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ABSTRACT

Tell El-Dabaa the (current city of Qantir) considers one of the most important archaeological sites in the Eastern Nile Delta. The archaeological site of Tell El-Dabaa is located in the Northern Sharkia Governorate, Egypt. The location is situated about 7 km North of the city named Faqus. The site had an essential location in the Eastern Nile Delta as a significant protection station on the eastern entrance of ancient Egypt. The site identified as the ancient city of Avaris. The city had been occupied by the Hyksos and they had used the city as their capital, starting between the period of (15th - 17th) Dynasties. The site became an essential military point and a commercial center located in the North-Eastern of Egypt during this period. Therefore, A huge number of the Asian immigrants intended to the city and they stayed in it. The site was later used by the kings of the 18th-19th Dynasties. It was discovered at the site great temples, several tombs, and other great monuments dated back to the Middle and New Kingdoms.

Keywords: ancient egypt, archaeological site, civilization, historical studies, monuments, tell el dabaa, temples, tombs.

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ABSTRACT

Tell El-Dabaa the (current city of Qantir) considers one of the most important archaeological sites in the Eastern Nile Delta. The archaeological site of Tell El-Dabaa is located in the Northern Sharkia Governorate, Egypt. The location is situated about 7 km North of the city named Faqus. The site had an essential location in the Eastern Nile Delta as a significant protection station on the eastern entrance of ancient Egypt. The site identified as the ancient city of Avaris. The city had been occupied by the Hyksos and they had used the city as their capital, starting between the period of (15th - 17th) Dynasties. The site became an essential military point and a commercial center located in the North-Eastern of Egypt during this period. Therefore, A huge number of the Asian immigrants intended to the city and they stayed in it. The site was later used by the kings of the 18th-19th Dynasties. It was discovered at the site great temples, several tombs, and other great monuments dated back to the Middle and New Kingdoms.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Tell El-Dabaa (Qantir) is a significant archaeological site in Sharkia Governorate. The site had a great strategic importance especially from the 12th Dynasty to the end of the 19th Dynasty. This region was known as “Rawaty” which means “the mouth of two roads”. The site became the capital of the Hyksos during the (15th-17th Dynasties). Additionally, the area was known as (Peru-nefer) in the 18th Dynasty, and the city was identified as the (Pi-Ramesses city) and the northern residence of Ramesses II in the Eastern Delta during the 19th Dynasty. [1]

The site had great importance during the reign of Amenemhat I (1963-1934 BC), the founder of the 12th Dynasty. A memorial temple had been built in the site by Senusert III (1872-1853 BC) for commemorating Amenemhat I. A massive number of the Asian immigrants (Syro-Palestinians) moved to the site, and they settled there under the Egyptian Authority. They worked in Egypt in different positions as; soldiers, servants, sailors, boat-makers, and craftsmen [2].

Moreover, it was discovered in the site various ritual temples and different tombs, as well as remains of oak tree found in pits in front of the main temple related to the ritual practices. This cult might be associated with the Asian activities, and related to the rituals presented for the Goddess Hathor. Additionally, it was believed that there was a relationship between the Egyptian God Seth, and the Asian God Baal-Zaphon. It was found in the site a round seal with a

representation of this God dated back to the 13th Dynasty [2].

Additionally, valuables were discovered buried with the deceased reflecting beliefs similar to the Ancient Egyptians as well as, several servants and donkey burials were discovered at the site that was popular during the time of Asiatic immigration with the beginning of Hyksos reign. The servants had been buried in a different way than the tomb owners. They were buried in the entrance towards the main door of the tomb in order to continue their services, waiting for the orders from the tomb's owner in the afterlife. The donkey burials' indicate that the donkeys might be sacrificed at the same time of the death of the tomb's owner. It is thought that the donkeys were related closely with expeditions and journey that had been occurred between the life and underworld [3].

The location of Tell Dabaa played an essential role as a strategic trading center during the Middle Kingdom, as well as the site was the capital of Hyksos for more than one hundred years. Additionally, the site played an essential part during the New Kingdom; it was discovered a palace complex decorated with Aegean frescoes dated back to the reign of Thutmose III. The various materials, pottery, weaponry, tools, and other monumental objects that had been discovered in the site, indicated that the site of Tell El-Dabaa was an essential strategic location as a defensive and commercial point in the Northeastern Delta [4].

II. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods was used to achieve this research. The researcher is a Lecturer of Tourist Guidance and Ancient Egyptian Civilization and also worked in Sharkia Governorate as Tourism and Archaeology Specialist that allowed visiting the archaeological site of Tell El Dabaa and the other historical locations in Sharkia Governorate, as well as interview a number of the specialists who work in different archaeological sites not only in Sharkia, but also in the whole of Egypt. The

researcher depended on the Site Tours, Interviews, Observations, References, Internet Websites, and Recent studies and Publications concerning the research subject. Additionally, the researcher communicated with archeologists, specialists, and executives who are working in the site for providing the essential information and detailed data related to the research subject. The primary purpose of the research is to throw the light on the archaeological site of Tell El Dabaa and develop theoretical investigation on how to effectively benefit out of those historical sights both economically and culturally. The researcher used the previous experiences and studies to conduct this research and achieve the main goals and objectives successfully.

III. THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF TELL EL-DABAA (AVARIS)

Tell El Dabaa was an essential location during the Middle and New Kingdoms. The site had identified as Avaris that was the capital of Hyksos (1640- 1530 BC). The site identified as (Peru-nefer), as an essential a military base and sea navy harbor during the 18th Dynasty. Moreover, Ramesses II built his Northern residence (Pi-Ramesses) upon the ruins of the city during the 19th Dynasty [2]. Tell Dabaa (Avaris) was one of the most important cities in the Nile Delta since ancient times; the city was easily accessed by the ships through the Pelusiac Nile to the Mediterranean. This place had an excellent harbor to receive the boats from all ancient kingdoms [5]. According to Kamose's Stele, the Avaris harbor was used to moor the military Navy of the Hyksos [6].

The site of Tell El-Dabaa is located in the North-eastern corner of the Eastern Nile Delta. This location had great strategic importance as it was controlling in the trade ways between the Near East and the Mediterranean. Therefore, a large number of Asians had good relations with the Egyptians, and they settled in the Eastern Delta under the rule of Hyksos, who had a strong power base over there during this period [7].

The city was primarily extended at the beginning of the Hyksos rule, and it was a strategic commercial location due to the economic importance of the town during that time. Many people settled in the eastern Nile Delta, and maintained relations with the neighboring countries. The Syro-Palestine amphorae, made for preserving the wine and olive oil, were found in the site. Additionally, some pottery pieces imported from Cyprus found in the location. The remains of a magnificent castle discovered on the eastern side of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile dated back to Hyksos period [8].

A large number of immigrants was travelling to the site of Tell El-Dabaa during the period 1600-1570 BC. They built their houses in that area. Their homes were divided into small dwellings located in the North-eastern region of Tell El-Dabaa for the poorer classes. The large houses with stairs leading to upper floors were situated in the eastern area related to the high levels, as well as a huge enclosure wall had been built around the city to protect the people against any attack [8].

Ahmosé entered the city of Avaris in 1530 BC, he destroyed the castle of Hyksos, and then he expelled them out of Egypt. Therefore, large storage buildings had built upon the ruins of the citadel. Additionally, it was discovered the remains of the destroyed camp of the Hyksos on the surface of the site; the soldiers' bodies were buried in small graves, and animals' bone remains were found in the area. After that a vast cemetery dated back to the 18th Dynasty was constructed in the site; it included numerous graves built with the brick materials from the ruins of the Hyksos castle. Additionally, a great Egyptian navy and military base (Peru-nefer) and palace dated back to Thutmose III discovered at the site. Later a new fortress was built upon the Thumossids' ruins. This fortress was built in the reign of Horemheb as a protection point on the eastern border against any attack on Egypt, especially a new power of the Hittites started to be appeared, as a parallel power to Egypt in the East [2].

