Map of the excavation areas from Tell el-Dab'a (after: M. Bielak, 2002, p. 30, fig. 1).
Far from Tell Arqa in Lebanon, in the north-eastern part of the Egyptian Nile Delta, pottery imported from this north Lebanese region was discovered. The author of this article only found out about the material after being informed about it by the director of excavation of Tell Arqa, Jean-Paul Thalmann. These ceramics and their stratigraphic context are the subject of this paper.

The ancient city of Avaris, modern Tell el-Dab’a, is situated on the easternmost branch of the Nile in the north-eastern Delta. From the late 12th Dynasty onwards, this town sustained a flourishing trade with the Eastern Mediterranean and its harbours along the Levantine coast. Hundreds of ships arrived and unloaded their goods in the harbour of Avaris. In most cases, these imports were shipped south to the capital city It-tawy. But a sufficient number of goods remained in Avaris, contributing to its prosperity and growth. A chief advantage of the Tell el-Dab’a material is that Egyptian pottery occurs side-by-side and in the same context with imported and locally-produced Middle Bronze Age (hereafter MB) ceramics. During MB IIA, nearly all MB vessels were imported to Avaris; however, from the transitional MB IIA/B onwards, local production increased, and by the beginning of the Hyksos period, it took over the leading role. Among the earlier imports were vessels whose origin can be traced back to the Akkar plain, and perhaps to its most important site – Tell Arqa.

In area F/I (fig. 1), the southern part of a huge building, probably a palace of the early 13th Dynasty (Phase G/4, fig. 32) 1, was uncovered (fig. 2). In its earliest phase of construction, this building was surrounded on three sides by a huge garden of which flower beds and tree pits were preserved, as well as rows of tombs built to the south of it. At a later stage this building was enlarged. It was during this later phase that a pit was dug (K 2817) in which tombs of the later palace phase cut through 2. In this pit several diagnostic sherds from storage jars were found; vessels which find their best parallels in shape and fabric to pottery found in the Akkar plain of North Lebanon.

The Egyptian material from this pit is a good example of the typical pottery deposit of this period. The potsherds were sorted according to the Vienna System (VS). This method was devised in the 1960s for classifying the various fabric groups of ancient Egyptian pottery and is also followed at Tell el-Dab’a (TD) 3. Two main classes of clays are found in Egypt: alluvial (Nile) and marl clays. The finest of the Nile clays (VS: Nile B-1, TD: I-b-1) is in most cases used for delicate vessels. In Tell el-Dab’a, carinated cups (fig. 3:1) with red painted vertical stripes appear in phases dated from the late 12th until the mid-13th Dynasty. Ceramic parallels from a burial in Abydos are dated to the middle of the 13th Dynasty 4. The “West Block Refuse Deposit” of the mortuary temple of Senwosret III, which is also in Abydos 5, is dated to the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties. Further parallels were discovered in the settlement of Kahun 6, and the tombs of Harageh 7, Armant 8 and the Dakhla oasis 9. Dishes (fig. 3:2–6) made of this fabric are not very common and appear mainly in the first half of the 13th Dynasty, such as a piece from a burial in Dra’ Abu el-Nagar from the first half of the 13th Dynasty 10. A shaff-tempered (VS: Nile B-2, TD: I-b-9) Nile clay was used for round-bottomed drinking cups (fig. 3:7,8), open bowls (fig. 3:9–14), smaller jars (fig. 3:15) and pot stands (fig. 3:16–23).
Do. Arnold 11 and M. Bietak 15 established a chronological development for the round bottomed cups based on the vessel index. Their studies showed that this type of vessel developed from an open, shallow shape in the 12th Dynasty to a closed, deeper cup in the late 13th Dynasty. Unfortunately, it is rare to find complete forms in settlement contexts; therefore, one has to find another way to deal with the fragmentary material. In the case of the cups, their rim diameter was very helpful, as well as the orientation of the sherd: when the rim pointed outwards, it came from an open cup and was therefore early in the sequence; when it was straight, it hinted to the middle of its chronological development; and when pointed inside, one could suggest that it dated more towards the end of its appearance. In the case of K 2817, the average diameter of the cups was around 12 cm. 87% belonged to the wide open type, while 13% showed a straight rim. Parallels for these cups were found all over Egypt. One of the best and
Egyptian vessels made of Nile B-1, B-2 and C.
most important, for chronological purposes, is Complex 4 from Dahshur \(^\text{13}\), which seems to be contemporary and dates to the early 13th Dynasty. Occasionally lids (fig. 3.24) in different sizes appear. Only rarely can one trace which vessels they fitted onto.

A finer version of the straw-tempered Nile clay (VS: Nile C, TD: I-c-1) was used for small bowls (fig. 3.25) and dishes (fig. 3.26). The latter has a comparable piece in Complex 6 from Dahshur \(^\text{14}\), which dates to the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties. Footed bowls (fig. 3.27–29) were used as offering vessels and as incense burners throughout the entire Egyptian periods. While they were multifunctional, bread moulds (fig. 3.30) seem to have been used only once and then discarded.

