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OVERSEAS POTTERY TRADE OF MEDIEVAL
ALEXANDRIA
AS SHOWN BY RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES
A PRELIMINARY COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

The role of Alexandria as an international trade centre in the medieval Mediterranean and the prominent part it took in the commercial exchange between East and West has been long known and appreciated¹. Written sources — both narrative and archival, eastern and western — are abundant. Especially in the later Middle Ages, during the age of the commercial revolution, many western written accounts refer to Alexandria. The animation of its harbours, the variety of imported and exported goods, the rich markets and the multitude of foreign merchants lodged in numerous *fondaci* and protected by officially recognized consuls are attested by visitors to the city and by documents from the archives of the Mediterranean maritime countries. Although Arabic contemporary sources contribute, as a rule, fewer details, they nevertheless confirm the general picture². New and ex-

¹ A standard book for the commercial history of the East Mediterranean is still W. Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1879. About Alexandria and Egypt see especially vol. I, pp. 105 ff., 417 ff., vol. II, pp. 24 ff., 427 ff. In recent times the whole question was reconsidered in Subhi Y. Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter* (1171—1517), Wiesbaden 1965, see especially ch. IV, pp. 122 ff., and ch. VIII, pp. 286 ff. He gives an extensive bibliography.

² The most complete list of Arabic and Western sources on medieval Alexandria gives E. Combe, *Alexandrie musulmane, Notes de topographie et d'histoire de la ville*, Cairo 1932.

tremely valuable material gradually comes to light as oriental documents are studied and published³. Of particular value are the documents from the Cairo Geniza now dispersed throughout the world⁴.

Other evidence which illustrates Alexandrian overseas trade is provided by archaeological finds. This material is hitherto generally less known. The present paper is therefore intended as a preliminary information on the subject. The finds to which I refer are countless potsherds of imported ware yielded by various excavations conducted at the area known as Kōm ed-Dikka situated near the center of Alexandria.

The terrain of the present Kōm (hill) ed-Dikka in early Islamic times had been a vast field of ruins of late Roman and Byzantine monuments. In subsequent centuries it served as a burying ground, and a place of industry which produced building materials. For short periods (evidently when the town's population had temporarily increased) it was resettled. Since the late 12th century the area was used as a dumping ground where the city's refuse was deposited⁵. The hill then rapidly grew until it reached a very considerable height⁶. Since the early 14th century the Kōm — together with the second mound situated near the Old Harbour known in modern times as „Kōm en-Naḏūra“ — constituted one of the most characteristic landmarks of Alexandria and was often mentioned in contemporary descriptions and

³ Cf. H. R. Roemer, *Über Urkunden zur Geschichte Ägyptens und Persiens in Islamischer Zeit*, ZDMG 1957, pp. 519 ff.

⁴ For references see Shaul Shaked, *A tentative bibliography of Geniza documents*, Paris—La Haye 1964. Cf. also S. D. Goitein, *The documents from Cairo Geniza...*, in JAOS, LXXX (1960), reprinted in his *Studies in Islamic history and institutions*, Leyde 1965; see also S. D. Goitein's article in a new edition of E. I., s. v. Geniza.

⁵ W. Kubiak, *Le fouilles polonaises à Kom el Dick en 1963 et 1964*, „Bull. Soc. Archéologique d'Alexandrie“, No 42, pp. 48 f. et 63 f.

⁶ The height 50 or 60 metres given by Gratien Le Père in *Description de l'Égypte, État Moderne*, Éd. 1818, t. II, p. 282 seems to be exaggerated. Actual height of the Kōm, even if it was slightly levelled before building the Citadel, could have hardly exceeded 40 metres above the sea level. Perhaps Kōm en-Naḏūra was a little higher.

represented on old maps and engravings⁷. Archaeological material suggests however that the Kōm ed-Dikka dumping ground must have been used at least throughout the 14th and 15th centuries⁸. In the 16th century the mounds within the walls of Alexandria — one of which was undoubtedly Kōm ed-Dikka — were still named „mountains of rubbish“ or „mountains of waste“⁹.

In the days of the French Expedition the hill was surmounted by a fort which was later considerably enlarged. In our times this fort lost its military value. The municipal authorities of Alexandria decided to demolish it and to level the hill for projected construction. In 1956 the work was begun.

Archaeological research around Fort Kōm ed-Dikka had already commenced in the late 19th century when D. C. Hogarth carried out his trial excavation¹⁰. Subsequent work in the area was directed by E. Breccia¹¹ and A. Adriani¹². It was, however,

⁷ The first mention of both hills is in Symeon Semeonis, Ed. R.P.G. Golubovich, *Biblioteca Bio-Bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente Francese*, t. III, Florence 1919, p. 260. For the engravings see G. Jondet, *Atlas historique de la ville et ports d'Alexandrie*, Cairo 1921, Pl. I, II, V, VI.

⁸ The problem was discussed in my report (BSAA No 42, p. 70 et note 1). Cf. also L. Dąbrowski, *Résumé des recherches archéologiques faites autour du Fort Kōm el-Dikka en Alexandrie*, „Bull. Fac. Arts Univ. Alex.“, XIV, 1960.

⁹ Pierre Belon du Mans, *Les observations de plusieurs singularités et choses mémorables, trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Judée, Égypte, Arabie et autres pays estranges, rédigées en trois livres par...*, Paris 1554, feuille 95, names the hills: „les montagnes des balieures“. Leo Africanus (Jean Léon l'Africain, *Description de l'Afrique, nouvelle édition traduit de l'Italien par A. Epaulard*, Paris 1956, vol. II, p. 496) who visited Alexandria in 1517 compares the hill with the „monte Testaccio“ in Rome. Domenico Trevisan (ed. Ch. Schefer et H. Cordier, *Recueil*, V, pp. 173—174 gives the name: „montagnes de décombres“.

¹⁰ Report on Prospects of Research in Alexandria, *Egypt Exploration Fund, Archaeological Report 1894—1895*, pp. 1—33.

¹¹ Les sondages près de la mosquée de Nabi Daniel et ceux de la rue el Bardisi, *Le Musée Gréco-Romain 1925—31*, Bergamo 1932.

¹² Lavori di sistemazione e nuove scoperte nello scavo di via El Bardissi, „Annuario del Museo Greco-Romano (1932—33)“, Alexandria 1934, pp. 19—27; Sondages dans la prétendue région de la nécropole royale, „Annuaire du Musée Gréco-Romain (1935—1939)“,

only in 1947 when A. J. B. Wace undertook his excavations with A. Lane examining his yields of pottery, that the medieval finds — especially imported ceramics — were thoroughly studied and their significance fully appreciated. It is most regrettable that the detailed report on this excavation has never been published¹³. Fortunately a short account, including the preliminary classification of the medieval pottery, was prepared and published by Lane. Some additional material was discussed by M. A. Marzouk, yet he concentrated primarily on Egyptian Mamluk ware¹⁴. Between 1947 and 1960 more archaeological research was carried on in the Kôm ed-Dikka area and its vicinity¹⁵. It has but little bearing on the scope of the present work.

