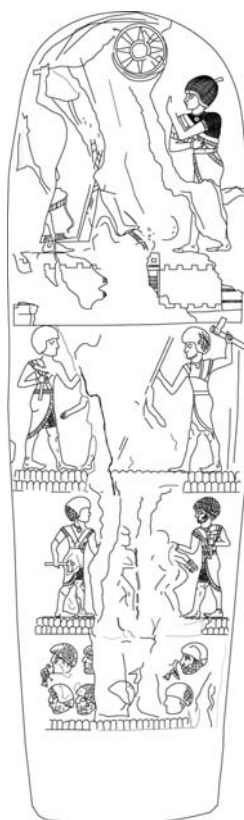


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TRICKLE PAINTED WARE:
AN EARLY BRONZE IV SPECIALIZED POTTERY PRODUCTION
IN PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN

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Early Bronze IV (2300-2000 BC) is characterized in Palestine and Transjordan by multiple ceramic horizons coexistent at a regional and cantonal level, each distinguished by specific pottery types and productions. Trickle Painted Ware, mainly attested in north-central Jordan Valley and generally regarded as a decorative style for Simple Ware vessels, actually has to be considered a specialized production, as technical, typological and stylistical features suggest. This preliminary overview of TPW attestations allows a more detailed definition of its geographical and chronological distribution.

1. PREMISE

Pottery has always been a primary tool in defining EB IV material culture and above all socio-economic pattern. Ruth Amiran was the first who stressed pottery regionalism as the main feature of the cultural horizon of the last quarter of the third millennium BC in Palestine, through the distinction of three¹ pottery groups – later brought to four² – each bearing in itself also an ethnic connotation and arranged in a chronological disposition³. Later on the work of the scholar was widened by William G. Dever, who distinguished six different pottery “families”⁴ – brought to seven with the discovery of tomb A 54 at Bab edh-Dhra⁵ – in which chronological and geographical distribution he thought that was possible to trace the progressive re-sedentarization of the social groups, from southeast north- and westward⁶, after the collapse of the urban system.

* I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Lorenzo Nigro, who introduced me to the study of Palestinian EB IV, for the opportunity of writing this contribution and for the support and the ever stimulating debate while drafting the same.

¹ Southern Group or *Group A*, Northern Group or *Group B* and Megiddo Group or *Group C* (Amiran 1960, 209-215; 1969a, 79-81).

² Adding the Bethel Group or *Group D* (Amiran 1969b; 1974, 1*).

³ *Groups B* and *C* were considered earlier, while *A* and *D* stood in the recent chronological horizon.

⁴ They are the *Northern Family* (abbr. N), the *North-Central Family* (NC), the *Central-Hill Family* (CH), the *Jericho-Jordan* (J), the *Southern Family* (S) and the *Coastal Family* (C), the latter only supposed (Dever 1971, 201-204; 1973, 56-59; 1980, 45-49).

⁵ Schaub 1973. The discovery of the tomb and the publication of the strongly peculiar materials of the funerary assemblage lead to the addition of the so-called *Transjordan Family* (TR), that was thought to be the earlier of the whole system of families (Dever 1973, 41; 1980, 48).

⁶ Dever 1980, 49.

In 1993 G. Palumbo and G. Peterman proposed to add another regional distinction to those recognized by Dever⁷ and at the same time to look at those “families” as contemporary and as regional variants of a unique cultural horizon with strong internal partitions, due to the development of diversified local traditions after the disappearance of the control of the urban centres on pottery production⁸. Actually, the increased archaeological research of the Eighties had shown that in some sites pottery types and productions belonging to different families were contemporary, since they had been found in stratigraphical association⁹. Since then research has gone on the one hand toward the definition of a general periodization with the distinction of two main phases: an early formative one, Early Bronze IVA or EB IVA (2300-2200 BC) and a more developed one, Early Bronze IVB or EB IVB (2200-2000 BC), into which re-comprehend and coordinate the different regional horizons, within their own internal chronological subdivisions¹⁰. On the other hand a great effort has been made toward a narrower and more detailed characterization of the regional horizons, extending the term “regionalism”¹¹ to the meaning of distinctions that are even “cantonal”, though composed in wider regional provinces (rather than families). In this mind, the presence/absence of a pottery type or production in a site should be seen not as the proof of the belonging of a site to a family or to another, but as the result of its insertion in a net of communication and exchange¹².

Trickle Painted Ware (henceforth TPW) is useful on both sides, since actually the narrow geographical distribution makes it a precious tool in defining ceramic provinces, while the occurrence in the stratified contexts of the sites makes it possible to use it as a chronological indicator of the funerary assemblages in which it frequently recurs.

⁷ It is the so-called *Amman-Zarqa Family*, located by the two scholars in central Transjordan (Palumbo - Peterman 1993). *Contra* Dever 2003.

⁸ Falconer - Magness-Gardiner 1984, 58; Prag 1986, 72; Palumbo 1990, 21, 80-81; Palumbo - Peterman 1993, 30; Nigro 1999, 13.

