

traced by a spread of truncated stone walls and pottery scatter. The remains were visible in two parts: over an area of approximately 110 by 80 meters north of the mosque on the summit of the mound and a smaller area of 35 by 20 meters to the west of the mosque, in total about one hectare. The descriptions provided in the first European travelers' accounts, especially that of G. Schumacher,³⁷ record that the collapsed house walls of the settlement still stood to considerable height in the nineteenth century, but by the time of Richmond's visit in 1933 he could observe that "no walls remain above ground level."³⁸ The walls had, it seems, been removed in the first decades of the twentieth century to build the village of Ṭabaqat Faḥl, just as the West Church was being quarried for its stone by the villagers at the time of Richmond's visit.³⁹ Nevertheless, surviving surface remains in the 1980s indicated that each domestic unit of the Mamluk settlement consisted of rooms facing out onto an open courtyard and surrounded by an enclosure wall.

Modest excavations during the 1988 season either side of Funk and Richardson's 1950s' sounding in the center of the mound (designated Area XXIII) exposed finely stratified layers belonging to a courtyard, consisting of a complex sequence of accumulated deposits consisting of interleaved black ash and yellow clay lenses.⁴⁰ Although conducted on a small scale, the excavations succeeded in producing an excellent sequence of ceramics from the early Mamluk period, firmly dated by coins, and forms part of McPhillips' study that follows.

MAMLUK POTTERY FROM FAḤL

Ceramics from Faḥl broadly datable to the Mamluk period represent a distinct corpus of wares that can be clearly differentiated from the early and pre-Islamic material culture of the site. The following report focuses on a representative selection of ceramic material recovered by the University of Sydney team in 1988 from two excavation plots, each of which measured five by ten meters, located in the center of the main archaeological tell of Khirbat Faḥl to the west (plot XXIIID) and east (plot XXIIIE) of Funk and Richardson's original 1958 sounding.⁴¹ These excavations revealed evidence of courtyard residential compounds constructed in stone and mud brick walls and beaten earth floors.⁴² The structures were associated

³⁷Gottlieb Schumacher, *Pella* (London, 1888).

³⁸Richmond, "Khirbet Fahil," 30

³⁹*Ibid.*, 26.

⁴⁰First reported in Walmsley, "The Islamic Period: the Later Islamic Periods," 192–93.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 192.

⁴²In 1999, excavations directed by Stephen Bourke brought to light more Middle Islamic material, in association with courtyard housing units divided by what is probably a street (pers. comm., Stephen Bourke). This material has been studied by McPhillips and will be included in the final

with at least nine Mamluk-period stratigraphic sequences of occupation and other deposits, while eleven copper alloy coins minted between 1341 and the final decade of the fourteenth century have been identified from Area XXIII, providing some elements for the creation of a relative chronology for the accompanying pottery corpus.⁴³

The Mamluk sequences represent a single period of Middle Islamic occupation and are superposed directly over Byzantine and early Islamic occupation, recognized by a sharp break in the material culture: there is no evidence available to suggest occupation in this zone in the intervening Islamic centuries or later than the fifteenth century.⁴⁴ This interim report is not intended to be definitive, nor does it include the full range of comparative published data, but rather it brings up to date the current state of knowledge of the ceramics from the site based on a study of the Area XXIII pottery undertaken by McPhillips in the spring of 2000.⁴⁵ A total of 1726 vessel fragments from the 1988 Area XXIII excavations have been assigned to twelve categories of ware and to a more detailed typology according to form.⁴⁶ The following discussion presents an overview of this material with an indication of its importance relative to the rest of the assemblage. The catalogue number of the featured specimens is given in parentheses.

HAND-MADE WARES

HAND-MADE GEOMETRIC PAINTED WARE (324, FIG. 10)

Often referred to by the acronym HMGPW,⁴⁷ this ware is constantly present in

publication on Mamluk Fahl.

⁴³Alan Walmsley, "Islamic Coins," in *Pella in Jordan 1979–1990: The Coins*, ed. Kenneth A. Sheedy, Robert Carson, and Alan Walmsley, Adapa Monograph Series, v. 1 (Sydney, 2001), 63–66, 152–53.

⁴⁴The uppermost deposits in this area of the tell did see major perturbation after 1967, yet diagnostic Ottoman or later wares are not seen in surface or other deposits.

⁴⁵Mamluk pottery has been published previously from Fahl as follows: from Tomb 2 and Tomb 7 in Smith, *Pella of the Decapolis I*, 236–43, pls. 70–77, 86, and 93–94; and a preliminary publication of the Area XXIII material in Walmsley, "The Islamic Period: the Later Islamic Periods," 193–98, pls 125–27; and idem, "Settled Life in Mamluk Jordan," 138–41, figs. 9–10. The present author has also presented a concise description with photographs in Stephen McPhillips, "Ceramics from Middle Islamic Fahl," in *Australians Uncovering Ancient Jordan: Fifty Years of Middle Eastern Archaeology*, ed. Alan Walmsley (Sydney/Amman, 2001), 271–78.

⁴⁶A much larger quantity of non-diagnostic pottery was examined by the current author, but this has not been added to the quantification given here as its value is affected by the discard of body sherds of unspecified wares at the time of excavation.

⁴⁷See Jeremy Johns, "The Rise of Middle Islamic Hand-Made Geometrically-Painted Ware in Bilad al-Sham (11th–13th Centuries A.D.)," in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique*, ed. Roland-Pierre Gayraud, IFAO, Textes arabes et études islamiques, vol. 36 (Cairo, 1998), 65–93.

non-elite sites in Bilād al-Shām from the twelfth century on through to the twentieth century.⁴⁸ At Faḥl it is the second most represented category of Mamluk pottery, and consists primarily of jars, bowls, and basins. Geometric decoration in black, brown, purple, or red paint is usually applied to the greater part of the surface over a thick coat of white slip. Several of the larger open forms in this ware also have applied bands with finger impressions on the exterior surface. The finished surface is often highly burnished, which contrasts with the often thickly and irregularly made character of this ware, which was produced in village bonfire kilns. There is considerable variation in the fabrics within the Faḥl assemblage, but they are always coarse and gritty, with abundant vegetal inclusions. A number of the examples possess textile impressions on the interior surface, indicating the use of a simple mold manufacturing technique.⁴⁹ Taken in combination with the two subsequent wares below, 31.2% of the assemblage consists of hand-made material.