A considerable amount of medieval ceramics was saved in the course of the leveling of the Kôm by the Municipality. The work performed by contractors could hardly be scientifically controlled; nevertheless representatives of the Greco-Roman Museum were instructed to collect artifacts. This more or less fortuitous action resulted in securing a number of valuable specimens of imported pottery. The material is now stored in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria and is available for study.

Alexandrie 1940, pp. 55—64; *Scavi e scoperte alessandrine 1949—1952*, A, „Bull. Soc. Archéologique d'Alexandrie“, No 41, pp. 1—10.

¹³ Wace's field notes and records of the excavation are kept in the Faculty of Arts of the Alexandria University. A Lane's summary: *Archaeological excavations at Kom el-Dik, a preliminary report on the medieval pottery*, was published in the „Bull. Fac. Arts Univ. Alex.“ V, (1949), pp. 143—147.

¹⁴ Egyptian Sgraffito ware excavated at Kôm ed-Dikka in Alexandria, „Bull. Fac. Arts Univ. Alex.“, XIII, pp. 3—23. See also his *Three signed specimens of Mamluk pottery from Alexandria*, „Ars Orientalis“, No 2 (1957), *Charles Long Freer Centennial Volume*, pp. 457—501.

¹⁵ Victor Guirguis then Director of the Greco-Roman Museum made in early 1956 three large trial pits in the South-West part of the Kom. In his unpublished report, *Tagrîr an a'mâl al-hafr allâti yaqûmu bihâ al-mathaf al-yûnânî ar-rûmânî bi minṭaqa kûm ad-dikka*, which is deposited in the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, there is a mention of Islamic pottery, yet no details are given. There is however no mention of glazed pottery in K. Michalowski's *Rapport sur la prospection du terrain dans la région de la mosquée de Nabi Daniel*, „Bull. de la Fac. de Droit Univ. Alex.“, XII (1958), pp. 37—39.

It was first examined by Dr. Gamal Mehrez who in particular studied fragments of Spanish ware¹⁶.

Since 1960 much more of this interesting material has come to light in the course of excavations conducted by the Polish Mission in collaboration with the local Governorate and the Egyptian Antiquities Service represented in Alexandria by the Greco-Roman Museum¹⁷.

The terrain of excavation is usually well stratified and its greater part remained undisturbed in later times. The excellent dividing lanes demarcate Arabic necropolae; one of the 9th and early 10th centuries, and another of the late 11th and 12th centuries. Both are dated by numerous grave-stelae¹⁸. The late (i.e. superior) necropolis has been especially important for our study as most of the imported pottery was found in the superimposed strata. The said necropolis had been used for inhumation until the last quarter of the 12th century, then immediately buried under a thick layer of waste and debris¹⁹.

PRE-FATIMID AND FATIMID PERIOD

Imported wares are rather uncommon in older strata, i. e. prior to the later necropolis. Only a very few sherds of Samarra lustre ware²⁰, two or three Chinese celadon-sherds of so-called Yüeh-

¹⁶ Recientes hollazgos de ceramica andaluza en Alejandra, „Al Andalus“, XXIV (1959), pp. 399—400.

¹⁷ W. Kubiak, *op. cit.* See also J. Lipinska and H. Riad, *Trial pits at Kôm el-Dikka in Alexandria*, „Annales de Service des antiquités égypt.“, LIX and W. Kubiak and E. Makowiecka, *Polish Excavations at Kôm el-Dikka in Alexandria in 1965 and 1966, a preliminary report*, ASAE, being printed.

¹⁸ W. Kubiak, *Stèles funéraires arabes de Kôm el Dick*, „Bull. Soc. Archéologique d'Alexandrie“, No 42, pp. 17—26 and id. *Inscriptions arabes de Kôm el Dick*, II Partie, Bull. SAA No 43, being printed.

¹⁹ W. Kubiak, *op. cit.*, (BSAA No 42), pp. 49 and 63 f.

²⁰ General classification of Islamic fine pottery gave A. Lane in *Early Islamic pottery*, London 1947 and *Later Islamic pottery*, London 1952. For the lustre ware of Samarra see F. Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra (Die Ausgrabungen von Samarra II)*, Berlin 1925, pp. 32—

Yao type (probably produced in the sites on the Lake of Shang Lin Hu in Chekiang in the T'ang or early Sung period²¹), and one sherd of rare Liao Dynasty relief ware have been recorded. Few fragments of ware similar to the types produced in western Islamic countries — viz. polychromatic ceramics resembling ware commonly used in Qal'at Banī Hammād in the 11th century²² and brownish and green 10th and early 11th centuries Spanish ware of the so-called caliphal type²³ — were also noticed among the finds from Kōm ed-Dikka. Mehrez announced one sherd of a very uncommon type of Spanish pottery of the 12th century decorated in relief and lustre²⁴.

The bulk of the pottery finds of the earlier period are of unquestionably Egyptian make and are in the greater part identifiable as Fustāt ware. The hypothesis in favour of the large production of finer ceramics in Upper Egypt supported by Butler has not as yet been proved²⁵. There is also no evidence whatever as to the local manufacturing of glazed ware in Alexandria, either in these or later times²⁶.

43 and Tafel X—XVII, and the excellent historical study of C. J. Lamm in his *Oriental glass of medieval date found in Sweden and the early history of lustre-painting*, Stockholm 1941, pp. 13 ff.

²¹ For general classification of Chinese pottery see W. B. Honey, *The ceramic art of China and other countries of the Far East*, London 1944. A short survey of the field and excellent illustrations gives the more recent work of F. Koyama and J. Figgess, *Two thousand years of oriental ceramics*, New York 1961.

²² G. Marcais, *Les poteries et faïences de la Qal'a des Beni Hammad*, Constantine 1913, pl. XI, fig. 2, 11, 14.

²³ Manuel Gomez Moreno, *El arte Árabe Español hasta los Almohades*, „Ars Hispaniae“ (III), Madrid 1951, pp. 311—313, fig. 377—380.

²⁴ G. Mehrez, loc. cit.

²⁵ D. Talbot Rice, *Islamic art*, New York—Washington 1965, p. 93.

²⁶ The lack of evidence of local production of the finer ceramic ware stands in contrast with the tradition of manufacturing of pottery in Alexandria as old as the Ptolomaic era (cf. A. J. Butler, *Islamic pottery a study mainly historical*, London 1926, pp. 10 ff.). There is however at Kōm ed-Dikka abundant evidence material in favour of glass industry (Cf. A. Lane, op. cit., („Bull. Fac. Art. Univ. Alex.“, vol. V) p. 144, J. Lipińska—H. Riad, op. cit., (ASAE), W. Kubiak, op. cit., (BSAA, No 42) pp. 48 ff.) which usually was closely associated with manufacture of glazed pottery.

AYYUBID PERIOD

The layers directly overlaying the superior necropolis correspond chronologically to the Ayyubid period. There is especially a very distinct stratum, in some places surpassing 10 metres in thickness, which occupies the central part of the southern half of the Kōm. In other parts of the area the layers are usually less clear but the presence of the said necropolis generally establishes basic chronological division giving at least a firm *terminus post quem*²⁷.

The Ayyubid layer yielded a great number and variety of fragments of the imported wares which made up as much as almost half of all the glazed pottery found of that period, and the greater proportion of wares of better quality.