⁹ Falconer - Magness-Gardiner 1984, 57; Helms - McCreery 1988, 323; Richard - Boraas 1988, 124-126. This topic has recently been resumed by S. Richard dealing with ceramic materials of Khirbet Iskander Phase B (Richard 2000).

¹⁰ A subdivision in two main phases had been primarily proposed by E.D. Oren (1973a, 20) and later suggested also by S. Helms (1989, 32) and K. Prag (1986), basing respectively on the stratigraphy of Tell Umm Hammad and Tell Iktanu, both in Transjordan and more recently proposed again by L. Nigro after the renewed Italian-Palestinian excavations at Tell es-Sultan/Jericho (Nigro 2003, 131-134, 138-139). As regards definitions, there is a general acceptance of the term Early Bronze IV, although most of the Israeli scholars still refers to this period as Intermediate Bronze Age. That of nomenclature is not mere question of terminology, since it relies on the one hand on historical interpretation - i.e. looking at EB IV as the natural prosecution of the Early Bronze Age culture, that comes to an end just within this phase - on the other with the proper detection of cultural horizons, as recently pointed out by L. Nigro (2007, 366-368, 376-386).

¹¹ Palumbo 1990, 21; Nigro 1999, 37; Palumbo 2001, 251; Nigro 2003, 139.

¹² Palumbo 2001, 253.

2. TECHNOLOGICAL AND TYPOLOGICAL FEATURES

TPW is generally referred to as a decorative style in use on *Simple Ware*, but the characteristics of paste, the typological repertoire and the peculiar painted decoration point toward an interpretation of the same as a specialized pottery production.

Actually, TPW is primarily characterized by finely levigated wares, ochre to brown in colour, tempered with mineral inclusions – generally limestone and chert grits –, of small dimension and middle-high frequency. Open shapes are generally handmade and wheel-finished, while closed shapes usually have handmade bodies with whether wheel-finished rims or wheel-made necks and rims.

From the morphological point of view, the repertoire reproduces shapes attested also in the ordinary productions, though functionally limited to few basic types. Open shapes are represented by beakers and cups with slightly incurved walls, with natural or pointed rims (pl. I,1-3) and bowls with flat base and oblique walls, shallow or deeper (pl. I,4), sometimes accompanied by two plain ledge handles (pl. I,5). Closed shapes are mainly distinguished by jugs with globular body and flaring neck, smallest (pl. II,1-2) or tallest (pl. II,3, 6), teapots (pl. II,4-5), hole-mouth jars (pl. II,7-8) and *amphoriskoi* of small (pl. III,1-3), medium (pl. III,5-6) and big size (pl. IV,1-2). Small jars are more scarcely attested (pl. III,4), while storage jars are well represented (pls I,6, III,7, IV,3-4).

As regards decorative patterns, from which TPW derives the name, there is a coexistence of diversified repertoires, each internally standardized. The red paint, above all on closed shapes, is sometimes applied on a whitish wash.

Among open shapes beakers and cups are generally decorated by horizontal bands that contain smaller vertical traits on the exterior and by a single thick horizontal band all over the rim on the interior¹³ (pl. I,1) or, more rarely, by vertical bands branching off a horizontal one¹⁴ (pl. I,3), while a central *tondo* on the interior – generally filled with crossed lines, concentric circles, irregular traits or curvilinear motives –, encircled by horizontal bands and smaller oblique traits, is frequently present on bowls with oblique walls¹⁵ (pl. I,4-5). Closed shapes, particularly jugs¹⁶ and

¹³ In settlement sites at 'Afula (Gal - Covello-Paran 1996, 41, fig. 10,1-3), Tell Abu en-Ni'aj (Palumbo 1990, fig. 38,1-5,7), at Tell el-Hayyat (Falconer - Magness-Gardiner 1984, 58, fig. 12,1-2,14; Falconer - Fall 2006, 45, fig. 4,1 a-b; 47, fig. 4,2 b) and at Tell en-Nekheil (Palumbo 1990, fig. 47,4) and in the tomb at Tell el-Huṣn (Harding - Isserlin 1953, fig. 1,1).

¹⁴ At Tiberias (Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,1).

¹⁵ At Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tombs 58 (Wightman 1988, 154, fig. 13,6), 65 (McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pls 21,8; 22,10; 23,19; 25,34,36) and 70 (Wightman 1988, 152, fig. 12,5-9; 153, fig. 12,11-12).

¹⁶ In the Northern Cemetery of Beth Shan in tomb 74 (Oren 1973a, 26, fig. 2,2; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,13), at Tell el-'Asi in tombs B (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,8) and G (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,11), at Tel 'Aral, in tomb 1 (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,6), at Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tombs 58 (Wightman 1988, 154, fig. 13,1), 65 (McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pls 23,17-18; 24,23, 28; 25,32) and 70 (Wightman 1988, 147, fig. 8,4-11) and in the tomb at Tell el-Huṣn (Harding - Isserlin 1953, fig. 1,18-19,23).