RED PAINTED HAND-MADE WARE

Six pieces of a burnished ware with a thinly applied red painted exterior decoration occur in this assemblage. A similar ware has elsewhere been suggested as a possible precursor to the more common HMGPW in Jordan.⁵⁰

HAND-MADE COARSE WARE (209, FIG. 11)

This sizeable group of pottery consists of jars with large horizontal loop handles, jugs, and bowls in a thick walled ware containing abundant coarse crystalline and other inclusions. The exterior surface of this type is frequently slipped and burnished. These were clearly used as cooking pots, for there is evidence of burning on the interior or exterior surfaces of some of the Faḥl examples. This class of ceramic is common throughout Middle Islamic Bilād al-Shām in the Mamluk period.⁵¹

⁴⁸At the Damascus Citadel excavations this ware is notable by its near absence; see Stephen McPhillips, "Twelfth Century Pottery from the Citadel of Damascus," in "Études et travaux à la citadelle de Damas 2000–2001: un premier bilan," *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 53–54, Supplément: Citadelle de Damas, ed. Sophie Berthier and Edmond Al-Ajji (2001–2): 139–55.

⁴⁹For examples excavated at Faḥl, see Smith, *Pella of the Decapolis 1*, pl. 86.

⁵⁰Johns, "The Rise of Middle Islamic Hand-Made Geometrically-Painted Ware in Bilad al-Sham," 66; Robin M. Brown, "A 12th Century A.D. Sequence from Southern Transjordan: Crusader and Ayyubid Occupation at Al-Wu'eira," *ADAJ* 31 (1987): 284; idem, "Late Islamic Ceramic Production and Distribution in the Southern Levant: A Socio-Economic and Political Interpretation" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York, 1992), 245–46.

⁵¹For discussion of distribution, see Brown, "Late Islamic Ceramic Production and Distribution in the Southern Levant," 256–59. Similar jars are published from Jerusalem: G. J. Wightman, *The Damascus Gate, Jerusalem: Excavations by Crystal-M. Bennett and Basil Hennessy at the Damascus*

WHEEL-MADE UNGLAZED WARES

SUGAR POT WARE (186, FIG. 12)

More than ten percent of the Mamluk pottery from the Faḥl assemblage belongs to this ware, which consists solely of large ribbed jars and straight-sided bowls in a uniformly soft yellow fabric with some fine inclusions.⁵² Although not connected directly to the sugar manufacturing process, these jars have been identified as containers for the finished product at a number of other sugar producing sites.⁵³ It is likely that sugar cane cultivation and production took place in the Wādī Jirm immediately south of Khirbat Faḥl, explaining perhaps the presence of such a quantity of this ware in domestic contexts on the tell. Nineteenth century visitors to Ṭabaqat Faḥl refer to recently abandoned mills in the Wādī Jirm,⁵⁴ and water mills are mentioned in the vicinity of Faḥl in the Ottoman *daftars* of the sixteenth century.⁵⁵ The Jordan Valley was a major sugar cane growing and refining area in the Mamluk period.⁵⁶

PLAIN UNGLAZED WARE (95, FIG. 13)

This group consists of bowls, jars, and jugs. The closed forms have looped handles

Gate, Jerusalem, 1964–66, BAR International Series no. 519 (1989), pl. 61:8, and have recently been published from Rāfiqah (Raqqah) in northern Syria; Marcus Milwright, "Ceramics from the Recent Excavations near the Eastern Wall of Rafiqa (Raqqah), Syria," *Levant* 37 (2005): 197–219. Fine walled wheel-made cooking wares with interior glazing are absent from the Faḥl assemblage.

⁵²Sugar pots from Tombs 2 and 7 at Faḥl had been initially dated to the Abbasid period: Smith, *Pella of the Decapolis I*, 237. This group has also been referred to as "Plain Ware" at Faḥl: Walmsley, "The Islamic Period: the Later Islamic Periods," 193–94.

⁵³Tell Abū Sarbūt and Dhra' al-Khān both provide local comparative material in the Jordan Valley: Kareem, *Settlement Patterns in the Jordan Valley*, 66–80; Margreet Steiner, "The Excavations at Tell Abu Sarbut, A Mamluk Village in the Jordan Valley," *ARAM* 9–10 (1998): 145–51; H. E. LaGro, "Sugar Pots: A Preliminary Study of Technological Aspects of a Class of Medieval Industrial Pottery from Tell Abu Sarbut, Jordan," *Newsletter of the Department of Pottery Technology, University of Leiden* 7/8 (1989–90): 7–20; H. E. LaGro and H. de Haas, "Announcing a Study of Islamic Pottery from Tell Abu Sarbut," *Newsletter of the Department of Pottery Technology* 6 (1988): 89–96, and idem, "Syrup Jars and Sugar Pots: A Preliminary Study of a Class of Medieval Industrial Pottery from Tell Abu Sarbut, Jordan, Part II," *Newsletter of the Department of Pottery Technology* 9–10 (1991–1992): 55–68; H. J. Franken and J. Kalsbeek, *Potters of a Medieval Village in the Jordan Valley: Excavations at Tell Deir 'Alla: A Medieval Tell, Tell Abu Gourdan, Jordan* (Amsterdam/Oxford, 1975), 143–54.

⁵⁴Schumacher, *Pella*, 33–34, 51.

⁵⁵Hütteroth and Abdulfattah, *Historical Geography of Palestine, Jordan and Southern Syria in the Late 16th Century*, 167. However, there is no mention of sugar production in this period.