There were two main sources of the pottery import to Alexandria in this time, as shown by archaeological finds. One was the Far East, the other the Christian lands of the North-Eastern Mediterranean²⁸. Far Eastern ceramics are represented by the Sung Dynasty stone-ware and porcelain of different types. Of the most common occurrence are celadons with light greyish fabrics and sea-green glaze of the Lung ch'üan type produced in Chekiang²⁹. Yüeh celadons usually with a darker grey body and grey-greenish thick glaze such as were made in different kiln-sites in Hangchow³⁰ and so-called northern celadons (or the Ju ware) with olive-green glaze and often with brownish-buff body³¹ occur less frequently. Somewhat less numerous are sherds of white porcelain of the Ting type produced in Kiang si province³² and lovely slightly bluish ware of ying-ch'ing type with

²⁷ W. Kubiak, op. cit., (BSAA No 43), in the press; id. and E. Makowiecka, op. cit., (ASAE, in the press).

²⁸ See classification of Wace's finds in A. Lane, op. cit., (Bull. Fac. Arts Univ. Alex., V), pp. 144 ff.

²⁹ Cf. G. St. G. M. Gompertz, *Chinese celadon wares*, London 1958, pp. 50—65.

³⁰ Ibid, pp. 4—21; Cf. also R. L. Hobson, *A dish of Yüeh ware*, „Burlington Magazine“ 63 (1933), p. 122.

³¹ Ibid, pp. 35—39; Cf. also S. E. Lee, *Sung ceramics in the light of recent Japanese research*, „Artibus Asiae“ XI (1948), p. 168.

³² Cf. W. E. Cox, *The Book of Pottery and Porcelain*, New York 1944, pp. 180 ff., and S. E. Lee, op. cit., pp. 166 ff.

all probability manufactured in Kiang si³³. These two last types of ceramics are more frequent towards the end of the period. Beside the described types a few sherds of crude thickbody pottery with brown or ochre glaze and of South-East Asian celadons could also be attributed to the same period³⁴.

Of the shapes of imported far-eastern vessels the most popular were ring flat-footed bowls of various dimensions. Some of them — judging from the curve of preserved fragments and from the substantial thickness of the body — must have been of considerable size. Fragments of vessels of a more elaborate form were also found, notably of spouted flasks, small vases, caskets, plates and ewers, some of them with lids. Many of these vessels were decorated. Delicate patterns — usually floral — were engraved in the bodies under glaze. Examples of zoomorphic designs — frequently standing in relief — including fish, birds, dragons and tortoises, were also found.

The second large group of foreign ware consists of imports of North Eastern Mediterranean origin where presumably numerous centres of industry of glazed pottery produced vessels of good quality, pleasant in shape and decoration and supposedly inexpensive. There have been several major types or families of these usually bowl-shape ceramics recorded at Kōm ed-Dikka. The first of these groups comprises only a few fragments of so-called Byzantine sgraffito ware. They are rather thickly potted with red body and the decoration scratched with a very fine point through a thin white slip. Decoration generally consists of a border band with a highly simplified rinceau design and concentric circles. The almost colourless glaze has creamy or pale green tint.

³³ W. E. Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 133 ff., and S. E. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 170 f.; cf. also Ch. N. Spinks, *A ceramic interlude in Siam*, "Artibus Asiae" 23 (1960), pp. 85—110, fig. 1, and 4a-d.

³⁴ Cf. also finds from the region of Aden (A. Lane, R. B. Serjent, *Pottery and glass fragments from the Aden littoral*, JRAS 1949, pp. 123 ff.) and from Fustāt (R. L. Hobson, *Chinese porcelain from Fustāt*, "Burlington Magazine" LXI, Sept. 1932, pp. 109 ff.). Many Far Eastern vessels of similar types as those found in Alexandria were excavated in medieval burials in the Philippines; cf. the recent work of L. and C. Loesin, *Oriental ceramics discovered in the Philippines*, Tokyo 1967, esp. figs. 54, 57, 111, 114, 115, 117, 120, 122.

The sgraffito ware has been found in considerable quantity on many sites in the North Eastern Mediterranean and is particularly well represented in Greece³⁵, where it was probably manufactured³⁶.

Of more frequent occurrence were fragments of another type of pottery which (together with the subsequently described types) may be listed into a larger class designated by D. Talbot Rice as the "elaborate incised ware"³⁷. The very characteristic decoration of this ware (mostly geometric) including circles, crosses, waved lines etc. is executed in a sgraffito technique. Besides there are broad incised or gouged lines around the center and other at the border. The glaze applied over the white slip is cream-coloured, brownish (or occasionally greenish) and the decoration is dark brown or olive-colour. The analogous pottery has been found in a number of sites³⁸. The ware from Chersonese (designated as groups 2 and 3 in A. L. Yakobson's classification) is reported to be of local production³⁹.

³⁵ Cf. A. Lane, *Medieval finds at Al Mina in North Syria*, "Archaeologia" 87, 1938, p. 43) who gives further references. See also Pl. XX, 1, A—D.

³⁶ Kilns and other traces of ceramic industry were found at Corinth. Sgraffito ware was locally manufactured throughout the 12th and 13th centuries; cf. Ch. H. Morgan II, *The Byzantine pottery*, "Corinth" XI, Cambridge, Mass. 1942, pp. 7—25 and 116—161.

³⁷ *Byzantine glazed pottery*, Oxford 1930, pp. 34 ff.

³⁸ The account of recent finds of this type of pottery at Corinth gives Theodora Stillwell MacKay, *More Byzantine and Frankish pottery from Corinth*, "Hesperia" 36 (1967), pp. 258 ff. and Pl. 63 figs. 27, 28, who also gives further references. The author designates it as "shiny olive incised ware II", and dates to the late 12th and mid 13th centuries, which agrees with our chronology. The analogous ware from Constantinople was dated by coins to early 13th century; cf. *The Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors*, vol. I (1947), Ch. II, *The pottery* by B. K. Stevenson, p. 54.

³⁹ A. L. Yakobson, *Medieval Chersonese (XII—XIV c.)* (in Russian), Moskva—Leningrad 1950, pp. 171—172, Pl. I and 195—197, Pl. XXVI, XXVII. The author affirms local production of the ware but gives no archaeological proof. He neither referred to wasters nor to other remains of the pottery industry associated with this particular type of ware. All his finds came from habitations. The given opi-

There is another type of pottery recorded in the same layer which is closely related to the previously described class, at least as far as the fabric is concerned. Both are thinly potted and were made of hard, fine clay of the same type, differing in colour from orange-red and purplish-red to dark grey, evidently as the result of uneven firing in the kiln. All this would point to one large centre of production. Decoration of the second type consists of sgraffito floral patterns or scrolls combined with characteristic, incised concentric bands deeply cut through the slip into the body. Often there is no sgraffito decoration. Occasionally, space between bands is divided by groups of parallel lines straight or pointed. The glaze on the slip ranges in colour from almost colourless to light green and from pale yellow to light brown. In the incisions it fires olive green and russet brown. The last type of pottery seems to be a modification of D. Talbot Rice's „shiny olive incised ware“⁴⁰. This type of ware found in al-Mina was described and illustrated by A. Lane. He suggested that it was probably produced in the Black Sea area⁴¹. However similar ware found in Cyprus and designated as the plain sgraffito is attributed to this island⁴².