The most common fabric for this phase is a heavy straw-tempered Nile clay (VS: Nile C, TD: I-c-2) which comprises nearly 40% of the settlement pottery. It was mainly used for the production of dishes (fig. 4.31–38) and beer jars (figs. 4.40; 5.52). At Tell el-Dab’a, a typology has been established for these beer jars based on the rims of these vessels \(^\text{15}\). Type 1 of the earlier Middle Kingdom (fig. 4.40) makes its last appearance during this period, with the most common type being the beer jars of the second half of the 12th Dynasty (fig. 4.41–44) with their funnel-shaped necks (type 2). Along with this type existed another one (fig. 4.45–48) with a straight neck (type 3). New at this time is a type (fig. 5.49–52) with a kettle rim (type 4). The latter existed until the beginning of the Hyksos period and has a rim diameter of over 10 cm \(^\text{16}\). Globular pots with folded rims (fig. 4.39) are quite common. They appear in this period for the first time and last until the beginning of the Hyksos period. One finds in all phases pot stands made of this fabric. From the late Middle Kingdom until the beginning of the Hyksos period konoi (fig. 5.54,55) are documented in the settlement material \(^\text{17}\). Their function still needs to be resolved.

A sand-tempered version of the Nile clay (VS: Nile E, TD: I-e-2) was primarily used to keep vessels from breaking during cooking, and in later phases, for the manufacture of local production of MB shapes. While the deep bowl (fig. 5.56) from K 2817 is an isolated case, the globular cooking jar (fig. 5.57) is found from Phase G/4 onwards until the middle of the Hyksos period. Its rim possessed a gutter which most probably served to lock a lid in place. The ordinary cooking vessel of this time was a handmade globular pot (fig. 5.58–60) whose rim was attached to the body on a turntable device. Most of these cooking wares exhibited a white wash on the exterior.
K 2817, Egyptian vessels made of Nile C.
Since the big marl clay formations are located in the southern parts of Egypt, vessels made from these clays are all viewed as imports to the site. While the small thin walled cups (fig. 6:61) are very rare imports from Upper Egypt, vessels from the Memphite-Fayum region are more frequent. In this period, they represent about 10% of the pottery repertoire in the settlement material of Tell el-Dab’a. Open forms like footed bowls (fig. 6:62) and carinated bowls (fig. 6:63) were not so common, whereas containers, whether small or large, were popular. Vessels made from this fabric were quite compact, which made them perfect for transporting liquids. Therefore, it is not surprising that these kinds of vessels were also found outside Egypt along the Levantine coast.

Small hand and wheel-made jars with rounded bases and shaped rims (fig. 6:64,65) exist from the Middle Kingdom until the end of the 13th Dynasty. Arnold divided them into two types: an older one with a globular body and a later one with a bag-shaped body. The first one is attested at Tell el-Dab’a until the middle of the 13th Dynasty, while the second one exists from the end of the 12th Dynasty onwards. Vessels of this type have been found all over Egypt and abroad in Sidon. The next group of jars have a handmade egg-shaped body and a corrugated neck (fig. 6:66,67) which was attached to it on a turntable device. Again, two types can be differentiated over a period of time: an earlier one with the uppermost horizontal groove of the corrugation only 1 cm below the rim, and a more recent one where the groove is further below the rim. While the first type exists in Egypt from Senwosret III/Amenemhet III until the middle of the 13th Dynasty, the second one can be found from the middle of the 13th Dynasty until the middle of the Hyksos period. Both types are distributed all over Egypt, whereas the older one is also found in Sidon.

Zirs (fig. 6:68,69) were very practical and multifunctional storage vessels, so it is not surprising to find them distributed all over Egypt and along the Levantine coast. These large vessels were built up in coils, and again, had their rims attached to the body on a turntable. Due to the fact that only a handful of complete vessels survive, one must, once again, turn for dating purposes to the development of the rims, which changed from the beginning of the Middle Kingdom until the middle of the New Kingdom.

The two types represented in K 2817 date, with the older one (Type 3, fig. 6:68), to a period between Senwosret II/III and the middle of the 13th Dynasty, and with the later one (type 4, fig. 6:69), from Phase G/4 until the early Hyksos period. Zirs of both types were distributed all over Egypt, Nubia and the Levantine coast. Well-dated examples for the older zir type 3 were found in Egypt in the tomb of Queen Weret II, wife of Senwosret III at Dahshur. Another rim fragment of this type comes from the very early 13th Dynasty and was found in complex 6, a dump near the pyramid of Amenemhet III, again, at Dahshur. Parts of a base from a zir, which probably belong to this type, were uncovered in a late MB II A context at Tell Arqa. The later rim type is represented in complex 7 at Dahshur.
5 K 2817, Egyptian vessels made of Nile C and E.
II-a

II-c-2

61

62

63

64

65

66

67

68

69

K 2817, Egyptian vessels made of Marl A and C-1.

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which Do. Arnold dates to one or two generations after Amenemhat VI and the beginning of the Hyksos period. On the Levantine coast, pieces of zirs were found in Phase 13/14 of Ashkelon and in a building at Megiddo (T. 3052) attributed to Stratum X, traditionally dated to the end of the MB II period. Since this would place the vessel into a period when this type is no longer represented in Egypt, one has to consider that this piece is an heirloom or belongs to an earlier phase. The latter is a possibility that should be considered, since these vessels were often dug into the floors to give them stability and to keep their contents cool. This action also prevented them from breaking and preserved them quite well in situ. Two zirs of this type survived in tombs from Byblos. One was found in a burial that cuts into the so-called Hyksos rampart. Although the tomb had been robbed in antiquity, the zir was found leaning against the right chamber wall, still in situ. Since the collapsed ceiling smashed the bones of the deceased, it was not possible to ascertain how many burials had been there originally. Among the bones and the mud, M. Dunand found one scarab made of amethyst and another of lapis lazuli. According to C. Mlinar, this type of amethyst scarab appears mainly in the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties. The lapis lazuli example belonged to the “Great principle of Thebes Mnw-nfer” and dates into the first half of the 13th Dynasty. In addition to these finds, some simple open bowls were found in the tomb. If all the published material belonged to a single burial, then we should suggest a date in the first half of the 13th Dynasty. P. Montet published another example for the later zir type from the royal tombs in Byblos. He writes that three large jars were found in tombs II and III. For reasons of chronology, this zir can only come from tomb II and should be dated to the first half of the MB IIIB period.

