

The Aiguières and Argentières sites at

Fréjus (*Forum Julii*)

Redevelopment of the Argentières site in the Villeneuve district of Fréjus led to a salvage excavation in 1975, and the adjacent Aiguières site was excavated in 1979, 1980 and 1981. A very large quantity of archaeological material was found at the two sites, indicating intensive occupation during the early first century AD. Summary accounts of these excavations have already been published (Goudineau, Brentchaloff and Rogers 1981; Goudineau 1982).

About 3700 fragments of Roman glass came from the two sites, more than 3,230 of which were from the Aiguières site. Together, the finds comprise a group of vessel glass of wideranging importance, mostly belonging to the first and second quarters of the first century AD. Much of the Aiguières material was found in stratified contexts, and one pit group has been dated by coin evidence to the Gaian or early Claudian period. Only a very small amount of glass post-dates this period. One small group dates from the later first century AD, and a few fourth century pieces were also found, but, in all, fewer than twenty fragments have come from the post-Claudian periods of Roman occupation.

The production methods of the glass vessels current during the period from Augustus to Claudius were very diverse, and most of them are represented in the glass from these sites in Fréjus. Core-made vessels had gone out of production, although a very few specimens of late forms seem to have continued in use. Polychrome cast vessels were still being made, as were both ribbed and

with ceramic profiles. These traditions of manufacture had been developed during the Hellenistic period, although many forms were introduced in the last decades of the first century BC. Blown vessels were becoming common in the western Mediterranean region in the early first century AD. The precise date of the invention of blowing is uncertain, though it seems to have occurred around the middle of the first century BC. In addition, the production of decorated mould-blown vessels appears to have commenced in the early first century, perhaps soon after AD 25. The glass assemblages from the two sites contained examples of vessels made by all these techniques.

A considerable range of vessel forms, including cups, bowls, plates, jars, unguent bottles, flasks, amphorisks, jugs and bottles was found, and many pieces were decorated with cutting and abrading, or with a wide variety of applied splashes and trails. Some objects were also found, most of which were stirring rods and counters or gaming pieces.

There is one large body fragment from a dark blue and white core-made vessel, probably an amphorisk (figure 1), from the Gaian-Claudian pit. The form is very similar to one from a burial in Tripolitania (Price 1985a: 69, no. 1, fig. 6.1.1). The production of core-made glass did not long outlast the discovery of glass blowing around the middle of the first century BC, if indeed the two methods of manufacture had any chronological overlap, so this piece must have been very old when it was deposited. Core-made vessels are rare in Augustan and later contexts, though large amphorisks of late type have sometimes been found in burials at this time, as at Samothrace (Dusenbury 1967: 37-38, nos 4-7, figs. 5-8).

represented by 149 fragments from a minimum of 87 vessels. Very similar
have found in many parts of the Roman world in the last years of the
century BC and early years of the first century AD. Some of the most
t assemblages of polychrome cast glass in the western provinces occur
onissa (Berger 1960), Magdalensberg (Czurda-Ruth 1979), Cosa (Grose
, Tarragona (Price 1981; 1987) and Ampurias, but pieces have also been
many other sites.

pieces came from a 'gold-band' pyxis, and one from a shallow square or
lar tray with elaborately carved handles made in strip mosaic (figures
'Gold-band' pyxides are quite frequently found in early first century
in Italy and elsewhere in the western Mediterranean region (Grose
and at least two other pieces are known in France, from Bethisy-Saint-
Oise (Berger and Jouve 1980) and from Augustan levels at the Verbe
site at Lyon (Leyge and Mandy 1986: 15, plate 5.7). Polychrome
lar trays are quite unusual, though examples in opaque and translucent
me are known in early first century contexts, and similar colourless
occur in the later first century (see Price 1987: 67-8, 72-73, for
from Spain and elsewhere).

re were at least eighteen strip mosaic vessels in various combinations
rs, mostly bowls with twisted cords on the rims formed by arranging
gn elements in a mould and fusing the pieces together (figures 4 - 5).
ssels are similar to pieces found in burials and on settlement sites in
ts of the Roman world in the first years of the first century AD. A
shallow bowl is known from the first century burial at Hellange,
rg (Wilhelm 1967: 11. no 1, pl. 1), and several fragments are known
Verbe Incarné site, Lyon (Leyge and Mandy 1986: plate 5.5-6,8,10,12)
also a piece from a shallow *succa*, composed of shut polychrome

strips interspersed with monochrome squares, which is comparable with the example at Rouen (Sennequier 1985: 37-38, no 1, pl. 1) and with two complete specimens at Trier (Goethert-Polaschek 1977: 15-16, nos 4-7, pl. 1).