Ramesses II built his northern residence (Pi-Ramesses) at the site, the city had been later abandoned, and it was used as a quarry for producing the building materials during the 21st -22nd Dynasties. A large number of stone blocks, statues, and other valuable monuments had been transported to Tanis, Bubastis, and different other places. Additionally, the cults and the ritual activities had also moved to the New location of Tanis, particularly Tanis was the Northern Capital of Egypt during this period. Moreover, secondary cults of the Gods of Ramesses II had independently appeared at Tanis and Bubastis during the 30th Dynasty [2].

IV. THE EXCAVATION WORK AT THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF TELL EL-DABAA

Edouard Naville initially excavated the site in 1885. Later, Pierre Montet excavated at the site of Tanis, about 20 km to the north of Tell El-Dabaa between the period 1929-1939. Montet had wrongly believed that he found the location of Avaris. Labib Habashi worked in the site of Tell El-Dabaa between 1941-1942, and he identified the site as the location of Avaris [9]. Shehata Adam excavated in the site of 12th Dynasty at Ezbet Rushdi between 1951-1954. Additionally, the excavations had later been carried out by the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Cairo, under the supervision of Manfred Bietak between the period 1966-2009. He confirmed the theory of Habashi that Tell El-Dabaa was the right location of the capital of the Hyksos (Avaris). Recently, Irene Forstner-Müller worked in the site from 2009 [2].

At Tell El-Dabaa, various buildings, tombs, residences, temples, and other constructions were discovered, influenced by Canaanite architecture styles. Those monumental constructions had been affected by the muddy shy environmental conditions, agriculture, and buildings on the archaeological sites [3]. According to excavations that had been done in 2010, the area was occupied by houses and settlements dated back to the

Second Intermediate Period. The excavations covered about 700 m², it resulted into discovering various rooms with massive walls and courtyards included ovens and grain storage areas [10].

The northeastern side of Tell El-Dabaa was excavated in 2012. It was discovered a trench about 60x50 m, divided into various residential quarters separated by different streets, and the more significant buildings located in the western side. This settlement dated back to the 15th Dynasty. The excavations resulted in discovering various remains of room fills, street layers, fireplaces, granaries, small pits, floors, walls, and other blocks. Additionally, it was found in the area, remains of a river harbor, funeral buildings dated back to the Second Intermediate Period, with other constructions dated back to the Ramessid Period, as well as remains of bones of birds and fish, teeth, and shaft fragments [11].

It was also discovered at Tell El-Dabaa many various tombs dedicated to Canaanite people. Those tombs had been constructed with mud-brick, and they included different vaulted chambers [12]. It was discovered at the site of Tell El-Dabaa many temples dated back to the Hyksos period. Those temples had been designed with Egyptian and Canaanite style [3]. The entrances of the temples were discovered in the north side of the temples, as well as various monumental objects were found such as; bronze daggers, ax heads, and jugs [12].

Several monumental remains and wall paintings had been discovered at Tell El-Dabaa in 1987. They were found in the palace complex that had been built upon an ancient fortress dated back to the New Kingdom [13]. The discovered wall paintings showing the relationships between ancient Egyptian Art and the eastern Mediterranean, as well as direct connections with Aegean society [14].

V. TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF TELL EL-DABAA

According to the geophysical studies, this region was characterized by the presence of flood basins, levees, and channel deposits. Therefore, the archaeological work needs more further excavations, due to the high level of sedimentations on the monumental area. The archaeological site of Tell El-Dabaa is located in the Northeastern side of the Nile Delta; this part of the Nile Delta was characterized by a low alluvial plain with southwest and northeast trending belts of higher ground known as island, and the archaeological site known as tell which contained the remains of ancient settlement debris. The location of Tell El-Dabaa related to Avaris (the capital of Hyksos), is now located under the deposits of silt remains and modern agriculture. The recent excavations confirmed that large numbers of Asian immigrants stayed in the Eastern Nile Delta. They called Hyksos; the foreigners who controlled Egypt during the Second Intermediate period until the end of the Middle Kingdom [15].

There were seven branches of the Nile during ancient times [Fig. 1]; the eastern branch of the Nile was the Pelusiac branch that related to the ancient city of Pelusium where it was located on the mouth of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. This branch is now dried up, and Tell El-Dabaa (Avaris) was located next to it [16]. The main river divided into two branches around the ancient City of Pi-Rameses, leading to the presence of the lakes and swamp-plains could be observed. The archaeological remains at Tell El-Dabaa influenced by the muddy environmental conditions, and the modern agriculture on the site [3].



Fig. 1: The Location of (Tell el-Daba'a) on the Eastern Nile Delta and the ancient branches of the River Nile.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0180770.g001>

VI. THE TEMPLE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF TELL EL-DABAA AT EZBET RUSHDI

Ezbet Rushdi is a small village about 1 km to the North-eastern side of Tell El-Dabaa. Shehata Adam discovered a grand temple at the site in 1950. The discovered temple and the settlement dated back to the 12th Dynasty, Middle Kingdom [17]. The Austrian archaeological Institute

excavated at the site in 1996, they had completed the excavation work at the site under the supervision of M. Bietak [18].

In addition to the excavations that had been done by Shehata Adam who discovered the temple, Manfred Bietak completed the excavation works, and he conducted the layout of the temple. He

also discovered monumental remains in the lower layers under the temple dated back to the 12th Dynasty. The temple was constructed by king Sesostris III, and it had been used as a memorial temple for king Amenemhat I (the founder of 12th Dynasty) until the end of the 12th Dynasty. The site had been reused in the second half of the 13th Dynasty. The settlement had later been destroyed, and it was replaced by the temple [19].

The temple consists of a central sanctuary with two adjoining chapels and a forecourt [Fig. 2]. A huge mud-brick enclosure wall surrounds the temple. It was discovered a corridor between the

wall and the central building, maybe a staircase leading to the up-roof. The forecourt included with two lateral buildings may be used as storerooms. Colonnades might surround the central part of the courtyard, and a water basin was discovered in the center. The building was surrounded by an outer enclosure wall; this wall appears much more exceptional thickness in front than the other parts. This shows that the front part might be included a front Pylon, and a secondary sanctuary was discovered in the northwestern side of the outer forecourt [20].

