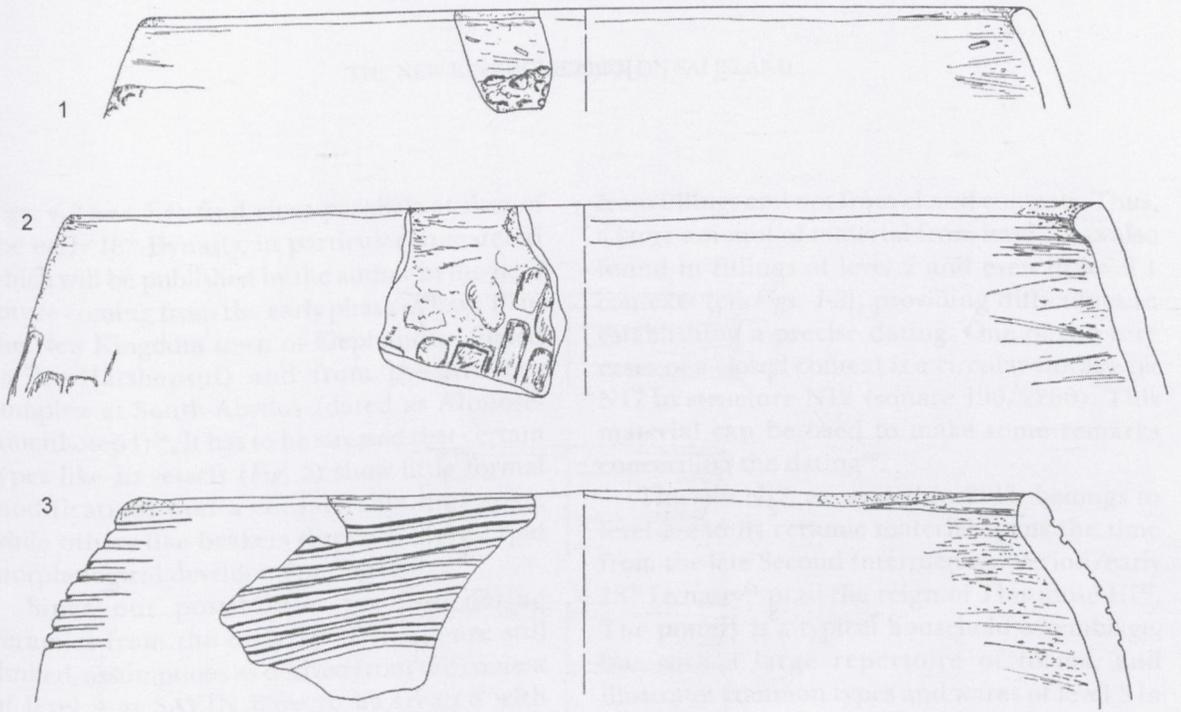


Fig. 3 : Nubian cooking pots from level 5, SAVINorth. Scale 1:3.

