

IMPORTED POTTERY IN OTTOMAN BILAD AL-SHAM

S ————— INTRODUCTION

ince the 1950s, the term «Historical archaeology» has gained considerable currency in archaeological discourse.¹ This term can be taken simply to refer to the archaeology of historical periods (i.e. of those societies that produced written records) where a conscious effort is made to integrate the evidence from textual sources with the artefacts and other data recovered from excavations and surveys. This correlation of physical data and texts raises important methodological issues in relation to the different modes of interpretation employed by archaeologists and historians, and, at a deeper level, the conceptualization of past events and longer-term socio-economic, cultural, or demographic trends.² A narrower interpretation of Historical archaeology has become dominant in North American scholarship, the discipline being defined as the study

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¹ Dan HICKS and Mary BEAUDRY, eds., *The Cambridge companion to historical archaeology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, p. 1-9; Matthew JOHNSON, «Rethinking Historical Archaeology», in Pedro FUNARI, Martin HALL and Sian JONES, eds., *Historical archaeology: Back from the edge*, One World Archaeology, Routledge, London and New York, 1999, p. 23-26.

² On the relations between text and artefact, see Peter KOSSO, «Epistemic independence between textual and material evidence», in *Methods in the Mediterranean: Historical and archaeological views on texts and archaeology*, ed. David SMALL, Mnemosyne: Bibliotheca Classica Batava, Brill, Leiden and New York, 1995, p. 177-96. On the conceptualization of past time and the archaeological understanding of the *Annales* school, see A. Bernard KNAPP, ed., *Archaeology, Annales, and ethnohistory*, New Directions in Archaeology, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, 1992; Gavin LUCAS, «Historical archaeology and time», in HICKS and BEAUDRY, *Companion to historical archaeology*, p. 34-45.

of the period from c.1492 to the present. Drawing upon World Systems theory, archaeologists have focused their attention on the ways in which the material record illuminates processes such as industrialization, European colonial expansion, and the spread of capitalism.³ The study of the material record of the Ottoman period is the only branch of Islamic archaeology to have been accepted into this North American vision of Historical archaeology.⁴ There can be little doubt that the archaeology of the Ottoman period provides ample opportunity to examine the growth of European influence and the resulting changes in the societies of the Middle East. In this article I offer an archaeological perspective on the importation of pottery into Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria) in the latter part of the Ottoman period (c.1700-1918).

Although the research undertaken by economic historians means that the dynamics of trade in raw materials and manufactured goods in the eastern Mediterranean are relatively well understood,⁵ the commercial distribution of glazed pottery from the 18th to the early 20th century has received relatively little notice. Until recently archaeologists had also paid scant attention to the material culture of the Ottoman period in Bilad al-Sham. While this situation is certainly changing for the better, attempts to synthesize the archaeological evidence continue to be hampered by the variable quality of published data and the uneven geographical coverage of excavations and surveys.⁶ This is particularly the

³ Charles ORSER, *A Historical archaeology of the modern world*, Plenum, New York, 1996.

⁴ For instance, the only entry devoted specifically to the Islamic world in the recent *Encyclopedia of historical archaeology*, ed. Charles ORSER, Routledge, London and New York, 2002, is: Lynda CARROLL, «Ottoman empire», p. 406-407.

⁵ Relevant studies commercial activities in ports of Bilad al-Sham include: Charles ISSAWI, «British trade and the rise of Beirut, 1830-1860», *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 8 (1977), p. 91-101; Daniel PANZAC, «Commerce et commerçants des ports du Liban sud et de Palestine (1756-1787) », *Villes au Levant: Hommage André Raymond. Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 55-56 (1990), p. 75-93; Michael REIMER, «Ottoman-Arab seaports in the nineteenth century: Social change in Alexandria, Beirut, and Tunis», in *Cities in the world system*, ed. Resat KASABA, Contributions in Economics and Economic History 126, Greenwood Press, New York and London, 1991, p. 135-56.

⁶ Summaries of the archaeology of this period can be found in Robert SCHICK, «The archaeology of Palestine/Jordan in the early Ottoman period », *Aram* 9-10 (1997-98), p. 563-75; Uzi BARAM and Lynda CARROLL, eds., *A historical archaeology of the Ottoman empire: Breaking new ground*, Contributions to Global Historical Archaeology, Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York and Boston, 2000; Marcus MILWRIGHT, «Pottery of Bilad al-Sham in the Ottoman period: A review of the published archaeolog-

case for the most recent periods as many excavation projects have chosen not to record 19th- and early 20th-century occupation levels. Practical constraints of time and funding have contributed to this reluctance to analyze the more recent archaeological deposits. As a result, relatively few published projects have identified well dated excavated contexts in the Ottoman period.⁷ Another relevant factor is the belief that the material culture of the later Ottoman period is better studied through texts, visual sources such as drawings, paintings and photographs, and the artefacts in museums and private collections.

Allowing for these constraints, the record of published excavations and surveys in Bilad al-Sham does allow one to formulate a series of research questions that draw on the inherent strengths of archaeological research. In particular, archaeology is well placed to examine the distribution of artefacts among different socio-economic groups in urban and rural areas and to isolate medium-term and long-term trends. Distribution patterns identified in the archaeological data can then be tested against information drawn from contemporary written sources. In this article I address three issues: first, the changing volumes of imports from different areas (principally China, Europe, and Turkey); second, the extent to which these imported goods penetrated the different social strata of Ottoman Bilad al-Sham; and third, the impact that imported goods had on the native ceramic industries. The first part of the article consists of a short discussion of the importation of pottery during the late Mamluk and early Ottoman periods (c.1450-1700: from now on referred to as period 1) that provides some historical background for the socio-economic patterns of the later centuries. The main part presents a preliminary assessment of the archaeological and textual evidence for the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries (period 2). The textual analysis concentrates upon the published records of the French consulates in the ports of Syria from the last quarter of the 18th to the end of the 19th century. In the conclusion I evaluate the extent to which the integration of textual and archaeological data results in a clearer picture of the international ceramic trade during the last two centuries of Ottoman rule.

ical evidence», *Levant* 32 (2000), p. 189-208; Alison McQUITTY, «The Ottoman period», in *The Archaeology of Jordan*, eds., Burton MACDONALD, Russell ADAMS and Piotr BIENKOWSKI, Sheffield University Press, Sheffield, 2001, p. 561-93.

⁷ See summary in MILWRIGHT, «Review», p. 191-93.

The pottery in period 1 comprises imports from China, Italy, Spain and Turkey (fig. 1 and table A in the appendix). It should be noted from the outset that the sharp chronological division suggested by the two maps (figs. 1, 2) is somewhat misleading. For instance, the manufacture of glazed pottery at Kütaḥya commences in the 16th century, but continued into period 2.⁸ I have placed all the examples of Kütaḥya ware onto the map on figure 2 partly for convenience, but mainly because the trade to Syria appears to be most intense in the 18th and early 19th century. A further qualification should be made regarding unglazed ceramic wares. While most unglazed pottery employed in Bilad al-Sham was manufactured locally, some specialized objects (particularly tobacco pipes) were, at times, imported into the region. As the study of tobacco pipes is an area developing its own scholarly literature, I have omitted these artefacts from the following discussion.⁹ For the purposes of the present discussion tobacco pipes are significant, however, as a chronological indicator for other excavated ceramics because they do not appear in the Middle East before the last decade of the 16th century.¹⁰

Chinese porcelain dating from the late 15th to the 17th century is only rarely found on excavations. The discovery of so many complete vessels in the houses of Duma district of Damascus suggests, however, that the archaeological record does not provide an accurate estimation of the true extent of this trade. Of the approximately 800 Chinese vessels identified in Duma by John Carswell, the majority dated from the second half of the 15th through to the mid 17th century.¹¹ Spanish lustre wares from

⁸ Sebnem AKALIN and Hilya BILGI, *Delights of Kütaḥya: Kütaḥya tiles and pottery in the Suna and Inan Kiraç collection*, Research Institute on Mediterranean Civilizations, Istanbul, 1997, p. 9-15.

⁹ For references to recent studies, see BARAM and CARROLL, *Historical archaeology*, p. 149-55; St. John SIMPSON, «The Clay Pipes», in *Belmont castle. The excavation of a Crusader stronghold in the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, ed. Richard HARPER and Denys PRINGLE, British Academy Monographs 10, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, p. 147-71.

¹⁰ Textual sources are collected in Rebecca ROBINSON, «Tobacco pipes of Corinth and the Athenian Agora», *Hesperia* 54 (1985), p. 151-56.