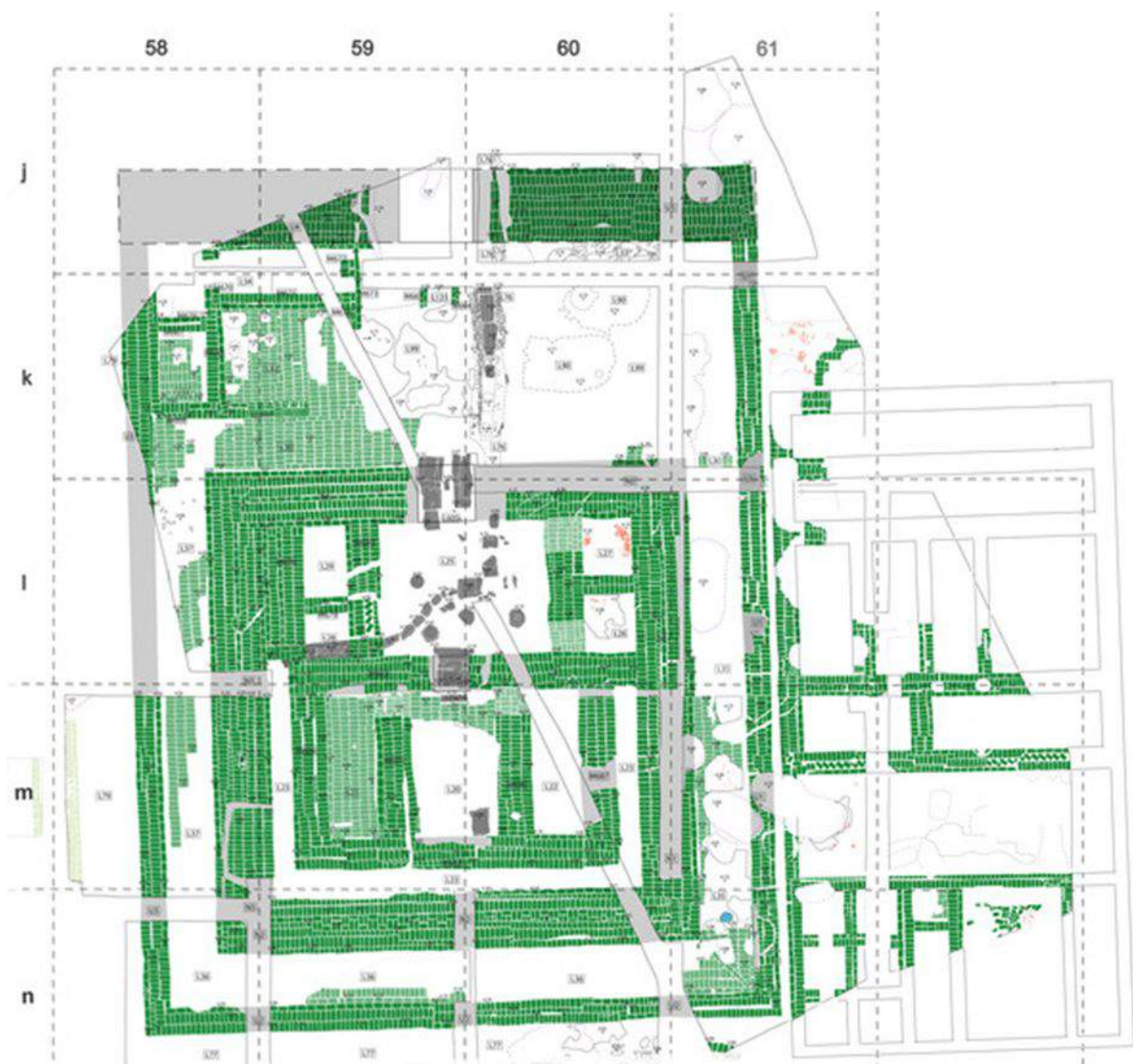


Fig. 2: The Layout Plan of the temple district at Ezbet Rushdi

<https://www.orea.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-the-temple-and-the-settlement-of-the-middle-kingdom-in-ezbet-rushdi-closed/>

Additionally, A settlement was found under the ruins of the temple [Fig. 3]. It dated also back to the 12th Dynasty. According to the excavation works, the settlement had been modified and enlarged. It included many different structures; it was discovered houses consist of three rooms, and surrounded by store-buildings [28]. It was discovered at the site a significant building dated back to the 13th Dynasty, it dedicated to the official workers who supervised the trade exchange and foreign expeditions. These workers were Asians but they were working under the Egyptian Kingdom's control. Additionally, domed tombs were discovered at the site related to those workers attached to this building. Moreover, it

was discovered at the site statues of queen Nofru-Sobek, and king Hornediheryotef from the late 12th Dynasty and the early 13th Dynasty; the royal statues were discovered by Labib Habachi who worked in the site [29].

Additionally, an offering pits were discovered by the Austrian Archaeological Institute, in front of the temple of Ezbet Rushdi that dated back to the 12th Dynasty. Unfortunately, the surrounding area is now cultivated, so it needs more attention and further excavations. This pit included pottery pieces and some animal bones for skeletons of two donkeys and four sheep [21].



Fig. 3: The Layout Plan of the settlement of Ezbet Rushdi, str. e/2

<https://www.orea.oew.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-the-temple-and-the-settlement-of-the-middle-kingdom-in-ezbet-rushdi-closed/>

VII. THE POTTERY PIECES AND THE OTHER MONUMENTAL OBJECTS DISCOVERED AT TELL EL-DABAA

Various pottery pieces discovered at the site of Tell El-Dabaa dated back to the 12th Dynasty, as well as some other pieces dated back to the 13th Dynasty [Fig. 4]. This pottery was locally made, and some other pieces imported from Syro-Canaanite countries [20]. However, it was discovered at Tell El-Dabaa about 500 pottery pieces brought from Cyprus. Some of these bottles were made for preserving the oil and perfume [Fig. 5]. This confirmed that there were commercial relationships between ancient Egypt and Cyprus [22]. Additionally, Shehata Adam excavated in the site of Ezbet Rusydi close to Tell El-Dabaa between the period 1951-1954. He discovered various types of the pottery pieces included pendant line, cross line, and white painted styles imported from Cyprus, as well as an oil and perfume vessels, had been discovered, that confirmed the commercial relationships between Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean [17].

The most important discoveries in the settlement included the pottery, flint pieces, animal bones, and other monumental objects. The common types of pottery found in the site, are represented in semi-circular cups made from the Nile clay. These bottles had used for preserving the beers, oil, and wine. Additionally, other types of pottery and fine ceramics such as; bowls with an incurved rim, small carinated cups, red semi-round bowls in various shapes and decorated with horizontal grooves under the edge, and red-washed jugs with a handle and a flat base. As well as the container vessels, large dishes, large hemispherical bowls, spinning bowls, bread units, large backing trays, large beakers, and large ring stands. In addition to the discovered Egyptian pottery, foreign vessels were discovered in the site, imported from the neighboring countries such as; fragments of the Minoan amphorae, Canaanite pottery, and Levantine vessels [23]. Additionally, large quantities of the valuable ceramic were discovered

in the site, and numbers of the monumental objects such as; scarabs, needles, knives, drills, sickles, and stone tools [24].



Fig. 4: Different Types of Pottery Discovered at Tell El-Dabaa

<https://www.orea.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-the-temple-and-the-settlement-of-the-middle-kingdom-in-ezbet-rushdi-closed/>

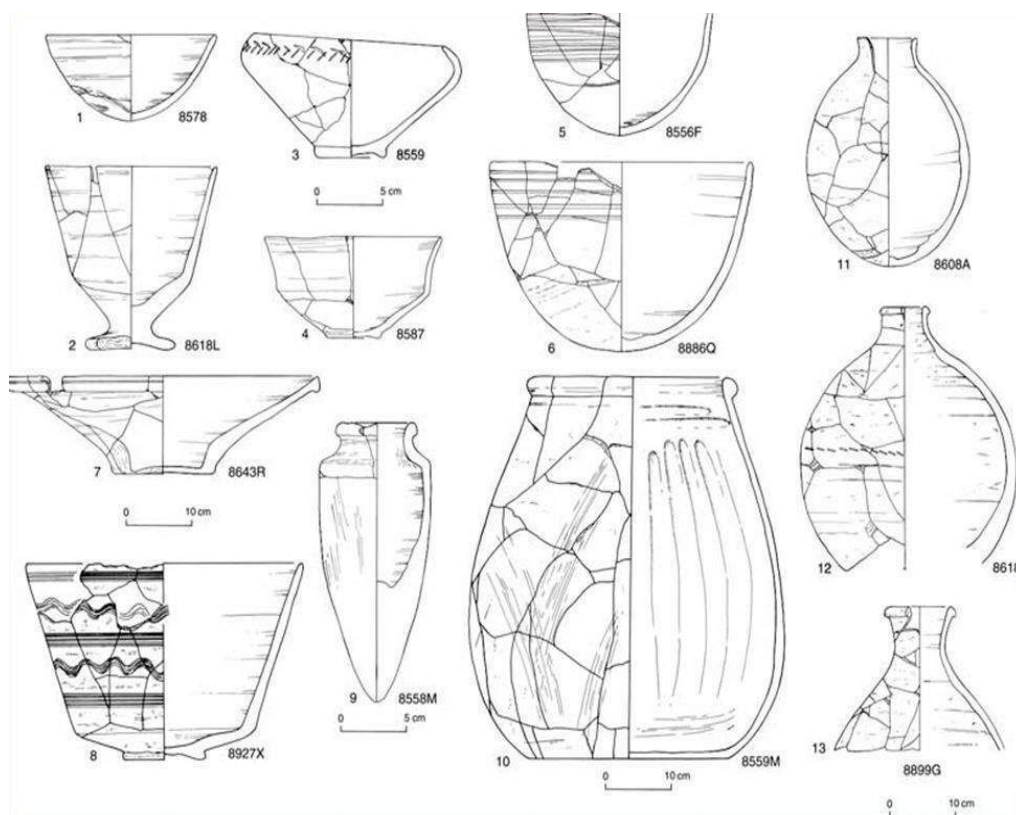


Fig 5: Different Types of Pottery Discovered at Tell El-Dabaa

<https://www.orea.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-the-temple-and-the-settlement-of-the-middle-kingdom-in-ezbet-rushdi-closed/>