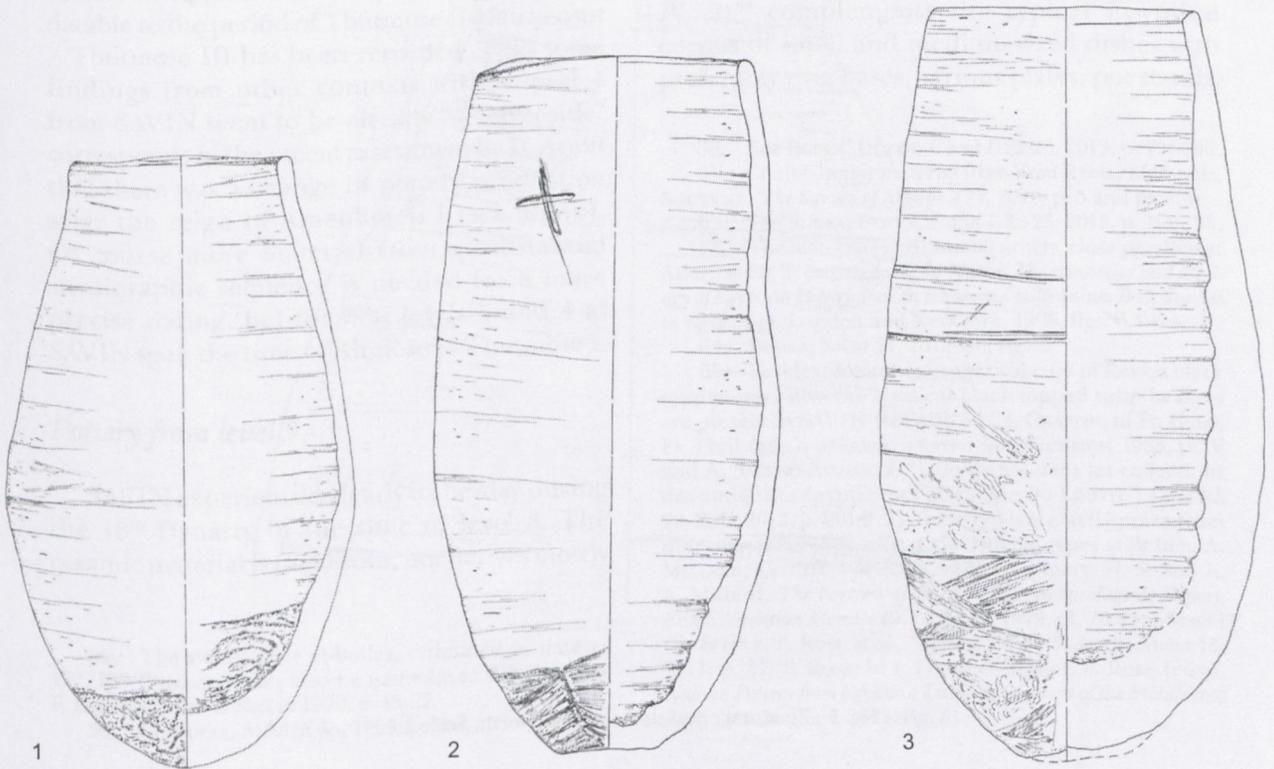


Fig. 4 : Ovoid jar and beakers from SAVINorth. Scale 1:3.

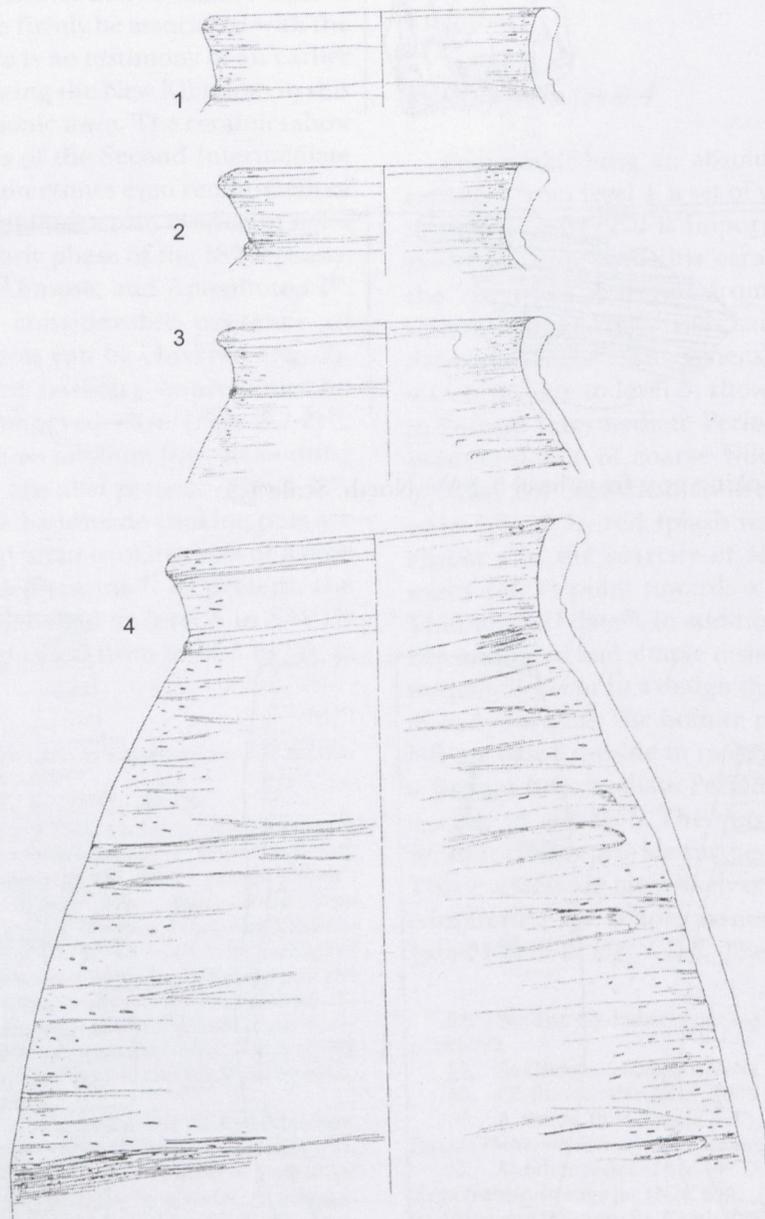


Fig. 5 : Zir storage vessels from SAV1North. Scale 1:4.

Figs. 4.2 and 5.4) find close parallels at sites of the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, in particular in material which will be published by the author in the near future coming from the early phase of level 10 in the New Kingdom town of Elephantine (dated as Pre-Hatshepsut) and from the Ahmose complex at South-Abydos (dated as Ahmose-Amenhotep I)<sup>58</sup>. It has to be stressed that certain types like *zir* vessels (Fig. 5) show little formal modifications over a considerable time span, while others like beakers display a more rapid morphological development (Fig. 4)<sup>59</sup>.