*amphoriskoi*¹⁷, are often painted in a “metopal” scheme, with all the neck and the body painted, except for the shoulder, which is mostly reserved and painted with small oblique traits (pls II,3, III,2). Otherwise the themes are the same attested on open shapes: vertical bands coming down from horizontal ones¹⁸ (pls I,6, II,2, III,1,3,6, IV,1), or horizontal and vertical bands combined together¹⁹, sometimes also containing oblique irregular traits²⁰ (pls II,4,7-8, IV,2-3). Free-field decoration is attested on open shapes²¹ but it is more widespread on closed ones²² (pls I,5, II,6, III,7) and it is usually differentiated also inside the same site. Concentric circles, generally appearing on *amphoriskoi* (pl. III,5)²³ and storage jars²⁴ (pl. IV,4), are more scarcely attested.

On closed shapes, particularly storage jars and *amphoriskoi*, also incised decoration recurs, generally placed at the junction between neck and shoulder²⁵.

¹⁷ At Tell el-Mutesellim in tomb 891 (Guy 1938, pl. 21,13), at Tel ‘Artal in tomb 1 (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,4) and in Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tomb 70 (Wightman 1988, 148, fig. 9,3-4,6).

¹⁸ At Tiberias on a beaker (Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,1), a S-shaped small jar (Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,6) and a storejar (Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,11), the latter almost identical to another one from tomb I at Tell el-‘Asi (Levy - Edeslstein 1972, 367, fig. 18,1), where this decorative theme also occurs on an *amphoriskos* from tomb B (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,16); it is furthermore attested at Tell el-Huṣn on a *bottle-amphoriskos* (Harding - Isserlin 1953, fig. 1,8) and on an *amphoriskos* (Harding - Isserlin 1953, fig. 3,45), at Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 particularly on middle size *amphoriskoi* in tomb 70 (Wightman 1988, 148, fig. 9,8-11), on teapots at Yavne’el (Liebowitz - Porath 1992, 5, fig. 1,11-12) and Hazorea’ in tomb 3 (Meyerhof 1989, 81, pl. 11,3:37) and at Tell el-Mutesellim on an *amphoriskos* in tomb 1098 (Guy 1938, pl. 21,8).

¹⁹ At Tell el-Hosn (Beth Shan), on storejars, in tombs 26 (Oren 1973a, 27, fig. 3,22; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,20) and 262 (Oren 1973b, 180, fig. 23,2) and at Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tomb 70 (Wightman 1988, 149, fig. 10).

²⁰ At Tell el-Mutesellim on an *amphoriskos* in tomb 891 (Guy 1938, pl. 21), at Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tombs 58 (Wightman 1988, 154, fig. 13,3-4), 65 (McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pls 21,5; 25,33) and 70 (Wightman 1988, 148, fig. 9,7), at Tell el-Huṣn (Harding - Isserlin 1953, fig. 2,31-35), where it occurs also on teapots (Harding - Isserlin 1953, fig. 1,12) and probably on hole-mouth jars from Tell Abu en-Ni’aj (Palumbo 1990, fig. 42,3-4) and ‘Afula (Gal - Covello-Paran 1996, 41, fig. 10,6,8).

²¹ At Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tomb 65 on beakers (Wightman 1988, 156, fig. 14,5; McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pl. 22,21) and bowls (Wightman 1988, 157, fig. 14; McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pl. 22,9-10).

²² At Tell el-‘Asi on storejars in tomb A (Feig 1991, 125, fig. 6,7-8), at Menaḥemiya in tomb 2 (Bahat 1976, 29, fig. 2,14), at Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 on *amphoriskoi* in tomb 65 (Wightman 1988, 156, fig. 14,1-2; McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pls 24,25; 25,35) and on S-shaped jars with enveloped ledge handles (Wightman 1988, 156, fig. 14,3; McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pl. 21,2), at Hazorea’ on jugs in tombs 2 (Meyerhof 1989, 69, pl. 5,2:19:71) and 3 (Meyerhof 1989, 77, pl. 9,3:44) and on teapots in tomb 3 (Meyerhof 1989, 81, pl. 11,3:24).

²³ At Tel ‘Artal on small- and middle-sized *amphoriskoi* in tomb 2 (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,2-3).

²⁴ At ‘En-Hanatziv on a storejar with enveloped ledge handles (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,10) and at Tell el-Hosn (Beth Shan) in tomb 203 (Oren 1973a, 27, fig. 3,23; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,1).

²⁵ At Beth Shan on storage jars in tombs 26 (Oren 1973a, 27, fig. 3,22; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,19), 203 (Oren 1973a, 27, fig. 3,23; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,1) and 262 (Oren 1973b, 180, fig. 23,2) and in the

In the distributions of such decorative schemes and typological repertoires – except for bowls with oblique walls, that frequently occur in the Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07²⁶, and that are elsewhere attested only at Tel ‘Aartal²⁷ – noteworthy differences do not seem to be observed, since they mostly occur in association not only in the same site, but often even in the same archaeological context.

3. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AND CHRONOLOGY

TPW is primarily attested in the Upper Jordan Valley, encompassing Lower Galilee²⁸ and the Beth Shan Valley²⁹ on the west and the Wadi el-Hammeh basin on the east³⁰. Further findings are attested in the Jezreel Valley³¹ (fig. 1). In all these areas it occurs both in funerary and in domestic contexts³².

settlement of Stratum R-6 on a jar (Mazar 2006, 110, fig. 4:4); at ‘En Hanatziv (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,10); at Tel ‘Aartal, in tomb 1 (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,4); at Tiberias (Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,11); at Tell el-‘Asi, on storejars in tomb A (Feig 1991, 125, fig. 6,4-5) and on an *amphoriskos* in tomb B (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,16); at Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07 in tomb 70, on small- and medium-sized *amphoriskoi* (Wightman 1988, 148, fig. 9,8-9) and on storejars (Wightman 1988, 149, fig. 10,1-2), at Tell el-Mutesellim on an *amphoriskos* and on a storage jar in tomb 1098 (Guy 1938, pl. 21,9-10), at ‘Afula on a jar (Gal - Covello-Paran 1996, 43, fig. 11,15.), at Tell Abu en-Ni’aj on jars too (Palumbo 1990, fig. 43,2), on *amphoriskoi* (Palumbo 1990, fig. 43,4) e on *hole-mouth* jars (Palumbo 1990, fig. 42,6).

²⁶ In tombs 58 (Wightman 1988, 154, fig. 6), 65 (Wightman 1988, 156 fig. 14,7, 157, fig. 14; McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pls 21,8; 22,9-10; 23,14; 25,34,36) and 70 (Wightman 1988, 152, fig. 12,4-9, 153, fig. 12,11-12).

²⁷ Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,1.

²⁸ At Tiberias (Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,1, 6, 11), Menaḥemiya in tombs 1 (Bahat 1976, 29, fig. 2,2, 30, fig. 3,2) and 2 (Bahat 1976, 29, figs 2,12,30; 3,8) and Yavne’el (Liebowitz - Porath 1992, 5, fig. 1,11-12).

²⁹ At Tell el-Hosn (Beth Shan) in the Northern Cemetery in tombs 26 (Oren 1973a, 27, fig. 3,22; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,19), 59 (Oren 1973a, 26, fig. 2,4; 1973b, 186, 26,15), 74 (Oren 1973a, 26, fig. 2,2; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,13), 203 (Oren 1973a, 27, fig. 3,23; 1973b, 172, fig. 19,1), 262 (Oren 1973b, 180, fig. 23,2) and in the settlement of Stratum R-6 (Mazar 2006, 108, fig. 3,2, 110, fig. 4,4-5), at Tell el-‘Asi in tombs I (Levy - Edelstein 1972, 367, fig. 18,9), A (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,17, 125, fig. 6,4-8), B (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,9,11,16), G (Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,8), at Tel ‘Aartal in tomb 1 (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,1-6), and at ‘En-Hanatziv (Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,10,12).

³⁰ In funerary contexts in a tomb at Tell el-Ḥuṣn (Harding - Isserlin 1953, figs 1,2, 8, 12, 18-19, 23; 2,28-29, 31-35; 3,45), in the Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07, in tombs 58 (Wightman 1988, 154, fig. 13,1-4, 6), 65 (Wightman 1988, 156, fig. 14,1-5, 7; McNicoll *et alii* 1992, pls 21,1-2,5,8; 22,9-10,21; 23,14,17-19; 24,23,25-28; 25,30,32-36) and 70 (Wightman 1988, 147, fig. 8,3-11, 148, fig. 9,3-11, 149, fig. 10, 152, fig. 12,3-9, 153, fig. 12,11-12); in domestic context at Tell el-Hayyat in Phase 6 (Falconer - Fall 2006, 45, fig. 4,1:a-b, s; Falconer - Magness-Gardiner 1984, 58, fig. 12,1-4, 14) and occasionally in Phase 5 (Falconer - Fall 2006, 47, fig. 4,2:h). TPW retrieved in stratified settlement contexts is attested at Dhahret Umm el-Marar and Tell Abu en-Ni’aj, but is still unpublished; a selection of TPW sherds from the latter has been published by G. Palumbo as the result of surface survey collection (Palumbo 1990, figs 38-39, 42-43,2,4).

³¹ At ‘Afula in the Stratum V settlement (Gal - Covello-Paran 1996, 41, figs 10,1-3,6-9, 43; 11,1,15-16), Tell el-Mutesellim (Megiddo), in tombs 891 A (Guy 1938, pl. 21,13) and 1098 A (Guy 1938,

As regards chronology – aside Tell Abu en-Ni‘aj, in which a long stratigraphic sequence, with at least four architectural phases, dating to EB IV were retrieved, but whose pottery remained unpublished as its internal periodization³³ – TPW is attested at Tell el-Hayyat in Phase 6, which, according to the excavators, dates back to final EB IVB³⁴. A dating to EB IVB seems to be feasible also to ‘Afula Stratum V³⁵ and Tell el-Hosn (Beth-Shan) Stratum R-6³⁶.

