

HORBAT ‘OFRAT IN THE LATE HELLENISTIC, ROMAN AND BYZANTINE PERIODS

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In June–August 2008, a preliminary salvage excavation was undertaken at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat (Khirbat eṭ-Ṭaiyiba; map ref. 219000–500/743250–600) in the wake of the National Road Company’s plans to widen a section of Road 79 from Nazareth to Shefar‘am.¹ The excavation is located where a modern road from the 1980s bends from south to west in order to circumvent Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat, but nonetheless partially overlies and cuts through the eastern part of the site (Fig. 1).

INTRODUCTION

Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat is located on a low hillslope about 210 m above sea level (Figs. 1, 2) in the Alonim–Shefar‘am hill belt of the western Lower Galilee, about 18 km southeast of ‘Akko (Fig. 3). The gently rounded hills consist of Senonian and Eocene chalk overlaid by *nari* crust, which disintegrates into rather poor gray rendzina soil (Olami and Gal 2003:9*). Most of this area was once forested, predominantly Tabor oak, but today it is partially covered with scrub used for sheep and goat grazing, and used for growing barley and olive groves. A spring once flowed into a small wadi south of the site, and a large deep well is still extant at its southwestern edge (Figs. 4, 5; see Fig. 1). Run-off rainwater was probably collected in cisterns, and indeed, stone-hewn, bell-shaped cisterns were found dispersed southeast of the site.

¹ The excavation (Permit No. A-5459), on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority and financed by the National Road Company, was directed by the author, with the assistance of Yoel Segal (area supervisor), Gilead Cinamon (preparatory supervision works), Rivka Meshayev (surveying), Howard Smithline (photography), Anastasia Shapiro (GPS map and petrographic analysis), Ria Abu Hilf (administration), and workers supplied by the Brick employment agency. Much assistance was offered by the archaeological staff of the IAA Lower Galilee and Valleys District. The author is extremely grateful to Leea Porat and Roeë Sheffer (pottery restoration), Hagit Tahan-Rosen (pottery and finds drawing), Hila Shoor-Rosenstein (metal laboratory), Tamar Winter (glass processing), Gabriela Bijovsky (numismatics), Nimrod Marom of the Laboratory of Archaeozoology, University of Haifa (faunal remains), Tanya Kornfeld (final plans and figures) and Nimrod Getzov (ceramic consultation). Ilana Peters edited this article.

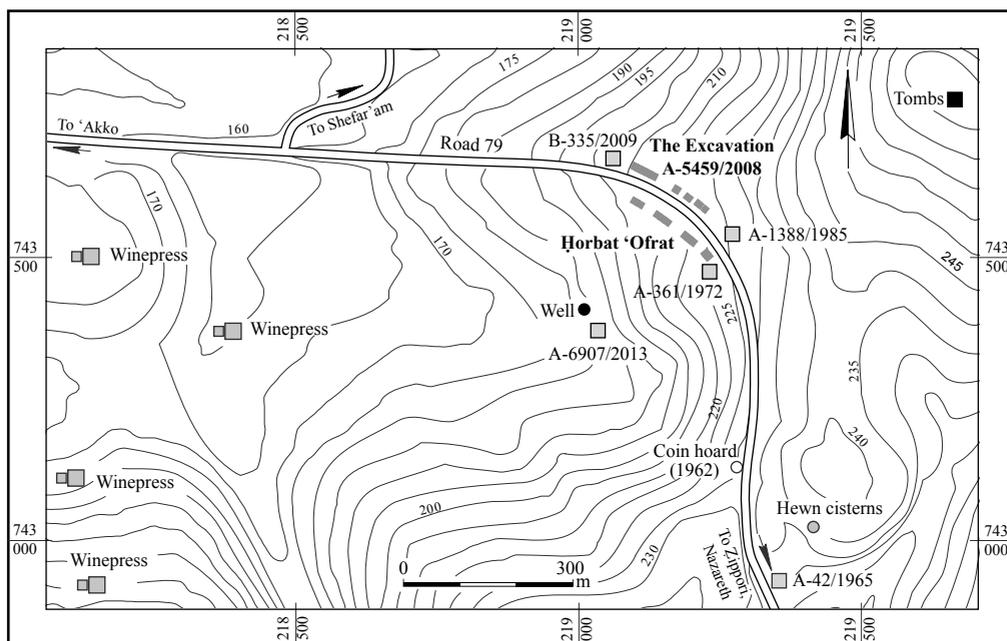


Fig. 1. Location map of Ḥorbat 'Ofrat, including past and subsequent excavations at the site.