¹¹ John CARSWELL, «China and the Near East: The recent discovery of Chinese porcelain in Syria», in *The Westward influence of the Chinese arts from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century*, ed. William WATSON, Colloquies on the Art and Archaeology of Asia, Percival David Foundation, London, 1972, p. 21-23; idem, *Blue and white: Chinese porcelain around the world*, British Museum Press, London, 2000, p. 67-68.

manufacturing centres such as Manises and Valencia also appear in excavated assemblages from Egypt and Bilad al-Sham, and can be dated from the late 14th through to the 16th century. Another group of glazed wares that span the transition from Mamluk to Ottoman rule in Bilad al-Sham are the glazed earthenwares of Italy. Consisting principally of sgraffito and tin-glazed (maiolica) wares produced in northern Italy, these imported items have been recovered in small numbers in Bilad al-Sham. Concentrations of finds have been noted in areas associated with Christian pilgrimage.¹² Iznik pottery is very scarce, appearing on a handful of excavated urban sites, most importantly the citadels of Damascus and Jerusalem. In the late 19th century Damascus was a major source for the purchase of Iznik wares, suggesting that much larger numbers of vessels reached Syria than is indicated by the archaeological record. One sherd from a Safavid lustre vessel was recovered from the Damascus Citadel, and, to the best of my knowledge, no other site in Bilad al-Sham has reported evidence of Persian ceramics after c.1500.

The written sources of the 16th and 17th do provide some evidence for the presence of imported wares in Bilad al-Sham. European travellers to the Middle East note the availability of Chinese porcelain in the markets of Damascus in the Mamluk and early Ottoman periods.¹³ Imported porcelain evidently retailed for high prices (for instance, in c.1525 Pierre Belon reports that in the markets of Cairo a small vessel cost about a ducat) and generally remained the preserve of the wealthier classes. References to Chinese and other imported pottery appear in the inventories of houses in 17th-century Damascus. Most common are cups (*finjān* or *filjān*) used for the serving of coffee, a drink that first appears in the Syrian capital in the mid 16th and was in widespread use by the 17th century.¹⁴ Analysis of the Arabic terms used in these inven-

¹² Denys PRINGLE, «Italian pottery from late Mamluk Jerusalem: Some notes on late and post-Medieval Italian tradewares in the Levant», *Atti 17. Convegno internazionale della ceramica. Temi liberi* (1984), p. 37-44; MILWRIGHT, «Review», p. 196-97.

¹³ See sources collected in Marcus MILWRIGHT, «Pottery in written sources of the Ayyubid-Mamluk period (c. 567-923/1171-1517)», *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 63.2 (1999), p. 513-16. On the trade to Medieval Europe, see David WHITEHOUSE, «Chinese porcelain in Medieval Europe», *Medieval Archaeology* 41 (1972), p. 63-78.

¹⁴ Abdul Karim RAFAQ, «The socio-economic and political implications of the introduction of coffee into Syria. 16th-18th centuries», in *Le commerce du café avant l'ère des plantations coloniales: Espaces, réseaux, sociétés (XVe-XIXe siècle)*, ed. Michel TUCHSCHERER, *Cahiers des Annales Islamologiques* 20, Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Le Caire, 2001, p. 128-32.

tories suggests that wealthy Damascenes were employing glazed wares imported from China and Iznik, in addition to locally-produced vessels.¹⁵ Similar items are also recorded among the personal effects of *hajj* pilgrims during the 17th century, and these provide circumstantial evidence that the unit cost of imported ceramics was significantly reduced from the prices of the previous century. In the 17th century cups appear to have been relatively cheap with even those described as '*ajamī* («Persian») and *ṣīnī* («Chinese») being valued at 0.09 and 0.1 piastres respectively. This may be compared to silver cups that fetched 3.5 piastres.¹⁶

The trade in porcelain coffee cups was evidently considerable in the Middle East during the 17th century. Traders for the Dutch East India Company based the Yemeni port of al-Mukha arranged for the importation of large numbers Chinese vessels. A merchant named Wurffbain sold some 85,165 pieces in the monsoon season of 1640, and another shipment of 108,693 porcelains worth 5,962 florins arrived at the port in 1643.¹⁷ It seems likely that much of these shipments was sold to local dealers for wider distribution in the Hijaz, Bilad al-Sham, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Middle East. Further shipments of celadon and porcelain arriving from China, Thailand and Vietnam were landed at the port of al-Tur in the southern Sinai. Although this trade can be traced as early as the 13th-14th century, the largest concentration of excavated finds comes from the 16th century, and mainly takes the form of coffee cups and small bowls.¹⁸ The Dutch were also landing large cargoes of porcelain in Basra. While most of this was for the Persian market, the regular camel caravans running along the Euphrates between Basra and Aleppo

¹⁵ Jean-Paul PASCUAL, «Meubles et objets domestiques quotidiens des intérieurs damascains du XVII^e siècle», *Villes au Levant: Hommage à André Raymond. Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 55-56 (1990), p. 205.

¹⁶ Colette ESTABLET and Jean-Paul PASCUAL, «Café et objets du café dans les inventaires de pèlerins musulmans vers 1700», in TUCHSCHERER, *Commerce du café*, p. 147-49. For further references to Chinese wares in the inventories of 18th-century pilgrims, see Colette ESTABLET and Jean-Paul PASCUAL, «Pèlerinage et commerce à l'époque ottomane. Les inventaires après décès de 135 pèlerins morts à Damas à l'Aube du XVIII^e siècle», *Turcica* 28 (1996), p. 130.

¹⁷ C. BROUWER, «Al-Mukha as a coffee port in the early decades of the seventeenth century according to Dutch sources», in TUCHSCHERER, *Commerce du café*, p. 282-83. See also T. VOLKER, *Porcelain and the Dutch East India company*, Mededelingen van Het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden 11, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1971, p. 94.

¹⁸ Matsuo KAWATOKO, «Coffee trade in the al-Tur port, south Sinai», in Tuchscherer, *Commerce du café*, p. 55-57, figs.5, 6

could well have been used to transport Chinese wares to the north of Bilad al-Sham.¹⁹

POTTERY IMPORTS DURING PERIOD 2 (C.1700-1918)

The period after c.1700 is represented by a slightly larger number of sites (fig. 2 and table B in the appendix).²⁰ Some areas of continuity can be identified with period 1, but new dynamics are also apparent in the distribution patterns of different groups of imported pottery. While most of the Chinese and Japanese wares are still reported from ports and cities, the presence of Chinese porcelain at the Palestinian village of Zir'in hints at a wider distribution pattern in period 2. 18th- and 19th-century Chinese and Japanese wares have also been identified in the houses of Duma district in Damascus and in the Armenian cathedral of St James in Jerusalem.²¹ The pattern of European imports differs considerably from the earlier phase, however. Where in the late 15th, 16th and 17th centuries the trade in glazed earthenwares comprised Spanish lustre and sgraffito and maiolica from Italy, the later imports were largely soft-paste and hard-paste porcelains. Of the European manufacturers, the Meissen factory of Dresden is the best represented in the archaeological record for Bilad al-Sham, and examples are also known from Anatolia.²² The greatest range of European imports is reported from the excavations in the Damascus citadel, but striking is the increased number of finds reported from rural sites, particularly in Palestine. Excavations at 'Akka (Acre) have recovered examples of European porcelain. 'Akka and Jaffa were probably the ports through which this material found its way into Palestine and Jordan (Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut serving Damascus and the remainder of Syria). Alternative routes were also employed; for

¹⁹ VOLKER, *Dutch East India company*, p. 98; Thabit ABDULLAH, *Merchants, Mam-luks and murder: The political economy of trade in 18th-century Basra*, SUNY Press, Albany NY, 2001, p. 77-78.

²⁰ The comparison is somewhat misleading, however, as it does not take into sites with Ottoman occupation phases that reported neither Syrian polychrome nor imported glazed wares. For these published sites, see MILWRIGHT, «Review», p. 203-205, tables 1 and 2.

²¹ CARSWELL, «China and the Near East»; John CARSWELL and C. DOWSETT, *Kūtahya tiles and pottery from the Armenian cathedral of St James, Jerusalem*, 2 vols., Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972.

