

# Core and Periphery: Nabataean Painted Finewares

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## Introduction

The Nabataean kingdom reached its greatest extent of influence in the 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E. when it expanded its borders to the southern Transjordan region. Hegra, the largest southern Transjordan city, brought its centuries old culture and unique artistic designs into the Nabataean kingdom. A comparison of the motifs on Nabataean painted fineware pottery at Hegra and Petra show the impact of Petra's pottery styles on Hegra styles before and after Hegra's annexation into the Nabataean kingdom.

Map of Nabataean Kingdom circa 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E.



Durand, C., and Gerber, Y. (2014) Nabataean Kingdom circa 1<sup>st</sup> Century C.E. . *The pottery production from Hegra/Madā'in Sālih (Saudi Arabia) during the Nabataean period. Preliminary results, 2008-2011*, Figure 1

## Research Questions

-How much cultural impact did the Nabataeans, centered in Petra, exert on those in the periphery of their kingdom?

-To what extent did periphery regions of the kingdom keep their local pottery designs upon annexation into the Nabataean kingdom?

## Methodology

-Phillip Hammond's typology of Nabataean painted fineware motifs divides all motifs found into four comparable pattern families.

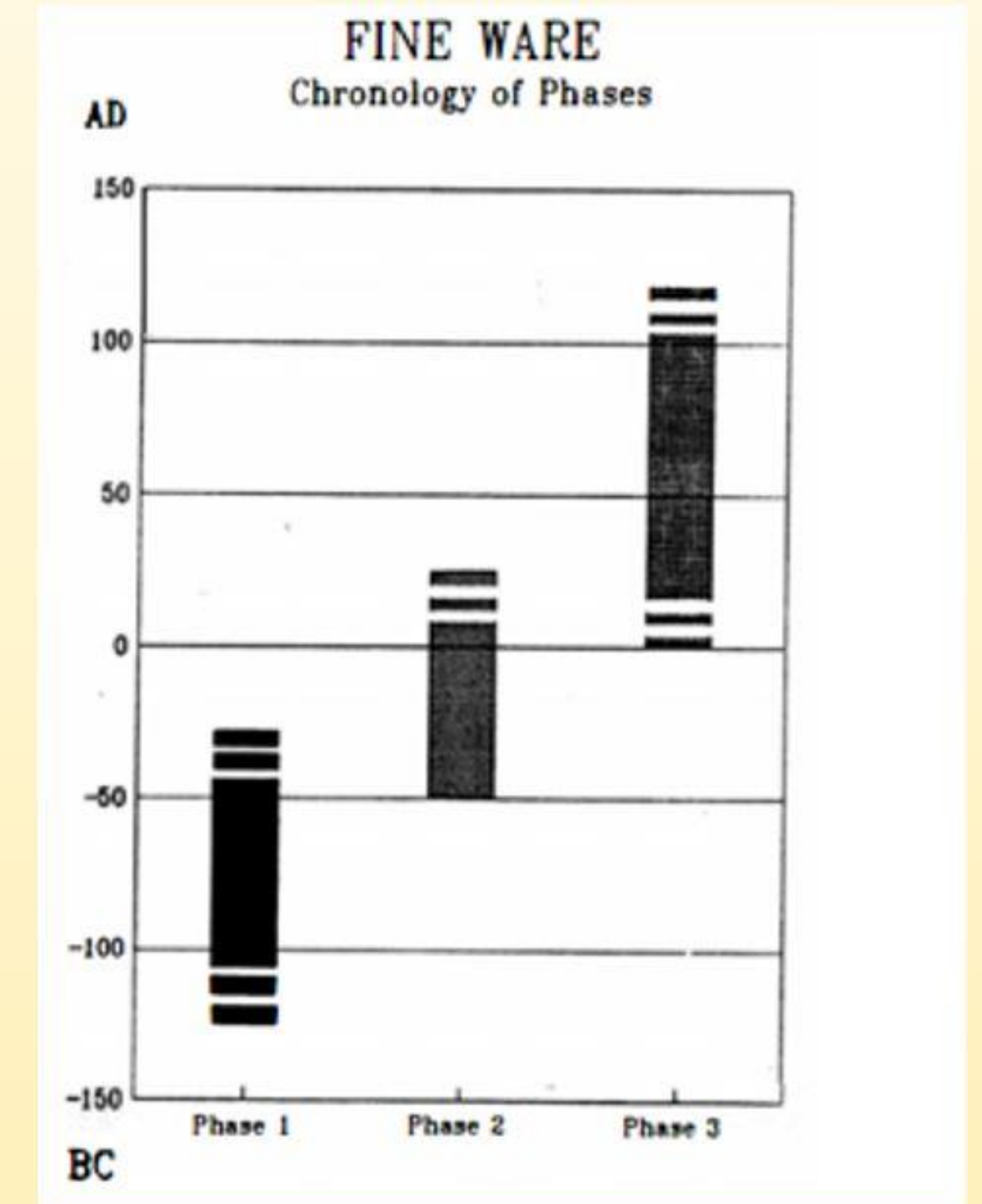
-Stephan Schmid's chronology of Nabataean painted finewares categorizes pottery into three chronological time periods.