⁵⁶Ashtor, "Levantine Sugar Production in the Late Middle Ages," 92–93; J. H. Galloway, *The Sugar Cane Industry, An Historical Geography from its Origins to 1914* (Cambridge, 1989), 31–35, 43.

and a few examples show elongated and thickened cylindrical necks with internal filters. They are close in fabric to the "thin painted ware," although the only secondary surface treatment is an occasional whitish slip. Parallels are provided by several regional sites, the most extensively published being those from Tall Qaymūn (Tall Yoqne‘am).⁵⁷ In the south of Jordan similar "cream wares" have been excavated in both urban and rural contexts and are well represented at sites such as Khirbat Fāris.⁵⁸

RED WARE (113, FIG. 14)

This is a hard dense ceramic which is pale or dark reddish to gray in color and is thrown in a well-levigated siliceous clay. The main forms are medium to large bowls and jars with thickened rounded rims and comparatively thin walls. Published parallels exist from Jerusalem and Tall Qaymūn.⁵⁹

THIN PAINTED WARE (49, FIG. 15)

This is a fine ware fired reddish yellow to pink with reddish brown or black painted decoration sometimes over a white or yellowish slip. The most common shapes are jars and jugs with vertical loop handles. In both its decorative technique and its fabric, it is reminiscent of earlier Islamic pottery from the site.⁶⁰

WHEEL-MADE GLAZED WARES

MONOCHROME GLAZED WARE (541, FIG. 16)

Monochrome glazed wares are the most frequently occurring Mamluk ceramic from the Fahl excavations.⁶¹ Forms represented are overwhelmingly footed bowls with incurving or everted rims. The uniformly thick lead glaze is green, yellow, or sometimes brown in color and always applied over a thick white slip, often spilling over onto the exterior surface. The fabric is hard yellowish red to pale

⁵⁷Miriam Avissar, "The Medieval Pottery," in *Yoqne‘am I, The Late Periods*, ed. A. Ben-Tor, M. Avissar, and Y. Portugali, Qedem Reports, vol. 3 (Jerusalem, 1996), 151–55, 167–68.

⁵⁸Mads Sarley Pontin, "The Pottery," in A. M. McQuitty, M. Sarley Pontin, M. Khoury, M. P. Charles, and C. F. Hoppe, "Mamluk Khirbat Faris," *ARAM* 9–10 (1997–98): 189.

⁵⁹A. D. Tushingham, *Excavations in Jerusalem 1961–1967* (Toronto, 1985), 1:142–51, pls. 34–43; Avissar, "Medieval Pottery," 128–29, 151–53. Very close forms in a similar ware dating to the Mamluk period have been catalogued in the Damascus Citadel excavations (pers. comm., Véronique François).

⁶⁰Alan Walmsley, "Tradition, Innovation, and Imitation in the Material Culture of Islamic Jordan," *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* (Amman, 1995), 5:661 (Walmsley's Ware 8). See comments in Walmsley, "The Islamic Period: the Later Islamic Periods," 194 (Type 2).

⁶¹It is probable that the presence of glazed wares in the assemblage has been somewhat exaggerated due to their high visibility during excavation.

yellow, and is well-levigated with small quantities of fine inclusions. There are a few fragments from closed forms from the site, and only one lamp. This prominence of monochrome glazed wares is not unusual at a site in the Jordan Valley,⁶² but at Faḥl it represents a larger proportion of the pottery repertoire than at other village sites in Northern Jordan, resembling more the situation at rural Palestinian sites, to which it was more accessible in this period.⁶³

SLIP PAINTED WARE (79, FIG. 17)

Underglaze slip painted ware is the second most frequent glazed pottery in the assemblage. In fabric it is fine and a consistent brittle red with few visible inclusions. The principal form at Faḥl is a carinated bowl with an incurving thickened rim. This is a ware well known at many sites in Bilād al-Shām, but generally occurs less frequently in Jordan than in Syria and Palestine.⁶⁴ The carinated form is dated at Burj al-Aḥmar to after 1265.⁶⁵ A single sherd from the Faḥl group is green glazed.

GLAZED INCISED WARE (43, FIG. 18)

Lead glazed wares with decoration incised into the underlying white slip are represented at Faḥl, but owing to the highly fragmentary and somewhat limited

⁶²Brown, "Late Islamic Ceramic Production and Distribution in the Southern Levant," 456.

⁶³As is the case at Ḥisbān, for example, Bethany J. Walker and Øystein S. LaBianca, "The Islamic Qusur of Tall Hisban: Preliminary Report on the 1998 and 2001 Seasons," *ADAJ* 47 (2003): 443–71. A recent survey in northern Jordan has revealed a situation closer to that at Faḥl, with high proportions of monochrome glazed bowls: Bethany J. Walker, "The Northern Jordan Survey 2003," 79. Palestinian sites that include abundant material include Belmont Castle: Richard P. Harper and Denys Pringle, *Belmont Castle: The Excavation of a Crusader Stronghold in the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, British Academy Monographs in Archaeology no. 10 (London, 2000), esp. the sections by Anthony Grey, "The Unglazed Pottery," 87–100, and Katherine Knowles, "The Glazed Pottery," 101–16; Tall Qaymūn (Tel Yoqne‘am), Avissar, "The Medieval Pottery," 96ff.; and Za‘rin, Anthony Grey, "The Pottery of the Late Periods from Tel Jezreel: an Interim Report," *Levant* 26 (1994): 60.

⁶⁴Marcus Milwright, "Trade and Patronage in Middle Islamic Jordan: the Ceramics from Karak Castle" (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1999), 170. Comparanda are too numerous to list here; this ware is well attested in Bilād al-Shām and further afield from the twelfth century, continuing at many sites well into the Mamluk period. In the Damascus Citadel excavations there is a locally distinctive development of this ware from the twelfth century through the Mamluk period: Stephen McPhillips, "Pottery of the Ninth to Thirteenth Centuries from the Citadel of Damascus" (Ph.D. diss., University of Sydney, 2004), 241–42, 251–52; Véronique François, pers. comm.

