

# Egyptian and Imported Pottery from the Red Sea port of Mersa Gawsis, Egypt

Sally Wallace-Jones

with contributions from

Andrea Manzo, Mary Ownby and Karin Kopetzky



ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD  
Summertown Pavilion  
18-24 Middle Way  
Summertown  
Oxford OX2 7LG

[www.archaeopress.com](http://www.archaeopress.com)

ISBN 978 1 78491 903 0  
ISBN 978 1 78491 904 7 (e-Pdf)

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Mersa Gawasis (Ancient Egyptian Saww) is a small Egyptian harbour on the Red Sea and a former Egyptian port city. The harbour lies at the mouth of Wadi Gawasis, 2 km south of the mouth of Wadi Gasus. 25 km north is the city of Safaga and 50 km south al-Qusair. Just two kilometers further south of Mersa Gawasis, a small stele was discovered with fragmentary inscriptions of the cartouche of Senusret I and the geographical name Bia-n-punt. 250 meters west of the harbor, on the north side of Wadi Gawasis, was found a small shrine with the name and titles of Ankhu, valet of Senusret I. The shrine consisted of a limestone anchor as a base, from which the upper holes were cut out. The Red Sea was a trade funnel from the 3rd century B.C. to about 6th century C.E. and the ancient ports of this zone provide evidence of not only trade but other exchanges between the East and the West. The Periplus says, "Of the designated ports on the Erythraean Sea, and the market-towns around it, the first is the Egyptian port of Mussel Harbor." The harbours of both are at the boundary of Egypt, and are bays opening from the Erythraean Sea. Rightly, the first chapter of the book deals with the recent discoveries made during excavations at some of the Red Sea ports that add further knowledge to what is already well-known. The present site of Mersa Gawsis revealed exceptional information about Pharaonic Era," says the author of the article.