Seven fragments from lace mosaic bowls were found (figure 6). These were formed by fusing together rods of colourless glass containing twisted threads of a different colour, which were either wound from the base like basketwork, or laid horizontally, and then sagged over a mould to produce the final form (Cummings 1980: 23-37 discusses this technique in connection with polychrome and monochrome vessels). At least two pieces are known in Augustan/Tiberian contexts at Lyon (Leyge and Mandy 1986: 9, plates 3.6, 5.9).

Fragments of polychrome floral mosaic bowls were common on these sites. At least 51 vessels are represented, most of which are shallow bowls, drinking cups and small carinated bowls with flower, roundel or spiral design elements, arranged in patterns within the vessels (figures 7 - 10). There are also some pieces of tall ribbed bowls (figure 11). Floral mosaic vessels are commonly found in many parts of the Roman world in the late first century BC and early-mid first century AD, and the distribution of these and the tall ribbed bowls appears to be concentrated in Italy and the head of the Adriatic, and in the western Mediterranean area. Some very similar pieces are known from the Verbe Incarné site at Lyon (Leyge and Mandy 1986: plate 5. 1-4).

Most of the 40 marbled and mottled vessels were ribbed bowls (figures 12 - 13). This form is very common on sites in the western provinces of the Roman world in the early-mid first century AD.

A great quantity of monochrome cast and sagged glass was found. One small group of vessels with 'ceramic forms' has heavily ground surfaces

(figures 14 - 15). These vessels were made in large quantities in the early first century AD. They are quite commonly found in the western provinces; some occur at Vindonissa, and others at Magdalensberg, Tarragona (Price 1987: 67-71, figs. 2-3.8-14), Benghazi (Price 1985b: 293, fig. 24.3.35-38), Cosa, Knossos and elsewhere.

A very large quantity of fragments of plain and ribbed bowls was found, representing an enormous number of vessels. Bowls of these types, which are found in very large quantities in Augustan and slightly later contexts throughout the Mediterranean region, have been closely studied in recent years (as in Weinberg 1970; 1973; Grose 1979; 1981).

About 500 pieces come from deep, hemispherical and shallow bowls with wide grooves below the rim on the interior surface (figures 17 - 19). They were usually produced in dark blue, yellow brown, purple, and greenish colourless glass. The vessels are well known on sites in the eastern Mediterranean, but also occur on sites on the north African coast, for example, at Benghazi and Carthage, and at Knossos (Hayes 1971: 253, 261, 272, figs. 6, 12, 19), throughout Italy, notably in Rome (Grose 1977) and at Cosa, and at several sites on the east coast of Spain, but they are only rarely found in the northwest provinces away from the Mediterranean. The cargo of the Tradelière shipwreck includes an important group of these vessels, mostly plain hemispherical and ribbed bowls (Fiori and Joncheray 1975; see also this volume). The Port Vendres II Claudian shipwreck has also produced at least one fragment from a plain hemispherical bowl (Colls *et al* 1977: 118-121, fig. 42.5), and pieces are known from other sites in France, including Orange (see Bellet this volume) and Lyon (Leyge and Mandy 1986: plates 3.1-2, 4.2) .

narrow ground area on the outside of the rim which does not extend to the top of the ribs, and a wide wheel-out groove inside the rim (figure 20), while around 280 others have more regular ribs, completely ground shoulders and narrow wheel-out lines (figure 21). The first group belongs to the ribbed bowl types found in large quantities throughout the Mediterranean region in the Augustan period. In the west, these are mostly found on sites close to the Mediterranean, and only rarely turn up in the northwest, whereas the second group, which is contemporary with the first in the initial stages of production, continues in use until the Flavian period and is very common indeed in the northwest provinces, as it is in most parts of the Roman world (Isings 1957: Form 3).

The mould-blown glass is not a very large group (41 fragments representing a minimum of 14 vessels), but it is extremely interesting. On the Alquières site most mould-blown fragments were found in contexts noticeably later than the majority of deposits or in unstratified contexts. Thirty-eight pieces came from the site, of which 20 (representing 7 vessels) were found in the Gaian/Claudian pit, and 14 more pieces from other contexts also came from these vessels. This is noteworthy because, as mentioned above, although the date of the invention of mould-blowing is not certain it seems to have occurred around or soon after AD 25, so the Gaian or early Claudian pit deposit at Fréjus is one of the earliest dated deposits containing mould-blown glass vessels.