In addition to the types described above there were recorded several distinct types showing however certain characteristics of precedent groups. These were: a) Pottery with floral or plaited designs on the border of vessels executed in low relief or in sgraf-

nion is based on a stylistic analysis. There is no discussion of the texture of the fabric that would held to establish a relation with analogous ware found in Alexandria.

⁴⁰ See his *Preliminary report upon the excavations carried out in the Hippodrome of Constantinople in 1927*, Oxford 1928, p. 34; cf. also group B 2 in his *Byzantine glazed pottery*, Oxford 1930, pp. 34 ff., figs. 5, 13, 14.

⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, („Archaeologia“ 87), pp. 43 f., where he gives further references. Examples are on Pl. XX, 1, unlettered.

⁴² See A. I. Dikigoropoulos and A. H. S. Megaw, *Early glazed pottery from Polis*, Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus (1940—1948), Nicosia 1958, p. 81 and Pl. VIII, c, g, i. There is however a possibility that at least part of this pottery found in Cyprus might have been imported. The authors admitted that the conclusive evidence of wasters is at present lacking (*ibid.*, pp. 85 f.)

fito technique. Some sgraffito border patterns, in a very conventionalized manner imitate the Arabic script. In the central part of the vessel are often found the same incised or gouged concentric bands, or parallel lines in a circle. The technique of decoration and colour of the glaze in many respects is close to the precedent types. The pottery was however rather thickly potted and the clay although of good quality is softer and more gritty. b) Ware with relief usually floral decoration executed in a technique resembling „champlevé“. The glaze varies from deep yellow and brown to dark green and the thick body is brown-red of very hard, gritty fabric⁴³. c) Olive or yellow-green glazed ceramics with roughly outlined zoomorphic or anthropomorphic designs (usually human faces and birds) deeply incised into the body⁴⁴. d) The last type of „elaborate incised ware“ with, usually geometric, scratched and incised designs, clearly outlined under the dark olive or brownish-olive glaze has been represented by several finds. It is rather thickly potted and the clay, red or pinkish-red and seems to be different as compared with other types of Byzantine pottery⁴⁵.

In rather moderate number occur sherds of the pottery known as the Athlit ware or Proto Majolica. This pottery appears in Alexandria in its main class with white or light buff sandy body and patterns painted in manganese-purple, yellow-brown and cobalt blue under transparent glaze⁴⁶. Similar ceramics have been recorded at different sites in Syria, Palestine, Transjordan,

⁴³ Both types show also general characteristics of the „elaborate incised ware“ (cf. *supra*, note 34) however exactly similar examples are not to be found in the published material.

⁴⁴ One sherd of this type is reproduced in J. du Plat Taylor and A. H. S. Megaw, *Cypriot medieval glazed pottery*, Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, 1937—1939, Nicosia 1951, Pl. IX, 3, No 14.

⁴⁵ Sherd of this type is reproduced in colour in D. Talbot Rice, *Byzantine glazed pottery*, Pl. II, 1.

⁴⁶ The detailed description, classification and illustrations of this kind of ware gives Ch. H. Morgan, *op. cit.*, pp. 105—112, Pl. XXXIII—XXXVII. See also C. N. Johns, *Medieval slip-ware from Pilgrims' Castle Athlit*, „Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine“, 3 (1934), pp. 141 ff., Pl. XLIX, LIII.

Italy and Greece⁴⁷. The painted type of this ware was produced, according to C. N. Johns' opinion, somewhere in Asia Minor⁴⁸, and according to Ch. H. Morgan, in the southern part of the Aegean⁴⁹. Actual kiln sites are till now unknown, although some more recent archaeological discoveries point to South Italy⁵⁰.

Quite a number of potsherds of the sgraffito ware produced in Port St. Symeon in North Syria has been recorded in the discussed layer. This pottery-painted in green or honey-colour under yellowish transparent glaze with darker stains — was decorated with incised floral, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic patterns⁵¹. Port St. Symeon (also known as Al-Mina) ceramics disappeared at the eve of the next period.

The last group of glazed ware of the region yielded by the Ayyubid stratum was manufactured in Cyprus. Finer products of the Cypriot ceramic industry destined for exportation are closely related to the preceding type manufactured at al-Mina⁵². Some Cypriot vessels of sgraffito type are indeed hard to distinguish from those of the al-Mina make, but ordinarily Cypriot pottery is technically less perfect, and there is a smaller proportion of green pigment in the glaze⁵³. Sherds of unquestionably Cypriot provenience occur rather sparingly in Alexandria.

The third source of foreign pottery of the same period revealed in Alexandrian excavations was the Mediterranean Muslim hin-

⁴⁷ Cf. A. Lane, *op. cit.* („Archaeologia“ 87), pp. 54 ff.

⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*

⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 108.

⁵⁰ According to A. Lane's information quoted A. J. Dikigoropoulos and A. H. S. Megaw, *op. cit.*, p. 85, n. 2 a quantity of this ware was discovered by Mr. J. Bradford on sites in Foggia district.

⁵¹ A. Lane, *op. cit.* („Archaeologia“ 87), pp. 27 ff., PL. XXI—XXVI.

⁵² Classification of this pottery is given in I. du Plat Taylor and A. H. S. Megaw, *op. cit.* Cf. especially pp. 5—6 and I. du Plat Taylor, *Medieval graves in Cyprus*, „Ars Islamica“ 4, pp. 72 ff., Figs. 19, 21, 41, 45 etc.

⁵³ Cf. R. L. Hobson, *The later al-Mina pottery*, „British Museum Quarterly“, 9 (1937), pp. 115—116. The problem of the manufacture of vessels of this type is discussed by D. Talbot Rice in his *Late Byzantine pottery at Dumbarton Oaks*, „Dumbarton Oaks Papers“ 20 (1966), pp. 213 ff.

terland. Examples of Islamic ware, very few in number, usually represent types of luxury pottery decorated in lustre and manufactured in Syria, with Raqqa as the principal centre of production, and in Persia. A few fragments of Maghrebian or Spanish painted pottery of a cruder type decorated in blue and manganese can also be attributed to the same period⁵⁴.

MAMLUK PERIOD

Later strata at Kōm ed-Dikka bear witness to a considerable change in the Alexandrian pottery trade. Fragments of imported ware are still fairly common but at the same time the proportion of ware of Egyptian make substantially increased. Foreign pottery in these later times was more or less limited to finer, more expensive types. Fragments of Chinese wares and in particular celadons occur throughout the Mamluk strata. The *ting* and — a bit later *ying ch'ing* type gradually disappear and in their place appears the famous Ming white and blue porcelain. The number of Chinese potsherds is however far below the average of the preceding period.

The ceramics of the Christian North-East Mediterranean, with the exception of Cypriot ware, completely vanish in the Mamluk stratum. But the pottery attributed to Cyprus, both finer and cruder types, continue well into the period.