⁶⁵Denys Pringle, *The Red Tower (al-Burj al-Ahmar): Settlement in the Plain of Sharon at the Time of the Crusaders and Mamluks, A.D. 1099–1516* (London, 1986), 149–50, fig. 50.

nature of the material, it has not been possible to divide this group into more detailed categories present at sites where it is more common.⁶⁶ The majority of this group possess simple geometric patterns incised into a white slip under a green or yellow glaze,⁶⁷ with a smaller number having much broader incised lines (gouged ware) or large areas without slip at all (reserve slipped ware). A few sherds exhibit more than one glaze color, and may be considered as part of the "splashed glazed" family. Incised ware fabrics are not readily distinguishable from those of the slipped glazed group, and indeed it is probable that incised vessels have been registered with the monochrome group as large parts of incised ware bowls were left undecorated.

STONEPASTE WARES (48, FIG. 19)

Stonepaste or fritware pottery is characterized by a siliceous white or off-white pottery body with a make-up of ten parts quartz, one part glass frit or glass fragments, and one part fine white clay.⁶⁸ It occurs infrequently within the Area XXIII assemblage and consists entirely of fine bowls and a small number of small jars. The white body is covered by a transparent alkaline glaze, colored by mineral additions, such as copper for turquoise in the case of the pottery of this group from Faḥl, which otherwise have a colorless glaze. A slip was not required as a base for applying painted decoration, as the stonepaste body itself fulfilled this function and reflected light through the glaze to highlight its color and any underglaze decoration. The Faḥl stonepaste pottery is highly fragmentary, but geometric or

⁶⁶At Zaʿrin (Tall Jezreel), a site of similar size to Faḥl in the Marj ibn ʿĀmir (Jezreel Valley), a range of incised wares are represented: Grey, "Pottery of the Late Periods from Tel Jezreel," 57–59. It is interesting to note that the author observes a relatively limited presence of glazed incised material in relation to monochrome glazed pottery at Tall Qaymūn (Tel Yoqneʿam) during the Mamluk reoccupation of the site from the beginning of the fourteenth century; Avissar, "Medieval Pottery," 96.

⁶⁷In the Damascus Citadel excavations, this material is typical of the Mamluk period; twelfth-century and earlier incised lead glazed wares are both finer walled and possess a more lightly applied incised decoration; McPhillips, "Pottery of the Ninth to Thirteenth Centuries from the Citadel of Damascus," 251–52; Véronique François, pers. comm. Tushingham has suggested a similar distinction at the Armenian Garden in Jerusalem; Tushingham, *Excavations in Jerusalem*, 143.

⁶⁸See James Allan, "Abu ʿI-Qasim's Treatise on Ceramics," *Iran* 11 (1973): 113–14. James Allan, L. R. Llewellyn, and F. Schweizer, "The History of So-called Egyptian Faience in Islamic Persia: Investigations into Abu ʿI-Qasim's Treatise," *Archaeometry* 15, no. 2 (1973): 165–73; Alan Caiger-Smith, *Lustre Pottery: Technique, Tradition, and Innovation in Islam and the Western World* (London, 1985), 199; Robert Mason and Michael Tite, "The Beginnings of Islamic Stonepaste Technology," *Archaeometry* 36 (1994): 77–78. The treatise of Abū al-Qāsim, written in Iran at the beginning of the fourteenth century, is of interest owing to its descriptions of the manufacture of fritwares and techniques of underglaze painting.

vegetal painted decoration is discernible in several combinations of color: black, cobalt blue or turquoise under a colorless glaze, and black or cobalt blue under a turquoise glaze. The fabric is consistently granular and off-white in color. The sherds of this ware are often considerably degraded or very small due to their fragile nature. There are good parallels for this material, particularly at urban sites in Bilād al-Shām, with production probably occurring at Damascus and in central and northern Syria. The range of stonepaste exhibited in the Faḥl group is consistent with Syrian wares of the Mamluk period.⁶⁹

MOLDED WARES

RELIEF MOLDED GLAZED WARE (FIG. 20)

Five sherds of this ware were catalogued, all from bowls with pronounced incurving rims and epigraphic relief molded decoration on the exterior surface. The glazes are glassy, thick, and generally made to a higher standard than those of other lead-glazed ceramics above. In color they are yellow, green, and brown, while in section they are pale red and fine. This ware is likely to have been produced at Jerusalem,⁷⁰ and is relatively prominent at certain urban sites in southern Bilād al-Shām such as Karak and Tell Ḥisbān,⁷¹ but is rarer elsewhere.

CONCLUSION ON THE CERAMICS

The range of pottery excavated in Area XXIII at Faḥl offers a reflection of the socioeconomic realities at an agricultural settlement in the Jordan Valley that also served as a local hub and transit point in the early Mamluk period. At a time when the Jordan Valley had become a highly developed area of large-scale agriculture, Faḥl—with its abundant water resources, fertile soils and strategic location—was well positioned to play a role in the massively expanded economic activity of the area during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The association of a significant

⁶⁹Archaeological evidence for the dating of these families of stonepaste wares to within the Mamluk period is provided by the Damascus Citadel excavations (pers. comm., Véronique François) and by work in northern Syria, such as at Qal'at Ja'bar: Cristina Tonghini, *Qal'at Ja'bar Pottery: A Study of a Syrian Fortified Site of the Late 11th–14th Centuries*, British Academy Monographs in Archaeology, vol. 11 (London, 1998), 52–55. Similar material to that from Faḥl can be found from a range of published Mamluk contexts in the southern Bilād al-Shām, such as at Tall Qaymūn (Tel Yoqne'am): Avissar "The Medieval Pottery," 113–16, and at al-Burj al-Aḥmar: Pringle, *The Red Tower*, 150–53. For a thorough survey of the distribution of Mamluk stonepaste wares, see Tonghini, *Qal'at Ja'bar Pottery*, 52–55 (fritware 3).