VIII. THE SIGNIFICANT DISCOVERIES FOUND AT TELL EL-DABAA

One of the most important discoveries at Tell El-Dabaa is the temple of Amenemhet I. This temple was dedicated to the “Ka” cult of Amenemhet I; a limestone fragment was found concerning the Horus name of Amenemhet I [Fig. 6], the founder of the 12th Dynasty.

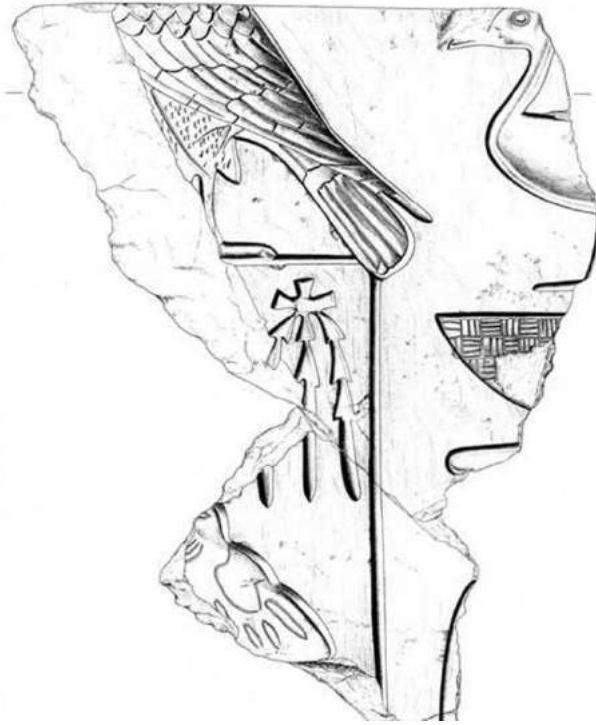


Fig. 6: Alimestone fragment concerning the Horus name of Amenemhet I

Additionally, a sealing stamp inscribed with the name of the mayor of Avaris called (Jmenjj-seneb-nefer) was discovered. This stamp was found in one of the secondary pits in the temple, with other pottery pieces dated back to the 13th Dynasty. This discovery is a critical documented record of Avaris (Hwt-w'rt) [Fig. 7], found in the site [27].

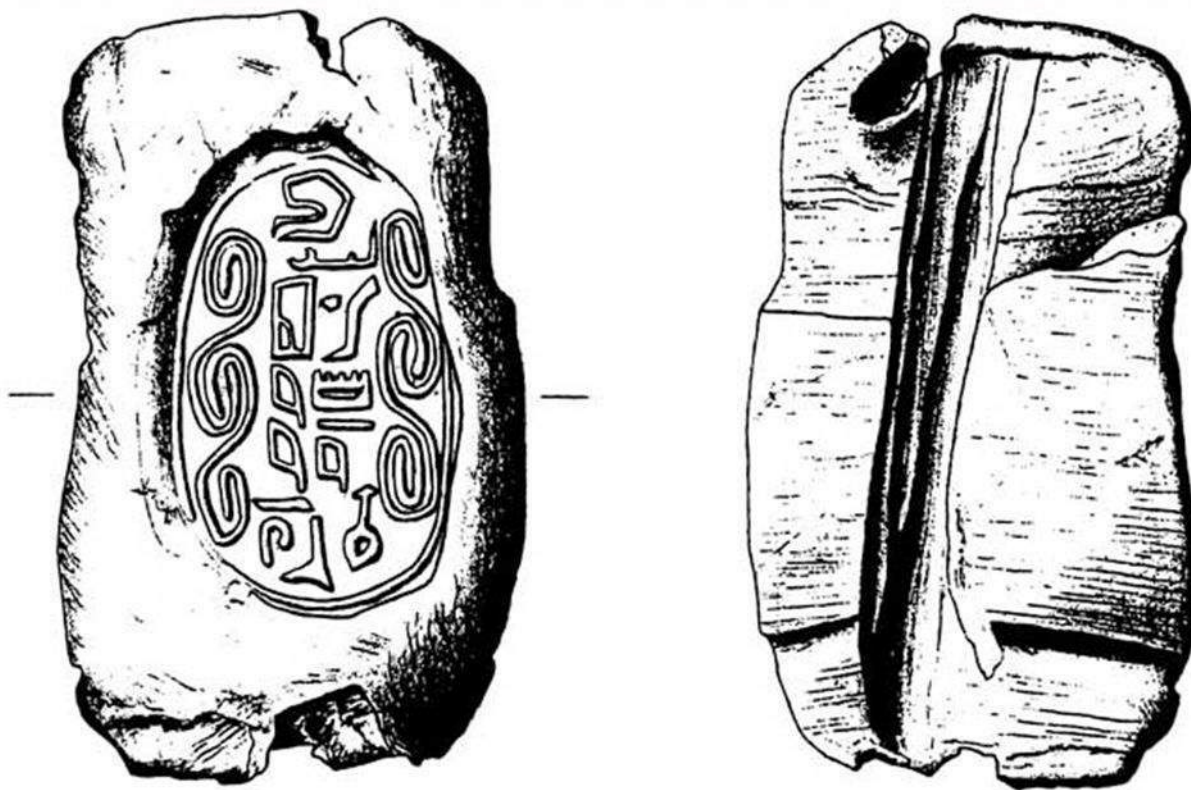
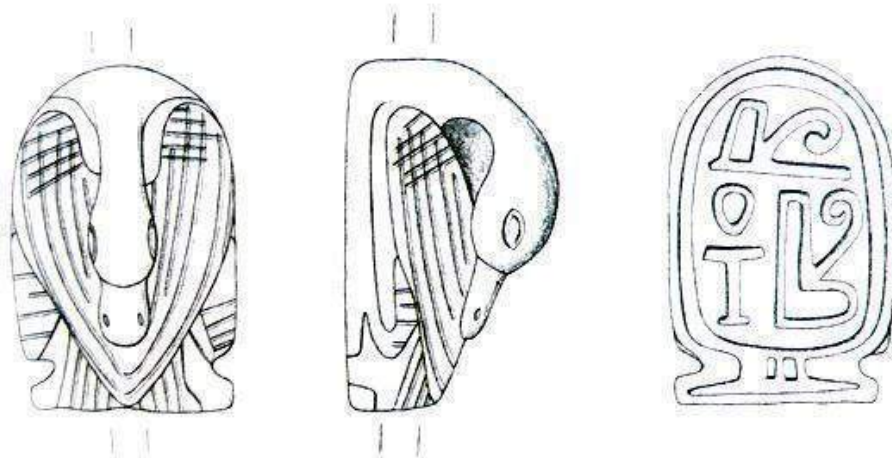


Fig. 7: Czerny E., Ein früher Beleg für hwt-wert auf einem Siegelabdruck aus Tell el-Dabca, *Ä&L* 11 (2001), 13-26.