Two small blue-green fragments probably come from a blue-green cylindrical cup (figure 22 a-b). The larger, from the pit, shows part of a curving foliage design with ivy leaves above a zone of round-headed arcading, and separated from this zone by two half-round mouldings, one small and one large. The smaller piece is, unfortunately, one of only two fragments in the

entire assemblage to have been distorted by heat, but it shows the right terminal of an ansate inscription and a vine leaf design, above a small moulding. The details of the design are identical with those found on cylindrical cups signed by Ennion with a design of ivy and vine leaves, and there is no doubt that the pieces come from an Ennion cup (Lehrer 1979; Harden et al 1987: 164, no 86). Similar cups have been found in northern Italy, but this appears to be the first example in Gaul.

Another very small body fragment comes from a blue - green cylindrical or ovoid cup (figure 23). It shows two bent legs (which may be at the front or the back of a running animal), above a raised horizontal moulding. The top of a design below the moulding also survives but there is not enough to interpret this. The original design is not certain, but the piece may come from the upper body of a ovoid circus cup, perhaps similar to the example from Sopron, Hungary (Harden et al 1987: 167, no 88), or the rather similar cup from Palencia, northern Spain (Price 1974: 72, fig 1.5).

Other fragments with almond-shaped and triangular bosses come from truncated conical and ovoid drinking cups, and there is a fragment from a blue-green cylindrical cup with horizontal cordons on the body.

At least four mould-blown ribbed bowls of three different types were found, a blue-green wide shallow bowl, two deep bowls with narrow ribs, in blue-green and peacock blue, and a blue-green deep thick bowl with broad ribs (figures 24 - 26). The forms of these vessels are very reminiscent of cast ribbed bowls, and they may have been made as copies of the cast vessels. Mould-blown ribbed bowls are found in many parts of the western provinces away from the Mediterranean region; for instance, they occur at sites in Spain and

the lower Rhineland and Britain. The deep versions with narrow ribs are known at Vindonissa (Berger 1960: 55, pls 9, 139-140; 18, 37).

The mould-blown glass also includes a piece from a tall pale blue-green ovoid-bodied amphorisk with a concave base (figure 27). There are broad vertical ribs on the body, with short horizontal bars across the grooves between the ribs. A similar amphorisk is known from Vindonissa (Berger 1960: 41-42, pl. 5.88) in a pre-Flavian context, and some fragments found in the Pasaje Cobos deposit, Tarragona, an early-mid first century assemblage, may also come from a vessel of this kind (Price 1981: 286, 696, no 63).

The assemblage of blown glass is extensive and extremely varied. It is closely comparable with assemblages of early-mid first century blown glass from sites such as Vindonissa (Berger (1960); Magdalensberg (Czurda-Ruth 1979; Cosa (Grose 1973-1976 and unpublished); Pasaje Cobos, Tarragona (Price 1981); Xanten (Charlesworth 1984); Velsen (van Lith 1977); Valkenburg (van Lith 1978-1979); and Colchester (Harden 1947; Charlesworth 1985; Cool and Price forthcoming), among many others.

The polychrome fragments come from a wide variety of cups, bowls, jugs and unguent bottles. The most remarkable piece is a blue-green body fragment, probably from a hemispherical drinking cup (figure 28), which no longer has any colours surviving, though the dull patches on the outside surface suggest that it was originally painted with a vine and ivy leaf and branch design, rather like the well-known dark green cup from Locarno.

Marvered trails in opaque white occur on small ribbed bowls (figure 29) with blue, purple, yellow brown and blue-green ground colours, and on several

bowls (figure 30) and unguent bottles. Opaque blue marvered trails
ed on the rims of three or four large blue green bowls, some with
-8 folds in the body below the rim (figure 31), and thin opaque white
d spiral trails on body fragments, and thick opaque white trails in
re of handles, were also present. Marvered opaque white splashes
on a dark blue hemispherical cup, the foot of a very large purple bowl
obular jug (figures 32 - 34), as well as on several smaller fragments.
l pieces speckled with unmarvered multicoloured grains of glass were
t they are too small to identify the vessel forms. In addition, there
w bowl and drinking cup in cased glass, where the outside layer is
, purple, yellow brown or dark green, and the inside layer is opaque
gures 35 - 36).

