

## I. INTRODUCTION<sup>28</sup>

During the excavations carried out in 1997 at Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a/Avaris (Fig. 1) in the eastern Delta by the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Egypt under the direction of Manfred Bietak, another part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty palace-complex was uncovered at <sup>c</sup>Ezbet Helmi (Figs. 2 and 3),<sup>29</sup> area H/III.

The New Kingdom complex was built above the Hyksos citadel. In the south-eastern part of this palace district, between the late Hyksos citadel (ph. D/2) and the early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty palace-complex (ph. D/1), two execration pits and a foundation deposit were found (Fig. 4).<sup>30</sup>

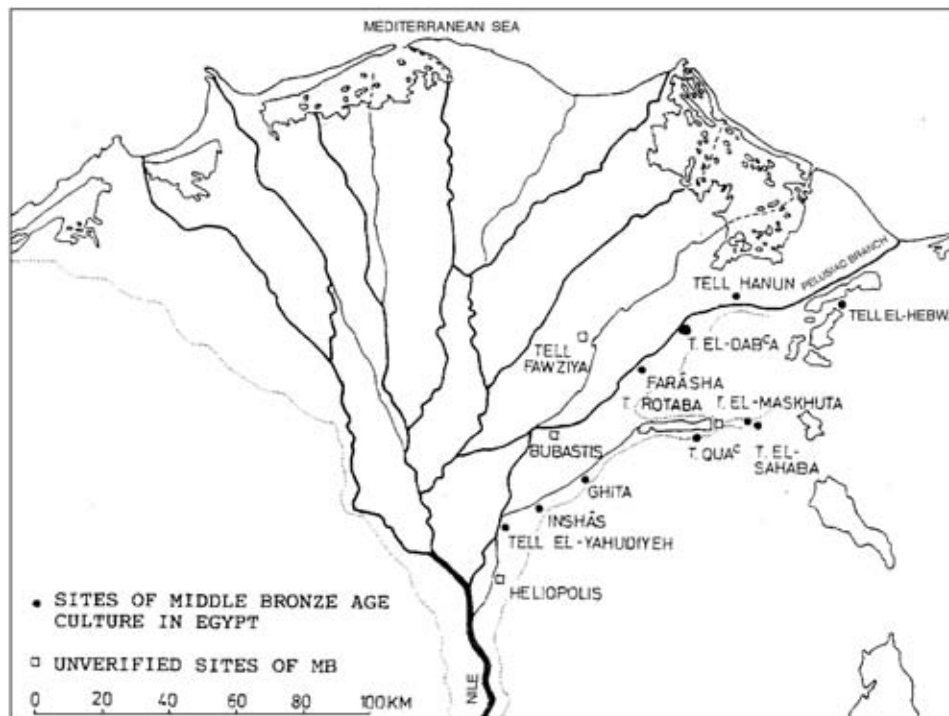


Fig. 1 The Eastern Nile Delta – Middle Bronze Age sites  
(from M. BIETAK, Egypt and Canaan in the Middle Bronze Age, *BASOR* 281 [1991], 29, fig. 1)

<sup>28</sup> This joint project was financed by the Agencia Nacional de Promoción Científica y Tecnológica (Programa de Estudios de Egiptología, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Argentina) and the Austrian Archaeological Institute Cairo (Austria), 2000.

<sup>29</sup> On the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty palatial complex and the Hyksos citadel at <sup>c</sup>Ezbet Helmi, see M. BIETAK, J. DORNER, I. HEIN & P. JÁNOSI, Neue Grabungsergebnisse aus Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a und <sup>c</sup>Ezbet Helmi im östlichen Nildelta 1989–1991, *Ä&L* 4 (1994), 9–80; M. BIETAK, J. DORNER & P. JÁNOSI, Ausgrabungen in dem Palastbezirk von Avaris, Vorbericht Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a/<sup>c</sup>Ezbet Helmi 1993–2000, mit einem Beitrag von A. von den Driesch

und J. Peters, *Ä&L* 11 (2001), 27–119, esp. 59–74; M. BIETAK & I. FORSTNER-MÜLLER, Ausgrabungen eines Palastbezirkes der Tuthmosidenzeit bei <sup>c</sup>Ezbet Helmi/Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a, Vorbericht für Herbst 2004 und Frühjahr 2005, *Ä&L* 15 (2005), 65–100; *iid.*, Ausgrabung eines Palastbezirkes der Tuthmosidenzeit bei <sup>c</sup>Ezbet Helmi/Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a, Vorbericht für das Frühjahr 2007, *Ä&L* 17 (2007), 33–58.