²² Véronique FRANÇOIS, «Éléments pour l'histoire ottomane d'Aphrodisias: La vais-selle de terre», *Anatolia Antiqua* 9 (2001), pl. 19.212.

instance, the Meissen cups in the Armenian cathedral of St James likely came via Istanbul, where they received their additional gilding and inscriptions (including one with the date of 1794-95).²³

Kütahya wares are the most common imports in the archaeological record. While published catalogues of Kütahya ware show that these workshops produced a wide range of vessel types,²⁴ the excavated finds in Bilad al-Sham are largely restricted to small cups, probably designed for the consumption of coffee. Assemblages from rural sites in Greece, Cyprus and Anatolia also indicate that the most widely distributed products from Kütahya were their coffee cups.²⁵ The Armenian cathedral of St James provides evidence for the importation of specifically commissioned sets of tiles, and the church also contains examples of jugs and bowls from Kütahya. The strong Armenian presence among the potters of Kütahya probably provides an explanation for the range of tiles and glazed wares found in the cathedral of St James. Kütahya coffee cups are notable for their varied decoration ranging from polychromatic designs to simple cobalt (blue) underglaze painting. Their wide distribution on urban and rural sites in Bilad al-Sham suggests that they had a relatively low unit cost, and that the potters were adept at reacting to the demands of their different markets in the eastern Mediterranean. One telling indication of their sensitivity to the tastes of consumers is the copying of the crossed-swords motif painted on the bases of Meissen cups during the «Marcolini period» (1756-73). Examples of Kütahya cups with the imitations of the Meissen mark have been recovered from the port of 'Akka and from the late Ottoman village (and later, Zionist settlement) at Horvet 'Eleq.²⁶

²³ CARSWELL and DOWSETT, *Armenian cathedral of St James*, I, p. 103.

²⁴ AKALIN and BILGI, *Delights of Kütahya*, *passim*.

²⁵ Joanita VROOM, «Coffee and archaeology: A note on a Kütahya ware find in Beotia, Greece», *Pharos* 4 (1996), p. 5-17; Marie-Louis VON WARTBURG, «Types of imported table ware at Kouklia in the Ottoman period», *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus* (2001), p. 366-67, figs. 4.6-14, 9.3-4; FRANÇOIS, «Aphrodisias», pl. 19.204-206.

²⁶ Gershon EDELSTEIN and Miriam AVISSAR, «A sounding in old Acre», *'Atiqot 31: 'Akko (Acre): Excavation reports and historical studies* (1997), colour pl. III.4; Adrien BOAS, «Pottery and small finds from the late Ottoman village and the early Zionist settlement», in *Ramat Hanadiv excavations: Final report of the 1984-1998 seasons*, ed. Yizhar HIRSCHFELD, Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem, 2000, p. 554, fig. 6. The excavators at Horvet 'Eleq did not establish stratigraphic distinctions between the occupation phases of the village and the Zionist settlement. Boas associates all of the European imports with the latter phase, though the increasing evidence for European wares in 19th-

Çanakkale wares are only rarely reported on excavations in Bilad al-Sham, though it seems likely that there was a relatively active trade in these glazed wares in 19th century and early 20th century. The greatest concentrations have been unearthed in Jerusalem and the Damascus Citadel.²⁷ Glazed earthenwares comparable to late Ottoman pottery from Turkey were located in the Jordan village of Malka. The excavator is cautious about the attribution of the sherds on the Jordanian site, however, suggesting that they may be of local manufacture.²⁸ In addition to glazed pottery from Çanakkale, excavations at the Damascus Citadel also revealed the presence of so-called Didymotic ceramics from the region of Thrace in northern Greece.²⁹ These relatively simple glazed earthenwares are also reported on sites in Anatolia and Cyprus,³⁰ and it may be that the future excavations of Ottoman-period contexts in Syria will provide additional information on this trade.

The underglaze-painted stonepaste vessels usually known as «Syrian polychrome ware» seem to represent the local competition to the imported ceramics discussed above. The study of Syrian polychrome ware has been hampered by the absence of either reliably dated archaeological contexts or written sources that might provide some chronological parameters.³¹ There has been a general assumption that the production of polychromatic glazed stonepaste vessels in Damascus was

century Palestine makes this clear-cut distinction questionable. Other possible examples of Turkish imitations of the Meissen crossed swords design appear in Saraçhane, Istanbul and Sardis. See John HAYES, *Excavation at Saraçhane in Istanbul. Volume 2: The pottery*. Princeton University Press and Dumbarton Oaks, Princeton NJ and Oxford, 1992, pl. 44.b; Howard CRANE, «Some archaeological notes on Turkish Sardis», *Muqarnas* 4 (1987), p. 57 n. 24.

²⁷ Kay PRAG, *Excavations by K. M. Kenyon in Jerusalem, 1961-1967. Volume V. Discoveries in Hellenistic and Ottoman Jerusalem. Centenary volume: Kathleen Kenyon, 1906-1978*. Levant Supplementary Series, Council for British Research in the Levant, London, forthcoming; eadem, *Excavations by K. M. Kenyon in Jerusalem, 1961-1967. Volume VI*, forthcoming; Véronique FRANÇOIS, «Production et consommation de vaisselle à Damas à l'époque ottomane», *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 53-54. Supplément: *Études et travaux à la citadelle de Damas, 2000-2001: un premier bilan* (2002), p. 157-70.

²⁸ Bethany WALKER, «The northern Jordan survey 2003 – agriculture in Late Islamic Malka and Hubras villages: A preliminary report of the first season», *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research* 339 (August 2005), p. 82.

²⁹ Véronique FRANÇOIS, «Production et consommation»; eadem, «*Tabak, ibrik, fincan* et autres pots d'époque ottomane au Bilâd al-Châm», *Turcica* 37 (2005), p. 285-86. See also C. BAKIRTZIS, «Didymoteichon: Un centre de céramique post-Byzantine», *Balkan Studies* 21.1 (1980), p. 147-53.

³⁰ VON WARTBURG, «Kouklia», p. 372-74.

³¹ See sources collected in MILWRIGHT, «Pottery of Bilad al-Sham», p. 200-202.

stimulated by the influx of Iznik wares into the Syrian capital in the 16th century, but recent excavations in the Damascus Citadel provide persuasive evidence for a later date.³² Syrian polychrome ware only appears in substantial numbers at the Damascus Citadel in 18th-century contexts, and thus belong mainly to period 2. Reviewing the evidence in table B and the map on figure 2 it is apparent that, like the glazed cups from Kütahya, Syrian polychrome wares enjoyed a distribution that encompassed not only the major cities, but also a wide range of smaller towns and rural sites.

In the following paragraphs selected written sources are used to examine two main issues. The first concerns the changing volume of imports from Europe in the late Ottoman period, and the extent to which European manufacturers adapted their products for sale in Middle Eastern markets. This discussion is largely based on the published archives of the French consulates operating on the coast of Syria and Palestine. The second is the effect that the influx of relatively cheap European glazed wares had on the economy and culture of late Ottoman Bilad al-Sham. This second issue encompasses the fate of local ceramic industries in the face of European competition, as well as an assessment of the appreciation of European imports among different social groups in the villages, towns and cities of the region. It should be emphasized that this is by no means an exhaustive analysis of the available sources and that the conclusions drawn from the following examples should be regarded as preliminary in nature.

The papers from the French consulates on the coast of modern Lebanon (Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut) provide a wealth of information concerning the state of manufacturing in Bilad al-Sham.³³ The significance of the consular documents in the present context resides in the data they provide about the importation of European and, to a lesser

³² Véronique François, personal communication.

³³ Adel ISMAIL, *Documents diplomatiques et consulaires relatifs à l'histoire du Liban et les pays du Proche-Orient du XVII^e siècle à nos jours*, 49 vols., Éditions des œuvres politiques et historiques, Beirut, 1975-93; idem, *Documents diplomatiques et consulaires relatifs à l'histoire du Liban et des pays du Proche-Orient du XVII^e siècle à nos jours. Première partie: les sources françaises. Correspondance consulaire et commerciale*, 6 vols., Éditions des œuvres politiques et historiques, Beirut, 1982-93. On the entries relating to ceramic manufacture in Bilad al-Sham, see comments in Marcus MILWRIGHT, «Written sources and the study of pottery in Ottoman Bilad al-Sham», in *Ottoman archaeology in the Middle East*, ed. Benjamin SAIDEL and Evelyn VAN DER STEEN, *al-Rāfidan*, 30 (2009), p. 35-50.

extent, Turkish glazed wares into Bilad al-Sham during the late 18th and 19th centuries. Much of this information comes in the form of tables outlining the quantity and value of the commodities arriving annually into the ports of Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut. These tables contain information on *fayance* (also given in the documents as *fayence* or *faïence*), porcelain, and jars (sing. *jarre*: probably large unglazed storage vessels).³⁴ *Fayance* can be translated simply as glazed pottery, though in the context of the consular records it likely refers to decorated tin-glazed earthenware, often known as «French faïence». Significantly, this industry flourished in southern France during the second half of the 17th and 18th centuries with Moustiers and Marseilles notable as major centres of production.³⁵