Petrographic analysis carried on materials from Transjordan in order to define centres of production and distribution of TPW, led S. Falconer to state that Tell Abu en-Ni‘aj probably was the centre of manufacture of TPW found at Tell el-Hayyat, Dharet Umm el-Marar and Khirbet el-Hammeh, although there might be another centre of production among these sites, to be probably located in the same Khirbet el-Hammeh³⁷.

pl. 21,8-10) and Hazorea', in tombs 2 (Meyerhof 1989, 67, pl. 4,2:20, 69, pl. 5,2:19/71-5543), 3 (Meyerhof 1989, 77, pl. 9,3:44, 81, pl. 11,3:4,3,37), 5 (Meyerhof 1989, 85, pl. 13,5:14), 20 (Meyerhof 1989, 89, pl. 20,20:3, 20:5, 20:7) and 22 (Meyerhof 1989, 81, pl. 16,22:3, 22:6).

³² Outside these areas TPW occasionally occurs at Tel Na‘ama, in the Hulah Valley (Greenberg *et alii* 1998, 22, fig. 21,10), where a sherd has been retrieved, whose origin has been traced by Y. Goren in the Jordan Valley (Greenberg *et alii* 1998, 23) and southward at Be'er Resisim, in the Negev (Cohen - Dever 1981, 67, fig. 10,22); the attribution to TPW of a cup from Khirbet el-Khirmil (Dever 1975, 28, fig. 5,27) and of a teapot from Cave G 23 at Jebel Qa‘aqir (Gitin 1975, 56, fig. 4,19) seems less feasible. Three TPW sherds are reported from Tell Umm Hammad, but unpublished (Helms 1986, 45). The presence of two small jars with flattened rim at Khirbet al-Batrawy (KB.06.D.633/2, KB.06.D.637/1; they will be published in a forthcoming ROSAPAT volume) in Phase IV, i.e. EB IVB, in the upper Wadi az-Zarqa is extremely noteworthy. The site lies, actually, outside the main distributional area of TPW, thus probably hinting to an extension of the latter south- and eastward and to the possible presence of centres of manufacture and distribution of TPW or of a similar kind of painted pottery production in this district.

³³ In this respect the only available information is that Phase 1 pottery at Ni‘aj - the most recent - is quite similar to that attested in Tell el-Hayyat Phase 6 (Falconer 1987, 252; Falconer - Fall - Metzger - Lines 2003, 4).

³⁴ Falconer 1987, 251; Falconer - Fall 2006, 44-46.

³⁵ Among the pottery of this Phase, actually, aside jars with flaring wheel-made necks shaped in an acute angle at the junction with the handmade shoulder - a feature that has been singled out as diagnostic of EB IVB (Nigro 2003, 134) - there are preservation jars with irregular vertical combing, characteristic of the later phase of EB IV as attested in the stratified settlement deposits of Tell Umm Hammad, where in stages 6-8 it replaces vestigial pattern-combing of stage 5 (Helms 1986, 42, 44-45, fig. 18,4), at Tell Iktanu, where it occurs particularly in Phase 2 (Prag 1995, 110), at Tell el-Hayyat (Falconer - Magness-Gardiner 1984, 58, fig. 12,15) and finally at Khirbet al-Batrawy, in the Wadi az-Zarqa basin, in Phase IV, dated to EB IVB (Nigro [ed.] 2006, 104; 126, pl. VI KB.05.A.18/6, KB.05.A.18/8, KB.05.A.18/9, 133, pl. IX KB.05.A.8/6, 143, pl. XIV KB.05.A.22/2, KB.05.A.48/3, 147, pl. XVI KB.05.A.95/10).

³⁶ Actually, in the repertoire of this phase is attested band-combed pottery, that has been recognized as an EB IVB indicator, founding on the stratigraphy of Tell Iktanu, where it frequently occurs in Phase 2 (Prag 1974, 78; 1986, 62, 64-65), Tell es-Sultan (Jericho), where it distinguishes Phase IIIId2 (Nigro 1999, 37, 44, fig. 9; Marchetti - Nigro [eds] 2000, 18, 63, fig. 1,12:19-20; Nigro 2003, 134, 154, fig. 21,4-6) and Khirbet al-Batrawy Phase IV (Nigro [ed.] 2006, 104).

³⁷ Falconer 1987, 256.

As for Cisjordan, further analysis of pottery sherds from Tel 'Artal, 'En Hanatziv and Tell el-Mutesellim (Megiddo) yielded partial results that seem to show that TPW from the three sites has a common manufacturing centre, that could not be located, though it seems feasible to exclude Tell el-Mutesellim as the one³⁸.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the data collected, while TPW is generally referred to as a decorative style in use on *Simple Ware* shapes, elements discussed in the analysis carried on above – wares, limited typological inventory, fine manufacture of the vessels and the often elaborate painted decoration – tend to show that it is instead a specialized pottery production. This hypothesis might be strengthened by the restricted geographical distribution of the findings, that – taken into account also the results yielded by petrographic analysis – could reflect that TPW was object of exchange between neighboring communities, certainly also with regard to being highly distinguished as a prestige good, amid a cultural horizon otherwise quite poor.