pt for a very small group of opaque monochrome blown fragments, the
he vessels are in blue-green or strongly coloured translucent glass, in
uch as purple, dark blue, dark green, yellow-brown, peacock blue, light
d so on. None of the blown vessel glass is really rare, as it belongs
aditions of early Roman blown glass. The most noteworthy feature of
glass from the sites in Fréjus is that so many vessels could be at
tly reconstructed, so a number of forms which are not easy to
from small fragments have been identified.

ly all the cups with wheel-cut and abraded decoration have cracked-off
nd rims which are vertical or slightly curved, with cylindrical,
ical or carinated bodies and concave or flat bases (figures 37 - 38),
ome have a thick domed base (figure 39). These cups are found
t the Roman world in pre-Flavian contexts, and the hemispherical ones

Most of the blown glass is undecorated. There are several cylindrical cups with fire-rounded rims, sometimes with folded M-shaped handles (Isings 1957: form 39) (figures 40 - 41), and larger bowls or cups with wide, stepped rims (Isings 1957: forms 37-38) (figures 42 - 43). In addition, many forms of shallow bowls, jars and plates with a wide variety of rims and bases have been identified (figures 44 - 48). Fragments of amphorisks and globular and ovoid jugs and flasks were common, and there were many tubular unguent bottles, plus one piece from a bird unguent bottle. There were, however, only a few indications that square and cylindrical bottles were used on these sites.

This assemblage of glass from the Aiguières and Argentière sites in Fréjus is of considerable importance for the study of the types of early first century glass in use in the western basin of the Mediterranean. It contains a very wide variety of tablewares and household vessels; it is closely datable with comparatively little contamination from subsequent activity; and many of the fragments are large enough for the vessel shapes to be identified. This is probably the largest glass assemblage glass of the period from a coastal site in the western Mediterranean region. Many of the vessels are closely comparable with another substantial group of contemporary glass, the Pasaje Cobos deposit at Tarragona in northeast Spain (Price 1981). Both settlements were most probably supplied with glassware from the same source or sources, and in view of the vast quantities of comparable material from many sites in Italy and the western provinces it may be argued that much, if not all of this, was produced in glassmaking centres in the area, probably in Italy.