While the precise number of jars is usually given, glazed pottery is calculated by the case, with the value of the case dependent upon the number and quality of the vessels held within them. The fact that *fayance* is sometimes calculated according to the price per dozen would suggest that much of the glazed pottery was exported from Europe to be sold as services of crockery rather than individual items. For instance, a document giving the merchandise imported into Beirut from Malta, Damietta and Cyprus from October 1 to 31 December 1813 records forty dozen of *fayance* with a value of 240 piastres, or 6 piastres per dozen (i.e. an average of 0.5 p. per item). The relatively low unit cost of the glazed wares might be compared with crystal glass that was priced at 3 piastres per item.³⁶ Some idea of the contents of a single case is given in a table outlining the goods received and dispatched from Tripoli in 1791. Here it is stated that the 15 cases of *fayance* contained 174 dozen of ceramic items. Thus, an approximate calculation would be 139 items per case.³⁷

³⁴ For a detailed study of the manufacture, distribution, and functions performed by storage jars from the region of Messenia in the Peloponnese from the 18th to the 20th century, see Harriet BLITZER, «Koroneïka: Storage jar production and trade in the traditional Aegean», *Hesperia* 59.4 (1990), p. 675-711. Significantly, these vessels were often employed for the transport of olive oil, and Marseilles was an important consumer of this commodity until the late 18th century.

³⁵ The first factories were established at Moustiers in 1679 and at St Jean du Désert outside Marseilles in 1677. Factories were later established in Marseilles and, at their height, eleven were operating simultaneously. See Arthur LANE, *French Faïence*, Faber and Faber, London, 1970 (second edition), p. 25-32.

³⁶ ISMAIL 1975-93, III, p. 112.

³⁷ ISMAIL 1975-93, IV, p. 58.

The information concerning the importation of pottery at the ports of Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut in the late 18th and early 19th century is given below in table 1. The currencies given in the table are livres tournois (l.), francs (fr.) and piastres (p.).³⁸

	Year	Port of Origin	Product	Quantity	Value of product	Total value of shipments
Sidon	1777	Marseilles	Fayance	10 cases	1,008 l.	1,564,966 l.
	1779	Marseilles	Fayance	12 cases	288 l.	292,061 l.
			Jars	189 pieces	567 l.	
	1780	Marseilles	Fayance	17 cases	1,275 l.	1,073,535 l.
	1781	Marseilles	Fayance	18 cases	1,300 l.	1,687,660 l.
			Jars	100 pieces	2,700 l.	
	1782	Marseilles	Fayance	28 cases	616 p.	1,025,795 p.
Tripoli	1784	Marseilles	Fayance	72 cases	2,160 l.	1,205,580 l.
	1788	Marseilles	Fayance	9 cases	450 l.	414,972 l.
	1789	Marseilles	Fayance	6 cases	180 l.	387,718 l.
	1791	Not stated	Fayance	15 cases	435 l.	240,377 l.
Beirut	1813	Malta, Damietta, Cyprus	Fayance	40 dozen	240 p.	3,446,742 p.
			Pipes	Not stated	1800 p.	
	1825	Not stated	Fayance, porcelain	49 cases	6,450 fr.	5,907,873 fr.
	1826	Marseilles, other countries	Fayance, pipe stems	31 cases (Marseilles), 15 (other)	5,655 fr.	2,812,340 fr.

TABLE 1: *The importation of pottery into Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut, 1777-1826, as recorded in French consular documents*

The published consular papers do not provide complete records for these ports in the period from 1777 to the mid 19th century. Historical factors may have contributed to the uneven coverage of the records. The period begins after the cessation of the Russo-Turkish wars. This conflict had resulted in significant damage to Tripoli. Other factors affecting

³⁸ Sources: ISMAIL 1975-93, II, p. 405-406, 409-16; III, p. 20-21, 110-13; IV, p. 45-47, 51-52, 57-59, 109; ISMAIL 1982-93, I, p. 133-38, 177-83. Cf. PANZAC, «Commerce», p. 77-84, tables 1-7, graph 1. During the French Revolution the livre tournois was replaced by the franc (which retained the same value as the former currency). See Daniel PANZAC, «International and domestic maritime trade in the Ottoman empire during the 18th century», *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24.2 (1992), p. 191, n.3.

trade were the aftermath of the French Revolution and, later, the Napoleonic Wars. Bombardment of Tripoli and Sidon in 1840 by British and Austrian warships restricted commercial activities at these ports in later years. Foreign merchants in all three ports endured the sometimes rapacious policies of local officials, and in 1791 Jazzar Pasha, governor of Sidon, even went as far as expelling French traders from the port.

Allowing for their fragmentary nature, the available data suggest that Marseilles was in a dominant position in the maritime trade of pottery (and other commodities) to Sidon and Tripoli in the latter part of the 18th century.³⁹ By the time of the first consular records dealing with Beirut this preeminent position was under challenge, though the entry for 1826 still shows the pottery imports from Marseilles were twice the volume of those from all other European ports. Assessing the total value of the annual shipments, it is clear that ceramic items constituted a low percentage of the total value (when they appear at all). Of the manufactured items, textiles were of greatest economic importance. There are considerable inconsistencies in the value of a case of *fayance* (compare prices given for ceramic imports into Sidon in 1777 and 1779). This disparity could be the result of scribal error, or may be explained either by the quality of the pottery in individual consignments or by variation in the size of the packing cases. More difficult to evaluate is the wide variation in value between the jars coming into Sidon in 1779 and 1781. Both imported jars and tobacco pipe bowls (*balles de pipe*) seem, however, to have enjoyed a much higher unit cost than *fayance*. A striking feature of the entries for Sidon is the rapid increase in the volume of imports of *fayance* – from 10 to 72 cases – in just seven years. A less pronounced increase is also evident in the case of Tripoli between 1788 and 1791.

The 1825 entry for Beirut is notable for the distinction it makes between *fayance* and porcelain (*porcelaine*). There is archaeological evidence for the import of European hard-paste and soft-paste porcelain from at least as early as the last decade of the 18th century (see above), and it is probable that the cargoes of *fayance* from earlier years in table 1 also contained some porcelain items. The last item for the port of Beirut (1826) is recorded as «*fayence et tuyaux de pipe*». Stems for chi-

³⁹ On the commercial status of Marseilles in the 18th century, see PANZAC, «18th Century», p. 192, 202-204. Although it is probably an unusual case, one Marseilles pottery manufacturer, Honoré Savy, exported his wares to the Levant using his own ships. See Lane, *French faïence*, p. 30.

bouk tobacco pipes were usually made of wood or reed, and so the «*tuyaux de pipe*» are probably not ceramic items. Sometimes the material of the pipes is mentioned : for instance, 4,000 pipe stems made from cherry wood (*cerisier*) with a value of 12,000 piastres appear among the items exported from Beirut to Malta, Tunis, Damietta and Cyprus in 1813.⁴⁰

The documents dealing with commerce through the port of Beirut in the 1820s also provide valuable information concerning the ports of origin and transit points used by boats making their way to Beirut with ceramics as part of their cargoes. These data are laid out in table 2.⁴¹

Date	Nationality of crew	Port of origin and transit ports	Product
6 Oct 1822	Not stated	Smyrna, Cyprus	Fayance
20 Dec 1824	England	Château Rouge	Fayance
1 Sep 1825	France	Larnaca	Fayance
14 Nov 1825	France	Marseilles, Larnaca	Fayance
13 Jan 1826	France	Marseilles, Larnaca	Fayance
26 Feb 1826	France	Marseilles, Larnaca	Fayance
2 Apr 1826	Austria	Trieste	Fayance
24 May 1826	France	Larnaca	Jars
31 Jul 1826	France	Marseilles, Larnaca	Fayance
24 Oct 1826	France	Marseilles, Larnaca	Fayance
2 Feb 1827	Sardinia	Tunis, Larnaca	Fayance
23 Mar 1827	Austria	Trieste, Larnaca	Porcelain

TABLE 2. *Boats carrying pottery to the port of Beirut, 1822-27, as recorded in French consular documents*

The entries for Beirut in table 1 recorded the intrusion of other nationalities in what had previously been a French monopoly. In table 2 it can be seen that France was still the dominant player in the provision of imported pottery to Beirut, though it is worth noting the presence of ships of other nationalities. Another important point – one which can also be seen in the many entries in the consular documents recording boats carrying cargoes without jars, tobacco pipes, or cases of pottery –

⁴⁰ ISMAIL 1975-93, III, p. 113.