Only 1.5% of the MB material from K 2817 is locally produced. Phase G/4, sees the first appearance of open bowls with incurved rims (fig. 7:70) and made from Nile clay. Imitations of MB cooking pots (fig. 7:71,72) are the most commonly copied vessels in these early phases. While the wheel-made examples (fig. 7:71) are made of the sandy Nile E (TD I-e-2) clay, the handmade ones (fig. 7:72) are mostly produced in a fabric (TD I-e-3) that was specially formulated at the site for the production of these flat-bottomed cooking pots. Parallels to the wheel-made examples are found in Tel Aphek Phase 2. Comparable vessels for the handmade cooking pot are numerous and can be found in Egypt itself, throughout Palestine and as far as Syria.

One fifth of the pottery material from K 2817 is imported from the Syro-Palestinian region. M. Bietak divided these fabrics into six major groups based mainly on macroscopic analysis. Group IV-1 and 2 are terra rosa clays, typical to the Levantine coast. The very red and calcareous IV-1 seems to derive from the Lebanese coast and north of it, while the fabrics that fall into group IV-2 remain enigmatic. This latter group contains many varieties of red to orange and beige fired fabrics. Some do come from the
K 2817, Middle Bronze Age vessels made of Nile B-2, E and imports.
Palestinian coast. White, light beige and light greenish fired clays fell into group IV-3 which contained low iron but a lot of limestone. IV-5 is reserved for a hard red to dark grey fired fabric, high in limestone and basalt inclusions. It is this group that includes wares from the Akkar plain. Finally, group IV-8 includes a fired fabric with a greenish or beige core, orange oxidation zones at the edges and a white selfsame slip on the surface. Horizontally combed slipper juglets (fig. 7:73) are typical to the MB IIa period at Tell el-Dab'a 44. Parallels come from the "Kharji-tombs" in Beirut 45, the "tombe phénicienne" in Sin el-Fin 46 and the royal tombs I-III in Byblos 47. This type of combing technique is visible on the base of a jar or a large jug from Tell el-Dab'a (fig. 7:74).

Burnished juglets are still very rare at this time. Only two red burnished examples with a ledge below the rim and a double handle (figs. 8:87, 9:111), body fragments of a burnished jug (fig. 8:88) and a red burnished juglet (fig. 8:89) are found in K 2817. Juglets with ledges below the rim appear at Tell el-Dab'a until Phase G/1-3 48 with one degenerated example in Phase F 49. Comparable pieces come from Tel 'Amr 50, Amrith 51, Beirut 52, Sin el-Fin 53, Tel Dan 54, Kafr Veradim 55, Megiddo 56, Hagosherim 57, Tell el-Hayyat 58, Yiftachel 59, Nahariya 60, Efrata 61 and Kabri 62.

To the group of the Levantine Painted Ware (LPW) vessels falls a red burnished rim of a jar or jug (fig. 8:90), a black and red burnished rim of what is most probably a jug (fig. 8:91), body sherds of a jug (fig. 8:92) decorated with standing and hanging triangles in two zones, and two red burnished bases, again from a jar or a jug (figs. 8:93, 94). Vessels of LPW appear at Tell el-Dab'a from the Middle Kingdom 63 until the end of the MB IIa. Parallels for the painted body sherds come from Tel 'Amr 64 and Tell Arqa 65.

Imported bowls with incurved rims are found at Tell el-Dab'a for the first time in Phase G/4, and they occasionally occur until the first half of the Hyksos period. The piece from K 2817 (fig. 8:95) is horizontally burnished inside. Only in the early phases (H and G/4) of Tell el-Dab'a, and then rarely, handmade flat-bottomed cooking pots (fig. 7:75) were imported to the site. By contrast, large amphorae form the bulk of imported material. In the MB IIa phases, the amphorae show a great variety in shapes and fabrics. Over 40% of the storage jars belong to fabric group IV-1, nearly 50% to IV-2 and the remaining 10% to groups IV-3 (6%), IV-5 (1%) and IV-8 (2%). One finds among this material many different rim types (figs. 7:76-85; 8:96-108; 9:112-116), while the bases (figs. 7:86; 8:109-110; 9:117) are not flat and leave the vessel in a shaky position.

To this group of vessels also fall the imports from the Akkar plain. The rims of these imports swing outwards (fig. 10:118-120), are rolled (fig. 11:123), and are very often shaped in a manner that creates a kind of stepped rim. The thickness of their walls is rather delicate in comparison to the other storage jars of this period. It is highly likely that these rims come from handleless storage jars similar to the ones discovered in Phase N, Niveau 14B

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K 2817, imported Middle Bronze Age vessels.
9 K 2817, imported Middle Bronze Age vessels

10 K 2817, vessels from the Akkar Plain found at Tell el-Dab'a and Tell Arqa.
at Tell Arqa (fig. 11: right) 66. Some of these storage vessels from Tell Arqa exhibit combed decorations on the shoulder at the point where the body and the upper part were joined together. One of the body sherds from K 2817 (fig. 10: 121) has this kind of decoration. Typical of the storage jars from Tell Arqa are their flat bases. Just such a flat base (fig. 10: 122) was also found in K 2817. All of the pieces ascribed to fabric group IV-5 had a plain uncoated surface. Also from this context comes a large group of storage jars (fig. 12: 124-135) that display the same kind of finesse and stepped trimming of the rim. The fabric of these jars is very similar to the one of the Arqa jars; therefore, this writer believes that they originated in the Akkar plain 67. Again, their surface shows no traces of any special treatment. East of F/I lies area A/IV which was used for domestic housing from the late 12th until the middle of the 13th Dynasty (fig. 13). Separated by a small street running north-west to south-east, two houses were uncovered, of which the eastern one is not fully excavated. Its south-western corner, which
probably belonged to a courtyard, was used as a dump (K 4249). The neighbouring house to the south consisted of four rooms. The examined material (K 4236/4256) comes from the eastern part of that building.