<https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-the-scarabs-seals-and-seal-impressions-of-the-areas-hi-to-hvi-at-ezbet-helmi/>

Moreover, several monumental objects and a significant constructions had been discovered at Ezbet Helmi. Manfred Bietak had excavated the site in 1990, and the discovered monumental structures dated back to the second Intermediate Period and the early of the New Empire. A large number of scarabs and stamp seals [Fig. 8] had been discovered at the site and dated back to that historical period [29]. Additionally, it was discovered houses with mud-brick walls at Ezbet Helmi. These houses were discovered by Manfred Bietak in 2013. Mudbricks samples were collected to be analyzed, as well as some other remains had been collected from the pits, a residue of houses, wood ash, ashes from kitchen fires, food remains, and broken jars [25]. According to the examined the mud-bricks, it appeared that the chopped dried plants were one of the most important

materials that had been used in manufacturing the mud-bricks and pottery pieces during this period [26].



Inv. Nr. 7775

Fig. 8: Stamp seal of the New Kingdom Inv. No. 7775 from Ezbet Helmi

Ernst Czerny <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-the-scarabs-seals-and-seal-impressions-of-the-areas-hi-to-hvi-at-ezbet-helmi>

IX. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS IN THE AREA A/II

A large sacred area was discovered included a great central temple and other smaller temples [Fig. 9]. The largest temple is about 30 m long, and it was one of the most significant temples during that period. According to the discovered remains in the site, it painted with blue decorations. The offerings area was discovered in

front of the temple; an alter on which remains of acorns were found, tree trenches found close to it, and the fruits might be come from these trees. The alter was surrounded by offering pits in it, large quantities of remains of pottery pieces, ceramic vessels, and burned animal bones [30].

Nemours smaller temples had been built around the main temple; some of which built on the Egyptian style, while the others built according to

the Near East architectural design. Moreover, a large house, a great tower, and different chapels were discovered in the site; and they were known in both Egyptian and Near Eastern architectural style. This area is surrounded by different cemeteries that included many various tombs. All buildings of this district are separated by wide streets from each other. This district had been later enlarged, especially during the reign of Hyksos. The site was rapidly flourishing, and then the funerary area had been founded. The various buildings, numerous cemeteries, and the ritual temples had been built around the main temple [30].

In the area A/II, the first settlement was discovered, and it dated back to the late 12th Dynasty. Small buildings in the form of tents erected on pillars, they were later replaced by various mud-brick buildings. Many different tombs were found next to this area [31].

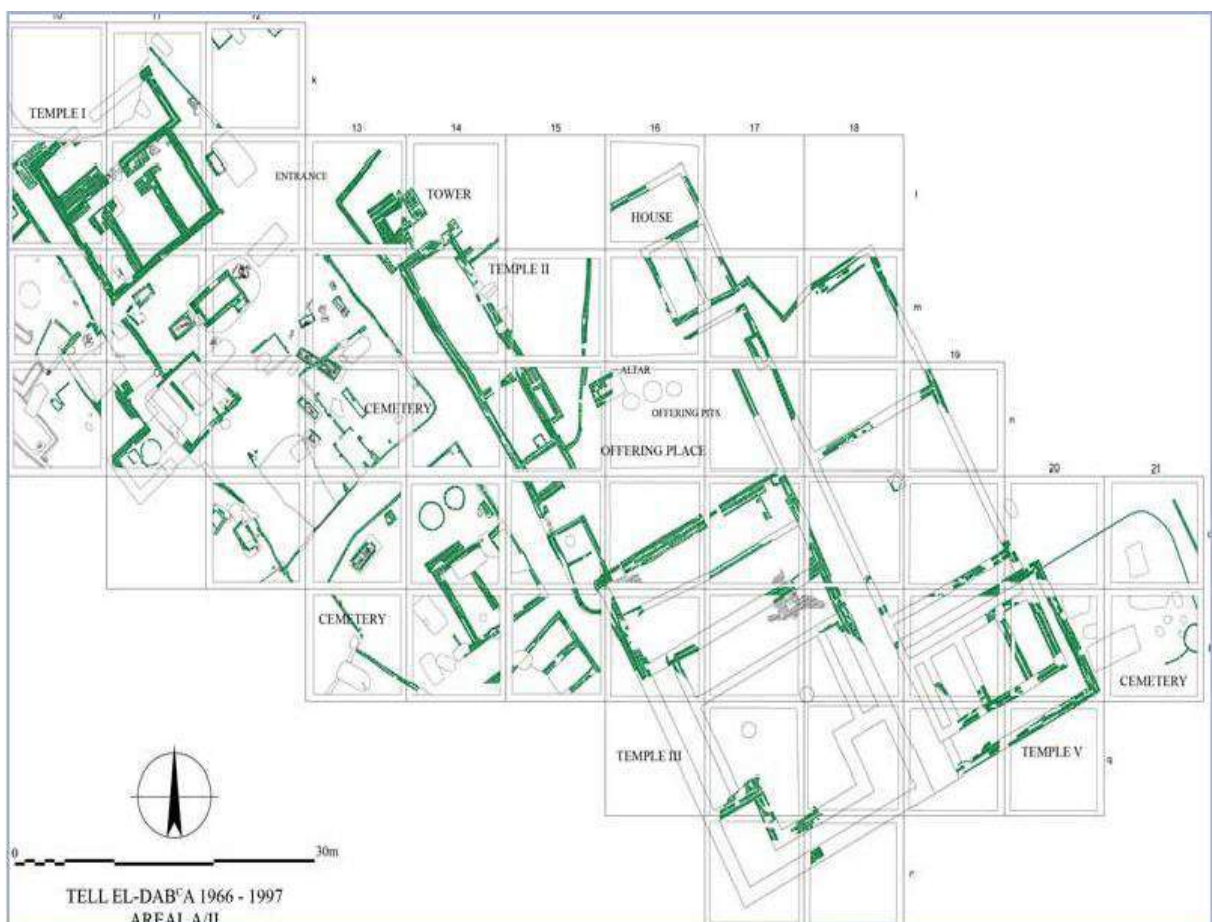


Fig.9: Tell El-Dabaa, Area A/II

Vera Müller <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-archaeological-remains-of-temple-rituals-in-the-sacred-district-aii-and-their-cultural-historical-assignment/>

According to the excavation's work of the Austrian Archaeological Institute at Tell El-Dabaa that had been carried out by M. Mietak between the period

1966-2009, these excavations resulted in discovering two Syrian-Palestinian temples, two Egyptian temples, and housing area in the Area

A/II dated back to the late 18th to mid of 16th century BC. Those temples reflected the ritual relationships and religious activities between the ancient Egyptians and Canaanites. The sacrificial pits that were discovered in front of the temples proved that the cult practices continued until the early New Kingdom, after the Egyptians expelled the Hyksos out of Egypt and controlled Avaris [31].