Muslim Anatolian pottery — on a very modest scale — replaced the earlier christian-made ware of this region. It is represented by a few finds of the type known as Miletus ware, which — as demonstrated by recent archaeological discoveries — had been manufactured in Isnik since the 13th century⁵⁵. One or two pieces of later Anatolian Isnik pottery of the blue and white type — reported to have been found in Alexandria — came from uncontrolled excavations, probably outside Kōm ed-Dikka.

⁵⁴ This type of pottery found at Byrsa near Tunis is illustrated in J. Febron et M. Pinard, *Les fouilles de Byrsa* 1953—1954, „Cahiers de Byrsa“, V, (1955), Nos. 12, 13, 21—26, 50, 64, 67—69.

⁵⁵ Oktay Aslanapa, *Türkische Fliesen und Keramik in Anatolien*, Istanbul 1965.

Syrian fine pottery, although never very numerous, occurs in the Alexandrian excavations throughout the Mamluk stratum. Handsome pieces of Damascus lustre and underglaze painted „silhouette“ ware were found ⁵⁶.

The largest quantity of imported ceramics as demonstrated by archaeological layers of the Mamluk age originated from the Western Mediterranean. Presumably Maghrebian blue and manganese painted wares — popular already in Ayyubid times — had been coming in large numbers almost until the end of Mamluk rule ⁵⁷.

In a parallel to the Maghrebian pottery came various types of Spanish ware. Practically all Spanish centers of ceramic production and all pottery types are represented among the Alexandrian finds. There are however types particularly favoured. These are Valencian gold and gold-and-blue lustre wares in major part manufactured at Manises, and the Catalan green-and-manganese painted ware usually made at Manresa. Andalusian lustre pottery of Malaga and Granada occurs only in a small quantity. The same is true with regard to the famous Paterna green-and-manganese ceramics. Only a few sherds could be positively classified within this group. On the other hand the contemporary, but less popular, white-and-blue Paterna ware is quite frequently recorded in Alexandria. A somewhat later group of ceramics manufactured in Aragonese kiln sites — in particular the green-and-manganese group — is represented by a number of potsherds as well ⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ Theory of the Anatolian origin of those types of pottery advanced by F. R. Martin, *The true Origin of so-called Damascus ware*, „Burlington Magazine“, XV (1909), pp. 269 f., has been so far unproved.

⁵⁷ Cf. *supra*, n. 54.

⁵⁸ The best general reference book on Spanish pottery is Juan Ainaud de Lasarte, *Ceramica y vidrio* („Ars Hispaniae“, 10), Madrid 1952. For the types common in Alexandria cf. pp. 13—30, figs., 17—19, 22, 41—43, 45—47; pp. 32—77, figs.: 72—84, 92—95, 111—113; pp. 111—122, figs.: 294, 296—298, 306, 307. See also A. W. Frothingham, *Lustreware of Spain*, New York 1951, Manuel Gonzales Marti, *Ceramica del Levante Espanol*, esp. vol. I, Barcelona 1944, and Martin, Almagro Basch y Luis Maria Llubia Munne, *La ceramica de Teruel*, Teruel 1962.

Medium size bowl-shaped vessels were obviously the most popular. The majority of examined sherds constitute fragments of bowls. Fragments of plates, dishes and albarelli occur, but in a smaller number. In one case a piece of a thick flat handle was found. This was evidently a fragment of a large wing handle „Alhambra vase“.

The last group of imported pottery excavated at Kōm ed-Dikka came from Italy and Sicily. This group — if we exclude the earlier „Athlit ware“ — is no so numerous as the former categories. A few sherds resemble 15th century ceramics found in Syracuse with decoration painted in brown, green and yellow or in brown and sea-green on a cream-coloured background ⁵⁹. Other sherds, viz. of cruder green-and-manganese cross-hatched ware, probably originated from the district of Orvieto ⁶⁰. A small number of sherds with blue-and-manganese and with polychromatic decoration are characteristic of Florence and Faenza 15th century products ⁶¹.

There is a large category of various kinds of glazed pottery, presumably made outside Egypt, which cannot be identified in the course of preliminary examination. Its origin is obscure and only thorough study of large comparative material may give an answer with regard to the provenance and chronology. In the study of Near-Eastern and Mediterranean pottery there are still many unexplored fields although recent studies-especially extensive archaeological excavations which are scientifically controlled and minutely recorded — bring new material every year and help

⁵⁹ Especially types as in E. Mauceri, *L'arte della maiolica in Sicilia (dal XIV al XVI secolo)*, Rassegna d'arte antica e moderna, 1915 (Anno 2, vol. 1), pp. 102—109, figs. 9, 10.

⁶⁰ See G. Reitlinger, *The interim period in Persian pottery*, „Ars Islamica“, 5 (1938), figs 27, 28. There is however a possibility that at least a part of this pottery was imitated in Egypt. The analogous type of pottery was also produced in North Persia (*Ibid*, pp. 173 f., figs 23—26), but it seems unlikely that some sherds from Kōm ed-Dikka could be attributed to this group.

⁶¹ These are exclusively types with non-figurative decoration. Any reference-book for Italian early maiolica gives the parallels. Cf. f. ex. G. Ballardini, *La maiolica italiana dalle origini alla fine del cinquecento*, Florence 1938, figs 19, 21, 23.

to clarify diverse problems. Besides, there are many types of pottery made in various periods in different localities — frequently widely separated — which are of almost identical appearance. Classification of such types often presents great difficulty. In a case where indications point toward the local production of some analogous vessels the whole category, as a rule, is attributed to such a local group. This conclusion would be certainly logical, but nevertheless in some specific cases misleading. In extreme cases only chemical and crystallographical analysis of fabric and glaze may furnish conclusive arguments. And this, let us hope, will become the practice in future archaeology.

GENERALITIES AND CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological finds of which we have given a general summary cannot, of course, provide conclusive arguments for the history of the traffic of ceramic ware in the Eastern Mediterranean. They can however enlighten some aspects of that traffic, which otherwise are little-known. And, as a rule, they give an approximate illustration of the general tendencies in industry and expansion of ceramic ware in the discussed time.

The early period, up to the rise of the Fatimid Dynasty in Egypt, shows several characteristic phenomena clearly demonstrated by archaeological material from Near-Eastern sites such as Samarra, Raqqa, Suse, Fustāt, Alexandria and many others. One of them is the production of lead glazed relief wares technically and artistically closely associated with preislamic models. Traffic of this type of ware doubtlessly existed but production was apparently widely spread over Iraq, Syria and Egypt and certainly influenced later manufacture⁶². Then comes an invention of a new technique of decoration in metallic lustre applied to glass and pottery. The main centre of the manufacturing of lustre pottery in the first half of the ninth century was Samarra and a little later Fustāt and probably some Iranian sites⁶³. Import

⁶² Cf. A. Lane, *Glazed relief ware of the ninth century A. D.*, „Ars Islamica“, VI (1939), pp. 56—65.

⁶³ Cf. A. Lane, *Early Islamic pottery*, pp. 14 ff., and D. Talbot Rice, *Islamic art*, pp. 36 ff.

of this type of ware from Iraq to Egypt must have been quite substantial, as demonstrated by thousands of fragments of Samarra ware yielded by Fustāt mounds⁶⁴. In view of this large traffic the conclusion becomes selfevident that either the local, Egyptian production began somewhat later, that its output had been insufficient to meet the great demand or that it was simply considered as of an inferior quality.