<sup>30</sup> See also P. FUSCALDO, Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a: Two Execration Pits and a Foundation Deposit, 185–188, in: Z. HAWASS & L. PINCH BROCK (eds.), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century. Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo, 2000, Volume 1: Archaeology*, Cairo & New York 2003.



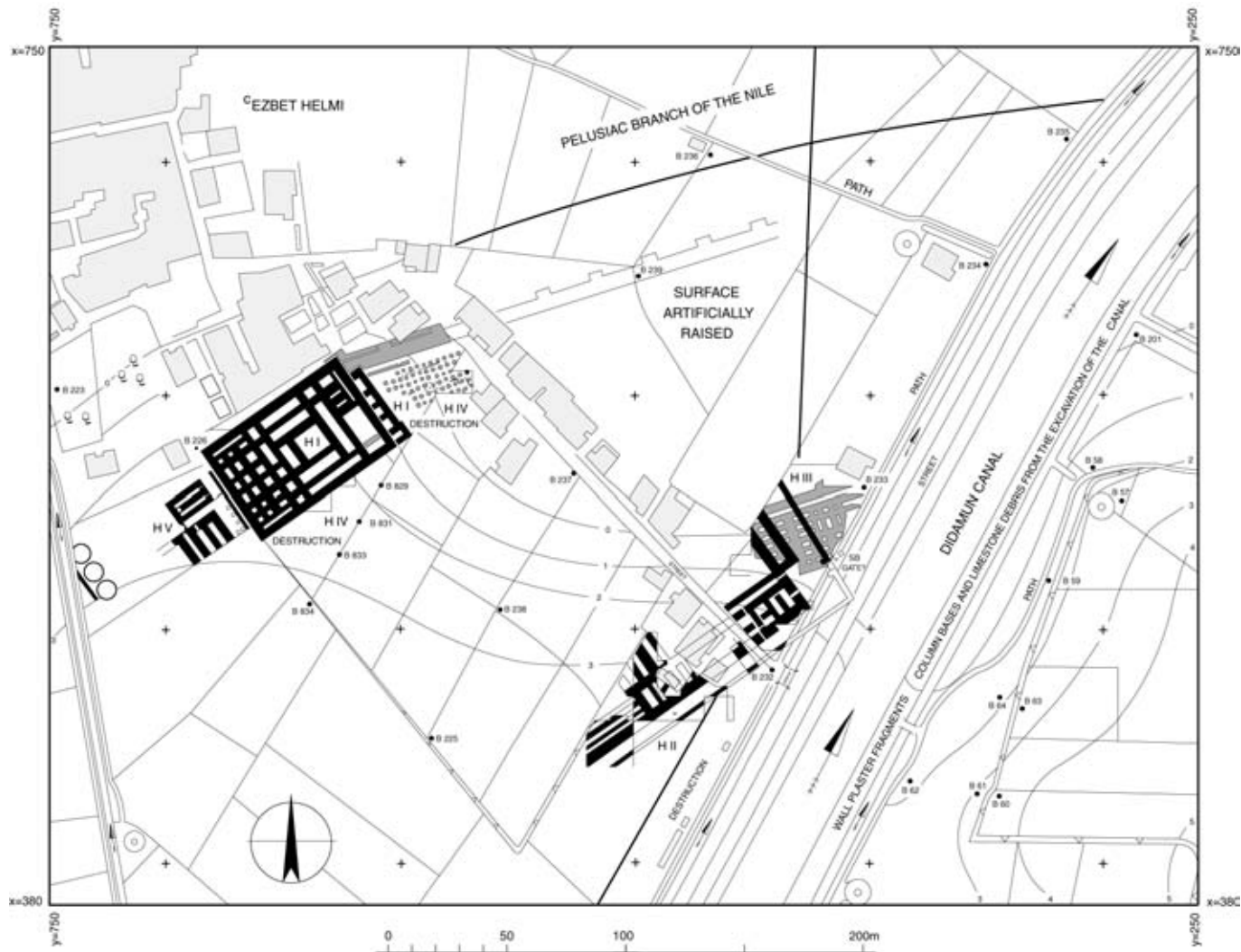


Fig. 3 'Ezbet Helmi (by J. DORNER, 1998)

Execration pit L1055 contained human skulls and fingers. Execration pit L1016, the most interesting feature discovered in this campaign, contained two human skeletons and a large amount of broken pottery on top of the bodies. Foundation deposit L1057 comprised a small collection of clay votive objects. One of them bore a hieratic inscription that was only partly preserved.