⁷⁰Avissar, "Medieval Pottery," 102; Nahman Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1980), 255, fig. 302.

⁷¹Milwright, "Trade and Patronage in Middle Islamic Jordan," 184; Walker and LaBianca, "Islamic Qusur of Tall Hisban," 464–66.

proportion of the pottery with the manufacture of sugar has been remarked on above.⁷² Furthermore, the range of ceramics in the corpus can be paralleled to those of other rural sites in Palestine and northern Jordan, but less so to rural sites further to the south.⁷³ The presence of a considerable proportion of glazed wares that are well-documented in the wider region also underlines the full integration of Faḥl into the economy of the region. Unglazed wheel-made wares and monochrome lead glazed pottery, along with the slip painted and incised sub-groups, are well known at Palestinian and larger Jordanian sites, to which Faḥl was readily accessible owing to its location near the intersection of two valleys, the Jordan and the Marj ibn ‘Āmir (Jezreel), at a point where coastal and highland routes met. The stonepaste and relief glazed wares found at Faḥl are likely to have been imported from Damascus and Jerusalem respectively, and are a reminder of the position of the village close to the road between these two cities where it crossed the Jordan river. The hand-made wares from Faḥl are similarly well-represented at other rural sites in Bilād al-Shām, but are more likely to have been manufactured in closer proximity to the site. It is interesting to note that all ceramic cooking vessels belong to this group. Studies of the Ottoman *daftar*s, although from the sixteenth century, provide some parallel indicators of the nature of the local economy and population in the immediate proximity of Faḥl.⁷⁴

⁷²Mamluk or Middle Islamic sites have been identified in the vicinity of Ṭabaqat Faḥl, particularly the sugar production sites in the Jordan Valley such as Khirbat al-Maḥrūqāt at the base of the Wādī al-Yābis: Jonathan Mabry and Gaetano Palumbo, "Survey in the Wadi el-Yabis (Irbid District, Jordan), 1987," *Syria* 65 (1988): 425–27; idem, "The 1987 Wadi el Yabis Survey," *ADAJ* 32 (1988): 296–302; and a large number of other sites on the valley floor: Kareem, *The Settlement Patterns in the Jordan Valley*, 181–204; Cherie Lenzen, Jum‘a M. H. Kareem, and S. Thorpe, "Jisr Sheikh Hussain Regional Survey," in *The Archaeology of Jordan II.1*, ed. Denyse Homès-Fredericq and Basil Hennessy (Leuven, 1989), 66–67; Ibrahim, Sauer, and Yassine, "East Jordan Valley Survey, 1975 (Part One)," 41–66; Yassine, Sauer, and Ibrahim, "East Jordan Valley Survey, 1976 (Part Two)." Further Middle Islamic sites have been identified higher up the eastern side of the Jordan Valley from Faḥl: S. Mittmann, *Beiträge zur Siedlungs- und Territorialgeschichte des Nördlichen Ostjordanlandes* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 39–94, as well as the better known Baysān: G. M. Fitzgerald, *The Beth Shan Excavations, 1921–23, The Arab and Byzantine Levels* (Philadelphia, 1931) and al-Himneh: Adrian Boas, "Late Ceramic Typology," in *The Roman Baths of Hammat Gader*, ed. Yizhar Hirschfeld (Jerusalem, 1997), 382–95.

⁷³Hand-made wares, including HMGPW, represented the majority of the wares collected in the rural settlements of the Arḍ al-Karak (the agricultural lands around Karak) of the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, which contrasts strikingly with the situation inside the castle itself; Brown, "Late Islamic Ceramic Production and Distribution in the Southern Levant," 240–41.

⁷⁴Taxes were levied on wheat, barley, sesame, goats, honey, and watermills; nine heads of family (or bachelors) are recorded as residing here at this later era: Hütteroth and Abdulfattah, *Historical Geography of Palestine, Jordan and Southern Syria in the Late 16th Century*, 167. The *Faḥl al-Taḥta* referred to in the *daftar*s may correspond either to Ṭabaqat Faḥl or to another settlement

There is no firm evidence in this corpus for pottery from periods immediately prior or posterior to the Mamluk centuries, except the possible late twelfth- to early thirteenth-century (Ayyubid) Red Painted Hand-made Ware, represented by only a few sherds in the corpus. Otherwise, both the dates of the excavated coins, even taking into account fluctuating supply levels over the period, and the range of wares represented within this group of pottery indicate that it is consistent with an interpretation of a date from around the middle part of the thirteenth century to the first part of the fifteenth century. The absence of Ottoman material is in line with Schumacher's observation that there was no permanent settlement on the tell in the late Ottoman period, with the pre-1967 village being built no earlier than the start of the twentieth century.⁷⁵

AL-DIMASHQĪ, AL-QALQASHANDĪ, AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The social and economic reconstruction of Jordan, resolutely pursued by the Ayyubid and especially Bahri Mamluk elites following the Crusader interregnum, included an active program of mosque and shrine building among other activities, especially at sites of particular religious significance such as Mu'tah, Māzar, al-Kahf, 'Amatah (Abū 'Ubaydah), and Jabal Hārūn. Faḥl, surely remembered for the decisive Battle of Fiḥl that drove a wedge between Jerusalem and Damascus in 635, may have been a beneficiary of this policy, bringing advantages in addition to its administrative role in the Mamluk province of Dimashq. The archaeological evidence points to the existence of a settlement of some note during Mamluk times, and a community honored by the erection of a mosque equipped with a minbar. As the ceramics also indicate, the presence of glazed wares in some numbers, including Relief Molded Glazed Ware from Jerusalem and stonepaste wares from Damascus or further north, suggest Faḥl was something more than an isolated agricultural settlement in early Mamluk times, with contacts that extended outside the immediate area. Likewise, the coins show Faḥl's involvement in a broader monetary economy, and together the finds could be taken to suggest that Faḥl was one of the more important sites in the Jordan Valley during early Mamluk times. It may have functioned as a focal point for the local community and served as a way station on east-west routes from the valley into the Jordanian mountains, especially the 'Ajlūn road.

