A transition from the Lower Egyptian Culture to Naqada Culture took place in the Nile Delta during the period contemporary with the end of Naqada II. One of the most significant results of the last research in this region is definition of a transitional phase (recognized on several sites) between these cultures. Such a phase was distinguished for the first time at Buto – *Schicht IIIa*¹. Similarly, at Tell el-Farkha - phase 2, a transition was also observed from Lower Egyptian to Naqada pottery². In the mentioned phases, apart from certain vessel forms known from phases belonging to Lower Egyptian Culture (Buto – *Schichten I-II* and Tell el-Farkha – Phase 1⁴), also potsherds with fibrous temper typical for that culture prove continuation of the local pottery tradition. On the other


hand, there are fragments of pottery related to the Upper Egyptian tradition of Naqada IIid. Primarily, pottery with painted decoration is significant here as characteristic for the mentioned period. An evident continuation of certain pottery forms characteristic for the Lower Egyptian society, apart from pottery related to the Naqada culture, confirm earlier assumption that the transition could have been gradual rather than rapid. It seems possible that instead of extermination of local inhabitants by the new settlers coming from the South during this period, we may speak rather of their assimilation with groups representing the Naqada tradition.

The tradition of the South of the country had been soon fully adopted at the Nile Delta during the end of Naqada II / beginning of Naqada III period (Naqada IIId2/Naqada IIIa1), when the quantity of Naqada pottery considerably increase. The pottery characteristic of these periods occurs on several sites of the Nile Delta. It was found at Buto – Schicht III (lower layers)\(^5\), Mendes - Unit 3 of Area B\(^6\), as well as at Minshat Abu Omar among the pottery assemblage of graves belonging to groups I and II\(^7\). It should be noted here, as suggested by Kaiser\(^8\), that there is a possibility of transferring the foundation date of the cemetery at Minshat Abu Omar to Naqada IIId2.

The pottery characteristic for the Upper Egyptian tradition and typical of Naqada Culture constitutes also a dominant group of the pottery in phase 3 at Tell el-Farkha, while the Lower Egyptian pottery is represented sparingly. Occurrence of a large quantity of Naqada pottery proves that the tradition of the South of the country had been fully adopted also at this site. These pottery bears resemblance to the pottery characteristic of the end of Naqada II and the beginning of Naqada III and on the basis of present research at the site, it seems that our phase 3 should be dated to the period of Naqada IIId2/IIIa1 – the beginning of Naqada IIIa2 (?) or the end of IID2 – the beginning of IIIA1 (?)

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The majority of the pottery found in Tell el-Farkha phase 3, similarly as in the previous phase 2, belongs to the medium rough ware (R2) (c. 97.83 %). It was made of the Nile clay tempered mostly with fine to medium straw and fine to medium sand (SN-II = c. 97.83%). Most of the forms belonging to that ware are connected with the Upper Egyptian tradition.

Among the jars, fragments of pots are present with a direct rim, slightly elongated upwards or with conspicuously short lip on the rim exterior. These forms, showing affinity to the forms known from Naqada II periods\(^9\), at Tell el-Farkha occur in the discussed phase, although some of them for the first time appear already in the previous phase 2\(^{10}\).

Currently, the most characteristic shapes include different kinds of mostly narrow to very broad-shouldered jars with an exterior lip rim (Fig.1:1-14). The related base shapes include mainly flat bases (Fig.1:16-19), though a few examples of pointed bases (Fig.1:20) were also found. The latter may imply that some of rim fragments may be classified to jars with a pointed base, but as fragments of such bases occur only sporadically, it is possible that only a few of the described rim fragments may belong to jars with a pointed base, which were probably mostly linked to the previous phase 2 and not so popular in phase 3. On the other hand, a large number of flat bases coming from Naqada structures of phase 3 (and less frequently in the previous phase 2), as well as complete examples of pots (Fig.1:13) (found in phase 3), allow us to assume that most of jar rims of that phase belong to forms with flat bases\(^{11}\). These probably include roll rimmed jars showing affinity to R84 and related groups\(^{12}\). Such jars are particularly typical of Naqada IIId – IIIa1, though some forms might occur even earlier or slightly later\(^{13}\).