All of these loci belong to a transitional phase (D/1), dating to the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. L1055 was cut in a lower stratum (str. e/1.2) than L1016 immediately above (str. e/1.1), making it earlier than the latter. Nevertheless, there is a clear religious connection between the two execration pits, as well as a tie to the historical events that surround the occupation of the Hyksos city of Avaris by Ahmose.

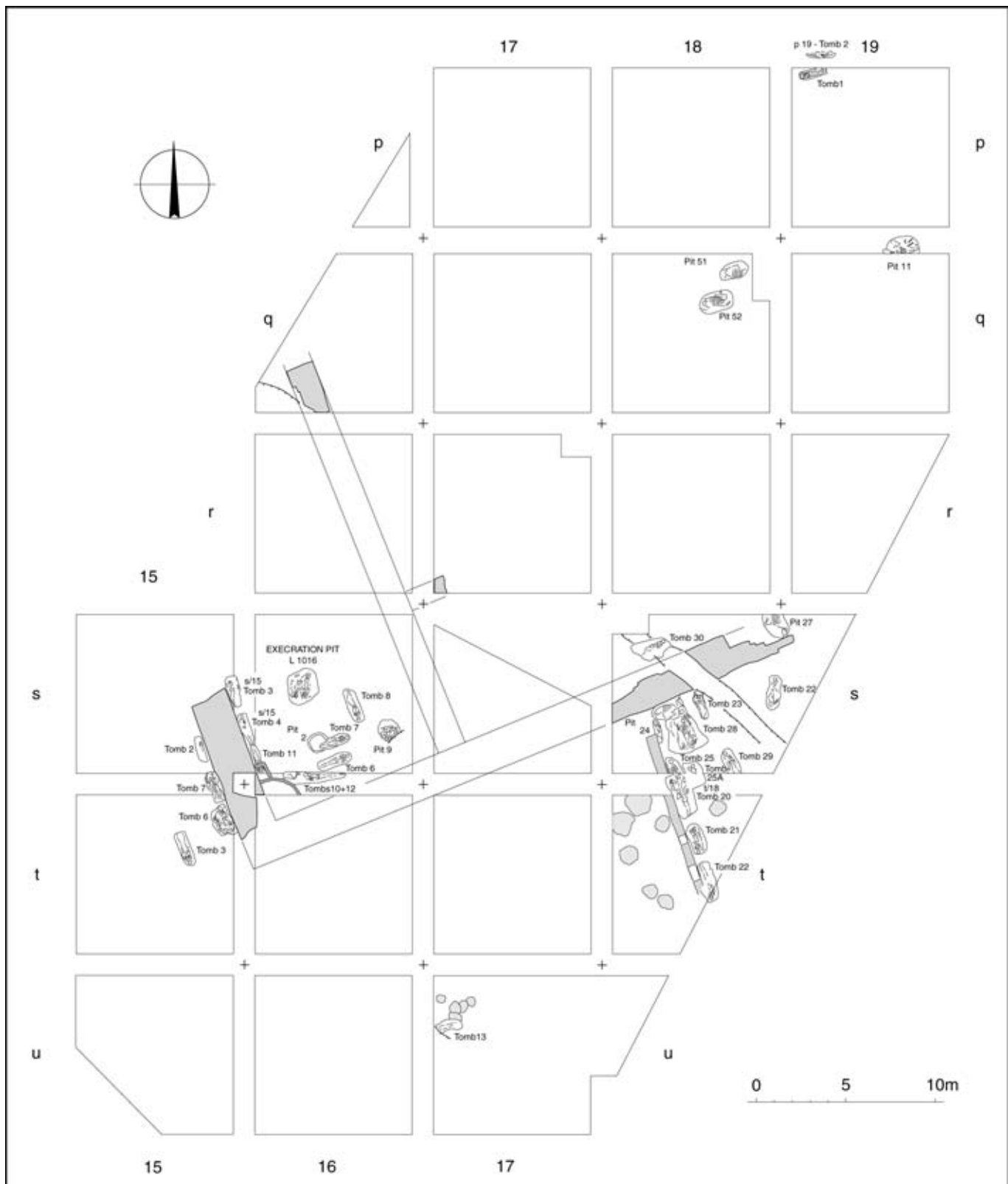


Fig. 4 Ezbet Helmi, area H/III early 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (by J. DORNER, 1998)