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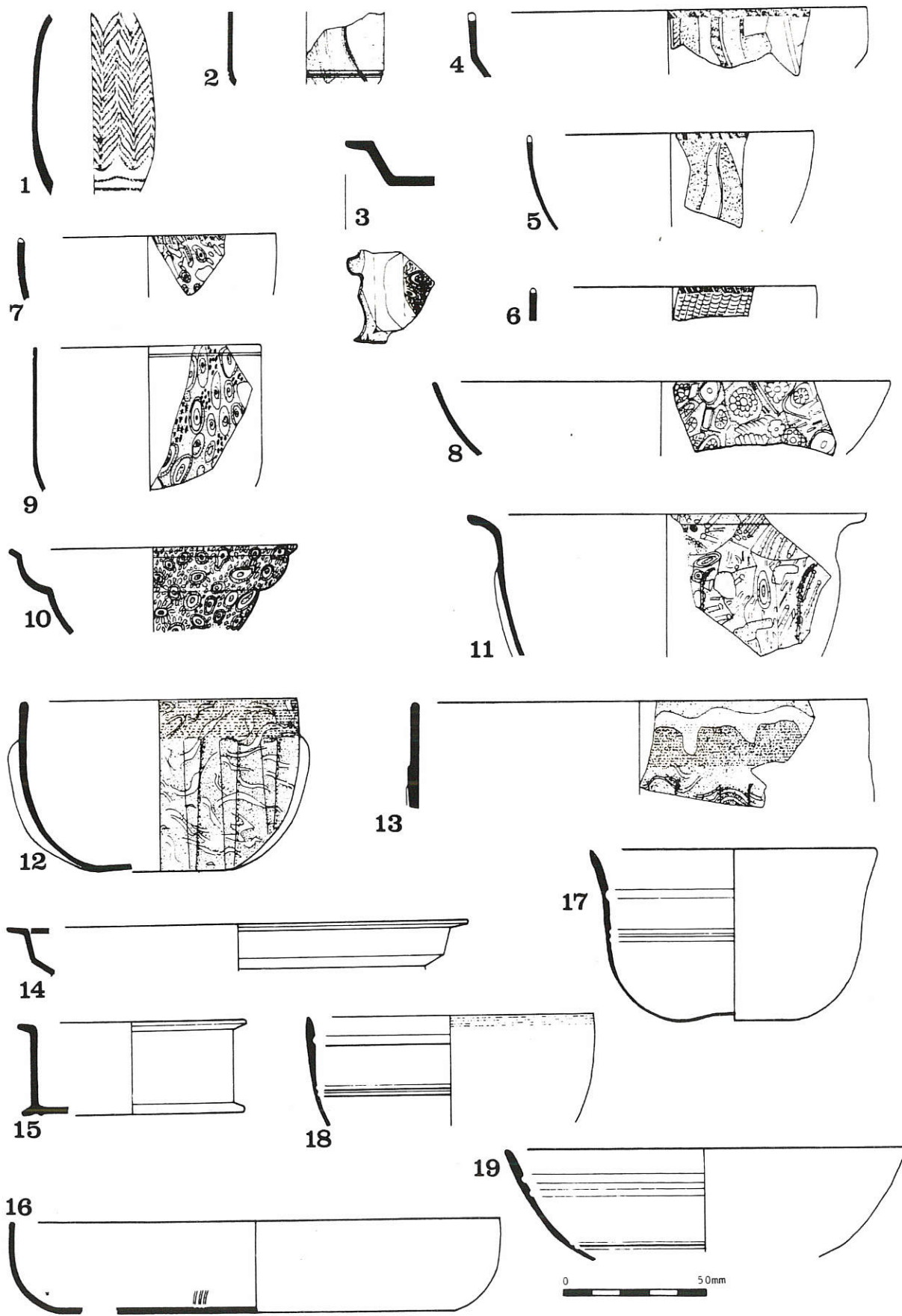
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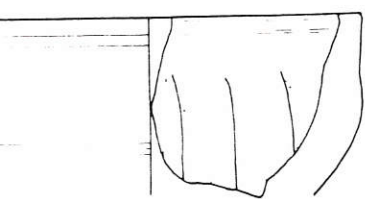
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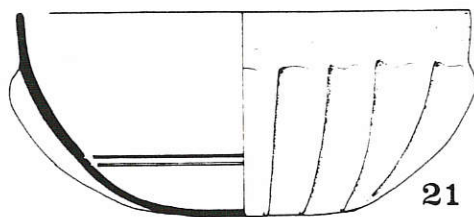
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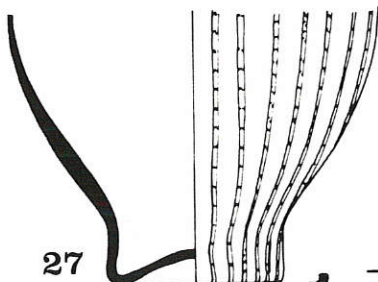
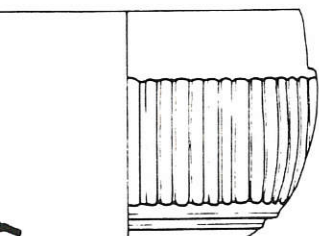
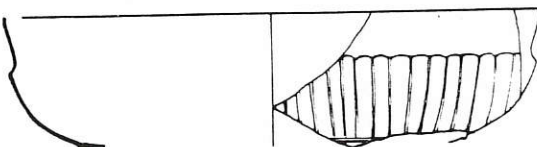
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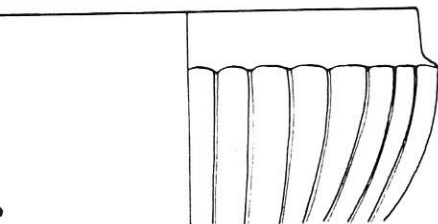
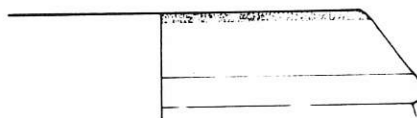


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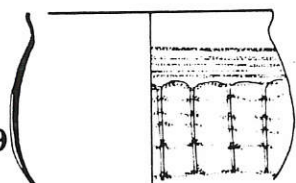
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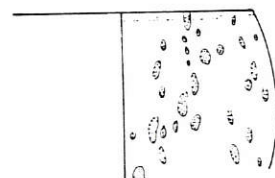
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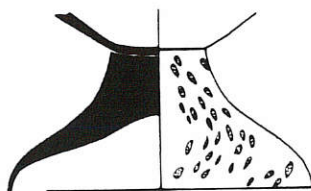