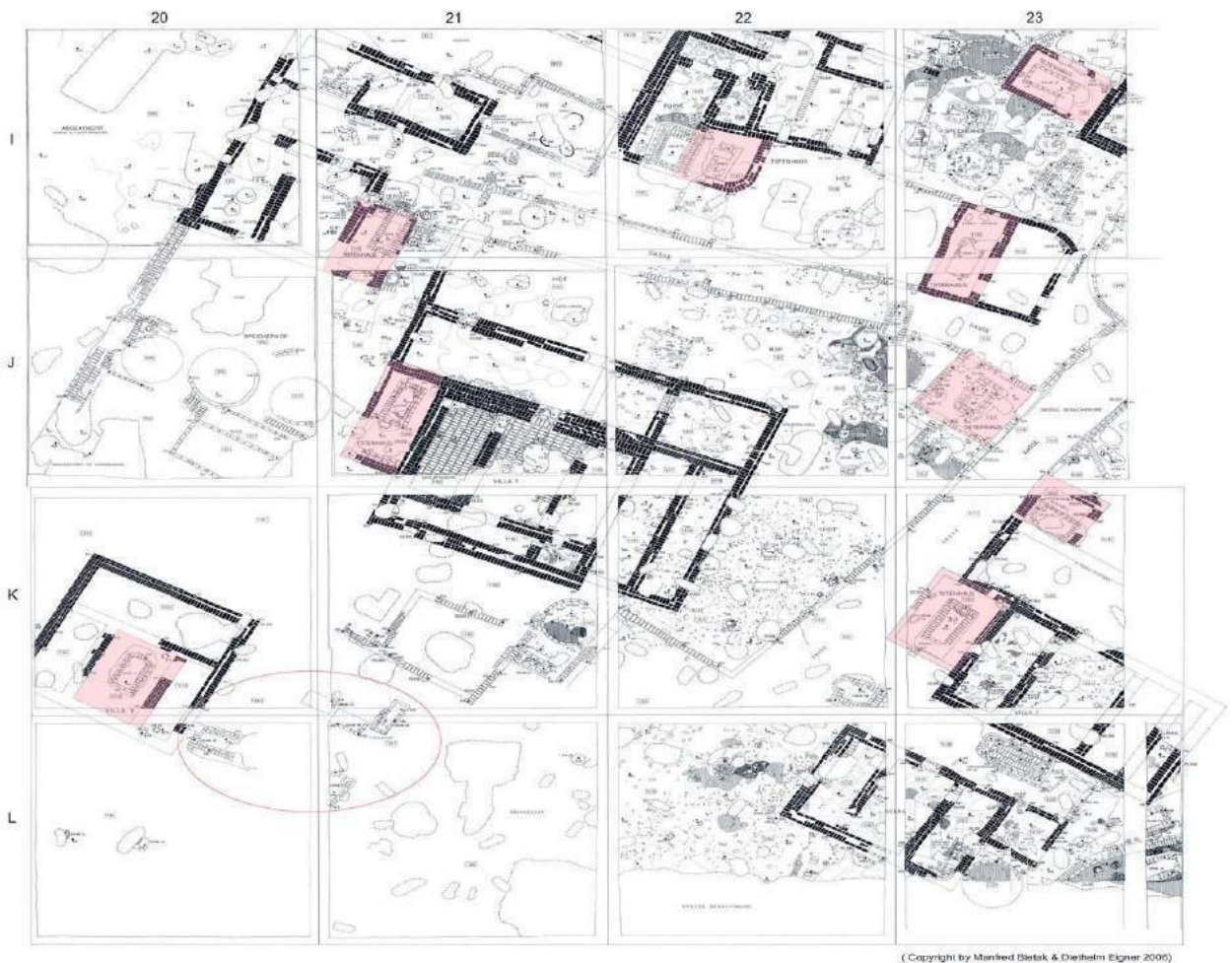
The Egyptian temples related to believe the otherworld and the cult of the dead, while the Asian temple related to worship the gods. It was discovered in the site the foundation's walls that could to point out the layout of the temples, some alters were discovered in the forecourts of the temples, and some ceramic pieces, pottery vessels and animal bones [31].

A unique structure related to Hyksos was found in the area F/II at Tell El-Dabaa, this building included a huge number of monumental remains of the ritual meals, were buried in large pits. These ritual activities had been practiced in the funerary ceremonies for kings and gods. The remains of a great banquet were found in a palace's courtyard, separated by a large wall from the other surroundings. Additionally, it was discovered a large number of ceramics, faience, stones, flints, metals, and monumental objects in the site. Almost of these pieces had been locally made, and the other pieces were imported from Cyprus, Syria, Palestine, and Nubia. One of the most essential discovered pieces are significant dishes decorated with hunting and aquatic scenes, as well as other objects in the form hippos, ducks, and femalres [3e figu2].

X. THE DISCOVERED TOMBS IN THE AREA F/I

A significant cemetery was discovered at Tell El-Dabaa between the period 1979-1989; it included about 500 tombs in the area F/I. Those tombs dated back from the Middle Kingdom to the early New Kingdom; 76 of these tombs dated back to the late 12th Dynasty and the early 13th Dynasty. The other tombs dated back from the

13th Dynasty to the end of the 15th Dynasty, and these tombs might be later reused by the Asians who controlled the site until the end of the Middle Kingdom. Several tombs were discovered in separate rooms attached to houses (Totenhäuser), and the other tombs were found between the houses in small cemeteries[Fig. 10]. Moreover, the child burials were found in large storage vessels inside the homes or the courtyards of these houses [33]. These tombs had been constructed by sun-dried mud-brick with vaulted ceilings and entrance shafts leading to the burial pits. Unfortunately, almost of the graves had been looted, but many different ritual practices could be observed dedicated to the traditions of ancient Egyptians and Syro-Palestinians [33].



(Copyright by Manfred Bietak & Dietrich Eigner 2005)

Fig. 10: Totenhäuser“ and small cemetery in area F/I (© OREA/ÖAI archive, M. Bietak and D. Eigner)

It was discovered at the area NW-SE a famous tomb built with mud-brick; the burial chamber is about 2,65 m x 1,65 m. It was found a skeleton in the entrance area, with a round cup and a jar. The remains of a young female found next to the northeastern wall that it seems that the servant lady was here buried as a human sacrifice to the tomb's owner, but this case had been rarely occurred in ancient Egypt. It appears that this tomb was dedicated to some soldier because his weapons were already buried with him, and some sheep's remains found on a dish next to the dead's head presenting as an offering to the tomb's master. The soldier was wearing a copper built with attached dagger put in his left side. He held his sword that made of copper, and its handle made of bone [34].

Additionally, in this area, a great cemetery was discovered; it consists of many different graves with their various architectural elements [Fig. 11]. This great building (palace) was partly constructed over the older tombs, and a garden was located to the south of the cemetery area. However, this garden had later used as a cemetery, and the new monuments were built upon the older graves. The graveyard of Tell El-Dabaa called as the "Palace Necropolis", it is located to the south of the palace, and its vaults are different from the older graves [3].