⁴¹ Sources : ISMAIL 1982-93, I, p. 18-20, 91-93, 123-25, 130-32, 163-67, 170-71, 174-83, 207-209. Cf. PANZAC, «Commerce», p. 85-86; «18th century», p. 195-99.

is the role of other ports in eastern Mediterranean trade at this time. Larnaca was clearly a common transit point between Marseilles and Beirut, while the data in table 2 also reveal the increasing importance of Trieste as a port of origin for Austrian glazed wares (as well as other commodities such as glass) bound for Middle Eastern markets. While the total value per shipment is given in the consular documents, there is no information concerning the value of each product within a given cargo. As a result, it is not possible to assess the volume or unit cost of the *fayance*, jars, and porcelain. Although they do not appear in the French consular records, there is evidence for the transport of ceramic storage jars from Messenia region in the southern Peloponnese to Crete and Cyprus, and probably also Egypt, and Palestine.⁴²

The imports coming through the port of Beirut in the last years of the 19th century are discussed in a letter from the French Consul General in Beirut, le Viscomte de Petiteville, to M. Spuller at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (dated 30 May 1889). While the former was able to report that France supplied half of the imported glazed pottery, related areas such as glass products – including window panes and sections for narghiles – were evidently dominated by Belgium and Austria.⁴³ A more detailed consideration of the nature and extent of imports into Lebanon and Syria comes in a document sent in June 1890 by le Viscomte de Petiteville to M. Chavery, the Director of Consulates and Commercial Affairs.⁴⁴ Early in the text the Consul General notes the disappearance of the monopoly formerly held by French merchants on the supply of items such as narghiles and tarbouches. While he reassures M. Chavery that French products were still highly regarded in the bazaars, the Consul General emphasizes that practical measures were needed to compete more effectively against other the products of Austria, Germany, England (i.e. Britain) and Belgium in the Syrian markets. Later in the document le Viscomte de Petiteville concerns himself with the commercial outlook for a variety of raw materials and manufactured items. The section dealing with glass and ceramics he notes the spread of European manufactured products into the interior. By way of an example, the Consul General reflects on the increasingly ubiquitous employment of window glass in the domestic architecture of Syria. Belgium appears to have

⁴² BLITZER, «Koroneika», p. 703-704.

⁴³ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 141-69.

⁴⁴ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 174-281.

been the only European exporter of this product at the time, with an export business amounting to 4,000-5,000 cases annually. He makes the following comments about the importation of glazed wares (*faiènces*) and porcelains to Syria:

Glazed wares, porcelains etc. are supplied by England and in second place by France. Italy, Belgium and Austria dispute among themselves for the other half of the supply. In Damascus estimates of the consumption of this article amount to 7,000 francs. The sale of the pottery called «*granit*» is most considerable; it reaches annually 25,000 francs in Damascus alone.

We have noted above that [the consumption of] window glass is beginning to spread to the interior [of Syria]. Our wholesalers must encourage the trade in glazed ware (literally, glassware: *verrerie*) by producing special porcelains for the Orient, taking account of the tastes of consumers, and their love of flashiness (*amour du clinquant*) and good prices.

Trieste today participates in the importation of pottery which, in former times, was supplied solely by Marseilles. An equally large quantity of articles of inferior quality such as jugs, pots and jars are sent to Syria via the Dardanelles.⁴⁵

A number of points are worth highlighting in this passage. If the Consul General's letter from the previous year is accurate, then there was a sudden increase in English/British exports to the Middle East after 1889. The value of the pottery bought in Damascus was evidently considerable, and it seems likely that most of the glazed wares imported into the ports of the Syrian littoral were bound for the Syrian capital. The ceramics described in the letter as «*granit*» can be identified with the glazed earthenwares produced by the Staffordshire potteries. These glazed wares are usually known as ironstone wares, though other names include granite ware (hence, the term *granit* used in the document), stone china, pearl stone, and Dresden china. Patented by Charles Mason in 1813, ironstone wares were strengthened through the inclusion of iron slag into the ceramic fabric.⁴⁶ The *Pottery Gazette* diary of 1885 lists sixteen English factories, among them George Ashworth and Brothers, Davenport, and Wedgwood and Co., advertising ironstone wares. The diary for 1900 lists a further six producers. There are references in these lists to the export of ironstone to the Americas and the colonies of the British

⁴⁵ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 253.

⁴⁶ Geoffrey GODDEN, *Mason's Patent Ironstone China. The related ware – 'Stone China', 'New Stone', 'Granite China' – and their manufacturers*, Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1971, p. 9-10.

Empire, as well as the production of vessels for use on passenger ships.⁴⁷ The Consul General's letter also suggests that there was also a brisk trade in these glazed vessels to Syria in the late 19th century. In Iran potters even copied the designs of imported Staffordshire ironstone wares onto their own vessels.⁴⁸

The second paragraph illustrates the Consul General's concern that French manufacturers and traders take account of local tastes. Particularly revealing is his disparaging comment about the «love of flashiness» in the Orient. Presumably, this characteristic would have been satisfied by the use of vivid glaze colours and the application of gilding. A bright, polychromatic palette had certainly been a characteristic of enamel-painted «French faïence» (a method known as «*petit feu*») of the later eighteenth century, and «granite wares» sometimes also carry bold and colourful designs. The Meissen factory in Dresden evidently designed porcelains to be sold in the «Turkish» market. Some changes were even requested by commercial agents selling goods in the Middle East; for instance, in the mid 18th century a dealer named Manasses Athanas requested that the crossed-swords mark of the Meissen factory be omitted from the bases of a consignment of vessels bound for Turkey. Apparently, this was done out of fear that the motif would be mistaken as a militant Christian emblem.⁴⁹ European manufacturers also undertook specific commissions elsewhere in the Islamic world; for instance, the English firm of Derby produced luxurious porcelain service that was presented to Fath 'Ali Shah in 1818-19.⁵⁰ In the 18th and 19th centuries Chinese manufacturers were also creating designs specifically for Middle Eastern markets.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Cited in GODDEN, *Ironstone China*, p. 106-108. On the designs used on Staffordshire pottery for export to North America, see: Christina NELSON, «Transfer-printed Creamware and Pearlware for the American Market», *Winterthur Portfolio* 15.2 (1980), p. 93-115.

⁴⁸ Arthur LANE, *Later Islamic pottery: Persia, Syria, Egypt, Turkey*, Faber, London, 1957, p. 76-77; Oliver WATSON, «Almost hilariously bad: Iranian pottery in the nineteenth century», Doris Behrens-Abouseif and Stephen Vernoit, eds, *Islamic Art in the 19th Century: Tradition, Innovation, and Eclecticism*, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts 60, Brill, Leiden and Boston, 2006, p. 337-39.

⁴⁹ William HONEY, *Dresden China: An introduction to the study of Meissen porcelain*, A. and C. Black, London, 1934, p. 60-61, pl. LVI.c-e.

⁵⁰ Stephen VERNIT, *Occidentalism: Islamic art in the nineteenth century*, The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art 23, Azimuth and Oxford University Press, London, 1997, cat. no. 86.

⁵¹ David HOWARD and John AYERS, *China for the West: Chinese porcelain and other*

The final paragraph of the Consul General's letter is interesting for its information concerning the new trade routes. Trieste was well placed to serve as the port for porcelains and glass produced in Germany, Austria, and Hungary for export to the Middle East or North Africa. The passage concerning pottery wares of inferior quality sent via the Dardanelles is probably a reference to the glazed ceramics from Çanakkale.⁵² Elsewhere in the consular documents, the Consul General notes that some countries were concentrating on the bulk production of low quality items for Middle Eastern markets,⁵³ and his comments suggest that pottery factories in southern and central Europe were following a similar course. The Incirli factory on the Bosphorus started to produce hard-paste porcelains in the later 19th century, though it is not clear the extent to which this ware was exported to Bilad al-Sham.⁵⁴

Other documents from the French Consulate in Haifa give us some idea of the volume of European and Turkish pottery entering the ports of Bilad al-Sham in the 1890s (table 3). The first group of data appears in an annex to a document from the French Consul General in Beirut to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This annex, written by M. Bertrand, the Vice-Consul in Haifa, to M. Develle provides detailed information concerning the imports and exports at the port in 1892. The Vice-Consul breaks down the imports into categories with glass and porcelain accounting for 16,600 fr. from a total of 2,141,190 fr.⁵⁵ Subsequent tables allow for greater precision concerning the category of «glass and porcelain». Listing products imported directly from France at the port, M. Bertrand states that porcelain accounted for 1,200 fr. Elsewhere it is noted that Austria was responsible for the import of glass and porcelain to the value of 12,700 fr.⁵⁶

decorative arts for export illustrated from the Mottahedeh collection, 2 vols., Sotheby's, London and New York, 1978, II, p. 461-84.