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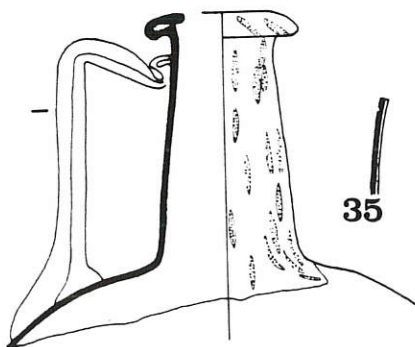
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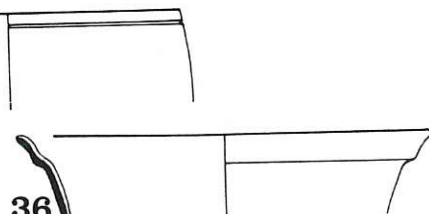
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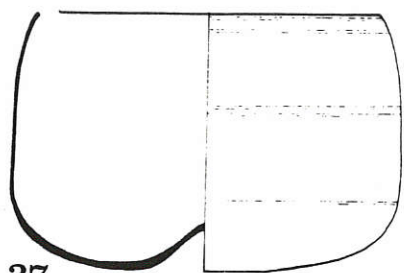


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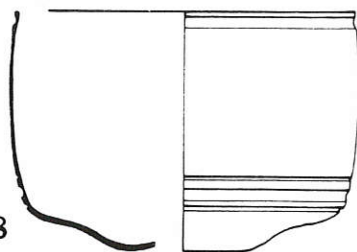


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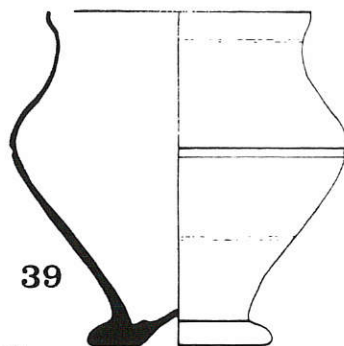




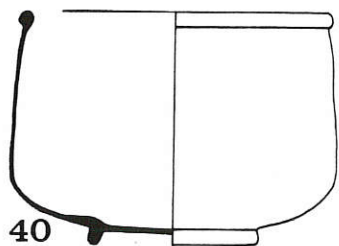
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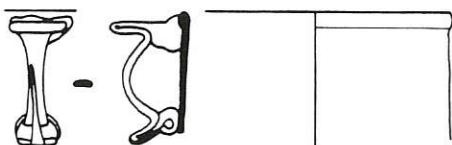
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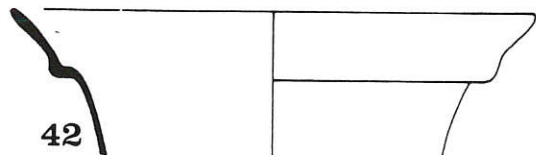


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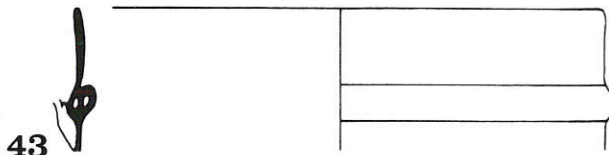


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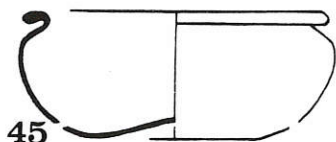
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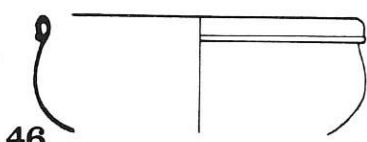
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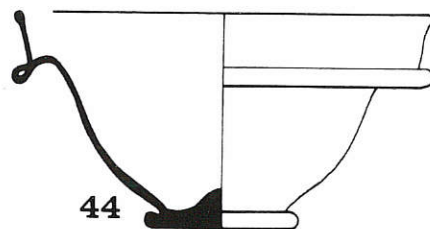
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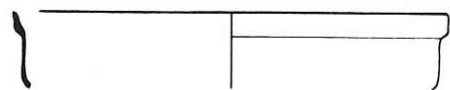
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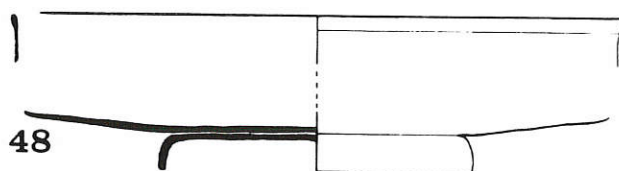
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