\(^{10}\) Jucha, *Tell el-Farkha II...*, Pl.1:5-8.

\(^{11}\) Köhler, *The Pre- and Early Dynastic...*, p. 18, fig.5:1-17.

\(^{12}\) Petrie, W.M.F., *Corpus of Prehistoric Pottery and Palettes*, London 1921, pl. XLII-XLIII.

Examples of rims, which probably refer to this kind of jars occur in great quantity, especially in the structures of our phase 3 and should be considered characteristic chiefly of that phase. That group of jars embraces forms which for the first

time appear since that phase, although some of the others were attested already in phase 2 (but at present are more popular). The number of these pots decreases after the end of the discussed phase. Such jars as well as fragments of jars which may belong to forms with flat bases in a similarly dated context were found at other sites in the Nile Delta. At Mendes, they occur in Units 2 and 3 of Area B\(^{14}\), at Buto they were found in *Schicht IIIa-IIIId*\(^{15}\), at Minshat Abu Omar were related to graves of group I and II\(^{16}\).

Apart from the above jars, narrow-shouldered forms with inconspicuous shoulders and almost straight or slightly convex sides (Fig.1:15) also occur, though rarely. That form is not so popular in phase 3. Such jars become typical slightly later – after the end of phase 3 – mostly in the subsequent phase 4.

Fragments of jars with a different body width and less or more conspicuous shoulders (Fig.2:1-2) also occur. All of them have an angular transition (shoulder bend) between the upper body and the basal point of the distinct neck. The lip rim has a rounded or slightly angular outer edge. Among these jars, new forms appear beside examples known from the previous phase 2 and some of them were also attested in the subsequent phase 4. These jars show affinity mostly to forms known from Unit 2 of Area B\(^{17}\) at Mendes and lower strata of *Schicht III* at Buto\(^{18}\).

\(^{14}\) Friedman, *The Early Dynastic*..., pp. 200-204; fig.2:a-b; fig. 4:a.


Moreover, examples with a smooth transition between shoulders and the neck (mostly of a concave contour) were also found. The lip-rim has generally a smooth rounded or slightly angular outer edge. Among them there are a few complete or almost complete storage jars with a rounded base (Fig.2:3) as well as others, of a smaller size, preserved without the bottom, which was probably flattened (Fig.2:4). In the case of the latter\textsuperscript{19}, the bottom (of one of those smaller jars) was situated inside a small bowl.

Other fragments include jars with a smooth transition between shoulders and the short zone mostly of a concave contour below the rim. They comprise forms known from the previous phase as well as forms which appear for the

first time in phase 3. Among them, there are examples with a different width of the body, less or more conspicuous shoulders and different types of the rim. Narrow-shouldered jars with a rounded exterior lip-rim (Fig.3:1) were attested chiefly in phase 3. Wide-shouldered jars with the lip-rim of a rounded and smooth outer edge in the middle of the rim height (Fig.3:2) were attested in previous phase 2 as well as phase 3 and subsequent phases. There occur also examples of wide-shouldered jars with a rounded exterior lip rim or with a slightly angular transition at the lower part of the rim (Fig.3:3), though they are rare in phase 3, contrary to the subsequent phases in which they are more popular.

Moreover different small jars were found (fragments as well as complete examples) with a less or more rounded body, pointed or rounded bottom and lip-rim\textsuperscript{20}.

Among them, there are bag-shaped jars with a rounded or slightly pointed bottom (Fig.3:7-8). They are typical of phase 3 but they were found also in the previous phase 2 as well as in the subsequent phases 4 and 5. The jars show affinity to R65 and affiliated groups\textsuperscript{21} which occurred in the second half of Naqada II and at the beginning of Naqada III\textsuperscript{22}. Similar examples appear also at the other Nile Delta sites of that date, e.g.: Buto, in Schicht II, becoming more popular in the subsequent Schicht III and some types were still attested in Schicht IV\textsuperscript{23}; Minshat Abu Omar – graves of group I\textsuperscript{24} and Beni Amir\textsuperscript{25}. In a


\textsuperscript{21} Petrie, *Corpus of Prehistoric...,* pl. XL.