Fig. 2. The stony plowed slope of Ḥorbat 'Ofrat, looking southwest; the paved path in the foreground is the old Nazareth–Shefar' am road.

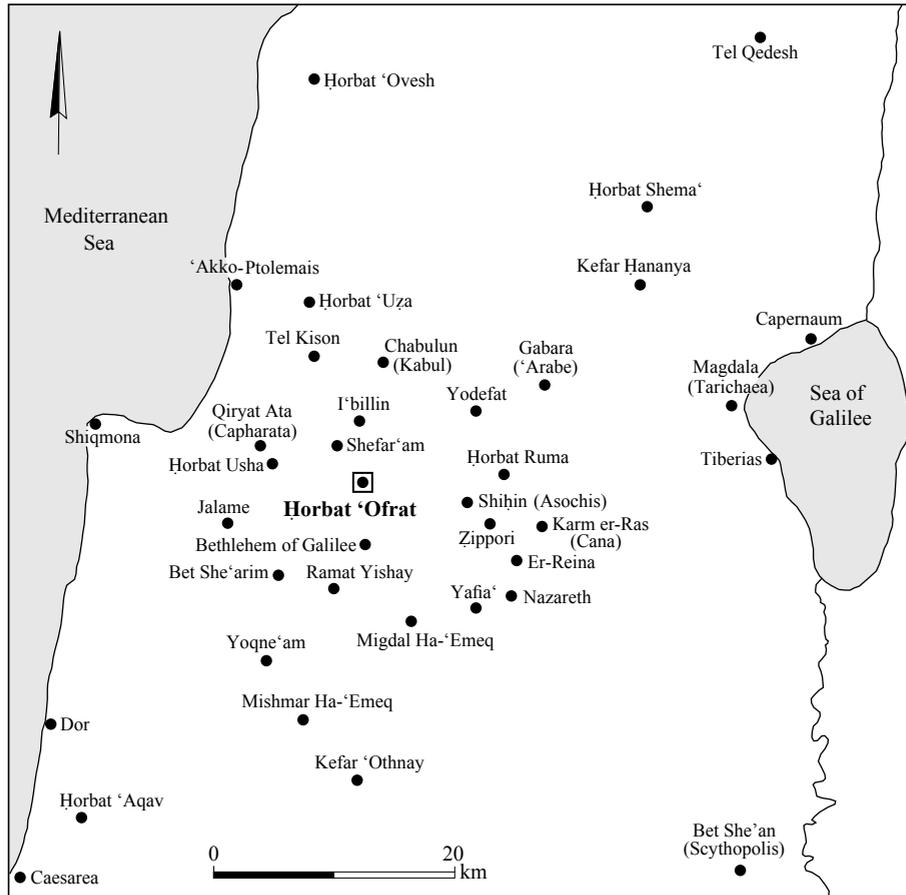


Fig. 3. Map of the Galilee, showing the location of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat and sites mentioned in the text.

The major ancient Roman west–east artery, and later the Ottoman Darb el-Ḥawarna route, led from ‘Akko into the Lower Galilee via Naḥal Evlayim, passing about 3 km to the north of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat, whilst the modern road follows the line of the old, possibly medieval, Shefar‘am–Nazareth road, passing the Zippori springs.

In the Roman and Byzantine periods, there were many villages located in these hills (Fig. 3). The closest village to Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat was Shefar‘am, about 3 km to the northwest. Settlements within an approximately 10 km radius included Nazareth, Yafia‘, Migdal Ha-‘Emeq, Bethlehem of Galilee, Bet She‘arim, Jalame, Ḥorbat Usha, Qiryat Ata, I‘billin, Chabulun-Kabul, Yodefāt, Ḥorbat Ruma, Karm er-Ras and Shihin, as well as Zippori, the capital of the Galilee in the Early Roman period.