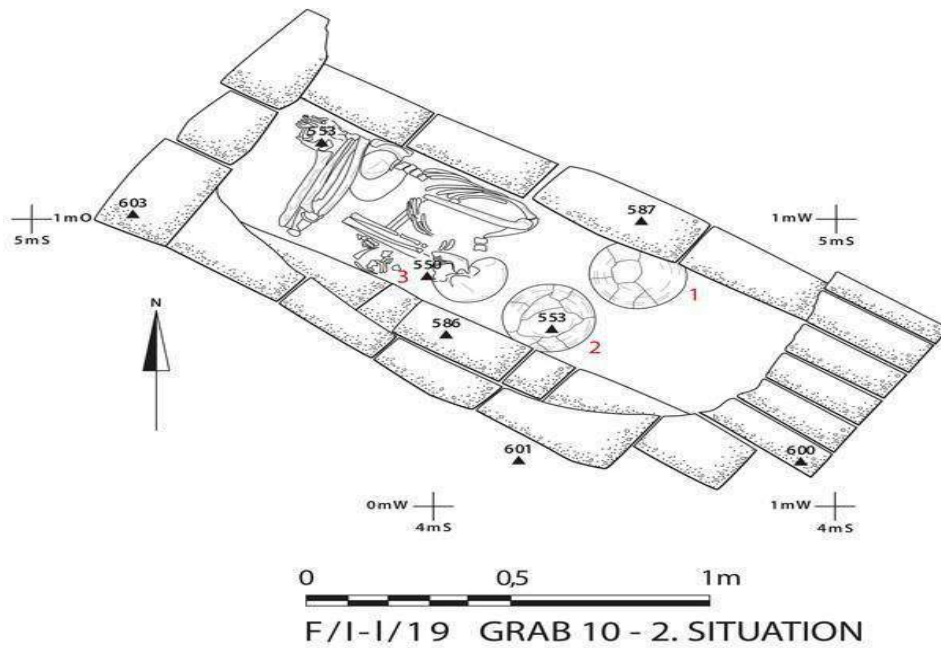
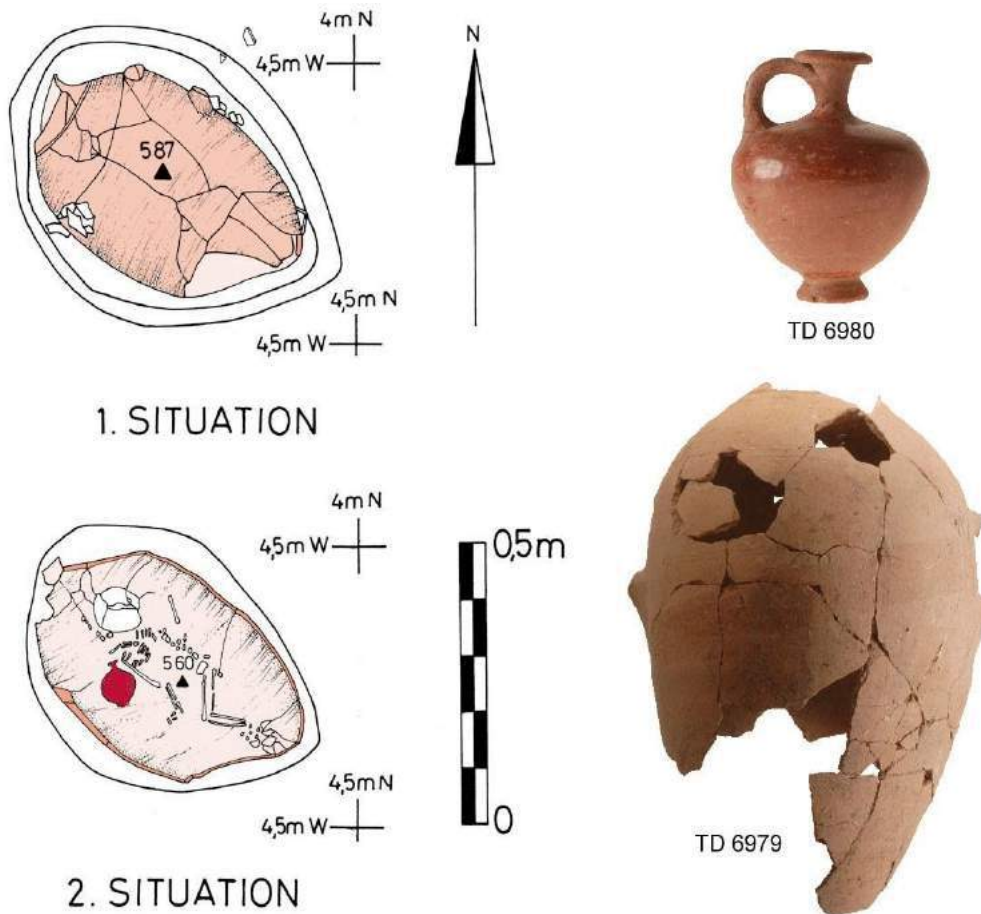
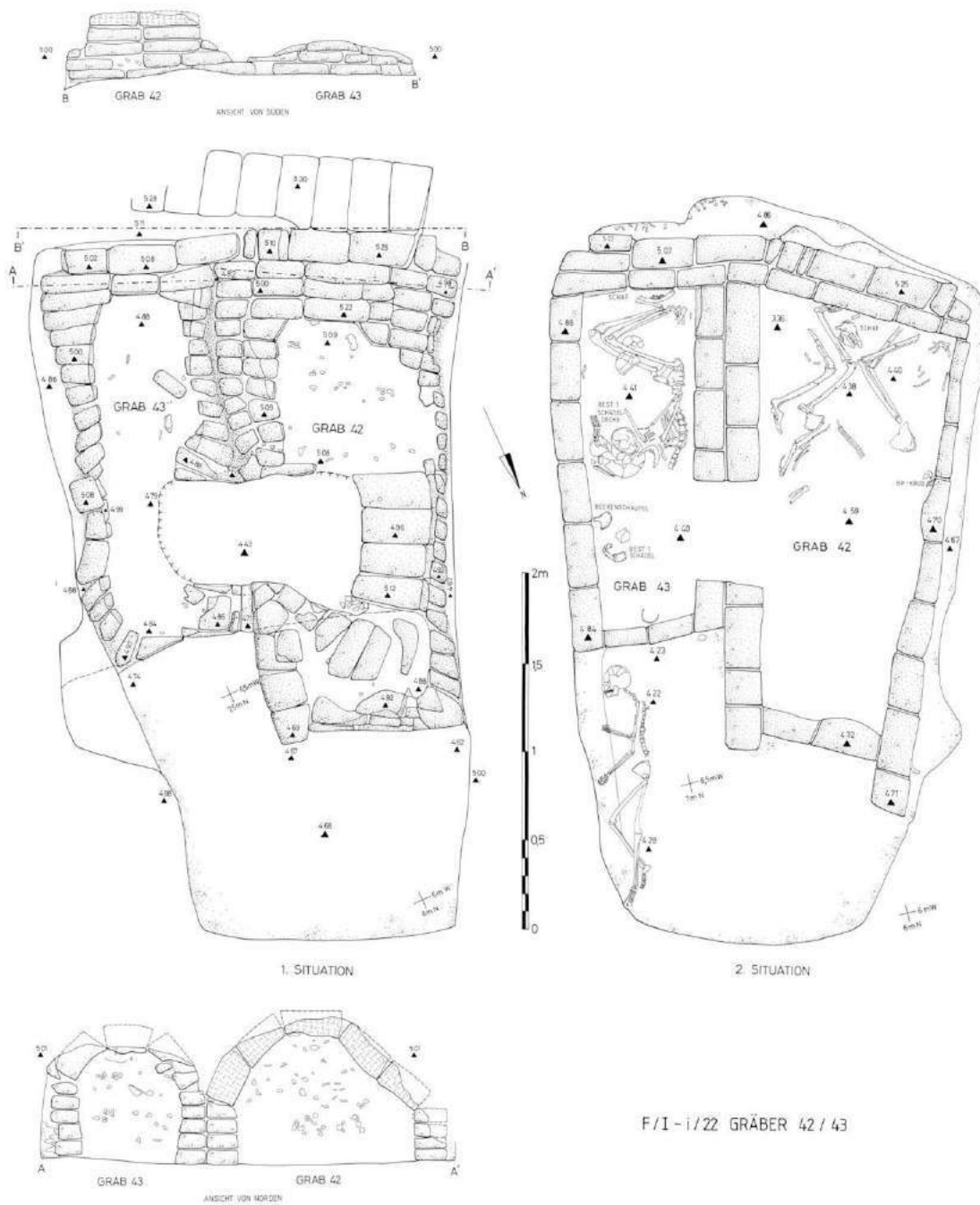


Fig. 11: Tell el-Dab'a, F/I-L/19, tomb 10 (© ÖAI/ÖAW archives)



Pot burial F/I – 1/23 tomb 25 (© ÖAI/OREA archive)



Constructed tombs F/I – i/22 tombs 42 & 43 with “Dienerbestattung” (© OREA/ÖAI archive, drawing L. Majerus)

XI. THE PALACES DECORATED WITH MINOAN WALL PAINTINGS DISCOVERED AT TELL EL-DABAA

A vast cemetery dated back to the 18th Dynasty was constructed over the site; it included numerous graves built with the brick materials from the ruins of the Hyksos castle. Additionally,

three palaces [Fig. 12] were discovered at the place built on high platforms, two of which decorated with the Minoan wall paintings. The palatial area covered 5.5 hectare (13 Feddan), it was surrounded by an enclosure wall with an entrance pylon on the north. As well as a great Egyptian navy and military base (Peru-nefer) and palace dated back to Thutmose III discovered at

the site. Later a new fortress was built upon the Thumossids' ruins. This fortress was built in the reign of Horemheb as a protection point on the eastern border against any attack of Egypt,

especially a new power of the Hittites started to be appeared, as a parallel power to Egypt in the East [35].