⁵² Ara ALTUN, John CARSWELL and Günül ÖNEY, *Turkish tiles and ceramics*, Sadberk Hanim Museum, Istanbul, 1991, p. 103-43; VERNIT, *Occidentalism*, p. 164-67.

⁵³ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 161.

⁵⁴ VERNIT, *Occidentalism*, p. 174. See also LANE, *Later Islamic pottery*, p. 66-67; Lynda CARROLL, «Could've been a Contender: The Making and Breaking of 'China' in the Ottoman Empire», *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 3.3 (1999), p. 188-89. The Kuznetsov factory in St Petersburg exported considerable quantities of porcelain to Iran in the 1890s and early 20th century, but I have found no evidence that they were also sending their wares to Bilad al-Sham. My thanks to Teresa Fitzherbert for bringing this to my attention.

⁵⁵ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 333-34.

⁵⁶ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 336-38.

Another document written by M. Bertrand to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 29 May 1894 remarks upon the increasing presence of the Austrian and German products in the markets of the Middle East, and also provides a table outlining changes in the volume of trade passing through Haifa in 1892 and 1893. Both imported porcelain and glass witnessed substantial rises from one year to the next with porcelain moving from 12,550 to 14,670 fr. and glass from 4,050 to 6,698 fr. (at the same time the total volume of imports declined). French exports of porcelain for 1893 amounted to 7,225 fr., with 5,225 fr. being sent directly from France (presumably, via Marseilles) and the remainder arriving via Beirut and Alexandria.⁵⁷ Perhaps the most interesting information is provided in a table that presents the importation of individual products for 1893 according to country of origin. Imported porcelains may be broken down as follows: England, 3 cases=275 fr.; Austro-Hungary, 87 cases=5,822 fr.; France, 65 cases=5,225 fr.; and Turkey, 56 cases=3,348 fr. (see table 3).⁵⁸ From my reading of the published consular papers this is the first time that Turkish glazed wares are mentioned specifically, though the archaeological record provides evidence for the consumption of Kütahya and Çanakkale wares in Bilad al-Sham in the 18th and 19th centuries.

	Year	Product	Value (francs)	Countries (value of imports in brackets)	Total imports in this year (francs)
Haifa	1892	Porcelain and glass	16,000	France (3,300) Austria (12,700)	1,992,461
	1893	Porcelain	14,670	France (5,225) Austro-Hungary (5,822) Turkey (3,348) Britain (275)	2,141,190
Beirut	1896	Pottery	50,000	France, Belgium and Germany	42,493,102
Tripoli	1896	Glass and pottery	366,890	France, Austria, Britain	30,597,826

⁵⁷ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 375-76, 380.

⁵⁸ ISMAIL 1982-93, VI, p. 386. Additional data in table 3 are drawn from: Vital CUINET, *Syrie, Liban et Palestine: géographie administrative, statistique et raisonnée*, Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1896, p. 67-69, 130-31, 621-22.

	Year	Product	Value (francs)	Countries (value of imports in brackets)	Total imports in this year (francs)
Jaffa	1896	<i>Poterie commune</i>	14,000	France (2,000) Other countries (12,000)	7,815,000
		Porcelain	14,000	France (3,000) Other countries (11,000)	
		Total value of pottery (including the mixed pottery/glass entry for Tripoli), 1892, 1893, 1896			
Total value of imports into the ports in the years 1892, 1893, 1896					85,039,615
Pottery (including the mixed pottery/glass entry for Tripoli) as percentage of total imports					0.56%

TABLE 3: *Pottery imports, 1892-96, as recorded in French consular documents and Vital Cuinet, Syrie, Liban et Palestine (1896)*

While it clear from table 3 that pottery comprised a small proportion (less than 1%) of the monetary value shipments arriving to the ports of the Syrian littoral in the 1890s, the number of glazed wares is worth remarking upon. Using the approximate figure of 139 pieces per case suggested above, one arrives the figure of somewhere in the region of 29,000 pieces of European porcelain passing through the port of Haifa in the year 1893. Even larger shipments are recorded for Tripoli and Beirut in 1896. As already noted, the unit cost of these decorated ceramics was probably relatively low, and this meant that they were able to compete in the market-place with locally-produced ceramics. Some confirmation of this is provided in the contemporary writings of Muhammad Saʿid al-Qasimi (d.1900). In his *Qāmūs al-Šinaʿāt al-Shāmiyya* (*Dictionary of the Crafts of Damascus*) al-Qasimi includes some interesting comments concerning the economic viability of certain crafts. Discussing the makers of (glazed) bowls (*qiṣṣāʿ*), he notes that craft was no longer much in demand. He attributes this to the revival of prosperity at the time of writing and the demand among Damascenes for vessels of *al-mālīqī*. This term probably refers to imported European porcelains. A comparable situation is described for the menders of fine glass and porcelain (*mukhar-ris*). In this case, al-Qasimi notes that the craft was in serious decline because the cost of these luxury items had become sufficiently low that people no longer took broken items to the *mukhar-ris* for repair.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Muhammad Saʿid AL-QASIMI, *Dictionnaire des métiers damascains*, ed. Zafer al-

The writings of al-Qasimi suggest that the late 1880s and 1890s witnessed an increase in the volume of European porcelain imports for he observes that in the imprecisely-defined «former times» the crafts of the *qiṣṣā'* and the *mukharris* were both profitable undertakings. Al-Qasimi's observation is probably correct, though it is evident from other accounts composed earlier in the 19th century that European imported goods were already freely available in the suqs of Palestine and Syria. Mary Rogers reports the sale of imported ceramics, glass, and metalwork in market of Nablus in the 1860s.⁶⁰ Not all of the demand for European porcelain was generated by private customers buying household crockery, however. Another important factor was the growth of the coffee house as a social activity for men in the Middle East. While coffee houses evidently existed in Damascus from the 16th century, the most active period for the establishment of coffee houses was during the 18th and 19th centuries. Local officials saw these institutions as valuable sources of tax revenue, and this is probably one of the reasons why coffee houses continued to flourish despite the periodic condemnations of religious scholars. By the 1870s there were over 110 coffee houses in Damascus alone – nearly double the number of public baths. Some of these coffee houses also offered music, story-tellers, and other entertainments.⁶¹ It seems likely that these commercial establishments would have required large numbers of glazed cups for the serving of coffee and, increasingly in the late 19th century, tea. Coffee cups and tobacco pipes have also been identified in archaeological contexts associated with the activities of French and Turkish troops.⁶²

Qasimi, *Le Monde d'Outre-Mer passé et présent. Deuxième série. Documents III*, 2 vols., Paris et La Haye, Mouton and co., 1960, p. 322-23 (*mukharris*), 355-56 (*qiṣṣā'*). For translation and commentary, see MILWRIGHT, «Study of pottery».

⁶⁰ Mary ROGERS, *Domestic life in Palestine*, London, 1862. Reprinted Kegan Paul International, London and New York, 1989, p. 260. See also observations on the shops selling porcelain in Nazareth in the 1880s in Gottlieb SCHUMACHER, «Das jetzige Nazareth», *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, 13 (1890), p. 243.

⁶¹ Brigitte MARINO, «Cafés et cafetiers de Damas aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles», *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 75-76 (1995), p. 275-94; RAFAQ, «Introduction of Coffee», p. 131-32.

⁶² Published examples are the excavation of a military trench constructed by Napoleon's troops during the siege of 'Akka in 1799, and a cache of nineteenth-century Ottoman military uniforms, weapons, and ammunition found in a cave at Ras al-Dabub, near Jerusalem. See: Edna STERN, «Excavation of the courthouse site at 'Akko: The pottery of the Crusader and Ottoman periods», *'Atiqot* 31: 'Akko (Acre): Excavation reports and historical studies (1997), p. 65-68, figs. 18, 19: 136-37; Gabriel BARKAY, *Ketef Himnom: A treasure facing Jerusalem's walls*. Israel Museum Catalogue 17, Summer, Jerusalem, 1986, p. 12.

It will be readily apparent that the two bodies of information – archaeological and textual – each have significant limitations that affect the scope of the conclusions. The geographical coverage of the excavations and surveys is patchy, as is the quality of much of the published data surveyed here. The texts discussed in this article represent a small fraction of the available material, and it is likely that a more systematic mining of Arabic and European written sources would provide a more nuanced picture. Future avenues of research might also focus upon the commercial records of the European pottery factories involved in the export of glazed wares to the Ottoman empire.