Identification of the Site

Literary sources—notably Flavius Josephus—together with archaeological evidence from surveys and excavations enabled the identification of most of the Early Roman-period Lower



Fig. 4. Deep well on the southwestern edge of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat, looking east.



Fig. 5. The walls of the deep well, viewed from above.

Galilee sites as Jewish villages; in many cases, the Arab villages preserved the ancient place names.

The site of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat appears in the Survey of Western Palestine as “*Khirbet et-Taiyibeh*” (Conder and Kitchener 1881:321). Avi-Yonah suggested that the ancient name was ‘Ofrat, noting the phenomenon of “*Tayyibetism*,” whereby local Arabs systematically changed the name ‘Ofrat, which means “evil spirit” to “*Tayyibet el-Ism*,” meaning “of good name,” or to its abbreviated “*et-Tayyibe*” (Avi-Yonah 1953:97). These name changes are considered to have taken place in the course of the Mamluk period, between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries CE (Elitzur 1992:286).

A village with the name of Capharata, also appearing in a corrupt form as Capharacco, is mentioned by Flavius Josephus as one of the settlements he fortified during the Great Revolt in order to protect the west of the primarily Jewish Galilee from the Roman-controlled Ptolemais-‘Akko plain (Flavius Josephus, *Life*:187–188; *War* II:573–574). In the past, it had been suggested to identify the village of Capharata as Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat based on the similarity in names and general location (Avi-Yonah 1953:96–98); Barag (1981), however, pointed to Qiryat Ata as the most likely candidate for Josephus’ fortified settlement. Recent excavations at Qiryat Ata appear to bear out the latter proposal (Torgē and Said 2015). Thus, it seems that the site of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat cannot be identified with any Galilean village name known from ancient sources.

Previous and Subsequent Surveys and Excavations (Fig. 1)

Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat (*Khirbat et-Taiyiba*) was visited by nineteenth-century travelers and researchers, most notably of the Survey of Western Palestine, who recorded a spring to the south of the site, and a deep, partially rock-cut and partially stone-built well (Figs. 4, 5; see

Fig. 1; Conder and Kitchener 1881). The well was adjacent to a low hill, on which were a large number of building stones and some decorated architectural fragments—including a heart-shaped corner column fragment—that were interpreted as the remains of an ancient synagogue (Conder and Kitchener 1881:321). In the survey of the Shefar'am map, carried out in the 1970s, Zvi Gal estimated the size of Horbat 'Ofrat to be about 20 dunams (Olami and Gal 2003:43*–44*, Sites 97–103, 109, 110). Ancient building remains were recorded, including a possible Iron II fortification wall on the southern terrace. In addition, several rock-cut winepresses were noted in the agricultural land surrounding the village, and some Roman-period burial caves were observed to its east, south and northwest.

Following heavy winter rains in 1962, a stray hoard of 274 bronze coins dating to Constantine's reign (335–361 CE) was discovered next to the road near Horbat 'Ofrat (IAA archives; for an approximate location, see Fig. 1). The coins from this hoard are briefly presented together with the coins from the present excavation (see Bijovsky, this volume). In 1965, the widening of the Nazareth–Shefar'am road damaged a Roman burial cave. Yehuda ben Yosef excavated the cave, which had *arcosolia*, *kokhim* and a repository (Permit No. A-42, IAA archives; for its location, see Fig. 1).

In 1972, following the construction of the new Nazareth–Shefar'am road, a six-square salvage excavation was carried out on the eastern slope of the hill (Permit No. A-361), next to the findspot of the heart-shaped column from the previous century (for its location, see Fig. 1). The excavation uncovered fragmentary walls and an upper crushing stone of an oil press with late Hellenistic and Early Roman pottery, which was overlain by part of a large Late Roman building with possible stylobates, a patch of a patterned mosaic, a small mid-fourth century CE coin hoard and some Byzantine and Islamic pottery (Urman 1993–1994).