The Irakian pottery was, in all probability, carried to Egypt by the water-way from the Tigris to the Persian Gulf and then to Qulzum on the Gulf of Suez, and to Fustāt, either by the old Khalīġ Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn (which in the times of Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn was probably navigable again), or by the shortest land-route. To Alexandria, the popular land-route from the Red Sea to Faramā and then the sea-route could have been used⁶⁵. However it seems more likely, that because the main market of pottery in Egypt was undubitably in Fustāt, occasional imports to Alexandria were brought by the usual water-route from that city.

Another important factor was the import of a great quantity of luxurious T'ang pottery from the Far East. Samarra and perhaps Baghdad, the rich capital cities of the Abbasid caliphs, were the primary destinations⁶⁶. In much smaller proportion this import was destined for other contemporary urban centers in the Near East and East Africa. In Egypt, besides Alexandria, a quantity of T'ang ware was found at Fustāt⁶⁷.

⁶⁴ Rudolph Schnyder's opinion (*Tulunidische Lüsterfayence*, „Ars Orientalis“, V, 1963, pp. 49—79 pass.) of the local manufacturing of, at least a great part, of this pottery and the given evidence do not seem convincing.

⁶⁵ The land-route from Qulzum to Faramā was usually taken by the Jewish merchants known as the Radhanites. See Ibn Khurdābeh, ed. de Goeje, BGA VI, Leyden 1889, p. 153; About these routes see G. Wiet, *Les communications en Égypte au Moyen-Âge*, „L'Égypte Contemporaine“, 24, January 1933, pp. 244, 258 ff.; Cf. also G. F. Hourani, *Arab seafaring in the Indian Ocean in ancient and early medieval times*, Princeton 1951, pp. 78 ff.

⁶⁶ Cf. F. Sarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 54 ff.

⁶⁷ See R. L. Hobson, *Chinese porcelain from Fustāt*, „Burlington Magazine“, LXI, Sept. 1932, pp. 110 ff.

Chinese pottery was exported via the port of Kanton⁶⁸, then to the Persian Gulf and up the Tigris to its destination. Far Eastern goods taken to Egypt were brought via the Red Sea and then followed the same route as the lustre ware of Samarra. It is very unlikely that any land-route could be much used for transportation of ceramic ware. For fragile material of that type it certainly would have been disastrous.

Chinese pottery served as models for local imitations, which were manufactured since early times in a great amount by Near Eastern potters. Many of Near Eastern archaeological sites yielded a quantity of wares influenced by Chinese pottery. There are vessels with a monochromatic tin glaze, usually white, imitating porcelain. There are also vessels decorated with polychromatic splashes in lead glaze. Some of them have an additional sgraffito decoration applied under glaze. Another type associated with Chinese inspiration bears clear decoration in cobalt blue, green, yellow or manganese on a plain white or creamy tin glazed surface. Some relief ware as well are said to be influenced by Far-Eastern models⁶⁹.

Nothing points directly to an extensive traffic of these wares. Archaeological material suggests at least several centres of production of T'ang-derived pottery in Mesopotamia, Persia and Egypt; therefore, as similar products were made in these various countries, probably no commercial reasons arose to carry such goods to distant markets. However, among early pottery finds in Egypt direct Chinese models for the local imitations are not to be found (with possibly one exception of T'ang white porcelain). Thus archaeological finds, though not conclusively, suggest indirect inspiration either by means of early import of T'ang-derived ware from industrial centers (where the manufacturing of such products was introduced earlier) or by the immigration of potters trained in this production.

⁶⁸ Short account of the Chinese pottery export in the T'ang epoch gives W. B. Honey, *op. cit.*, pp. 59 f.; See also G. F. Hourani, *op. cit.* pp. 69 ff.

⁶⁹ Cf. D. Talbot-Rice, *Islamic art*, pp. 38—40; See also R. Koechlin, *Chinese influences in the Musulman pottery of Susa*, „Eastern Art“, I, (1928), pp. 1—12.

In Fatimid times the situation in the Near Eastern ceramic industry changed, and accordingly main trends in the pottery traffic changed also. Two distinctly different periods may be distinguished with the division around the year 1060.

The first of these periods witnessed in Egypt extraordinary developments in the field of arts and artistic industry⁷⁰. Pottery and glass-making attained a high degree of perfection. In particular the lustre-painted white ceramics, those decorated with alkaline glazes and incised decoration, types known as „Fayoumi“, and monochrome tin glazed vessels were manufactured in great number in Fustât kilns, and perhaps also in other centres of Upper Egypt⁷¹.

With such developed local industry certainly no need for a substantial import of foreign pottery arose. On the contrary, there must have existed a rather important export of Egyptian ceramic ware and other products of artistic industry to foreign countries, especially to Mediterranean lands, both Muslim and Christian. The problem has never been fully studied, but occasional informations in scientific literature are not lacking⁷². Alexandria, in all probability, served as a chief loading place for this merchandise, and some pieces of Fustât pottery of early Fatimid types may be associated with this commerce.

During this period, however, small quantities of Far-Eastern pottery, especially expensive porcelain, continued to arrive in Egypt⁷³; since Iraq had lost its privileged position in the Islamic world, Egypt had become the chief destination of Far Eastern pottery in the Near East.

⁷⁰ Cf. f. ex. E. Kühnel, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, London 1966; pp. 65 ff.

⁷¹ D. Talbot-Rice, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

⁷² See f. ex. A. Lane, *Early Islamic pottery*, p. 22; E. Kühnel, *op. cit.*, pp. 72 ff.; cf. also G. Ballardini, *Note sui „bacini“ romanici e in particolare „bacini“ orientali in San Sisto di Pisa, „Faenza“*, XVII (1929), p. 121.

⁷³ Cf. for instance a handsome porcelain bottle of the late 10th century found at Fustât (See G. T. Scanlon, *Fustât excavations 1965, preliminary report*, I Part, „Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt“, V, Boston 1966, pl. I.

At a certain time during the Fatimid period the traditional itinerary of merchants carrying oriental goods to Egypt somewhat changed. Since the early 12th century written accounts refer to the traffic via the Port of 'Aidhab, from which goods were taken by land to Qūṣ or to Aṣwān on the Nile valley and then downstream to Cairo and Alexandria ⁷⁴. The route via Suez could have been still of some importance. Pottery was certainly carried along the same route as the merchandise of the famous Kārimī-merchants ⁷⁵, possibly even on their own ships, although it seems that earthenware was not often listed along with other goods dealt with by this guild ⁷⁶. It is, however, noteworthy that al-Idrīsī — around the year 1154 — spoke of pottery as of one of products brought from Aden ⁷⁷. And Aden was evidently one of the chief supply-centres of Kārimī-merchants by the middle of 12th century.

In later Fatimid times the influx of Oriental ceramic wares again increased in proportion. Moreover, for the first time in Islamic economic history, the pottery of western Muslim countries found its way to Egyptian markets. This import — though substantiated only by very few finds — bears witness to the growth of new industrial centres in the West, hitherto producing ceramic-ware only for local consumption.