The distribution of imported pottery in period 1 (c.1450-1700) exhibited a concentration of finds on urban sites, ports, and administrative centres in rural areas such as the citadel of Karak in Jordan. Perhaps the most important shift in consumption patterns in period 2 is the increased availability of imported pottery, particularly Kūtahya stonepaste wares, European porcelain, and Chinese porcelain, in rural areas of Bilad al-Sham. Presumably, the combination of larger volumes of imports and decreased unit cost facilitated the dispersal of imported glazed pottery. While the trade in Kūtahya wares appears from the archaeological record to have been considerable during period 2, this activity does not register in the written sources surveyed in this article. Conversely, the references to the large numbers of pottery sent through the Dardanelles to Syria in the 1890s suggests that the archaeological record does not provide an accurate reflection of the importation from Çanakkale. Other disparities between the textual and archaeological evidence may be noted; the presence of a single sherd of Staffordshire ware in the Damascus Citadel is difficult to reconcile with the French Consul General's claim that England dominated the trade in ceramics to Syria in the 1890s. Lastly, the French consular records are not going to be a useful source on the import of Chinese and Japanese pottery that will have found its way into Bilad al-Sham via ports on the Red Sea or, perhaps, by means of the camel caravans passing between Basra and Aleppo.

At a more general level, however, archaeological data and the written sources provide complementary data for the ceramic trade in the second half of the 19th century. The introduction of steam ships into the Mediterranean in the 1830s greatly facilitated the trade of European manufactured goods to the Middle East, and there can be no doubting

that the influx of relatively inexpensive, factory-produced glazed porcelain had a lasting impact on the manufacturing practices and consumption patterns in Bilad al-Sham.⁶³ Where in earlier periods imported luxury ceramics actually stimulated the activities of Syrian potters (for instance, in the imitation of Yuan and Ming period porcelain⁶⁴), al-Qasimi's account from the 1890s indicates that the European wares were extinguishing the local production of glazed bowls in Damascus. Presumably, this was also the case for other urban centres in Syria, though it is also apparent that workshops involved in the production of unglazed pottery continued to thrive in Gaza, and a number of other locations in the south of Bilad al-Sham.⁶⁵ It is worth reiterating that imported pottery is of limited economic significance when seen in the larger context of the balance of trade between Europe and the Middle East in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. What makes it a subject worthy of attention, however, is the social visibility of glazed ceramics; these affordable objects were bought and used by a wide spectrum of socio-economic groups in both urban and rural contexts. Not only did glazed pottery perform practical functions, it was also conspicuously displayed within domestic settings.⁶⁶ The burgeoning of coffee houses in towns and cities must also have made porcelain coffee cups even more conspicuous in everyday life. The study of ceramics can thus provide important insights into economic and cultural dynamics of the last two centuries of Ottoman rule in Bilad al-Sham.

⁶³ Cf. comments on the decline of the native silk industry in Jean-Luc ARNAUD, *Damas: Urbanisme et architecture, 1860-1925*, Paris, Sindbad-Actes Sud, 2006, p. 52-55. Also Donald QUATAERT, «Ottoman manufacturing in the nineteenth century», in *Manufacturing in the Ottoman empire and Turkey, 1500-1900*, ed. D. QUATAERT, SUNY Press, Albany NY, 1994, p. 87-121.

⁶⁴ John CARSWELL, «Şin in Syria», *Iran* 17 (1979), p. 15-24; idem, *Blue and white*, p. 59-79.

⁶⁵ G. GATT, «Industrielles aus Gaza», *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 8 (1885), p. 69-79; Haim GERBER, *Ottoman rule in Jerusalem, 1890-1914*. Islamkundliche Untersuchungen 101, Klaus Schwarz, Berlin, 1985, p. 55-81; Alexander SCHÖLCH, *Palestine in transformation, 1856-1882. Studies in social, political and economic development*, trans. W. YOUNG and M. GERRITY, Institute for Palestine Studies, Washington DC, 1993; WALKER, «North Jordan Survey», p. 82; MILWRIGHT, «Study of pottery». On the decline of handmade pottery production in villages in Palestine in the early 20th century, see: Lydia EINSLER, «Das Töpferhandwerk bei den Bauernfrauen von Ramallah und Umgegend», *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, 37 (1914), p. 249-60.

⁶⁶ On the domestic display of ceramics, see ROGERS, *Domestic Life*, p. 46-47, 122. Also comments in Marcus MILWRIGHT, «Modest luxuries: Decorated lead-glazed pottery in the south of Bilad al-Sham (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries)», *Muqarnas* 20 (2003), p. 102-103.

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Appendix

As the result of the variable quality of the published excavations and surveys, no attempt has been made in maps or tables to indicate the number of finds per site. It is possible that some cups identified below as products of the workshops of Kütahya were, in fact, manufactured in Syria.

TABLE A: *Sites in Bilad al-Sham reporting imported glazed pottery c.1450-1700 (period I)*

	Site Name	Publications	Comments
1	ʿAkka (Acre)	Pringle 1984	Italian glazed wares
2	Antioch	Waagé 1948	Italian glazed wares
3	ʿAyzariyya (Bethany)	Saller 1957	Italian sgraffito (?)
4	Beirut (suq area)	Anon 1995 (and personal observation of unpublished excavated material)	Chinese porcelain, Spanish lustre, Italian maiolica, Italian sgraffito
5	Belmont castle	Knowles 2000	
7	Damascus citadel	François 2002, 2005 (and unpublished)	Iznik ware, Italian sgraffito, celadon, Kraak porselein, Safavid lustre
	Damascus (Duma)	Carswell 1972, 2000	Chinese porcelain
8	Hama	Riis and Poulsen 1957	Italian maiolica, Spanish lustre
11	Jerusalem, Armenian Garden	Tushingham 1985	Italian sgraffito
	Jerusalem citadel	Johns 1950	Italian sgraffito, Spanish lustre, Iznik ware
	Jerusalem, Damascus Gate	Wightman 1989	Italian sgraffito
	Jerusalem, south of Haram al-Sharif	Ben-Dov 1982	Porcelain, celadon, Iznik ware, and possibly Persian wares
13	Karak	Milwright 1999, 2008	Chinese porcelain, Italian sgraffito
14	Latrun	Stark 1999	Italian sgraffito
15	Maʿarrat al-Nuʿman/ «Tell Minis»	Porter and Watson 1987; Mason 1995	Iznik ware (dubious provenance)
17	Al-Mina	Lane 1938	Italian maiolica and sgraffito
18	Al-Nasira (Nazareth)	Bagatti 1984; Pringle 1984	Italian maiolica, sgraffito and marbled ware
22	Tal al-Safiyya	Bliss and MacAlister 1902	Italian sgraffito
24	Tripoli	Salamé-Sarkis 1980	Italian sgraffito(?)

TABLE B: *Sites in Bilad al-Sham reporting Syrian polychrome ware and imported pottery of the 18th to early 20th century (period 2)*

	Site Name	Publications	Comments
1	ʿAkka (Acre)	Edelstein and Avissar 1997 ; Muqari 1996	Kütahya ware, Meissen porcelain, Chinese porcelain
2	Antioch	Waagé 1948	Kütahya ware(?)
4	Beirut (suq area)	Anon 1995 (and personal observation of unpublished excavated material)	Syrian polychrome, Chinese porcelain
5	Belmont castle/ Suba	Knowles 2000	Kütahya ware
6	Burj al-Ahmar	Pringle 1986	Syrian polychrome
7	Damascus citadel	François 2002, 2005 (and unpublished)	Syrian polychrome, Kütahya ware, Meissen porcelain, French faïence and porcelain, Staffordshire glazed ware, Delft ware, Çanakkale ware, Didymotic ware
	Damascus (Bab Saruja)	Toueir 1973	Syrian polychrome
	Damascus (Duma)	Carswell 1972, 2000	Chinese and Japanese porcelain
8	Hama	Riis and Poulsen 1957	Çanakkale ware
9	Harim citadel	Gelichi 2006	Kütahya ware(?)
10	Horvet ʿEleq (Khirbat Umm al-ʿAlaq)	Boas 2000	Kütahya ware, European porcelain, Çanakkale ware
11	Jerusalem, Armenian cathedral of St James	Carswell and Dowsett 1972	Kütahya ware, Meissen porcelain, Chinese porcelain, Japanese porcelain
	Jerusalem, excavations	Prag forthcoming (a and b)	Çanakkale ware, marbled ware, transfer-printed blue and white (likely British)
12	Kabri (al-Tall)	M. Hawari in Kempinski and Neimeier 1994	European porcelain
13	Karak	Milwright 1999, 2008	Syrian polychrome, Kütahya ware(?), European porcelain (20th-century)
15	Maʿarrat al-Nuʿman/ «Tell Minis»	Porter and Watson 1987; Mason 1995	Syrian polychrome (dubious provenance)
16	Malka	Walker 2005	Possible Turkish glazed earthenware (may be locally manufactured)
17	Al-Mina	Lane 1938	Çanakkale ware
19	Ras al-Dabub	Barkay 1986	Kütahya ware
20	Sataf	Gibson, Ibbs and Kloner 1991	European porcelain
21	Tal ʿAfiq	Kochavi 1977	Syrian polychrome
23	Tiʿinnik	Ziadeh 1995	European porcelain
25	Zirʿin	Grey 1994	Kütahya ware, Chinese porcelain