Since our possibilities for fine dating ceramics from the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty are still limited, assumptions as derived from the context of level 4 at SAVIN have to be treated with caution. However, it seems safe to assume a date range beginning with the reign of Ahmose (or Amenhotep I), and ending with Thutmose I as the latest possible date for the disposal of the vessels in square 180/2270, since no material datable to the period of Thutmose II-Hatshepsut / Thutmose III has been recorded. That some findings from other contexts within level 4 from SAVIN seem to be already "Thutmoside" corresponds to the recent assessment by D. Aston that there was a change in pottery production after the reign of Amenhotep I (see above). Of course more material from a substantial stratigraphic sequence is needed for a more precise dating, but for now levels 5 and 4 at SAVIN span the time of Ahmose to Thutmose I.

### Pottery from level 3

SAVIN experienced clearly its heyday during the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in the time of level 3. The ceramic material is numerous, but derives mostly

58. The site of Deir el-Ballas, estimated in date as 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> Dynasties, can also be named; see BOURRIAU, in P. LACOVARA, *Deir el-Ballas*, 1990, p. 15-22.

59. Cf. SEILER, *MDAIK* 55, 1999, p. 205.

from fillings and not from closed contexts. Thus, a large amount of material from level 3 was also found in fillings of level 2 and even in level 1 contexts (cf. Figs. 1-2), providing difficulties in establishing a precise dating. One of the rare cases of a closed context is a circular storage pit N17 in structure N12 (square 190/2260). This material can be used to make some remarks concerning the dating<sup>60</sup>.

The silo N17, excavated in 2011, belongs to level 3 and its ceramic material spans the time from the late Second Intermediate Period/early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty<sup>61</sup> until the reign of Thutmose III<sup>62</sup>. The pottery is a typical household assemblage, but with a large repertoire of forms, and illustrates common types and wares of level 3 in SAVIN (Fig. 6)<sup>63</sup>. It supports the assessment that level 3 can be predominately associated with the later reign of Thutmose III<sup>64</sup>.

A considerable amount of Nubian cooking pots and some Kerma black topped cups (cf. Pl. 2)<sup>65</sup> complements the typical Egyptian corpus of small and medium-sized dishes with preferably ring bases, various plates, pot stands,

60. See BUDKA, DOYEN, *E and L* 22-23, 2013, p. 191-196.

61. Cf. the similar material from Kom Rabia/Memphis, BOURRIAU, *The Survey of Memphis IV*, 2010, p. 5 and passim.

62. See BUDKA, DOYEN, *E and L* 22-23, 2013, p. 192-193.

63. The material finds, among others, close parallels at Askut, see S. T. SMITH, *Askut in Nubia. The economics and ideology of Egyptian imperialism in the second millennium B.C.*, *Studies in Egyptology*, London and New York, 1995, figs. 6.4-6.5.

64. BUDKA, *Sokar* 24, 2012, 60, fig. 7.

65. Besides almost hemispherical cups of Kerma black topped ware also the classical black topped tulip beakers are present in SAVIN (see also SAC4, GRATIEN, in Fr. Geus, Fl. Thill (eds.), *Mélanges offerts à Jean Vercoutter*, 1985, pl. V and A. SACKHO-AUTISSIER, "L'île de Saï dans les collections des antiquités égyptiennes du musée du Louvre", *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 201-212); these types are well known from other Egyptian sites, cf. e.g. the Nubian types at Buhen, A. MILLARD, *Part III. The Finds*, in W. B. Emery, H. S. Smith, A. Millard, *The Fortress of Buhen. The Archaeological Report, EES Excavation Memoir* 49, London, 1979, pl. 78 or at Sesebi (K. SPENCE, P. ROSE *et al.*, "Sesebi 2011", *Sudan et Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 37; P. ROSE, in I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose (eds.), *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom*, 2012, fig. 3).