As regards geographical distribution, TPW production area does not seem to spread out of the Upper Jordan Valley on both banks, including the Beth Shan Valley and the Wadi el-Hammeh basin. At the present state of available documentation, it is, instead, impossible to confirm the role of Tel 'Artal, west of the Jordan river, aside Tell Abu en-Ni'aj, east of the same, as one of the main manufacturing centres nor ascertaining whether there were other sites involved on TPW making, as the coexistence of several decorative repertoires, mutually differentiated but each strongly standardized inside, used at the same time, may perhaps indicate. The Jezreel Valley does not seem, instead, to be involved in the production of TPW, but it is just touched by the net of circulation and exchange of the latter. That way may be perhaps explained also the absence of TPW from the coeval repertoires of the Sharon Plain³⁹, that show strong uniformity with those of Jezreel during EB IV.

The limited chronological duration of this pottery production is not less important than the restricted geographical distribution, since TPW, on the basis of the stratified assemblages of the settlement sites, seems to appear during EB IVB (2200-2000 BC) and to disappear soon after, leaving no trace of itself in the subsequent MB I (2000-1800 BC). From this data TPW gains, therefore, a value as precious chronological indicator for the dating of the contexts in which it occurs, particularly when dealing with a cultural horizon as EB IV, whose internal periodization is still waiting for a final revision.

As regards, finally, the socio-economic interpretation of this pottery production, it is still matter of debate. The function as funerary production seems to be ascertained through the frequent occurrence in burial equipments, where it could well have served

³⁸ Hess 1984, 60. Data yielded from the analysis, therefore, do not allow to confirm or reject the hypothesis that the manufacturing centre of TPW in the Upper Jordan Valley might be Tel 'Artal.

³⁹ The only exception is an *amphoriskos* from Assawir (Tel Esur) with red painted decoration consisting of vertical bands branching off a horizontal one (Yannai 1996, 12*, fig. 7,8).

in connection with the banquet, as it might be indicated by the predominance of vessels connected with the pouring function as teapots and jugs and that of open shapes devoted to drinking and consumption of food offerings such as beakers, cups and bowls. Whether this function was exclusive or not could be, instead, confirmed or rejected only on the basis of the settlement sites discoveries, distinguishing among manufacturing sites and possibly workshops and other archeological contexts that could help clarifying TPW usage in domestic settings, objective that still awaits further finds to be pursued.