Can these discoveries assist in understanding al-DimashqĪ as a source, even in

at the base of the valley, perhaps in the vicinity of modern al-Masharia': Walmsley, "Settled Life in Mamluk Jordan," 142.

⁷⁵In the early nineteenth century two British naval commanders visited "Tabathat Fahkil" during a journey through the region, and described the ruins of a village on the tell, clearly corresponding to Khirbat Faḥl: C. L. Irby and J. Mangles, *Travels in Egypt and Nubia, Syria and Asia Minor; During the Years 1817 and 1818* (London, 1823), 304; see also Schumacher, *Pella*, 51.

the smallest way? Generally, al-Dimashqī has been judged as a less than critical scholar who incorporated earlier material in his work without exercising any rigorous editorial control.⁷⁶ The contradictions found in his geographical work would seem to confirm this, for instance by placing Amman, al-Salt, al-Zarqā', and the Balqā' in both Karak and Dimashq provinces. However, the extensive archaeological evidence from Mamluk Faḥl would indicate that al-Dimashqī's sources were rooted in an historical reality, and that the inclusion of Fiḥl as an *iqlīm* in Dimashq was not an historical relic of much earlier times, but reflected a current, or near-contemporary, situation.⁷⁷ Hence archaeology may serve to confirm the usefulness of al-Dimashqī as a source on the geography of early Mamluk Bilād al-Shām.

⁷⁶Dunlop, "Al-Dimashqī."

⁷⁷If this reasoning is correct Bayt Rās, also listed by al-Dimashqī as another *iqlīm* of Dimashq, should reveal evidence for significant Mamluk-period occupation, including a mosque.

APPENDIX: INVENTORY OF CERAMICS: FIGURES 10 TO 20

Figure 10. Hand-Made Geometric Painted Ware

1. Jar, Cat. No. 16903, Area XXIII E 7.8; core 7.5YR 5/1, surface 10YR 6/1; brown paint 2.5YR 4/2; gray fabric with infrequent fine red, white, and gray grits and organic temper
2. Bowl, Cat. No. 16910, Area XXIII E 8.2; slipped and burnished interior surface; core 7.5YR 7/6, surface 7.5YR 8/2 and 7.5YR 8/4; dark brown paint 5YR 3/2; reddish yellow fabric with abundant coarse white grits and organic tempering, some finer red and gray inclusions
3. Bowl, Cat. No. 16628, Area XXIII D 1.4; burnished interior and exterior surface; core 7.5YR 7/4, int. surface 2.5YR 7/8, ext. 2.5YR 6/6 and 5YR 7/4; dark red paint 7.5R 4/3; pink fabric with infrequent gray, red, and white grits and some organic temper

Figure 11. Hand-Made Coarse Ware

1. Lid, Cat. No. 16672, Area XXIII D 1.14; core 10YR 7/3, surface 10YR 8/2; pale brown fabric with gray, red, and white grits
2. Bowl, Cat. No. 16658, Area XXIII D 1.8; self-slipped; core 10YR 8/3, surface 10YR 8/2, 10YR 8/4 and 5YR 7/4; pale brown fabric with white and gray grits and organic temper
3. Cooking Jar, Cat. No. 16645, Area XXIII D 1.5; self-slipped with traces of burnishing exterior; core 10YR 4/1, surface 10YR 6/2 and 10YR 8/2; pale brown fabric with abundant mineral inclusions (quartz?) and organic temper

Figure 12. Sugar Pot Ware

1. Jar, Cat. No. 16775, Area XXIII D 6.46; core 2.5YR 6/8, ext. surface 2.5YR 6/6 and 10YR 8/3, int. surface 2.5YR 6/6 and 5YR 6/8; dense light red fabric with gray and white grits and abundant chaff
2. Jar, Cat. No. 16841, Area XXIII E 3.4; core 10YR 7/4, ext. surface 5YR 8/4 and 7.5YR 8/4, int. surface 5YR 6/3 and 7.5YR 8/4; pale brown soft lightweight fabric with gray grits and organic tempering

Figure 13. Plain Unglazed Ware

1. Jug or jar with neck filter, Cat. No. 16403, Area XXIII E 3.9; core 5YR 7/6, ext. surface 2.5Y 8/3 and 10YR 8/3, int. surface 7.5YR 8/4; light red fabric with very fine gray, white, and red grits
2. Jar, Cat. No. 16604, Area XXIII D 1.3; core 10YR 8/4, surface 7.5YR 8/4; porous pale brown fabric with prominent white grits
3. Jar, Cat. No. 16632, Area XXIII D 1.4; core 7.5YR 5/1, ext. surface 10YR 8/3,

- int. surface 5YR 6/4; porous pale brown fabric with reddish brown, gray, and white grits
4. Bowl, Cat. No. 16431, Area XXIII E 3.11; core 10YR 5/1, margins and surface 7.5YR 8/4; fabric as Fig. 13.3

Figure 14. Red Ware

1. Jug, Cat. No. 16967, Area XXIII E 1.9; core 2.5YR 5/6, surface 5YR 5/4; dense red fabric with infrequent fine grits
2. Jar, Cat. No. 16972, Area XXIII D 6.46; core 2.5YR 5/6, surface 5YR 5/4; fabric as Fig. 14.1
3. Basin, Cat. No. 16948, Area XXIII D 6.20; core 10YR 7/2, surface 10YR 6/1; fabric as Fig. 14.1, although pale gray in color