Simultaneously, the growing import of foreign ceramics, in particular the lustre-painted-ware hitherto traditional to Egypt, proves a certain decline of its industry.

Archaeological data and chronology are generally not precise enough to permit very accurate and absolute historical conclusions, yet the quoted facts could be associated with the effects of unhappy events which caused a depopulation of Egypt in the days of al-Mustanṣir's rule. Disastrous pestilence and famine

⁷⁴ See *al-Idrīsī*, ed J. Dozy, pp. 179, 191, 192; *William of Tyre*, transl. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey, vol. II, p. 336 etc.; cf. also S. Y. Labib, *op. cit.*, pp. 124 ff.

⁷⁵ Walter J. Fischel, *The spice trade in Mamluk Egypt*, JESHO I, p. 162.

⁷⁶ The only account I was able to find was referred to in A. Lane and R. B. Serjeant, *op. cit.* (JRAS 1949), pp. 113 f.

⁷⁷ Transl. Jaubert, I, p. 51. For further Eastern accounts of this trade see A. Lane and R. B. Serjeant, *op. cit.*, pp. 109—117.

beginning in 1054 had ravaged Egypt for eight years and caused unreparable damage to Fustāt's prosperity ⁷⁸. It must have also affected the flourishing potters' industry and brought about its gradual decline. The final blow to the city of Fustāt and its crafts had been its burning by Shawar's order in 1168. But when it occurred and the fire consumed the remaining parts of the city — the glory of Fustāt pottery had already been long gone. Famous potters who survived the plague probably left the country to look elsewhere for a better opportunity. The sudden expansion of Raqqa, Rāyy and Kashan lustre painted wares at about this time is sometimes associated with the immigration of Egyptian potters ⁷⁹. In any case the local industry of artistic ceramics during the last century of Fatimid rule did not create remarkable works of great beauty and perfect technique, and produced no artists who could equal such masters as the Muslim, Sa'ad or Miṣrī of the preceding period.

The decline of Fustāt ceramic production, especially its finer and more expensive types, promoted, as we said, the rapid growth of imports which, during Ayyubid times, must have brought to Egypt enormous quantities of divers vessels. This increasing demand in Egypt coincided with a renaissance of ceramic industry in China where under the rule of the Sung Dynasty the volume of output and quality of ware surpassed that of the T'ang period. The firmly controlled export of pottery must have been both encouraged and facilitated by the authorities ⁸⁰.

Further study, however, would be required with regard to the second large group of ceramic vessels brought to Egypt. The vigorous development of North-Eastern Mediterranean centers of ceramic production, and especially the traffic of its products, are little known. Trade in this region in the late 12th and 13th centuries was almost entirely monopolized by Italian merchants. They, in constant need for means of payment for expen-

⁷⁸ Cf. Ali Bahgat bey et A. Gabriel, *Fouilles d'al-Fustat*, Paris 1921, pp. 11 f.

⁷⁹ Cf. A. Lane, *Early Islamic pottery*, pp. 37—38; D. Talbot-Rice, *Islamic art*, p. 93.

⁸⁰ See W. B. Honey, *op. cit.*, pp. 94 ff., F. Koyama—J. Fig-gess, *op. cit.*, pp. 64 f.

sive Oriental transit goods purchased in Egypt, might have been responsible for introducing this kind of ware. Perhaps, as well, the pottery arrived in Egypt directly from the Northern Lands and was transported both by Muslim and Byzantine merchant marines. The detailed history of this commerce is still quite obscure, although its role must have been considerable to justify the presence of a Constantinopolitan fondaco in Alexandria ⁸¹. Greek merchants in Egypt were somewhat privileged, as a number of them paid as duty only 10 percent on the value of their goods, instead of the usual 20 percent collected from others ⁸².

Pottery finds indicate wider commercial relations between Black Sea ports and Egypt, than merely the import of Mamluk slaves. Egyptian trade with the Black Sea had considerable traditions ⁸³ and continued well into the Mamluk times. Part of it was carried out without the intermediary of the Italian fleet ⁸⁴.

The import of luxury vessels decorated with metallic lustre from the centers of manufacture situated far inland of the Near Eastern countries was restricted in volume due to the long and difficult land transportation. Nevertheless since the Egyptian market throughout centuries was accustomed to this type of ware, after local production had ceased, foreign supplies had to satisfy its demands. If the theory of emigration of Fustāt potters to Raqqa and Kashan is true, commercial contacts with these centers would be only natural.

The Raqqa pottery, jointly with other goods from Mesopotamia, was certainly transported via Aleppo to the Christian ports of North Syria—Lattakieh or Saint Symeon ⁸⁵ — and then by boat to Alexandria. The water-way down the Euphrates and around Arabia, in this case, is less plausible because of too great

⁸¹ In 1422 when Ghillebert de Lannoy visited Alexandria the Constantinopolitan fondaco had been already abandoned (cf. his *Oeuvres*, ed. Potvin, Louvain 1878, p. 110).

⁸² Al-Maqrizī, *Al-Khiṭāṭ*, ed IFAO, II, p. 102.

⁸³ Cf. G. I. Bratianu, *Recherches sur le commerce Génois dans la Mer Noire au XIII^e siècle*, Paris 1929, p. 28.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁸⁵ Cf. S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Penguin Books, 1965, III, p. 360.

a distance and too short a navigable season on the upper Euphrates. The Persian pottery from Rayy and Kashan was in all probability generally transported by the old land-route to the Persian Gulf, then to Qais ⁸⁶ and by sea to Aden or directly to the Red Sea ports, although the important trade-route via Baghdad and Aleppo cannot be excluded.

In Mamluk times the influx of North-East Mediterranean pottery ceased almost completely. The political events of the 13th century notably affected the economic life of the region where the ceramic production was concentrated. First of all the sack of Constantinople by the Latins and the subsequent conquest and re-conquest of the Aegean lands largely upset their arts and crafts. Then, the Mongol campaigns in Syria — among others disasters — brought an end to the flourishing potters' industry of Raqqa. A little later came the Mamluk attack on the principality of Antioch, where another centre of ceramic manufacture, the Port Saint Symeon, was destroyed. Qalā'wūn's and al-Ashraf's campaigns towards the end of the century against the Crusaders' settlements ruined all coastal towns which might also have housed some ceramic industry. About the same time Chersonese, another industrial city on the coast of Taurida, declined at about the same time, and by the end of the 14th century it was completely destroyed.

Uninterrupted connections with Italian tradesmen and regulation of commercial relations with the reestablished Byzantine Empire and the Black Sea ports could not revive Egyptian imports even if some supply centers had escaped destruction and were still active. In the course of the 13th century the Fustāt pottery industry regained a vigour unknown since Fatimid times and the kinds of ware that had been previously imported from the North were locally produced in great quantity. Some of them — earlier types of a lead glazed sgraffito pottery — could have been directly inspired by models imported from the Christian North. Another ceramic with painted silhouette decoration under transparent glaze — usually turquoise blue — developed by the

⁸⁶ About those routes see G. Le Strange, *The lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, Cambridge 1930, pp. 297—8.

imitation of Raqqa pottery. The origin of another type of painted ceramics can be traced to the so-called Miletus ware of early Isnik, and some others were influenced by decoration on certain Damascene and Persian (particularly Sulṭānābād) vessels.