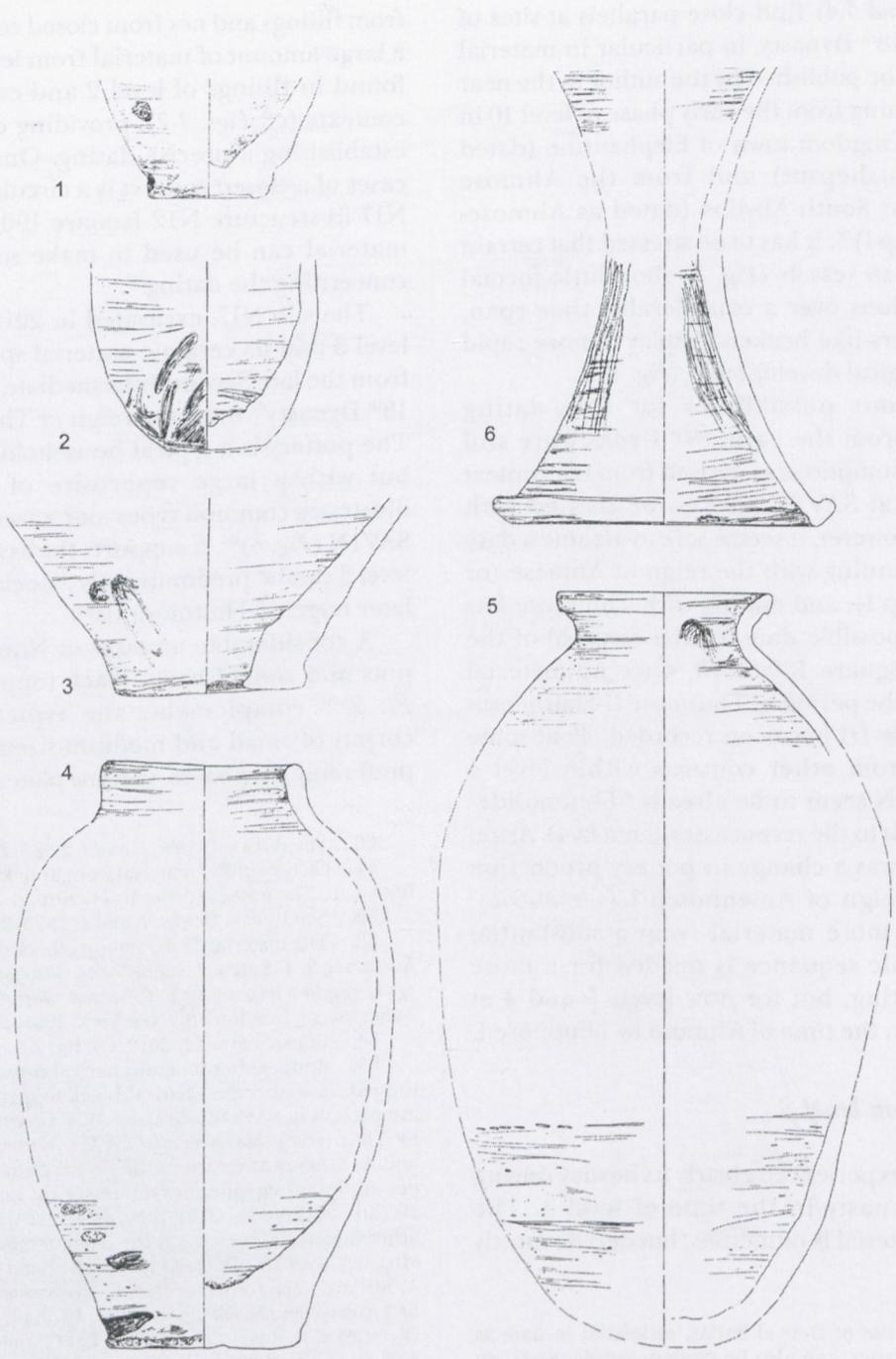


Fig. 6 : Beer jars, flower pot, pot stand and jar from level 3. Scale 1:4.