In 1985, an archaeological excavation was carried out following the exposure of ancient walls while laying telephone cables on the northeastern side of the newly-diverted road (Permit No. A-1388; Peleg 1990; for its location, see Fig. 1). An area of about 13 × 13 m was uncovered, revealing limited remains of a monumental building comprising several large ashlar-stone walls built on bedrock, but no extant floors. There were some fragments of colored fresco, modeled stucco and pottery dated to the Middle to Late Roman period, third to fourth centuries CE. The coins found in the excavation mostly dated to the fourth century CE, but also included one coin of Herod I and one of Agrippa I from the Early Roman period, as well as a rare coin of Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE) minted at Gaba. Approximately 3 km further east, a *kokhim* burial cave was excavated (beyond the map limits of Fig. 1). The cave entrance and the *kokhim* were sealed with stone blocks, and the cave contained three clay sarcophagi, a clay ossuary, a fourth-century CE coin and some potsherds from the Middle and Late Roman periods (Peleg 1990:93, 96–98).

Following the 2008 excavation, two additional excavations were subsequently carried out at the site. In 2009, prior to the widening of the main road, a salvage excavation (Permit No. B-335) was carried out by Bar-Ilan University in the same strip along the northeastern side of the main road, intermittently in between all the squares excavated in the present

excavation (for their general location, see Fig. 1).² In 2013, a salvage excavation was conducted following damage caused by earthworks carried out along an agricultural path adjacent to the Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat well (Permit No. A-6907; Alexandre, forthcoming; for its location, see Fig. 1).

THE EXCAVATION

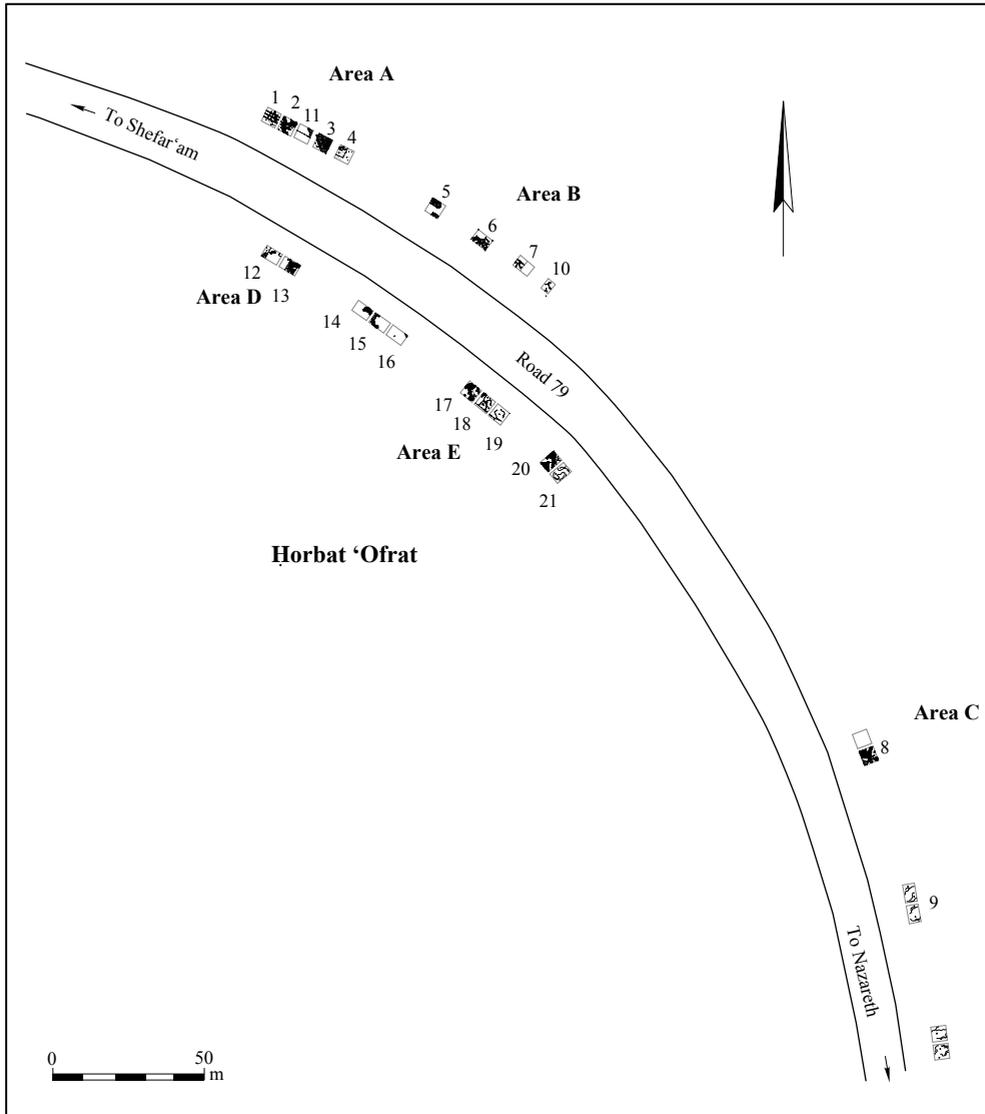
The excavation took place on the northeastern margins of the Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat hill (c. 200 m asl), with ten 5 × 5 m squares dispersed along either side of the main road within the strips designated for expansion (Plan 1). The excavation squares were located only in land that was either state-owned or whose private owners gave their permission to excavate. Prior to manual excavation, the topsoil was removed and trial trenches were dug with a mechanical digger. Some squares marked northeast of the road were not excavated as the bedrock lay close to the surface without archaeological remains; on the southern side, by contrast, the archaeological layers were found beneath a 1–2 m thick layer of packed road makeup.

