

## **Some Thoughts on Sugar Production and Sugar Pots in the Middle Islamic to Mamluk Periods in Jordan**

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Excavations during the last decade at the Tawahin es-Sukkar near Safi to the south of the Dead Sea in Jordan revealed structures connected with sugar cane milling and the refining of sugar. Study of the sugar pots from the 2002 excavations at the Tawahin and the adjacent settlement of Khirbet Shaykh 'Isa (which can be equated with ancient Zoara) indicate sugar production was taking place on a significant scale from the 11<sup>th</sup> to late 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

This paper will present the morphological and material characteristics of these sugar pots, comparing them with their counterparts from elsewhere in Jordan and Palestine. This will be considered within the broad model of production and consumption, reviewing the evidence, for example, for centres where separately storage and secondary refining occurred. The issue of the extent to which sugar pots travelled with their contents will be discussed, as will the potential of integrating typology with fabric analysis to begin elucidating some of the steps within the chain that led from primary production to secondary refining to selling, first, within southern Jordan (encompassing the southern Ghors and the region administered by Karak) and, second, more widely within the Levant.