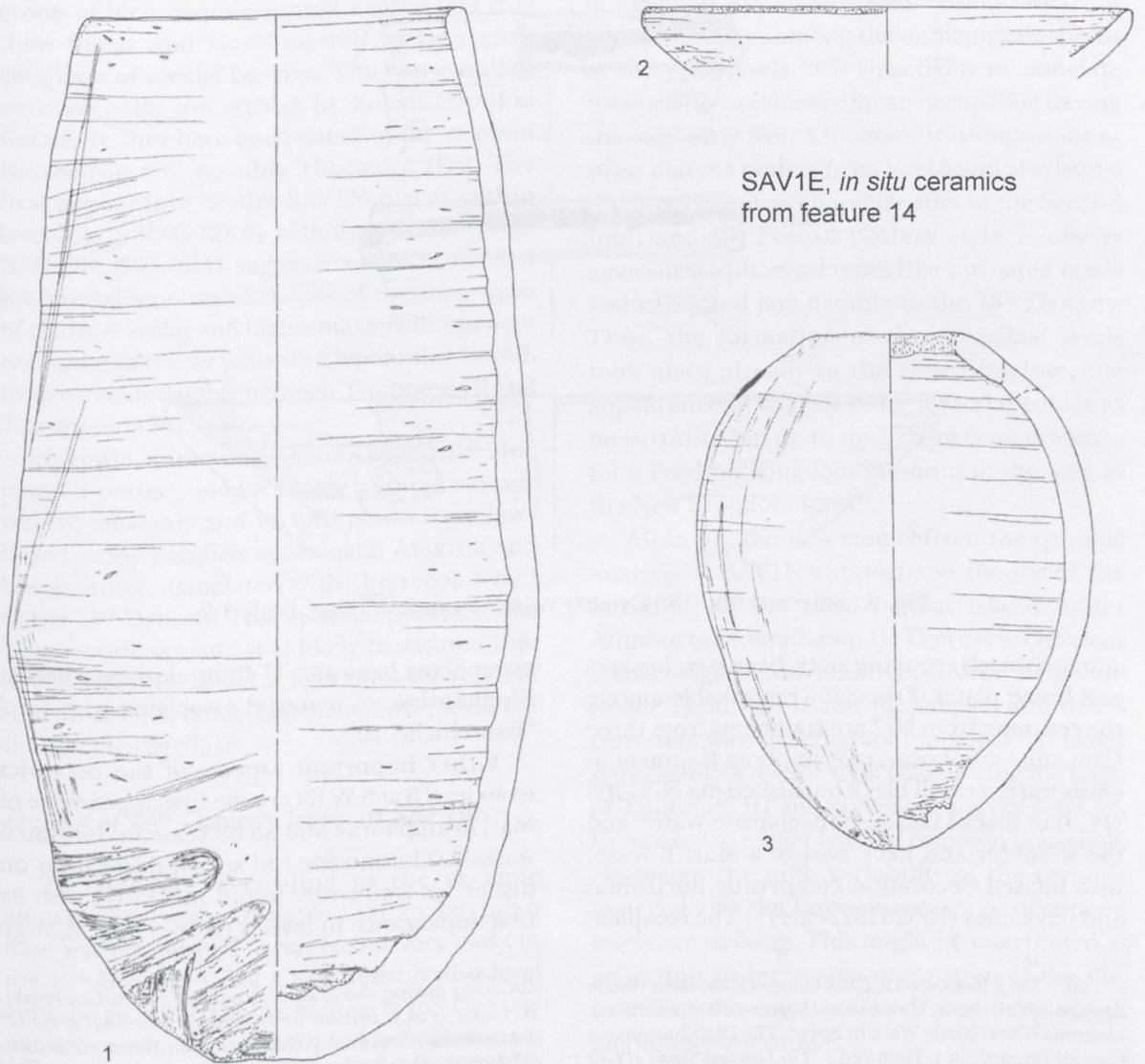


Fig. 7 : Pottery from feature 14 in SAV1East, early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Scale 1:2.

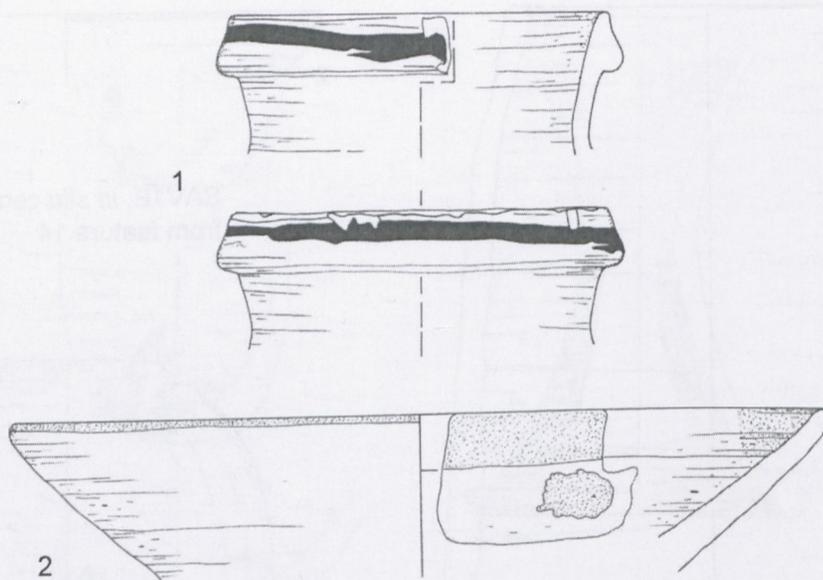


Fig. 8 : Selected mid 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty vessels from SAVI East. Scale 1:2.

storage vessels, cooking pots, beer jars, beakers and bread plates. Especially remarkable among the ceramics from N17 are fragments from three Canaanite amphorae, one amphora fragment in Oasis ware, a small black burnished jug N/C 763 (Pl. 3) of Black Lustrous Wheel-made Ware<sup>66</sup> and the shoulder and neck part of a Marl B vessel with incised decoration comprising horizontal and wavy lines (N/C 1182, Pl. 4)<sup>67</sup>. The complete

66. See J. HOERBURGER, *Black Lustrous Wheel-made Ware in Ägypten*, MPhil thesis, University of Vienna, 2006; *Id.*, "Black Lustrous Wheel-Made Ware in Egypt: The Distribution of a Cypriot Import", in I. Hein (ed.), *The Lustrous Wares of Late Bronze Age Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean, Papers of a Conference, Vienna 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> of November 2004, CCEM 13*, Vienna, 2007, p. 107-113. This Cypriote Ware seems to be most common during the reign of Thutmose III, see I. HEIN, "The Significance of the Lustrous Ware Finds from 'Ezbet Helmi/Tell el-Dab'a (Egypt)", in I. Hein (ed.), *The Lustrous Wares of Late Bronze Age Cyprus*, 2007, p. 79-106.

67. Cf. close parallels from the Ahmose complex at South Abydos, BUDKA, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 94-95, fig. 6.2. Very common is this long-lasting style of decoration already on Marl A3 jars from the Middle Kingdom, see T. RZEUSKA, "Zigzag, triangle and fish fin. On the relations of Egypt and

assemblage from silo 17 finds close parallels at Elephantine, in material associated with level "Bauschicht" 10<sup>68</sup>.

Other important aspects of the ceramics from level 3 at SAVIN are the first appearance of Marl D amphorae and an increase in decorated wares<sup>69</sup>. Thutmoseid red splash decoration on dishes<sup>70</sup> is frequently found in SAVIN with its first appearance in level 3 (cf. Fig. 8.2). A large

C-Group during the Middle Kingdom", in W. Godlewski, A. Lajtar (eds.), *Between the Cataracts. Proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006, Part Two: Session Papers, PAM Supplement Series 2.2/2*, Warsaw, 2010, p. 397-420.