Figure 15. Thin Painted Ware

1. Closed form, Cat. No. 16457, Area XXIII D 6.26; core 10YR 7/4, surface 2.5YR 8/3; parallel diagonal lines of black paint exterior (7.5YR 5/1); fine pale brown fabric with frequent fine gray and white grits
2. Jar, Cat. No. 16425, Area XXIII D 100.2; core 10YR 5/1, surface 7.5YR 8/4; dribbles of black paint exterior (7.5YR 5/1); fine porous light gray fabric with reddish brown, gray, and white grits
3. Jar, Cat. No. 16419, Area XXIII D 7.13; core 2.5YR 6/6, surface 2.5YR 8/4 and 10YR 8/2; dribbles of black and dark red paint exterior (7.5YR 5/1); fine light gray fabric with gray and white grits

Figure 16. Monochrome Glazed Ware

1. Bowl, Cat. No. 16704, Area XXIII D 1.34; creamy white slip interior and to ca. 40mm below exterior lip, dark green glaze interior and dribbles exterior, dark brown in color where it has dripped over unslipped surface; core 5YR 6/6, surface 2.5YR 4/4; fine reddish yellow fabric with occasional mineral grits
2. Bowl, Cat. No. 16570, Area XXIII D 5.28; pale yellow slip over interior surface and to ca. 27mm below exterior rim, covered by thick mustard glaze; glaze drips exterior; core 10YR 7/4, ext. surface 2.5Y 8/2 and 7.5YR 7/3; hard pale brown fabric with frequent rounded black, gray, and white grits
3. Bowl, Cat. No. 16815, Area XXIII E 1.10; yellow glaze with black speckling on exterior foot, spots of very pale brown slip exterior and some glaze drips interior foot; core 7.5YR 8/4, ext. surface 7.5YR 6/4 and 10YR 8/3; fabric as Fig. 16.2

Figure 17. Slip Painted Ware

1. Bowl, Cat. No. 16819, Area XXIII E 2.1; pale yellow glaze exterior, appears

- pale yellow over slip and light red on remaining surface; core 2.5YR 4/4, surface 2.5YR 4/4; fine light red fabric with occasional mineral grits
2. Bowl, Cat. No. 16627, Area XXIIID 1.4; green glaze over a white slip producing crosshatched motif; core 2.5YR 6/6, surface 2.5YR 7/6; fabric as Fig. 17.1

Figure 18. Glazed Incised Ware

1. Bowl, Cat. No. 16920, Area XXIIIE 101.3; pale yellow glaze to rim, green glaze splashed on rim and interior, horizontal incised bands and areas in reserve incised into cream slip on interior surface; core 2.5YR 6/6, surface 2.5Y 8/3; fine light red fabric with occasional mineral grits
2. Bowl, Cat. No. 16935, Area XXIIIE 100.2; green glaze and white slip interior and dripped on lower exterior surface, incised floral motif interior; core and surface: 7.5YR 7/2; fine pinkish gray fabric with occasional white and red grits
3. Bowl, Cat. No. 16829, Area XXIIIE 2.2; yellow glaze with splashes of pea green glaze and white slip interior, unslipped (reserve) zones appear reddish brown; core and surface: 2.5YR 6/8; fine light red fabric with occasional white and red grits

Figure 19. Stonepaste Ceramics

1. Ledge rimmed bowl, Cat. No. 16727, Area XXIIID 5.16; turquoise glaze entire surface over black underglaze painted geometric motif interior and pairs of parallel stripes exterior; core 10YR 8/2; friable off white stonepaste fabric
2. Ledge rimmed bowl, Cat. No. 16882, Area XXIIIE 4.10 and 6.3; colorless glaze entire surface over black underglaze painted geometric motif interior and pairs of parallel stripes and band at rim exterior; core 10YR 8/2; friable off white stonepaste fabric
3. Small bowl, Cat. No. 16682, Area XXIIID 1.24; colorless glaze entire surface over black and cobalt blue underglaze painted geometric motif interior and cross-hatched black bands exterior; core 10YR 8/2; friable off-white stonepaste fabric
4. Jar, Cat. No. 16696, Area XXIIID 1.32; thick turquoise glaze exterior, dripped to foot, colorless glaze interior surface; core 10YR 8/2; friable off white stonepaste fabric

Figure 20. Relief Molded Glazed Ware

1. Bowl, Cat. No. 16925, Area XXIIIE 102.8; thick dark green glaze entire surface, relief molded vegetal motif exterior; core 5Y 7/1; soft light gray fabric with very fine white and black grits
2. Bowl, Cat. No. 16928, Area XXIIID 100.2; thick dark green glaze exterior

surface, yellow interior; sharp molded fluting exterior; core 7.5YR 8/6; soft reddish yellow fabric with very fine white and black grits

Thanks to Judith Sellers for original pencil drawings of the hand-made and glazed vessels with surface decoration.