\textsuperscript{23} Köhler, *The Pre- and Early Dynastic...,* pp. 18-19, fig.6:7-9, fig.7:2-4,17-21.

\textsuperscript{24} Kroeper, *The Excavations...,* pp. 13-14, fig.62-64; Kroeper & Wildung, *Minshat Abu Omar I*, p. 17.

similarly dated – to the end of Naqada II / beginning of Naqada III – context, they occur also at the Upper Egypt, e.g.: Umm el-Qa’ab\textsuperscript{26} or Elkab\textsuperscript{27}.

\textit{ Delta} [in:] Krzyżaniak, L., Kroeper, K., Kobusiewicz, A. (eds.), \textit{Interregional Contacts in the Later Prehistory of Northeastern Africa}, Poznań 1996, Fig. 21, 29-XI.


\textsuperscript{27} Hendrickx, \textit{Elkab}..., p. 211, fig.XIX: C-RRJ –1.
Small jars with a pointed bottom (Fig.3:9-10) were also found in that phase. These examples show affinity to forms known from the second half of Naqada II\textsuperscript{28} which occur also in a similarly dated context at other sites, e.g. Beni Amir\textsuperscript{29}, Buto\textsuperscript{30}, Minshat Abu Omar\textsuperscript{31}, Abydos\textsuperscript{32} or Hierakonpolis\textsuperscript{33}.

Hole mouth jars (Fig.3:4-6) are also present. These were found both in the previous, transitional phase 2 and even earlier in phase 1 (which relates to the Lower Egyptian Culture) and can still be identified after the end of phase 3. The kind of jars, which usage seems to be of a domestic nature (cooking pots?), may belong to the local – Lower Egyptian - pottery tradition or/and to “corpus” of the household pottery. Possibly, this is why they – as the Lower Egyptian or/and settlement pottery - were not so frequently presented in older publications and corpuses\textsuperscript{34} focusing on the Upper Egypt and cemeteries. Examples found at Tell el-Farkha show affinity to forms known from other sites of Naqada IId-IIIa period. At Buto, examples showing some similarity, though of sides less inclined towards the interior, occur from the transitional Schicht IIIa\textsuperscript{35}. Other examples coming from Mendes were found in Units 2 and 3 of Area B\textsuperscript{36} and these, associated with a settlement at Hierakonpolis, were dated to Naqada II\textsuperscript{37}. It is worth mentioning that forms of a similar shape occur also at Canaan in the Early Bronz I context\textsuperscript{38}. In the above region they occur even earlier, in the Neolithic as well as Chalcolithic Ages. These, mostly rough/


\textsuperscript{29} Abd el-Moneim, *Early Dynastic mound...*, p. 271, fig., 7, 29-X.


\textsuperscript{31} Kroeper & Wildung, *Minshat Abu Omar I...*, p. 39, no. 687/5 Taf.15; 34, no. 651/1, Taf.14.


\textsuperscript{34} Petrie, *Corpus of Prehistoric...*, pl.XLIV:R89p, R100; Petrie, W.M.F., *Ceremonial slate Palettes, Corpus of Proto-Dynastic Pottery*, London 1953, pl.XXV:83s.

\textsuperscript{35} Köhler, *Tell el-Fara‘in - Buto III...*, p. 21, 120; Taf.20:1-3.

\textsuperscript{36} Friedman, *The Early Dynastic...*, p. 200-201, fig. 2:d; 4:d.

\textsuperscript{37} Adams & Friedman, *Imports and Influences...*, p. 324-326, fig. 7.

fragile vessels, at ‘En Besor occur in stratum IV, dated to EB Ib and contemporary with Naqada IIIa2\(^39\), as well as subsequent stratum III and II\(^40\). At other Canaanite sites those vessels occur also in EB I strata\(^41\).