However, the complicated process of manufacturing lustre painted ceramics evidently could not be successfully imitated by Fustāt potters. This type of ceramic ware — so fashionable in Egypt — continued to be imported, but the source of supply was now entirely different. Instead of the East, the West — from the 13th through the 15th centuries — had become the chief place of manufacture of this ware which widely supplied Mediterranean and even North European countries⁸⁷. Egyptian customers particularly favoured Spanish lustre ware, preferring it to the products of Kashan⁸⁸. Abundant archaeological finds both in Fustāt and Alexandria bear witness to its popularity⁸⁹, although the superior quality and more elaborate and sophisticated designs on Kashan wares are hardly questionable. The popularity of Spanish lustre in Egyptian markets was supposedly due to its lower price. The great production of Spanish lustre, particularly in Valencian kilns, and the facility of sea transport secured by the powerful and well organized Catalan merchant fleet⁹⁰ were sure factors to guarantee steady and relatively inexpensive importation.

Besides lustre painted pottery generally manufactured by Muslim potters in both Muslim and Christian ports of Spain, simpler vessels of more daily use were imported. These vessels were painted in blue or green and manganese, and were more Christian in feeling and apparently cheaper than finer ware. This pottery was usually thin and light as compared with the rather heavier products of Fustāt, and was decorated in graceful designs, although perhaps a little strange for Egyptian taste. This type must

⁸⁷ Cf. A. W. Frothingham, *op. cit.*, p. 73 and Juan Ainaud de Lasarte, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 f.

⁸⁸ See A. W. Frothingham, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁸⁹ Cf. G. Mehrez, *loc. cit.*; E. Kühnel, *Loza hispano-arabe excavada en Oriente*, „Al-Andalus“, 1942 (7), pp. 255—267.

⁹⁰ Cf. F. Giunta, *Aragonesi e Catalani nel Mediterraneo*, esp. t. II (Palermo 1959), pp. 86 ff.; see also Ch. E. Dufoureaq, *L'Espagne Catalane et le Maghrib aux XIII et XIV siècles*, Paris 1966, pp. 572 ff.

have been almost equally popular as the lustre ware. Another cruder type came from the Maghreb with more traditionally Islamic decoration painted in blue and manganese. The above-mentioned types constituted the majority of foreign ware on the Egyptian market.

Chinese celadons in later Mamluk times become infrequent, probably as a result of the Mongol policy to promote the land traffic from China at the cost of the sea trade, which was prevalent in earlier times and better fitted for the transport of fragile wares. Previously unknown blue-and-white Chinese porcelain apparently was never brought to the West in great quantities. The situation was the same with the genuine Persian wares of Kashan and Sultanabad which only occasionally appeared in Egypt. Damascene pottery was equally uncommon, although certain vessels could have been mistaken for Egyptian ones. With the exception of Damascene lustre painted ceramics, there was no economic justification for importation of Syrian pottery in Mamluk times, since exactly the same types of wares of a similar quality were manufactured by Egyptian potters.

Import of Italian ceramics during the 14th and 15th centuries — illustrated by occasional finds in Alexandria and Fustāt — had probably no economic significance. The volume of this import had evidently never been great, and Italian ceramic ware was rather intended to satisfy Egyptian tastes for foreign curiosities than necessity. Some of the vessels could have been brought by Italian merchants for their own use.

As shown by archaeological finds the importation of fine pottery must have been an important branch of foreign trade in Medieval Egypt. The wide use and considerable fragility of ceramic vessels assured constant demand. Thus pottery — together with timber, metal, spices, wool, silk, oil, and perhaps some other articles — not to mention slaves — must have constituted one of the chief items of imported goods. The rather high prices of ceramic vessels⁹¹ must have made their trade a rather profitable

⁹¹ See the list of prices established by E. Aschtor, *Matériaux pour l'histoire des prix dans l'Égypte médiévale*, JESHO, VI, 1963, pp. 177—178.

one. This explains why, for instance, in Spain many noble and rich families were organizing the export of pottery⁹². However a curious fact which stands in a certain contrast with given evidence should be noted. Written records of the Egyptian pottery trade — with exception, perhaps, of Chinese wares⁹³ — are disappointingly scanty in medieval sources⁹⁴. This evidently makes the archaeological sources even more valuable, but in the same time impairs the basis of a firm historical interpretation.

⁹² Cf. A. W. Frothingham, *Catalogue of Hispano-Moresque pottery in the collection of the Hispanic Society of America*, New York 1936, p. XXIII.

⁹³ Cf. P. Kahle, *Chinese porcelain in the lands of Islam*, "Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society", 41 (1940), pp. 27—46; Id. *Islamische Quellen zum chinesischen Porzellan*, ZDMG 88 (1934), pp. 11—45, and A. Lane-R. B. Serjeant, op. cit., pp. 110 ff.

⁹⁴ See for instance S. D. Goitein, *The main industries of the Mediterranean area as reflected in the records of the Cairo Geniza*, JESHO IV (1961), p. 188.

WŁODZIMIERZ ZAJĄCZKOWSKI

ASERBAIDCHANISCHE SPRACHPROBEN

Die in vorliegendem Aufsatz veröffentlichten und analysierten Sprachaufzeichnungen habe ich im Mai 1962 während meines Aufenthaltes in Baku im Sektor für Dialektologie des Nizāmi-Instituts für Literatur und Sprache bei der Akademie der Wissenschaften der Aserbaidchanischen SSR mit der Hilfe des wissenschaftlichen Mitarbeiters dieses Sektors Rasim Kerimow aufgeschrieben.

Sie bestehen aus 33 Liedern „Bayatī“ und 150 Sprichwörtern und Redensarten.

Die Bezeichnung „Bayatī“ ist für das aserbaidchanische Volkslied aus dem Stammesnamen „Bayat“ gebildet wie die Ausdrücke „Varsagi“, „Türkmeni“, „Türki“, „Afsari“, „Kazachi“, die eine bestimmte Gedichtsart bedeuten, auf Stammesnamen zurückgehen.

Die „Bayatī“ haben sich von Generation zu Generation fortgeerbt und noch heute sind sie sowohl im Volksmund, wie auch bei gebildeten Leuten vollkommen lebendig und erfreuen sich einer allgemeinen Beliebtheit, so daß täglich neue Lieder in Nachahmung der alten gedichtet werden.

Das „Bayatī“ besteht aus vier Versen, jeder Vers mit 7 Silben. Es wird also das alte türkische Versmaß, das sogenannte „pirmak hisabi“ angewandt. Es besteht aus vierzeiligen Strophen, von denen die erste, zweite und vierte Zeile immer, wie es auch im „Mani“ der Fall ist, den gleichen Endreim haben.

Inhaltlich ist das „Bayatī“ sehr mannigfaltig. Es gibt kein Thema, das nicht den Inhalt des Liedes bilden könnte. Jede Gelegenheit und jedes Erlebnis, politische Verhältnisse, neue Moden,