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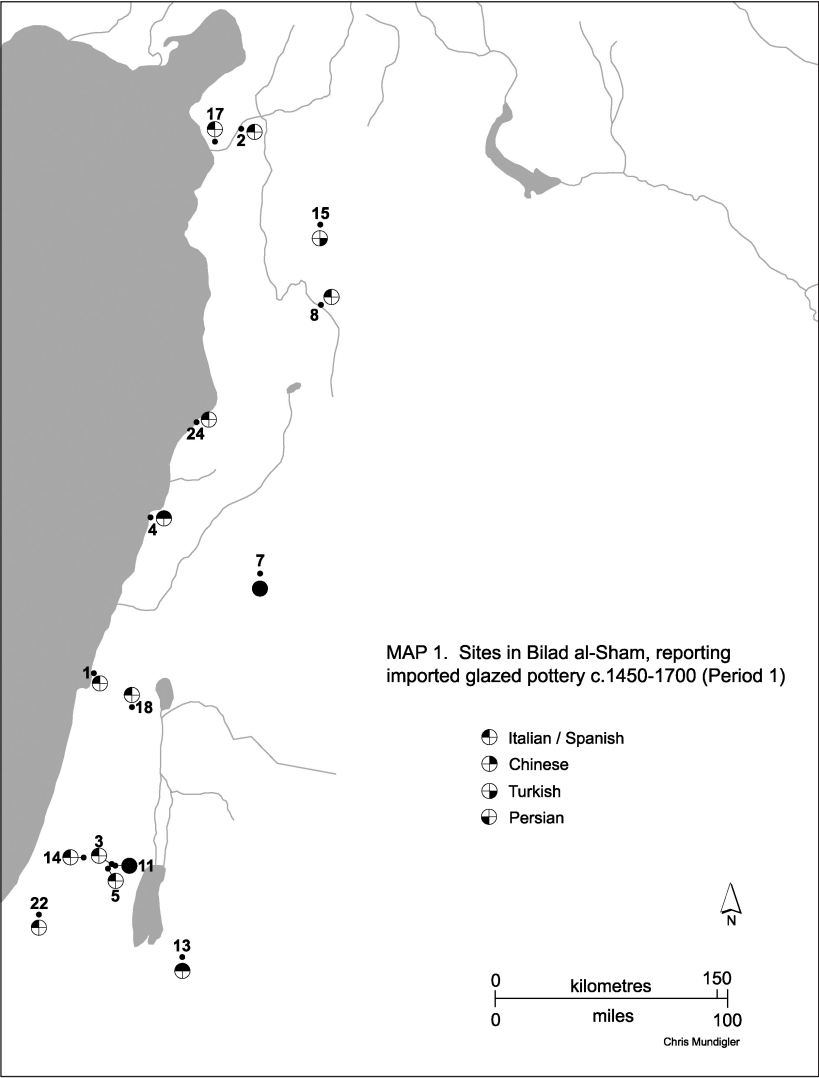


FIGURE 1. *Sites in Bilad al-Sham reporting imported glazed pottery c.1450-1700 (period 1)*

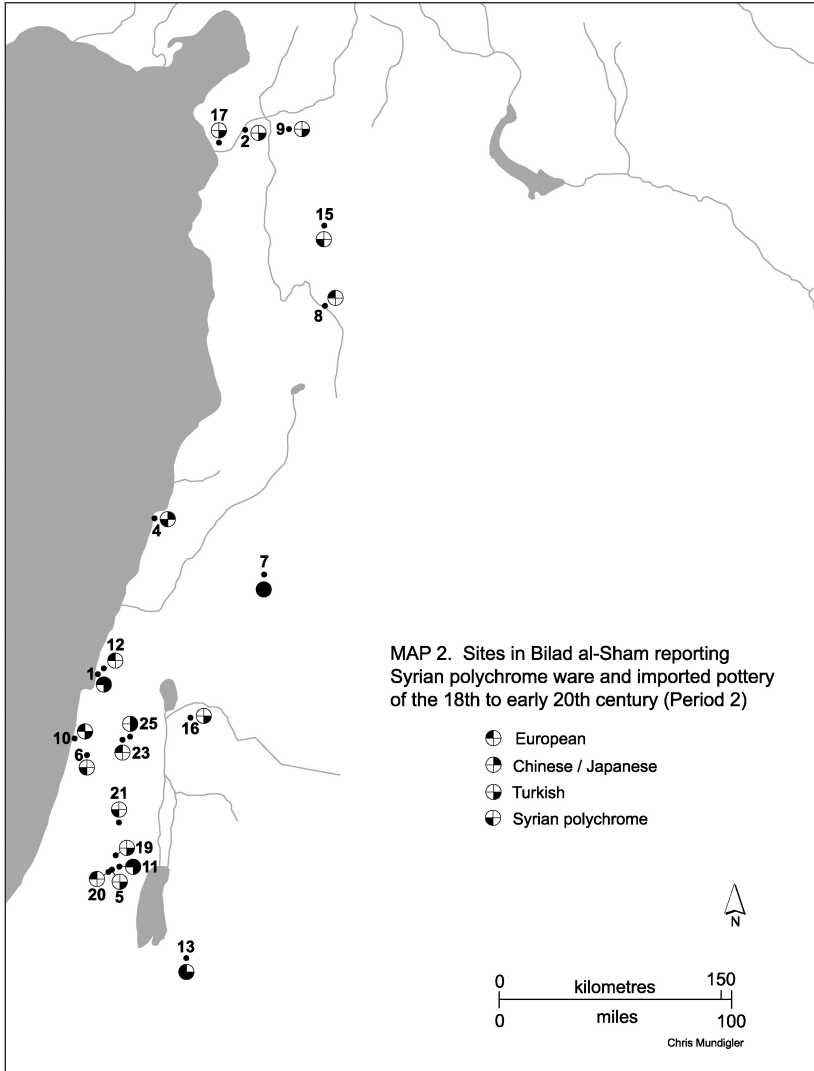


FIGURE 2. Sites in Bilad al-Sham reporting «Syrian polychrome» ware and imported pottery of the 18th to early 20th century (period 2)

Marcus MILWRIGHT, *Imported Pottery in Ottoman Bilad al-Sham*

This article presents archaeological and textual evidence for the importation of glazed pottery into Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria) from the 18th to the early 20th century. The chronological and spatial distribution patterns of the ceramics are correlated with data from primary written sources. The results are compared with those of the late Mamluk and early Ottoman phases (c.1450-1700). It is argued that from the late 18th century the increasing volumes of European glazed wares exported to the Middle East affected the tastes of consumers in both urban and rural areas. Unable to compete with the cheap European porcelains and ironstone wares, glazed pottery production declined significantly throughout Bilad al-Sham in the last decades of the 19th century.

Marcus MILWRIGHT, *Importation de poteries dans le Bilad al-Sham ottoman*

Cet article présente des indications textuelles et archéologiques concernant l'importation de poteries à glaçure dans le Bilad al-Sham (Grande Syrie) du XVIII^e au début du XX^e siècle. L'étude de la répartition chronologique et spatiale des céramiques est mise en corrélation avec les données fournies par les sources primaires écrites. Les résultats sont comparés à ceux de l'époque mamlouke tardive et du début de l'époque ottomane (c.1450-1700). Il est démontré que le volume croissant de céramiques à glaçure d'origine européenne exportées vers le Moyen-Orient a eu, dès la fin du XVIII^e siècle, une incidence sur les goûts des consommateurs tant en ville qu'à la campagne. Ne pouvant faire concurrence aux porcelaines et «ironstones» bon marché en provenance d'Europe et livrés dans les ports du littoral syrien, la production de céramiques à glaçure dans le Bilad al-Sham déclina au cours des dernières décennies du XIX^e siècle.