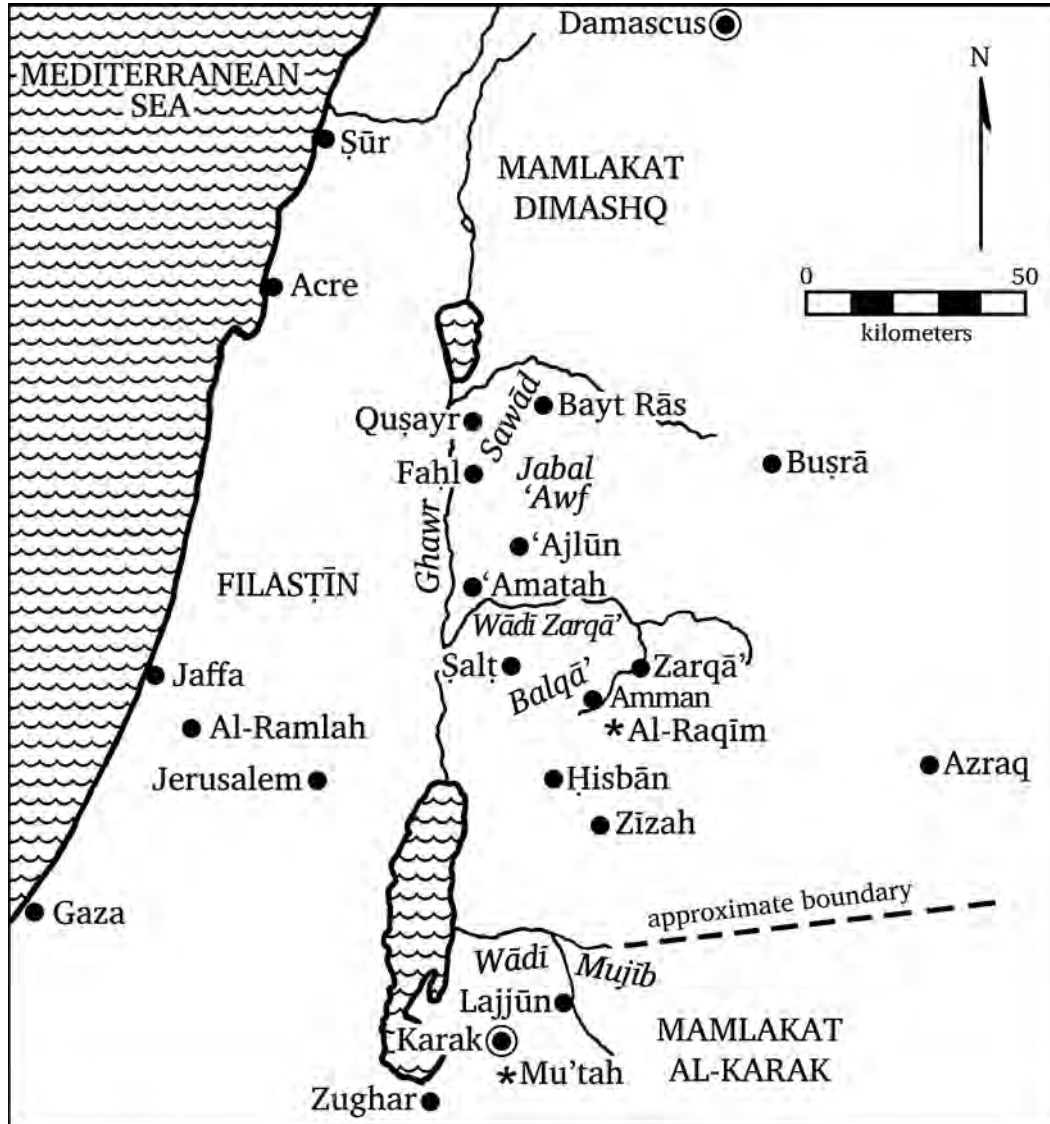


Fig. 1. Generalized map of Jordan and Palestine in Mamluk times

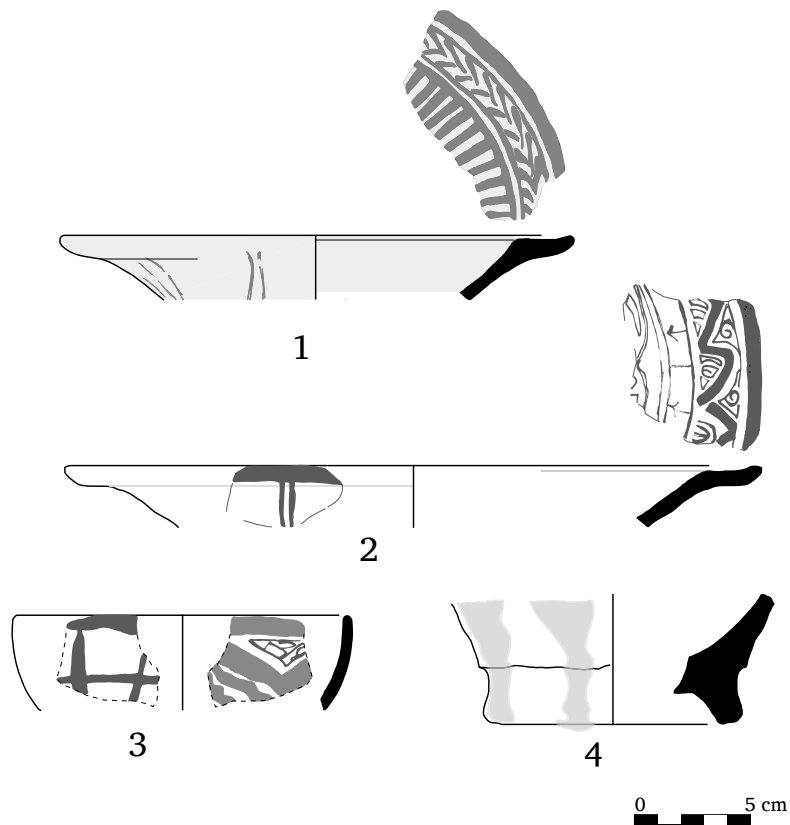


Fig. 19. Stonepaste Ceramic: bowls (1–3) and jar (4)

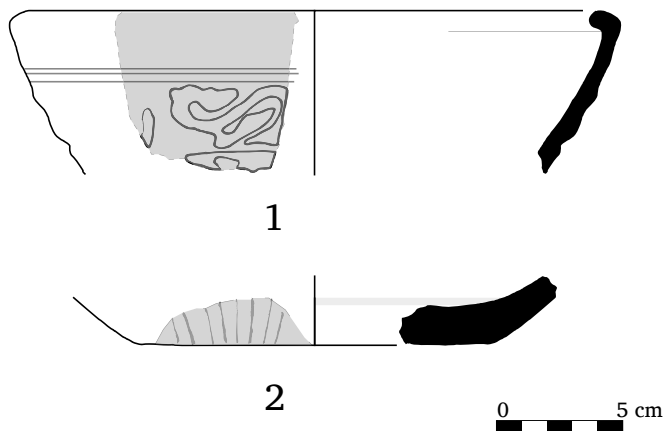


Fig. 20. Relief Molded Glazed Ware: bowls (1–2)