In both contexts, the one from the dump (K 4249) and the one from the house (K 4236/4256), vessels from Tell Arqa were discovered dating to the transitional MB IIA/B period (= Phase F at Tell el-Dab’a). The material from these collections gives a good picture of the ceramic repertoire of this time.

In this period nearly 40% of the pottery shapes belong to the MB corpus. 73% of these shapes are still imported to the site, while the rest was locally produced. The Egyptian corpus consisted of model vessels (fig. 21:1) made from very fine Nile clay (TD: I-b-1). The cups (figs. 14:1-3; 21:2,3), made of chaff tempered Nile clay (TD: I-b-2), are already straight-walled with an average rim diameter of 10 cm. Almost all the rims of this bowl shape have been dipped into a red wash. Once in a while, are found in the first half of the 13th Dynasty large cups (fig. 14:3) and small bowls (fig. 14:5,6) with a rim diameter between 13 and 20 cm. Vessels with spouts (fig. 21:4) are not very common in the Egyptian pottery repertoire from the middle of the 13th Dynasty. The same is true for the jar from K 4249 (fig. 14:7). These jars appear only in Phases F and E/3. The pot stands (figs. 14:8, 21:5–8) display the same shapes and surface treatments as the earlier periods. In the rougher Nile clay (TD: I-c-1), bowls (fig. 21:9) and footed bowls (fig. 21/10) were produced. Jars (fig. 21:11) are not very common. Pots with rims rolled to the outside (fig. 14:9), which appeared for the first time in Phase G/4, have their peak in this period and last until the beginning of the Hyksos period. Hemispherical bowls (fig. 21:12) and deep bowls with horizontal grooving (fig. 21:13) made from the rough Nile C (TD: I-c-2) fabric are rare in comparison with the large dishes (fig. 14:10). Dishes

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12 K 2817, vessels found at Tell el-Dab’a. Possible origin: Akkar Plain.
with triangular trimmed rims (figs. 14:11, 12; 21:14) have in most cases a hollow pedestal base. At the site they appear from the Middle Kingdom into the levels of the New Kingdom. The beer jar type (rim type 2) of the Middle Kingdom (fig. 14:13) has its last occurrence in Phase F, while the type with the kettle rim (figs. 14:14; 21:15, 16) is the prominent one of that period. One finds again pot stands (fig. 14:17) and footed bowls (fig. 14:15, 16) in this fabric, as well as high supports (fig. 14:18) that were used as stands for larger bowls or as offering tables. Though found throughout all periods, perforated pot lids (fig. 22:17) are not very common. They belong to the repertoire of settlement pottery. Their special function is not clear yet. One possible interpretation is that they served as lids for steamers, and
14 K 4249. Egyptian vessels made of Nile B-2 and C.
thus are connected to special cooking activities. Aside from Egypt \(^9\), these
types of lids were also found in Mesopotamia \(^7\).
The sandy Nile E (TD: I-e-2), which in former phases was mainly used for
closed shapes, also serves now for open vessels, such as bowls with
trimmed rims (fig. 15:19) or rolled rims (fig. 15:20). Deep bowls (fig. 35
22:18), jars (figs. 15:22; 22:20) and cooking jars (figs. 15:21; 22:19) are still
part of the repertoire. Typical cooking pots (figs. 15:23-25; 22:21,22) be-
come more and more globular, a trend that continues towards the end of
the Second Intermediate Period where the pots are already a bit squat. The
body of a greenish Upper Egyptian Marl jar (VS: Marl A-3, TD: II-a-3) was
smoothed where the neck broke off and secondarily reused in this period.
Marl C-1 (TD: II-c-2) zirs with horizontally trimmed rim types (figs. 15:28,29;
22:23) are the usual large storage jars for Phase F, while the rim (fig. 15:27)
from a jar with a corrugated neck of the older type and from the same fab-
ric makes its last appearance. Large supports made from this fabric are all
of general shapes (fig. 22:24) found throughout all the periods from the
Middle Kingdom until the New Kingdom.

The transitional MB IIa/B period sees the greatest variety in local produc-
tion of MB shapes. Bowls with incurved rims (figs. 23:25-27), either red
burnished or painted inside, are made from the finer Nile clay (TD: I-b-2)
or from the very sandy Nile E fabric (TD: I-e-2) (fig. 16:33-35,38). The lat-
ter, together with limestone tempered Nile D (TD: I-d), was especially used
at this time for imitating MB pottery. It even seems that Nile D clay was in-
vented for this reason, since it appears together with the first local copies
of MB vessels at Tell el-Dab’a at the end of the MB IIa period. In some cases,
only with the help of petrography is it possible to distinguish vessels of
local production from an import. This fabric was often used for black,
brown and red burnished juglets (figs. 16:30; 23:28,29).