-A data set of 545 painted Nabataean pottery sherds from the Petra site of Wadi Mataha and a data set of 31 Nabataean painted pottery sherds in Hegra are compared using Hammond's typology and Schmid's chronology. Using Hammond's pattern families and Schmid's three phases, we can map determine pottery styles in Petra and Hegra over nearly three centuries.

-The Hegra data set consists of locally produced pottery and pottery imported from the Petra region; these are compared to better understand Hegra's traditional pottery styles.

<b>Family A</b>		
<b>Family B</b>		
<b>Family C</b>		
<b>Family D</b>		

Hammond, Philip C. (1959) Pattern Families in Nabataean Painted Ware. *American Journal of Archaeology* 63(4): 371-382



Schmid, Stephan G. (1995) Nabataean Fine Ware from Petra. *Studies in the History and Archaeology in Jordan*, V, figure 9

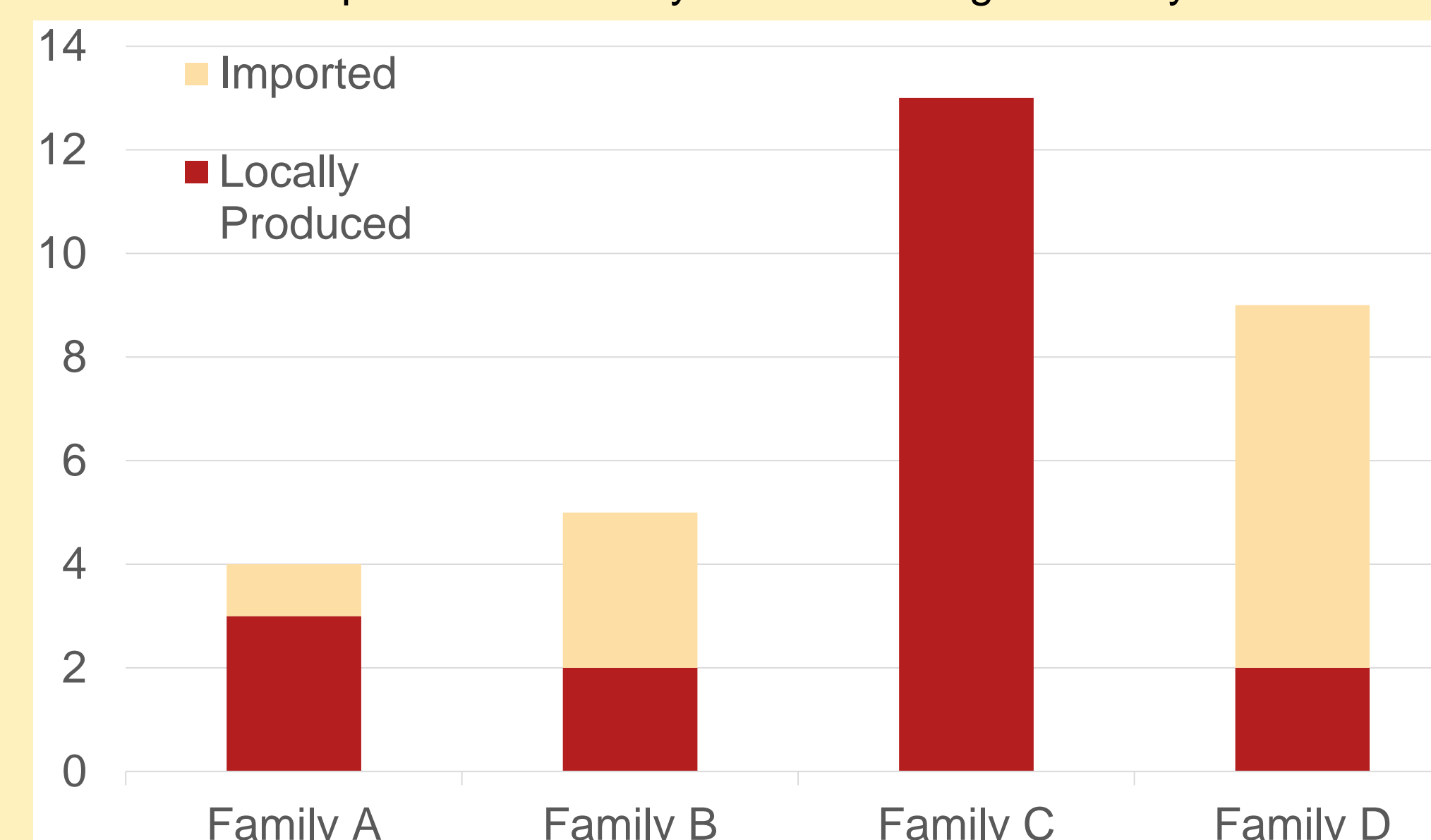
Wadi Mataha Data Set by Phase and Family Pattern

	A	B	C	D	Unknown	Total
Phase 1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phase 2	59	1	0	52	0	112
Phase 3	18	21	8	130	5	182
Unknown	5	1	1	1	0	8
Phase 2-3	11	68	2	146	16	243
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>545</b>

Hegra Data Set by Phase and Family Pattern

	A	B	C	D	Total
Phase 1	3	0	3	0	6
Phase 2	0	1	2	1	4
Phase 3	0	3	3	8	16
Unknown	1	1	5	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31</b>

Imported vs. Locally Produced Hegra Pottery



## Results

-In the Wadi Mataha data set, Family A is the dominant pattern family in Phase 2 but its frequency declines as Family B and Family D become more prominent in Phase 3

-In the Hegra data set, Family C is the dominant pattern family in all three phases; similar to the Wadi Mataha data set, Family A is found in higher frequency in the earlier phases as Family B and Family D become more prominent in Phase 3

-The locally produced pottery in Hegra are predominantly Family C motifs while the imported pottery follows the trends of the dominant Petra pottery motifs of Family D.

## Conclusion

-Because Hegra's pottery motifs largely followed the trends found in the Wadi Mataha data set, Petra's pottery styles heavily influenced Hegra's pottery style; Petra's influence did not significantly change after Hegra's annexation into the Nabataean kingdom, suggesting that previous contact through trade with Petra affected Hegra's pottery styles more than political inclusion in the Nabataean kingdom.

-The persistence of Family C motifs across both the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C.E. and 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E. show that Hegra continued to produce their own style of pottery well after their annexation into the Nabataean kingdom.