On the northern and eastern sides of the road, ten squares were excavated along a strip of over 500 m in Areas A, B and C, with gaps between the areas (Sqs 1–11; Sq 10 and a few other unnumbered squares were cancelled). On the southern side of the road, another ten squares over a strip of about 220 m (Sqs 12–21) were excavated in Areas D and E, again with intervening gaps.

Stratigraphy and Architecture

The integration of the archaeological remains from all the squares into a comprehensive site stratigraphy was a difficult task for several reasons. First, the small, narrow excavation areas were not physically connected to each other. The width of each excavated strip was 5 m, a limitation that precluded the exposure of a coherent room or house plan. Moreover, in several of the excavated squares there were only poorly preserved walls, making it impossible to reconstruct well-defined building units; in some squares, there were no structural remains, only superimposed open living surfaces with pottery. In addition, bedrock was reached in small probes in Areas A–C and E, but not in Area D, where the archaeological deposits

² The salvage excavation (B-335/2009) was carried out in accordance with the specifications of the IAA by Rona Avissar, Joe Uziel and Itzhaq Shai on behalf of Bar-Ilan University. It was located only on the northeastern side of the main road, where the road works involved lowering the ground level (thereby destroying any archaeological remains), and not on the southwestern side of the road, where the widening involved covering over the original ground surface. The excavation consisted of an area of approximately 76 half squares (5.0 × 2.5 m) in designated Areas E, F, G and H, located adjacent and between our Areas A, B, and C (Fig. 1). Architectural remains dating to the Late Roman and the Byzantine periods, as well as occasional Hellenistic sherds, were uncovered only in Area H, adjacent and west of Area A, whilst evidence of rock-hewing were found in a few squares in other areas. The results of this excavation will be published separately. The author is grateful to the excavators for this preliminary information.