In Phases G1-3 to E3, globular burnished or red burnished jars with dif-
ferent rim types appear in the settlement material as well as in the burials
as imports (figs. 18:70,71; 24:40) and local productions (fig. 16:31,39).
These types of burnished jars occur at the end of MB IIa and the transi-
tional MB IIa/B period in Lachish \(^7\) and Ruweisah \(^8\). Mainly in this phase,
one finds red burnished carinated bowls (fig. 16:32) made of Nile E (TD:
I-e-2). A comparable piece comes from a burial in Megiddo \(^3\). Burnished
or red burnished bowls with a red burnished cross inside (fig. 16:36) occur
at Tell el-Dab’a from the transitional MB IIa/B period onwards. They seem
to be markers for the beginning of the MB IIb. These types of bowls were
found in Stratum F of Tell Beit Mirsim \(^7\), in Stratum III of Tel Jerishe \(^75\), in a
phase at Bat Yam \(^7\) which was dated by P. Beck to the end of MB IIa and
the transitional MB IIa/B \(^7\), in burial chambers in Wadi et-Tir \(^7\), Gezer \(^7\) and
Tel Aviv \(^8\), in a child burial in the Chantier II nord at Tell el-Far’ah \(^8\), in the
last burial of a rock-cut chamber in Barqai \(^6\) and in tomb 948 at Tel Kabri \(^6\)
which dates from the late MB IIa until the early MB IIb period.

Open bowls with everted rims (fig. 16:37) only appeared in this period.
They can be compared with an example from Stratum III at Tel Jerishe \(^8\).
The appearance of big globular bowls (fig. 23:30,31) is also restricted to
Phase F at Tell el-Dab’a. They are either red burnished or red painted on
the outside. Similar pieces come from Shechem below Stratum XVIII \(^8\),
from Stratum III at Tel Jerishe 86; from a Stratum XII burial at Megiddo 87; from Aphek 88, Tel Poleg 89 and Tel Burga 90. Globular jars with moulded rims (fig. 23:32,33) are typical of the settlement material of the early MB IIb period (Phase F–E/2). Parallels are known from Shechem 91. A unique piece is a red burnished fragment 36 of a bowl or pot with an everted rolled rim (fig. 16:40). Large krater-like storage vessels (figs. 16:41,42; 23:34,35) with a white washed exterior are documented at Tell e-Dab’a from the transitional MB IIA/B period until the beginning of the Hyksos period. A similar piece was found at Shechem 92. "Holemouth" cooking pots (fig. 17:43) are rare at the site. Rather more common from Phase F until the middle of the Hyksos period are the typical MB cooking pots with gutter rims (fig. 17:44–48). At Aphek, they already appear in the middle MB IIA period 93. As seen on an example from Byblos, some might be equipped with a single handle 94.

In this period (=Phase F), about 30% of the settlement pottery was imported to Tell el-Dab’a. Alongside the last appearance of combed dipper juglets (fig. 18:57), one finds red burnished and painted dipper juglets (fig. 18:58,59) and red and brown burnished juglets with candlestick rims (figs. 18:60; 24:37), kettles (fig. 19:92) and small ring bases (fig. 18:63) or button bases (figs. 18:62; 24:38). Typical to the middle of the 13th Dynasty at Tell el-Dab’a is a high quality burnish. This gives the surface a metallic gloss 95 found in many cases on juglets (fig. 18:61) and carinated bowls (fig. 18:64,66,67).

In Phases G/1-3 until E/3 carinated bowls with rolled rims (figs. 18:64; 19:93) were found. Parallels come from Tel Akko 96 and Phase G of Tell Beit Mirsim 97. Pieces similar to the carinated bowl with moulded rims (fig. 18:65) are listed for Tel Dan 98, Ginosar 99 and Hazor 100. Open bowls with incurved rims (fig. 24:39) were still imported in small numbers. One bowl with an S-profile (fig. 18:69) is unique. At Tel Burga a comparable vessel was discovered 101. Red burnished kraters with moulded rims are found from Phases F till E/1 at Tell el-Dab’a. Although most of them are locally-made, some early examples (fig. 18:79,73) are imported. They might have been inspired from large kraters, such as the ones found at Kfar Szold 102. It is difficult to find comparable pieces for a closed pot with incised horizontal and wavy lines (fig. 18:74). Perhaps a smaller version from Tomb IV at Tell Sukas, which has horizontal grooves and dates to the first half of MB IIb, is comparable to it 103.

While one-sixth of the imported amphorae from this period was made in IV-1 clay (figs. 18:49-56; 24:36), two-thirds were produced in IV-2 clay (figs. 18:75-77; 19:78-91; 24:41-53) and one-tenth in IV-3 (fig. 19:94-97) and IV-8 fabrics (fig. 19:98). Beside the types that already existed in the MB IIA corpus, such as the elongated everted rims, a new group of storage jars finds its way to the site for the first time. These jars are larger vessels with a rim diameter between 15 and 20 cm (figs. 18:55; 19:86,87,96,98).

Two vessels found in this transitional MB IIA/B phase were imported from the Akkar plain. In K 4249 the rim of a storage jar (fig. 20:99) was discovered. It curves outwardly with an overhanging lip. At the point where the shoulder of the vessel joins the neck, one finds three horizontal grooves; the sur-
K 4249, Egyptian vessels made of Nile E, Marl A-3 and C-1.