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Trickle Painted Ware

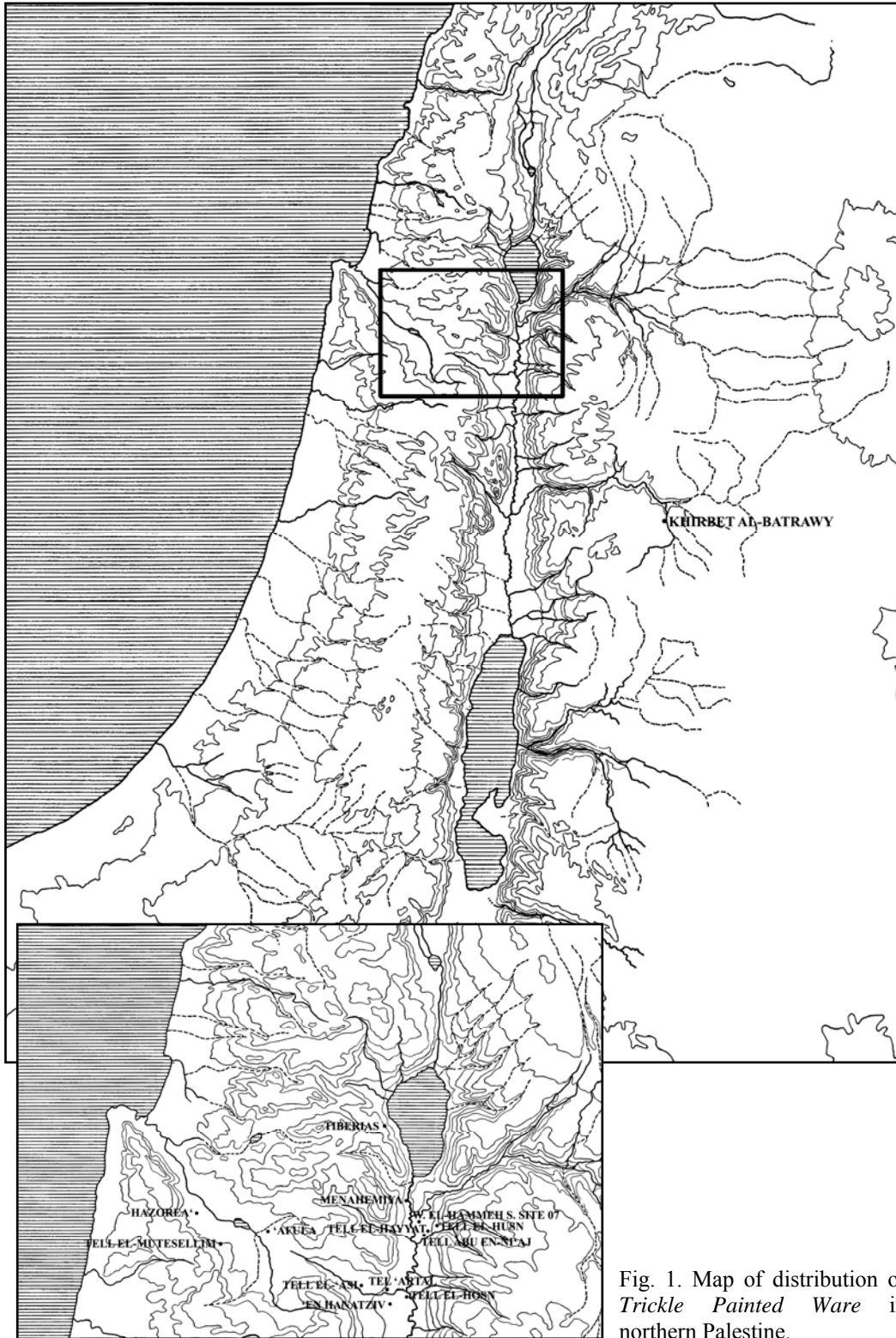


Fig. 1. Map of distribution of *Trickle Painted Ware* in northern Palestine.

Plate I

N°	Shape	Class	Site/Context	Bibliography
1	Beaker	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell Abu en-Ni'aj	Palumbo 1990, fig. 38,8
2	Beaker	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell Abu en-Ni'aj	Palumbo 1990, fig. 38,1
3	Beaker	Trickle Painted Ware	Tiberias	Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,1
4	Bowl	Trickle Painted Ware	Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07, tomb 70	Wightman 1988, 152, fig. 12,6
5	Bowl	Trickle Painted Ware	Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07, tomb 65	Wightman 1988, 157, fig. 14,8; McNicoll <i>et alii</i> 1992, pl. 22,10
6	Jar	Trickle Painted Ware	Tiberias	Tzaferis 1968, 18, fig. 5,11



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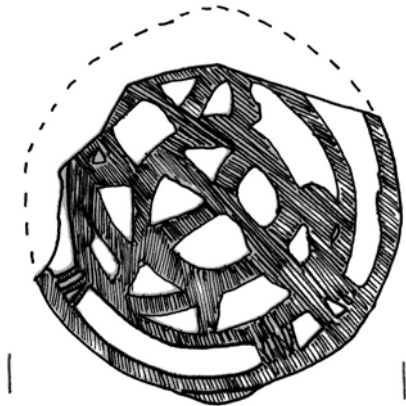
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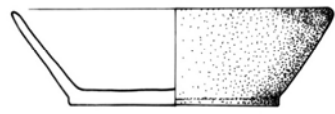
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PLATE II

N°	Shape	Class	Site/Context	Bibliography
1	Jug	Trickle Painted Ware	Menahemiya, tomb 1	Bahat 1976, 29, fig. 2,2
2	Jug	Trickle Painted Ware	Yavne'el	Liebowitz - Porath 1992, 5, fig. 1,11
3	Jug	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-'Asi, tomb G	Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,9
4	Teapot	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-Huşn	Harding - Isserlin 1953, 3, fig. 1,12
5	Teapot	Trickle Painted Ware	Tel 'Artal, tomb 1	Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,6
6	Jug	Trickle Painted Ware	Hazorea', tomb 3	Meyerhof 1989, 76, 77, pl. 9,3:44
7	Hole-mouth jar	Trickle Painted Ware	'Afula, Stratum V	Gal - Covello-Paran 1996, 41, fig. 10,8
8	Hole-mouth jar	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell Abu en-Ni'aj	Palumbo 1990, fig. 42,3



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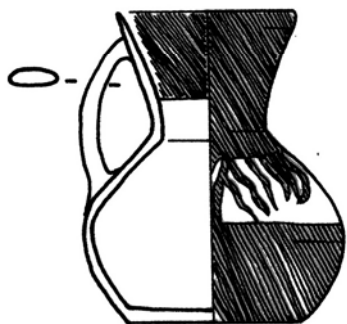
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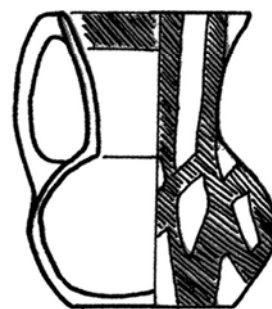
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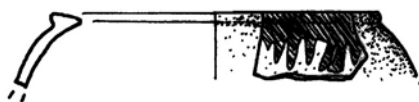
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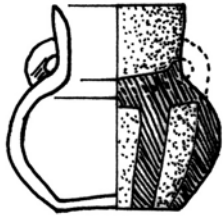
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PLATE III