68. Cf. BUDKA, *MDAIK* 61, 2005, p. 90-116. Nubian hand-made wares from New Kingdom contexts at Elephantine have been studied by D. Raue, publication in preparation. For now see: D. RAUE, "Medja vs. Kerma at the First Cataract – Terminological Problems", in I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose (eds.), *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom*, 2012, p. 49-58.

69. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 29-30.

70. Cf. D.A. ASTON, in E. Černý, I. Hein, H. Hunger, D. Melman, A. Schwab (eds.), *Timelines, OLA* 149.1, 2006, p. 65-73.

group of bichrome-decorated necked jars that show linear and floral as well as figurative designs is of special interest. The best parallels were recently unearthed in Kerma/Doukki Gel where they have been dated to the reign of Hatshepsut and possibly Thutmose III<sup>71</sup>. The first appearance of the SAVIN pieces within level 3 (e.g. N/C 723.01 with the joining pieces N/C 265, 305, 311) suggests a similar date. A substantial amount of sherds of the same type of chaffy Nile clay and bichrome decoration were excavated in recent years on Elephantine island, from contexts datable between Thutmose III and Thutmose IV<sup>72</sup>.

Specific wares and vessel types like blue painted pottery, monochrome painted storage vessels, meat jars and various plates from level 3 find ready parallels at Malqata, Amarna and Elephantine, associated with the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. This material postdates the Thutmoside era and it is likely to assume that level 3 at SAVIN lasted at least until the reign of Amenhotep III, if not further towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty<sup>73</sup>.

### *Dating of 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty levels at SAVIN*

To conclude, according to the ceramic analysis it seems reasonable that an Egyptian base was established at Sai Island very early in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Level 4 and possibly also level 5 can be attributed to the very early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and the assemblages of these layers include a substantial amount of material which is of 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty character. Rather than being associated with the nearby Classical Kerma cemetery, these sherds are completely of a domestic character and

71. Ph. RUFFIEUX, "Poteries découvertes dans un temple égyptien de la XVIII<sup>e</sup> dynastie à Doukki Gel (Kerma)", *Genava* 57, 2009, p. 124-126, figs. 3-5.

72. BUDKA, *ASAE* 84, 2010, p. 351 and personal observation.

73. Cf. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 29, table 3.

of Egyptian style; they appear within SAVIN in regular numbers among the undiagnostic sherds of the early levels. It is thus likely to associate these sherds as evidence for an occupation during the very early New Kingdom. It is important to stress that the pottery from level 5 and also level 4 which still displays characteristics of the Second Intermediate Period pottery style is always associated with vessel types like carinated bowls and carinated jars datable to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Thus, the formation of these earliest levels took place already in the New Kingdom; the appearance of slightly older material comes as no surprise. But up to now, there is no evidence for a Pre-New Kingdom presence in the area of the New Kingdom town<sup>74</sup>.

All in all, the new results from the ceramic analysis at SAVIN support the theory of the founding of the town on Sai Island under Ahmose (or Amenhotep I). There is yet no clear archaeological evidence in SAVIN for the period under Thutmose II and Hatshepsut and this is consistent with the epigraphic analysis<sup>75</sup>. A major remodeling of the site took place during the reign of Thutmose III and comprises part of level 3<sup>76</sup>. Compared to earlier levels of common household character, the high variability of the ceramic material and the large quantities of decorated wares are striking. This might be interpreted as reflecting an increasing occupation of the site, as well as the construction of new temples and adjoining structures<sup>77</sup>.

74. Contrary to what was recently proposed by the late M. AZIM, "I. Une installation civile antérieure au temple A", in M. Azim, J.-Fr. Carlotti, "Le temple A de l'île de Saï et ses abords", *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 34-36.

75. GABOLDE, *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 135.

76. See most recently BUDKA, *Sokar* 26, 2013, p. 86.

77. Cf. J. BUDKA, "Life in the New Kingdom town of Sai Island: some new perspectives", in N. Spencer, A. Stevens, M. Binder (eds.), *Nubia in the New Kingdom: Lived experience, pharaonic control and indigenous traditions. Proceedings of the 2013 conference, London, British Museum, forthcoming*.

### ***Additional evidence: New work at the Sector SAVIE***

In 2013, a new excavation area, SAVI East, was opened just 30-50 meters north of the stone temple, Temple A, at the eastern edge of the Pharaonic town. A total of 33 features have been exposed and described at SAVIE of which 18 date to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, comprising mostly of mud brick structures and storage installations<sup>78</sup>. All in all, the area was strongly affected by activities in the Medieval, Ottoman and sub-recent times. Pharaonic building material was hacked away and stratigraphical information is mostly lost due to the disturbance and Post-New Kingdom pits and holes.

A total amount of 300 baskets of pottery sherds was processed from the 2013 mission at SAVIE. Out of 32.199 sherds, 18.327 pieces were assessed as Post-New Kingdom (57%) and the remaining 13.872 as New Kingdom (43%). Rim and base sherds, handles and decorated/painted sherds are regarded as diagnostics and were processed according to ware and vessel type (a total of 4.360 pieces). The material compares well to levels 4 and 3 at SAVIN, ranging in date from the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty to Thutmose III/Amenhotep II<sup>79</sup>.