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face stayed plain. A comparable rim (fig. 20: right) was found at Tell Arqa in Phase N, Niveau 14 (non-stratifié) 104. Unique to Tell el-Dab’a is a squat wheel-made cooking pot (fig. 25:55, Photo 1) 105 whose base, parts of the body, and the rim are unfortunately missing. The latter is turned outwardly and vertically trimmed with a tool that produced a groove. On the pronounced shoulder are eight incised parallel horizontal grooves. The vessel exhibits on its plain surface (Munsell: 10R 4/4 weak red) traces of intensive burning as a sign of its use as a cooking pot. Again, the best parallel comes from Phase N, Niveau 14 C of Tell Arqa (fig. 25:98/318.008) 106. For the first time, Cypriot Red-on-Black (fig. 24:54) ware is proven for Phase F. A parallel situation exists at Ashkelon. There, Phase 12, equivalent to Phase F at Tell el-Dab’a, also testifies to the initial appearance of Cypriote Red-on-Black ware 107.

The fourth context, K 10042 (fig. 26), lays in Area A/II south-west of a small building dated to the early MB II B period (=Phase E/3). At this time, nearly 80% of the pottery belongs to the Egyptian ceramic tradition. Of the remaining 20% of MB shapes, 14% are imported to the site while the rest was locally produced. Although the bulk of the cups are straight-walled in this period, the rims of the cups from context K 10042 (fig. 27:1,2) bend already slightly to the inside and show an average rim diameter of 9 cm. They were made of fine Nile clay (TD: l-b-1). Carinated bowls with hand-made bases (fig. 27:3) found at Tell el-Dab’a date from Middle Kingdom layers until the Hyksos levels. Simple bowls (fig. 27:4-6) exist alongside large carinated bowls (fig. 27:7) decorated with horizontal grooves, small knobs below the rim and a wavy-line above the carination. Antecedents to this type were already discovered in early 19th Dynasty levels 108 at the site. Jars (fig. 27:8) are still very rare in the pottery corpus, while spouted jars (fig. 27:9) belong to the repertoire, as well as pot stands (fig. 27:10-13). Miniature dishes (fig. 27:14,15) are mainly found at the site in cultic contexts such as burials or offering pits. In the settlement material they were used as lids for storage vessels or as lamps. Occasionally, the potters produced lids with handles (fig. 27:17) as well as lamps. The latter were pinched on one side for placing the wick (fig. 27:16).

Jars (fig. 27:18) and pots with out-rolled rims (fig. 17:19) made of fine Nile C fabric can be found, as well as footed bowls (fig. 27:20,21) and lids (fig. 27:22). The rather Nile clay vessels hardly differ from the material of the previous phase. One sees among the material open bowls with straight rims (fig. 27:23) and triangular lips (fig. 27:24). There are also large storage vessels (fig. 27:25), beer jars with kettle rims (fig. 27:26), pot stands (fig. 27:27) and from time to time, kemaï (fig. 27:28) which were 109 fixed on the rim of bowls. Bowls (fig. 28:29) and globular cooking pots (fig. 28:30-32) made out of Nile E clay are still part of the collection. It seems that from MB II B onwards some of the cooking pot bodies were thrown on the wheel. Amongst the Mar I C-1 zirs, rim type 4 (fig. 28:33) is still the dominant shape. In the corpus of MB vessels of this period, one still finds bowls with incurved rims (fig. 29:34) made of Nile B-2 fabric. Red burnished cups with ring or disk bases (fig. 29:35) appear in Tell el-Dab’a in Phase G/1-3
as imports, and in the following Phases F and E/3 as local copies. Parallels are known from a burial in Phase 2 at Aphek, from Hadar Yosef, from burials at Megiddo, from Stratum III at Tel Jerishe, from a rock-cut chamber burial in Khirbet Kufin, from area A at Tel Poleg, from Phase 4a at Tel Nami and from a courtyard tomb at Tell el-Ajjul. Carinated bowls made of Nile D, such as the brown burnished example from K 10042 (fig. 28:36) are only found in Phases F and E/3. In comparison to them, burnished bowls with incurved rims (fig. 29:37,38) in the Nile E fabric exist from the end of MB IIA until the first half of the Hyksos period. Red burnished jars (fig. 29:39,40) and red burnished globular jars with different modelled rims (fig. 29:41-43) are part of the settlement material.

The imported material consists of fragments of brown burnished (fig. 30:47) and plain (fig. 30:64) juglets, burnished bowls with incurved rims, both with and without a red cross inside (fig. 30:50,51) and burnished jars (fig. 30:52). New to the repertoire are burnished globular bowls with
longer, slightly everted necks (fig. 30:48,49). They seem to be markers of the MB IIIB period. Parallels have been found in Phase 4 in Aphek [118], in Stratum E of Tell Beit Mirsim [119], in the "tombe phénicienne" at Sin el-Fin [120], in a burial cave at Kfar Szold [121], in Strata XX-XVIII at Shechem [122], at Hazor [123], Kamid el-Loz [124], Wadi et-Tin [125], at-Tayibin [126], M'toune [127] and in the latest burials from Tomb IV of Tell Sukas [128], in a rock-cut chamber tomb at Yiftahel [129], at Efrata [130], in the tombs of Jericho of Kenyon's Group I and II [131] and in Phase M of Tell Arqa [132].

Three-quarters of the storage jars of this period are made of IV-2 fabric (fig. 30:53-63), while groups IV-1 (fig. 30:44-46) and IV-3 average 10% each. The remaining fabrics belong to groups IV-8 and IV-5. Into the last group fall the rim and base (fig. 31:65, Photo 2) of a medium-sized storage jar found in this context. The rim shows traces of horizontal burnishing while the body was space-vertical burnished. This technique, as well as the shape and the fabric (Photo 3), are known from jars at Tell Arqa, like a storage jar with handles from Phase N, Niveau 14B (fig. 31:79/424.009) [133].