N°	Shape	Class	Site/Context	Bibliography
1	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-‘Asi, tomb B	Feig 1991, 123, fig. 5,16
2	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Tel ‘Artal, tomb 1	Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,4
3	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-Mutesellim, tomb 1098, chamber A	Guy 1938, pl. 21,8
4	Jar	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-Hayyat	Falconer - Magness-Gardiner 1984, 58, fig. 12,4
5	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Tel ‘Artal, tomb 1	Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,2
6	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-Ḥuşn	Harding - Isserlin 1953, 3, fig. 1,8
7	Jar	Trickle Painted Ware	Menahemiya	Bahat 1976, 29, fig. 2,14



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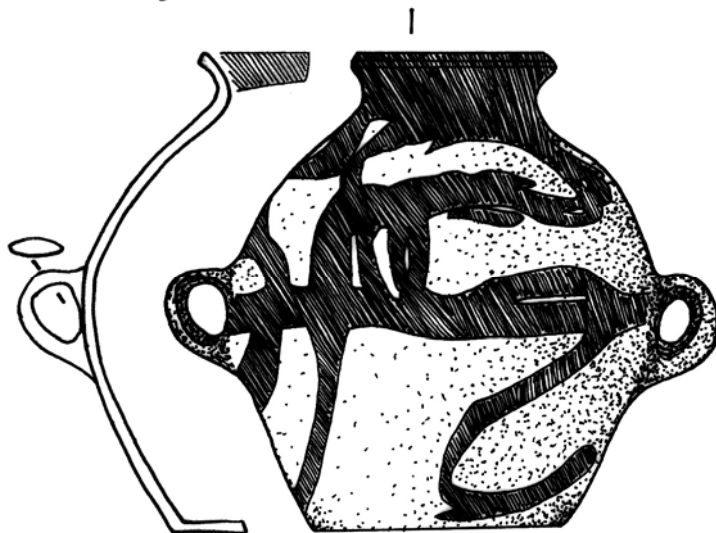
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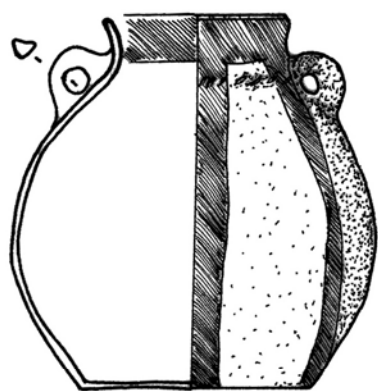
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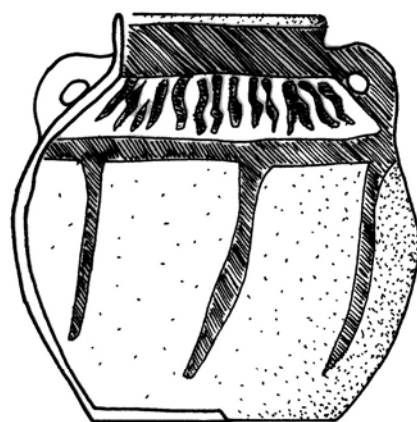
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PLATE IV

N°	Shape	Class	Site/Context	Bibliography
1	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Wadi el-Hammeh Survey Site 07, tomb 70	Wightman 1988, 146, 148, fig. 9,8
2	<i>Amphoriskos</i>	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-Ḥuṣn	Harding - Isserlin 1953, 3, fig. 2,35
3	Jar	Trickle Painted Ware	Tell el-Hosn (Beth Shan), Stratum R-6, <i>locus</i> 58102	Mazar 2006, 110, fig. 4,4
4	Jar	Trickle Painted Ware	‘En-Hanatziv	Hess 1984, 56, fig. 1,10



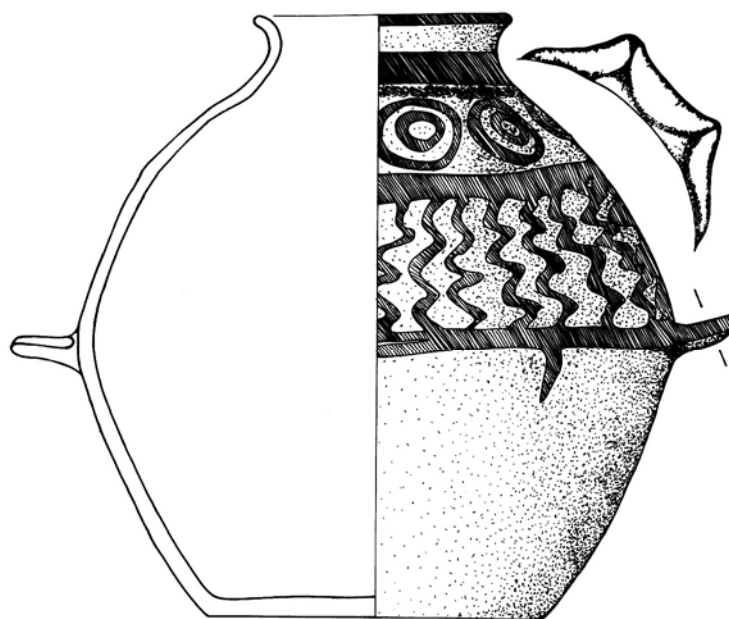
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