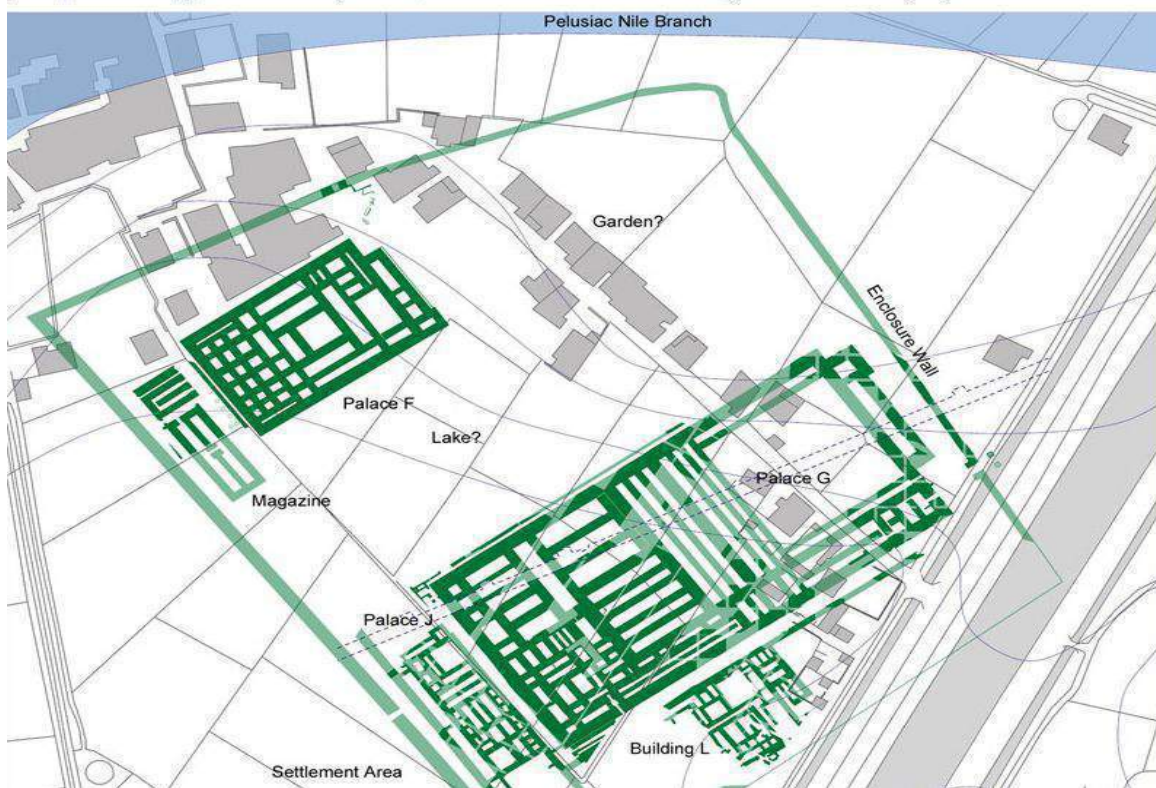


Fig. 12: Layout plan of the three palaces dated back to the 18th Dynasty

It was discovered Minoan wall paintings [Fig.13] in the two palaces of the ancient Egyptian naval base (Peru-nefer) at Ezbet Helmi next to Tell Dabaa, dated back to the reign of queen Hatshepsut, king Thutmose III, and his son Amenhotep II. These wall paintings fallen on the ground because they painted on material not suitable for the mud-bricks walls of the palace. The little of the wall paintings had been reconstructed, and the painted scenes need more efforts to be preserved. The Minoan wall paintings decorated the Egyptian palaces showing the relationship between Egyptian Art and that of the eastern of Mediterranean area. The wall painting scenes (buon fresco) were unknown in Egypt before the reign of Thutmose III. Furthermore, an industrial style of Aegean Art by using various figures on the wet wall plaster, and using different colors for example use the blue instead of green,

blue instead of grey, and the black color was essential in the Minoan Art. The most significant decorations of Peru-nefer dated back to the reign of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut represented in different hunting scenes, ritual scenes, representations of humans and animals, and plaster reliefs with representations of bulls or lions [35].



Fig. 13: Freeze of Taureador from Palace F (Graphic: OREA)

Manfred Bietak <https://www.orea.oeaw.ac.at/en/research/tell-el-daba-publications/tell-el-daba-late-minoan-wall-paintings/>

XII. CONCLUSION

Tell El-Dabaa is one of the most important archaeological sites in Sharkia Governorate. The site known as Avaris the Capital of Hyksos. The site was later used during the reign of the kings of the 18th-19th Dynasties. The region had a great strategic importance from the Middle Kingdom to the end of the New Kingdom. The site became the capital of the Hyksos during the (15th-17th Dynasties). The city had an excellent harbor to receive the ships known as (Peru-nefer) in the 18th Dynasty, and Ramesses II built his Northern Residence in it during the 19th Dynasty.

The location of Tell Dabaa played an essential part between Egypt and the neighboring countries as a strategic trading center during the Middle Kingdom. Therefore, a large number of the Asian immigrants moved to the region and they stayed in it under the Egyptian Authority. As well as, the site played an important role during the New Kingdom; it was discovered remains of ancient Egyptian harbor and palace complex decorated with Aegean frescoes dated back to the 18th Dynasty. Additionally, various materials, pottery, weaponry, tools, and other monumental objects that had been discovered in the site.

The site was identified as (Peru-nefer) as an important military station, and navy harbor during the reign of Thutmose III, as well as

Ramesses II built his residence city (Pi-Ramesses) upon the ruins of the capital city of the Hyksos. This site had an excellent strategic location as it was controlling in the trade ways between the Near East and the Mediterranean. The other people from different countries were interested in making good relations with the Egyptians, and they settled in the Eastern Delta under the Egyptian authority.

The city was later abandoned, and the site was used as a quarry for producing the building materials, especially during the 21st -22nd Dynasties. A large number of stone blocks, statues, and other valuable monuments had been transported to Tanis, Bubastis, and different other places. Additionally, the cults and the ritual activities had also moved to the New location of Tanis, particularly Tanis was the Northern Capital of Egypt during that period.

XIV. RESULTS

Tell El Dabaa is one of the most important archaeological sites in the Northern Sharkia Governorate. The site identified as Avaris the capital of the Hyksos. However, they controlled the North of Egypt, they could not to control the South of Egypt. The native Egyptian kings in Thebes succeeded in expel the Hyksos out of Egypt, and Ahmose founded the New Egyptian Empire.

The Hyksos entered Egypt with modern war equipments and military weapons. The Egyptians developed these weapons and equipments achieving a huge development in the ancient Egyptian military during the New Kingdom.

The site of Tell El Dabaa is now occupied by the agriculture works and the modern buildings. As well as the most of Tell El-Dabb's monuments and huge statues moved to the nearby places where they discovered during the recent excavation works.

Sharkia Governorate has many archaeological sites that need more further studies and additional excavation works. The archaeological site of Tell El Dabaa has to be put on the tourism map, and be opened for visitors to see Sharkia's great history and civilization.

Site Development and Strategic Planning. The planning and development for the archaeological site will be useful to the local community by the improvement of infrastructure operations that the region is in need for (roads, electricity, water, information and communication services, and others). They will be beneficial to the National Economy by setting up hotels, shops, rest and parking areas, and restaurants and cafes around the site, as well as employment opportunities, investment opportunities.

The site has to be supported with marketing and public relations campaigns. The cultural heritage specialists and archaeological site managers play a vital part in the cultural life of their local societies. Additionally, cultural educational programs, social media campaigns, and modern technologies that consider professional tools giving a positive picture towards the touristic destinations.

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