Different small shallow bowls, were also found in our phase 3\(^42\). They include forms with an almost straight contour of divergent sides with a relatively pronounced or slightly thickened (Fig.4:1) exterior lip and a flat and diagonal contour between the outer edge and the angular edge proper. Moreover, among the forms with an almost straight or slightly concave contour of the sides there are examples with a rounded external lip (Fig.4:2-3). The above bowls were attested even in the older phase 1 belonging to the Lower Egyptian Culture so some of them may belong to the Lower Egyptian pottery tradition\(^43\). These were still present in the subsequent transitional phase 2, occasionally in phase 3 and sparingly even later.


\(^{41}\) Gophna, R. (ed.), *Excavations at Tel Dalit. An Early Bronze Age Walled Town in Central Israel*, Tel Aviv 1996, pp. 82, 21, 89-92, fig. 41; Yekutieli, Y. & Gophna, R., *Excavations at an Early Bronze Age site near Nizzanim*, Tel Aviv 21:2, pp. 164-175, fig.9:7, fig.12:13-15.


Among other forms, of which some were still present in the subsequent phase 4, there are examples which appear in phase 3 as well as these known already since phase 2. These include: bowls with divergent sides of an almost straight or slightly concave, simple or inflected (concave and convex) contour and a direct rim, rounded with an angular transition between the rim top and the interior surface of the vessel (Fig.4:4) as well as with the rounded (Fig.4:5) or flattened horizontally (Fig.4:6) rim top or diagonal and flattened contour between the outer edge and the edge proper of the rim (Fig.4:7). Moreover forms with an almost straight contour of divergent sides and with the rim slightly thickened on the exterior and a slightly flattened or rounded outer contour of the rim (Fig.4:8), with a strong everted (flaring), pronounced exterior lip and a
flat rim top (Fig.4:9) were also found. Among the forms with an almost straight or slightly concave contour of the sides there are examples with the rounded (Fig.4:10) or a vertical and flat (Fig.4:11) outer contour of the rim.

Sporadically bowls with convex walls and a slightly thickened lip on the interior side of the vessel (fig.4:12), showing affinity to examples known form the other Delta sites\textsuperscript{44} may also be found.

Moreover, fragments of large deep bowls and vats were also attested but they did not occur frequently. Some of them belong also to the coarse rough ware (R1) made of the Nile clay, tempered with medium to coarse sand and medium to coarse straw (Fabric SN-III). The surface was mostly rough or slightly smoothed though examples with yellow coating also occur yet sporadically. That group includes forms with an almost straight or slightly convex contour of divergent sides and a less or more thickened exterior lip (Fig.5:1-2), showing affinity to examples known also from the other Nile Delta sites\textsuperscript{45}. Some of them were found in the strata of phase 3, while others occur rarely in the mentioned phase (contrary to their greater popularity in subsequent phases).

Other vessels of a larger size\textsuperscript{46} with an almost straight contour or a slightly convex contour of divergent sides were also found in phase 3. They appeared already in the strata of the end of phase 1 or beginning of phase 2 as well as in phase 2.

A few examples of miniature vessels (Fig.6:1-10) were also found. Some of these vessels were made also of a higher quality fabric, tempered mostly with sand and with or without a smaller amount of fine to medium straw. Miniature vessels appear quite rarely at Tell el-Farkha and most of the forms were found only as single examples. Different types of miniature vessels are known from Naqada II – III periods\textsuperscript{47}. Examples showing some affinity to some of these found at Tell el-Farkha occur also at other sites of the Nile Delta or the Upper Egypt. Such were attested for instance at Buto, chiefly Schicht

\textsuperscript{44} Köhler, *Tell el-Fara‘in - Buto III...*, pp. 21-22, Taf.19:7, Taf. 27:3,6.
\textsuperscript{46} Köhler, *Tell el-Fara‘in - Buto III...*, p. 27, Taf. 39-41.
III but also *Schicht IV*\(^{48}\) as well as at Tell Ibrahim Awad, phase \(6^{49}\) or Hierakonpolis\(^{50}\).