The vessels found at Tell el-Dab'a prove direct or indirect trade between Egypt and the Akkar plain in northern Lebanon. It is well known that there was contact between the kings of Egypt and the rulers of Byblos already in the Old Kingdom period [134]. This connection based on mutual economic needs were continued or renewed in the time of the Middle Kingdom [135]. It is known from excavations at Kahun, Lish and Dahshur that in the second half of the 12th Dynasty these contacts intensified [136] and more imports came into Egypt. It is most likely that Tell el-Dab'a was the harbour where these goods were unloaded. The city was situated in ancient times on the eastern most branch of the Nile, which was the closest for ships coming from the Eastern Mediterranean to enter. Ancient texts testify that during the Hyksos period hundreds of ships were lying at
18  K 4249, imported Middle-Bronze Age vessels.
anchor in the harbour of Tell el-Dab’a¹³⁷. Whether these vessels came directly from the Akkar plain or via the big cities of Byblos and Sidon is still an open question. While the appearance of storage jars, designed for long distance trade, is not surprising, the discovery of a cooking pot is quite unexpected. The latter is not used as a classical trading commodity, but is rather connected with its user, and is therefore often regarded as an ethnic marker. According to one school of thought, when people travelled their cooking vessels understandably travelled with them. Another theory ties the appearance of cooking vessels far from their home of origin with their presumed function for the preparation of special meals.

The ceramic material supports the view that during the MB IIA period a more intensive trade existed between Egypt and Lebanon than in later periods. One possible explanation might be found in the fact that the political and economic structures of the Middle Kingdom were still functioning. Indeed, the collapse of the political power of Egypt seems to be combined with a drop in the network of potential trading partners. Indications of this were a shift towards other sources of imports in the MB IIB period and the fact that commodities, whose imports during the MB IIA period were no problem, had to be looked for elsewhere, or were not available anymore.

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19. K 4249, imported Middle Bronze Age vessels.

20. K 4249, vessels from the Akkar Plain found at Tell el-Dab’a and Tell Arqa.

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22 K 4236/4256, Egyptian vessels made of Nile C, E and Marl C-1.

23 K 4236/4256, Middle Bronze Age vessels made of Nile B-2, D and E.
K 4236/4256, Imported Middle Bronze Age vessels and Middle Cypriote vessel.
25  K 4236/4256, vessels from the Akkar Plain found at Tell el-Dab'a and Tell Arqa.

26  Position of K 10042 in Area A/II, Phase E/3 (after I. Forstner-Müller, 2001, p. 203, fig. 6).

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27 K 10042, Egyptian vessels made of Nile B-1, B-2 and C.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 footed bowl</td>
<td>nile C-1</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 footed bowl</td>
<td>nile C-1</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 lid</td>
<td>nile C-1</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 bowl</td>
<td>nile C-2</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 bowl</td>
<td>nile C-2</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 jar/pot</td>
<td>nile C-2</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 beer jar</td>
<td>nile C-2</td>
<td>red wash outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 pot stand</td>
<td>nile C-2</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 urns</td>
<td>nile C-2</td>
<td>uncoated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28 K 10042, Egyptian vessels made of Nile E and Marl C-1.

29 K 10042, Middle Bronze Age vessels made of Nile B-2, D and E.
30 K 10042, imported Middle Bronze Age vessels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>object</th>
<th>fabric</th>
<th>surface treatment</th>
<th>comment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-1</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-1</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-1</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 bowl</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-2</td>
<td>brown burnished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 bowl</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-2</td>
<td>red burnished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 bowl</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-2</td>
<td>red burnished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 bowl</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-2</td>
<td>burnished inside</td>
<td>red cross painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 bowl</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-2</td>
<td>burnished inside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-2</td>
<td>red burnished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
<td>plain</td>
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<tr>
<td>60 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>61 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 storage jar</td>
<td>Palestinian VI-3</td>
<td>plain</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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31 K 10042, vessels from the Akkar Plain found at Tell el-Dab'a and Tell Arqa.

79/424.9
(after: J.-P. Thalmann, Tell Arqa - I, pl. 89/5)
Fig. 1: Stratigraphy of Tell el-Dab‘a

32 Stratigraphy of Tell el-Dab‘a (after M. Bietak, I. Forstner-Müller and C. Milnar, 2001, fig. 1).
I would like to thank Eva Dobretsberger for inking the drawings, Nicola Math for preparing the map of Area A/IV, and Manfred Bietak, Irmgard Hein and Irene Forstner-Müller for allowing me to use their material.

NOTES

4. T. E. Peet, 1914, p. 57f, pl. XXIX:B13 (2nd vessel from right in the upper most row).
5. J. Wegner, 2000, p. 94, fig. 8:8.
6. T. Burton-Brown, 1959, p. 77, fig. 3.
7. R. Engelbach, 1923, pl. XXXIV:10D.
8. R. Mund and O. H. Myers, 1937, pl. XXXII:10M.
9. C. A. Hope, 1980, pl. XXV.
16. In later periods there appears a type 5 beer jar with a kettle rim and a rim diameter below 10 cm.
17. Not a single one has been found within burial contexts.
19. For Dahshur see Do. Arnold, 1982, p. 32, fig. 8:6. See also B. Bader, 2001, figs. 24-27.
21. For Dahshur see Do. Arnold, 1982, p. 32, fig. 8:8. See also B. Bader, 2001, figs. 30-38.
23. B. Bader, 2001, figs. 47-54.
26. J.-P. Thalmann, I. Forstner-Müller and K. Kopetzky forthcoming. The authors are preparing an article about the synchronisation of the relative chronologies of Tell Arqa and Tell el-Dab’a.
31. Personal communication.
32. Compare for example to a piece from a Phase G/4 tomb in Tell el-Dab’a (M. Bietak, 1991b, p. 67, fig. 15).
33. G. T. Martin, 1971, pl. 15:32.
40. Yarbud: A. A. Assaf, 1967, Table. VI/31. Mtoune: F.
Neutron activation analysis was done on the material with minimal results. See P. McGovern, 2000. Meanwhile, a petrographic study is underway and seems more promising.

