SABINA KULEMANN-OSSEN

Notes on late Bronze Age pottery from Kamid el-Loz
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Recent excavations at Kamid el-Loz have produced large amounts of well stratified Late Bronze Age I pottery. This paper will give a review on the principal wares and vessel shapes from the excavations in the northwestern vicinity of the Late Bronze Age Temple. The assemblages include a great quantity of locally produced "simple" wares. Besides, Cypriote "Base ring ware" and a variety of painted wares form part of the pottery corpus.

Background and Acknowledgments

The following paper is an abridgement of an article that will be presented in a volume on Late Bronze Age Ceramics in the series Orient-Archäologie¹. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Frédéric Husseini, the Director-General of the Directorate General of Antiquities (DGA), for the permission to publish the detailed version of this article – prior to its forthcoming in BAAL – in the series Orient-Archäologie. I would also like to thank Marlies Heinz for allowing me free access to all materials from her excavation at Kamid.

Introduction

One of the main goals of the recent excavations at Kamid el-Loz is the elucidation of the transitional period from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age. With the 2002 and 2004 excavations in areas I-f-12 to I-f-14 Late Bronze Age I occupation layers were reached in an extensive area that is situated to the north-west of the Late Bronze Age Temple. Several building units with installations that mainly prove household activities were exposed². The pottery from the floors comprises a homogenous Late Bronze Age I group, including some survivals of the Middle Bronze Age.

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Wares and Vessel Shapes from the Temple Area

Seven principal wares were encountered, Medium Fine Wares, Coarse Wares, Cooking Pot Wares, Monochrome Painted Wares, Bichrome Painted Wares, Chocolate-on-White Ware (?) and Cypriote Base Ring Ware.

Medium Fine Wares

Most common among the Medium Fine Wares are sherds and vessels with predominantly mineral and less organic temper. The fabric is hard, the surfaces are well smoothed and generally buff to reddish in colour. The majority of the examples is wheel-made. Vessel shapes range from open shallow and deep bowls to carinated bowls as well as pots with outturned rim and jars with elongated or rounded triangular rim (Pl. 1). Furthermore, ring bases, simple rounded bases and body sherds with comb decoration are to be found among the Medium Fine Wares.

Coarse Wares

The Coarse Wares are mainly characterized by thick walls and untreated, rough surfaces. For most Coarse Ware sherds mineral and organic temper is attested, the size of inclusions being larger than that of the Medium Fine Wares. Wheel-made vessels are prevailing among the Coarse Wares, though handmade vessels are also common. The most frequent shapes of the Coarse Wares are large pots with funnel-shaped neck and folded, ridged rim (Pl. 2). Beyond, the Coarse Wares include several sherds with impressed or incised fishbone pattern 4.

Pl. 1- Medium Fine Wares (scale 1: 3).

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Cooking Pot Wares

The Cooking Pot Wares can be divided into two main groups: those with predominantly mineral and less organic inclusions and those with exclusively mineral inclusions. The pot shapes are either globular or carinated, both with rounded bases. Most frequently occurring are carinated pots (Pl. 3: 1). The Cooking Pots are commonly wheel-made, rather rare are handmade pots with a wheel-finished rim. Most examples have a smoothed surface, some pieces show traces of burnishing or polishing. Among the rim types outturned, angular rims with slight depressions at the interior are prevailing.

Monochrome Painted Wares

The predominant paint colours of the Monochrome Painted Wares are red, brown or black. The painting is usually associated with an unslipped surface. Both, wheel-made and handmade vessels occur. Most common are vessels with mineral and/or organic temper. Very typical paint decors are simple lines and wavy or zigzag lines (Pl. 3: 2, 3).

Bichrome Painted Wares

Only few Bichrome Painted Ware sherds are attested. All pieces are exclusively minerally tempered and wheel-made. In the majority of cases the painting is applied on an untreated surface. The painting colours are always red and black (Pl. 3: 4).

Chocolate-on-White Ware (?)
White II category which is mainly present in Phase V (LB IA-B) of the Abu Kharaz sequence.

**Base Ring Ware**

The only example of Cypriote Base Ring Ware (BR I) attested so far in the recent Temple Area excavations is the neck of a juglet with plastic bands and broken handle. The piece is barely tempered, some small white inclusions are visible. On the exterior surface a red-brown, polished slip is applied. The fabric is very hard. In the Late Bronze Age I Temple T 3 from the old excavations a similar piece was found (Pl. 3: 5).

**Chronological remarks**

Generally, the pottery assemblages from the new Temple Area excavations find good parallels within the Palaces P 5- P 4 and the Temples T 3 (mainly T 3d) at Kamid el-Loz. Other parallels are to be found in the level VII assemblages at Tell el-Ghassil. Similar vessel shapes also occur at Tell Arqa, phase L, Late Bronze I. At Tell Nebi Mend comparable wares and shapes are present in the Late Bronze I phases F-D.

Pl. 3- 1. Cooking Pot Ware (Scale 1:3), 2. and 3. Monochrome Painted Ware (Scale 1:3), 4. Bichrome Painted Ware (Scale 1:2), 5. Base Ring Ware (scale 1: 2).
Notes

1- Title of the article for Orient-Archäologie: "New Results on Late Bronze Age Pottery from Kamid el-Loz/Lebanon".

2- For further details see S. Kulemann-Ossen, II. The northwestern vicinity of the Bronze Age Temples (areas I f 12-I f 14), in: M. Heinz et al., Kamid el-Loz in the Beq'a'a plain / Lebanon. Excavations in 2001, 2002 and 2004, BAAL 8 (2004), 105 ff.

3- The Classification into the category Chocolate-on-White is not definite.

4- Cf. Note above, Kulemann-Ossen (2004), Pl. 3: c-e.

5- Cf. Note above, Kulemann-Ossen (2004), Pl. 2: f.


7- P. Fischer, The Rise and Fall of the Middle and Late Bronze Age Society of Tell Abu Al-Kharaz, in: P. Fischer (ed.), The Chronology of the Jordan Valley during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages: Pella, Tell Abu al-Kharaz, and Deir 'Alla, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Denkschriften der Gesamtkademie XL (2006), 59–197.

8- C. Penner, Kamid el-Loz. 19. Die Keramik der Spätbronzezeit. Tempelanlagen T3 bis T1, Palastanlagen P5 bis P1/2, Königsgrab (Schatzhaus) und Königliche Werkstatt', Saarbrücker Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 63 (2006), Fig. 52/14.


12- S. Bourke, The Transition from the Middle to Late Bronze Age in Syria: The Evidence from Tell Nebi Mend, Levant XXV (1993), 155–195.