The vessels which may be used as pot-stands embrace forms with a straight contour of convergent sides and a flattened rim top (Fig.6:11,14). Moreover, some of them possess a smoothed or reworked more than one edge (Fig.6:14), what may imply that some parts of the body were left open. In that case, these may be part of fenestrated pot-stands. Such examples were found chiefly in phase 3 as well as the subsequent phases 4 and 5. Another form with conver-

\(^{48}\) Köhler, *The Pre- and Early Dynastic...*, pp. 19-20, Fig.7:5-8,11-16,22-25; *Tell el-Fara' in - Buto III...*, p. 20; Abb.14; Taf.18.


\(^{50}\) Adams & Friedman, *Imports and Influences...*, p. 327, fig 8:f.
gent sides of an almost straight contour and the rim which is slightly thickened on the exterior and has a flattened rim top (Fig.6:12) occurs mostly in phases 2 and 3 as well as 4. Among others, forms with an almost straight or convex contour of convergent walls (Fig.6:13,15) were found generally in phases 3 and 4. Moreover, on the body of these examples holes may also occur of a different shape (circles, triangles) cutting through the entire vessel walls. All of the pot-stands were made of the medium Nile clay (Fabric SN-II) and their surface was less or more smoothed.

A single example of a cup on foot was also found in the strata belonging most probably to phase 3 (Fig.6:17). It was made of the medium Nile clay (Fabric SN-II) and its surface was slightly smoothed.

Among others, fragments belonging to undefined forms with divergent sides of a convex contour and with the flat edge, which – in the preserved part, probably on the orifice plane – does not form a circle but straight line (Fig.6:16), were also found in phase 3 as well as the subsequent phases 4 and 5. In the upper part of the flattened top semicircles might be made. Some of these fragments may belong to flat forms, rectangular ones or with rounded corners (?), though some may belong also to fenestrated pot-stands (?) with some parts of the body left open.

Most of the base shapes, as pointed out above, found in phase 3 constitute flat forms. Only sparingly they embrace rounded or pointed bases well-known from the previous phase 2.

Other wares and fabrics form only a very small part of the pottery assemblage of phase 3. The coarse rough ware (R1) (made of Fabric SN-III) constitutes only c 1.09% of the pottery assemblage of the described phase. Most of the shapes belong to large deep bowls or vats.

The fine ware pottery with very well smoothed surface (S) also reflects only a small part of the pottery assemblage (0.82%) of phase 3. It was made of Marl clay (Fabric M-I) or Nile clay containing inclusions of sand which may occur as a natural constituent of the clay, though a small amount of very fine sand might also be added intentionally as temper (Fabric SN-I). The pots comprise mostly fragments of jars with a distinct, short neck and the rim with an exterior lip (Fig.7:1-2). Those jars occur only occasionally in phase 3 and become more frequent in subsequent phases.
Pottery with painted decoration (Petrie’s *Decorated pottery (D-class)*) occurs quite rarely in phase 3. The number of potsherds with mostly red, plum red to purple-brown painted decoration of different patterns increases in phase 2, though it is worth mentioning that the first examples with different decorative patterns, e.g. spirals, wavy lines and triangles, occur even earlier, in Phase 1 of the Lower Egyptian Culture. These fragments may constitute different types of vessels which appear since Naqada II and are typical mostly of that period, though some forms as well as decorative patterns may occur also later at the beginning of Naqada III. However, on the basis of undiagnosed potsherds it is impossible to specify to what type of vessels they belong to. In most cases, fragments of preserved decorations also disable reconstruction of a complete decorative pattern, yet some motifs were recognized on potsherds of phase 3. Among them examples decorated with spirals (Fig.7:4) occur. This kind of decoration is well known from the second half of Nagada II period\(^5\). Other examples were decorated with a motif which may resemble a pattern (aloe?) (Fig.7:3) known also from the second half of Naqada II period, both Naqada IIc and Naqada IId\(^5\). The latter potsherd was found in two pieces – one in the construction of phase 3, the other in another construction of the previous phase and it may be out of place. Beside them, other fragments with unclear decoration motifs were found in the discussed phase.