A preliminary report by A. Cohen-Weinberger seems to support this theory.

M. Chéhab, 1939, p. 804, fig. 2:c.
O. Tufnell, 1969, p. 30, fig. 4:35-40.
M. Bietak, 1991a, p. 55, fig. 27:10.
A. Durks, 1982, p. 4, fig. 2:19.
M. Chéhab, 1939, p. 805, fig. 4:b.
D. Ilan, 1996, p. 327, fig. 4:105:2.
N. Getzov and Y. Nagar, 2002, p. 8, fig. 7:11.
G. Loud, 1948, pl. 10:21, T. 3143, pl. 10:16, T. 2152 and pl. 10:18, T. 5171.
K. Covello-Paran, 1996, p. 74, fig. 4:10.
S. E. Falconer and B. Magness-Gardiner, 1984, p. 62, fig. 15:3.
L. Barda and E. Braun, 2003, p. 74, fig. 4:7.
I. Ben-Dor, 1950, p. 31, fig. 24:c.
R. Gonen, 2001, p. 70, fig. 47:3.
T. Bagh, 2002, p. 94, fig. 2.
A. Durks, 1982, p. 5, fig. 3:10.
J.-P. Thalmann, 2002, p. 373, fig. 8:1.
Sherds of this group have been sent for petrography.
M. Bietak, 1991a, p. 147, fig. 106:13.
R. Ellison, 1984, p. 65, fig. 1:5.
P. E. Guigues, 1938, p. 37, fig. 57:c.
W. F. Albright, 1933, p. 105, pl. 5:5.
G. Loud, 1948, pl. 105, fig. 8:5.
L. H. Vincent, 1947, p. 279, fig. 6:18; photo: pl. VI:10.
J. Kaplan, 1955, p. 11, fig. 4:10:11.
J. Mallet, 1988, p. 79, fig. 33:3.
D. P. Cole, 1984, p. 111, pl. 6:e.
S. Geva, 1982, p. 32, fig. 28:19.
G. Loud, 1948, pl. 28:2, S=T. 3084.
M. Kochavi, P. Beck and R. Gophna, 1979, p. 144, fig. 10:5.
D. P. Cole, 1984, p. 115, pl. 8:a, below Stratum XVIII, p. 115, pl. 8:f.
D. P. Cole, 1984, p. 115, pl. 8:b.
fig. 2:11, phase 2.
M. Dunand, 1937, pl. CLIX:2843.
M. Bietak, 1991c, p. 40.
M. Dothan, 1976, p. 11, fig. 7:1.
W. F. Albright, 1933, p. 50, pl. 4:4.
D. Ilan, 1996, p. 325, fig. 4:104:12.
C. Epstein, 1974, p. 29, fig. 10:1.
M. Kochavi, P. Beck and R. Gophna, 1979, p. 144, fig. 10:15.
H. Thrane, 1978, p. 32, fig. 33.
K. Kopetzky, in print, fig. 2:5 - TD 6564E. See also D. A. Aston, 2002, p. 75, fig. 11:2. However, the dating given by Aston should be changed to Phase F.
M. Bietak, K. Kopetzky and L. E. Stager, in print.
T. Rzeuska, in print.
G. Loud, 1948, pl. 9:8, T. 5167; pl. 14:36, T. 5166.
S. Geva, 1982, p. 32, fig. 28:16.
E. S. Marcus, 1991, p. 139, fig. 37:1.
O. Tufnell, 1962, p. 24, fig. 9:5a.
M. Kochavi, P. Beck
119 W. F. Albright, 1939, p. 805, fig. 3:a.
121 C. Epstein, 1974, p. 18, fig. 3:5.
125 L. H. Vincent, 1947, p. 279, fig. 6:25.
126 A. Abou Assaf, 1974, pl. 3:7.
129 L. Barta and E. Braun, 2003, p. 74, fig. 4:1.
130 R. Gonen, 2001, p. 36, fig. 23:1.
133 J.-P. Thalmann, 2006, pl. 89:5.
134 i.e.: Egypt imported cedar wood from the Lebanon mountains, while Egyptian objects were found in Byblos “temples aux obélisques”.
135 For this see H. Altenmüller and A. M. Moussa, 1991, p. 1–48. For the connections during the late 12th Dynasty, see J. P. Allen, The historical inscription of Khnoumhotep at Dahshur, lecture held in 2004.
137 See for this L. Habachi, 1972.

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L. Habachi, 1972, The Second Stela of Kamose and his Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and his Capital, ADAIK 8, Glückstadt.


J. A. Iliiffe, 1936, "Pottery from Ras el ’Ain", *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 5, p. 113–126.


K. Kopetzky, in print, "Stratum b2 of Tell el-Dab’a: The MB Corpus of the Settlement layers", in *Proceedings of the 2 ICAANE*...
held in Copenhagen 2000.


W. M. F. Petrie, 1890, Kahun, Hawara and Gurob. Field & Tuer, London.


J.-P. Thalmann, 2006, Tell Arqa-