### ***Earliest remains at SAVIE***

In the southern area of Square 2 at SAVIE, a small plaster coated installation, set directly against the gravel, was found. It is a well preserved small storage bin (1.20 x 1.82 m) which was completely concealed by debris (feature 14). It still held two intact pottery vessels *in situ* as well as some broken ceramics<sup>80</sup>. The drop pot or beaker (find n°40/2013 = P40) and the small red

burnished vessel (find n°39/2013 = P39) are both datable to the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, definitely prior to the reign of Thutmose III. The two vessels (P39 and P40) are therefore significant for dating the context of the early occupation of SAVIE. They are both wheel made and represent well known types from Pharaonic Egypt and Nubia (*Fig. 7.1 and 3*)<sup>81</sup>. The beaker with a trimmed base finds good parallels at SAVIN within level 4 (*Fig. 4.2*), whereas it prominently differs from Thutmoside examples, well known from level 3 (*Fig. 4.3*). In feature 14, a small dish with a red rim was found within the small bottle P39 (*Fig. 7.2*) – this piece also confirms the dating to the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, finding parallels at Abydos and Elephantine.

Similar as at SAVIN, a small percentage of Nubian wares was noted within the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty material at SAVIE. This indigenous Nubian pottery, handmade as a rule and very often decorated with impressed and/or incised patterns, shows relations to the local Kerma corpus<sup>82</sup>. It is especially intriguing that within the storage bin 14 and in its surroundings several fragments of Nubian vessels came to light, associated with the earliest phase of occupation at SAVIE. They comprise mostly cooking ware, but also examples of fine ware (cups, dishes and beakers in Kerma Black topped style) are present at SAVIE<sup>83</sup>.

According to both the archaeological features and the ceramics, the southern part of SAVIE

78. Cf. BUDKA, *Sokar* 26, 2013, p. 78-87.

79. Cf. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 23-33.

80. BUDKA, *Sokar* 26, 2013, p. 82, fig. 7.

81. See e.g. for P39 R. HOLTHOER, *New Kingdom Pharaonic Sites. The Pottery*, 1977, Pl. 29 ; J. HELMBOLD-DOYÉ, A. SELER, "Kerma-Ware Vessels Found in an Intact Burial Chamber at Aniba", in I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose (eds.), *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom*, 2012, p. 45, n°36 with further references; for P40 HOLTHOER, *loc. cit.*, WD 1, Pl. 41 ; HELMBOLD-DOYÉ, SELER, *loc. cit.*, p. 39, n°10-13.

82. See Br. GRATIEN, *Sai I. La nécropole Kerma*, 1986, *passim*.

83. See the close parallels at Sesebi for the early 18th Dynasty: P. ROSE, in I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose (eds.), *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom*, fig. 3.

with feature 14 is closely linked to the domestic zone excavated around Temple A by M. Azim. This zone is characterized by small structures with single-brick walls and storage facilities very similar to our new findings<sup>84</sup>. It is an early occupation phase within the New Kingdom town comparable to levels 5/4 at SAVIN and of pre-Thutmose III date<sup>85</sup>.

To conclude, the earliest remains at SAVIE are dating to the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, most likely to the reign of Ahmose<sup>86</sup>. There is nothing of the Kerma period prior to the New Kingdom. The area can therefore be safely interpreted as part of the newly founded Egyptian town<sup>87</sup>.

### Heyday of SAVIE

In the northern part of SAVIE, mud brick remains belonging to a single large structure were uncovered. They confirm the image derived from the magnetometric survey results. This major building at SAVIE was labelled as “Building A”<sup>88</sup>. From the foundation trench of the northern wall of this building two rim sherds were recovered. Especially relevant is the fragment of a decorated Marl clay vessel. P57 is made in a Marl A4 according to the Vienna System (Fig. 8.1). Its mouth diameter measures 10.6 cm and 48% of the rim of this jar thrown

84. AZIM, *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 11-36.

85. Cf. BUDKA, *Sudan and Nubia* 15, 2011, p. 31 and BUDKA, *Sokar* 26, 2013, 82.

86. Cf. the similarities with South Abydos (BUDKA, *E and L* 16, 2006, p. 83-120) and for example also with Tomb S 4 at Aniba, recently dated to Ahmose by A. SEILER (HELMBOLD-DOYÉ, SEILER, in I. Forstner-Müller, P. Rose (eds.), *Nubian Pottery from Egyptian Cultural Contexts of the Middle and Early New Kingdom*, p. 45).

87. The Kerma sherds discovered at SAVIE and at SAVIN are associated with early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty; they do not attest a pre-New Kingdom activity. This also holds true for the material mentioned by M. AZIM (AZIM, *CRIPEL* 29, 2011-2012, p. 34-36) – his presumed dating of the area around Temple A as pre-Thutmose III can now be specified: early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, Ahmose to Thutmose I.