That ware includes also potsherds belonging to jars with wavy handles (Fig.7:5,7-8) as well as an almost complete example of such a jar (Fig.7:9). Some of these fragments may belong to older forms of jars belonging to Petrie’s W-class, with protruding two wavy handles, which are known from the second half of Naqada II period, though they may occur also at the beginning of Naqada III\(^5\).

Moreover, an example of the thin-walled potsherd with a modelled decorative band – a wavy pattern (Fig.7:6) which may belong to a jar with a con-


tinuous wavy band - may be linked to the end of phase 3 (though it may be out of place). This pattern seems to belong to the younger forms of W-class, characteristic mostly for the Naqada III - Protodynastic period. It should be noted here that potsherds with this pattern were found mostly in the subsequent phase 4.

Other pottery, mostly fragments of bowls, belonging to red or reddish-brown ware (P-1-b) with a polished or burnished surface (0.27%), constitutes also only a small part of the pottery assemblage of phase 3. It is worth mentioning that a small amount (almost absence) of red or reddish-brown ware with a polished or burnished surface (P-1) in our phase 3 and on the other hand occurrence of the medium rough ware (R-2) jars with the exterior lip like R84 can be compared to Mendes – Unit 3, where similar observations were made.

Some potsherds of the non-Egyptian (Palestine) origin were also found in strata of phase 3. These belong to a relatively small group, yet their presence at the site may evidence developed contacts of Tell el-Farkha inhabitants with other areas. Unfortunately, the majority belongs to undiagnosed potsherds. Only a few examples of rims (some of them decorated with punctuated dots beneath) were found in discussed phase (Fig.7:10). A significant, though not so large group includes handles (Fig.7:11-12) coming from jars with a modelled well pronounced and protruding pair of ledge handles. They show affinity to handles identified at Early Bronze sites in Canaan.

Naqada IIId2 / IIla1 pottery found in the structures of phase 3 shows affinity to the similarly dated pottery found at other sites in the Nile Delta. It is comparable mainly with Buto – Schicht III, especially its beginning: Schicht IIla-IIlc and probably also IIId. It resembles also pottery found at Mendes in Unit 3 of Area B, which together with the subsequent Unit 2 are correlated with

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55 Friedman, The Early Dynastic..., pp. 202-203.
57 Köhler, Tell el-Fara ’in - Buto III..., pp. 43-46
Buto Schicht III\textsuperscript{58}. Although Mendes – Unit 2, should be probably acknowledged as later than our phase 3 and similar rather to Tell el-Farkha - phase 4. Some of the pottery of phase 3 shows also affinity to the pottery assemblage of graves belonging to groups I and II from Minshat Abu Omar, though our phase 3 seems comparable mainly to Minshat Abu Omar - group II.\textsuperscript{59} Contrary, the pottery of phase 3 differs from pottery from el-Tell el-Iswid (South) of phase A – associated with the Lower Egyptian Culture as well as phase B – belonging to the Naqada III period\textsuperscript{60}. It seems that our phase 3 should be assigned somewhere between phases A and B of el-Tell el-Iswid (South). We come to similar conclusions if we compare the pottery of phase 3 with Tell Ibrahim Awad phase 7 and the subsequent phase 6\textsuperscript{61}, older and younger than Tell el-Farkha phases 2 and 3 respectively.

Occurrence of a great quantity of Naqada IIId2/IIIa1 pottery in phase 3, and almost complete disappearance of the previous Lower Egyptian tradition only in that phase, may prove that final assimilation of local population, which started during the transitional phase, was completed during this period (phase 3).

\textsuperscript{58} Friedman, \textit{The Early Dynastic...}, pp. 200-204.
\textsuperscript{59} Kroeper, \textit{The Excavations...}, fig.57-67.
\textsuperscript{60} Van den Brink, \textit{A Transitional...}, pp. 66-77, fig. 7-14.
\textsuperscript{61} Van den Brink, \textit{Preliminary Report...}, pp. 52-55.