88. BUDKA, *Sokar* 26, 2013, p. 83-86.

on the pottery wheel are preserved. An irregular band in dark brown is painted along the top part of the rounded lip; the beginning of a slightly flaring neck is partly preserved. Such vessels are known from other contexts in Egypt from the Thutmose era onwards (mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty)<sup>89</sup> – P57, found within the undisturbed section of the foundation trench of wall 30, provides therefore a good dating indication for “Building A”. This large mud brick structure must have been contemporaneous with Temple A and most probably originates from a period within the later part of the reign of Thutmose III or of Amenhotep II. Other ceramics like red splash decoration on dishes (Fig. 8.2) and further parallels to level 3 at SAVIN support this dating.

### Conclusion

The 2013 season provided the confirmation that the earliest remains in the new excavation area SAVIE, around Temple A, and at SAVIN are already early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty in date and do not pre-date the New Kingdom. The archaeological evidence supports therefore the assumption derived from textual sources that the Egyptian town on Sai Island has been a new foundation of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The identity of its founder still remains to be assessed – the most likely candidates as far as the ceramics are concerned are Ahmose or Amenhotep I. Comparisons with South-Abydos and a tomb from Aniba mentioned in this paper maybe indicate a greater probability for Ahmose. From a ceramic point of view, one can exclude Thutmose I as being the king who made the first installations at the island.

With all the *caveats* in mind that an absolute dating of settlement pottery from the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty brings: thanks to the ceramics presented here, an Egyptian presence on Sai Island is

89. See e.g. C. A. HOPE, “Innovation and Decoration of Ceramics in the Mid-18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty”, *CCE* 1, 1987, p. 109.

already traceable in the reigns of Ahmose and Amenhotep I. The nature of this presence will have to be assessed by future excavation – the deposits excavated until now are still small sized and leave much room for debate. The heyday of the New Kingdom town was clearly highlighted by the recent excavations, both at SAVIN and SAVIE: by the time of Thutmose III the site had markedly developed and its rich archaeological material finds parallels in both Nubia and Egypt illustrating the importance of this major temple town.

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#### RÉSUMÉ

Le but de cet article est de définir les limites et le potentiel de datation du matériel céramique exhumé lors des fouilles récentes de la ville pharaonique de l'Île de Saï (secteurs SAVIN et SAVIE). Des parallèles étroits provenant d'Elephantine et d'Abydos Sud sont présentés, ainsi qu'un choix de contextes pour chaque niveau d'occupation. Même si cette étude revêt encore un caractère préliminaire, elle souligne le rôle-clé de l'Île de Saï pour comprendre la « reconquête » égyptienne de Koush au début de la XVIII<sup>e</sup> dynastie. La céramique atteste une présence égyptienne sur le site pendant les règnes d'Ahmosis Nebpehtyré et d'Amenhotep I<sup>er</sup> et complète ainsi les données textuelles correspondantes.

#### ABSTRACT

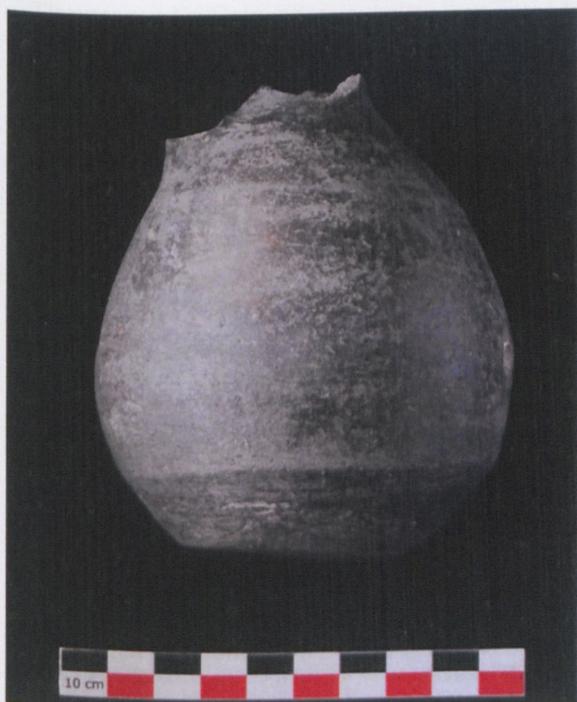
The paper outlines the limits and the potential of dating ceramic material unearthed during recent excavations in the Pharaonic town on Sai Island (sectors SAVIN and SAVIE). Close parallels to material from Elephantine and South Abydos are discussed. Selected contexts for each level of occupation are presented. Although still of a preliminary character, the study of the material underlines the key role of Sai Island in understanding the so-called Egyptian "reconquest" of Kush in the early 18th Dynasty. The ceramics attest to an Egyptian presence at the site during the reigns of Ahmose Nebpehtyra and Amenhotep I and thus complement corresponding textual evidence.



Pl. 1 : Fragment of carinated jar with painted decoration from SAVINorth.



Pl. 2 : Kerma black topped cup from SAVINorth.



Pl. 3 : Black lustrous wheel made jug from SAVINorth.



Pl. 4 : Fragment of Marl B jar with incised decoration from SAVINorth.