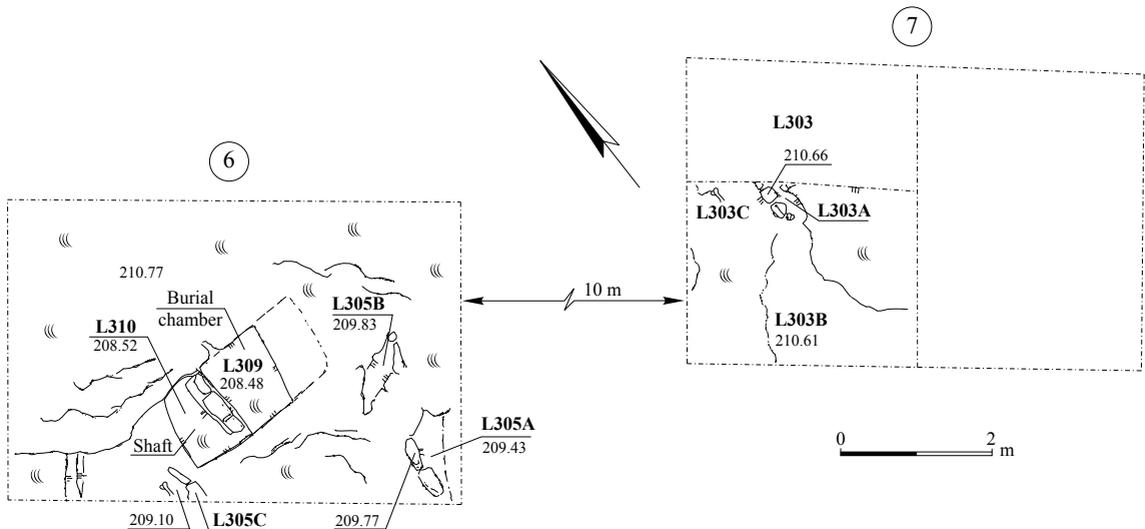


Plan 1. Excavation Areas A–E.

were thicker. Lastly, modern earthworks, as well as building activities carried out by the inhabitants during the later periods of occupation, sometimes dug into and disturbed the earlier strata. As a result of the above conditions, there were almost no clean loci in the excavation, and the allocation of pottery and other artifacts to strata was not always clear-cut. Nonetheless, on the basis of a compilation of the architectural remains, stratigraphic correlations and associated finds, six architectural strata could be discerned, their dates ranging from the late Hellenistic through the late Byzantine/Early Islamic period. The main elements of the six strata are briefly summarized in Table 1 and described in detail below, from early to late.

Table 1. Excavation Strata

Stratum	Period	Date Range	Finds
VI	Late Hellenistic	Late 2nd–early 1st c. BCE	Rock-hewn burials (Area B); winepress (Area C); sporadic pottery throughout
V	Early Roman	1st–early 2nd c. CE	Building remains, cistern (Area A); winepress (Area C); sporadic pottery throughout
IV	Middle to Late Roman	3rd–mid-4th c. CE	Stone-chip waste layer (Area A); building remains (Area D)
III	Early Byzantine	Late 4th–early 5th c. CE	Building remains (Areas A and E); pottery throughout
II	Byzantine	Mid-5th–6th c. CE	Building remains with destruction layer (Areas A, D); <i>in situ</i> finds (Area D); pottery throughout
I	Late Byzantine to Early Islamic	Late 6th–early 7th c. CE	Pits and thick burnt layer overlying Byzantine building (Area D)



Plan 2. Area B, Stratum VI, plan of Hellenistic burials (Sqs 6, 7).

Stratum VI: Late Hellenistic Period (Late Second–Early First Centuries BCE)

The archaeological remains of the late Hellenistic period—the earliest stratum—were limited to fragmentary remains of burials (Area B), an agricultural installation (Area C) and sporadic pottery sherds in all the excavated areas.

Area B.— In Sqs 6 and 7 (Plan 2), six small, shallow, oval-shaped hollows with an approximate north–south orientation were cut into the gently sloping, soft, chalky limestone bedrock at a depth of 0.3–0.4 m below the ground’s surface (Fig. 6; L303A–C and L305A–C;



Fig. 6. Area B, Stratum VI, pit burial (L303A), looking northeast.



Fig. 7. Area B, Stratum VI, burial shaft (L310) and chamber (L309), looking east.

average dimensions 0.5×0.3 m, depth 0.25 m). A few fragmentary, very poorly preserved human long bones were found both within and next to these hollows, indicating that these were simple pit burials. Hellenistic storage-jar sherds, found on bedrock in the immediate vicinity (L303), may date these remains.

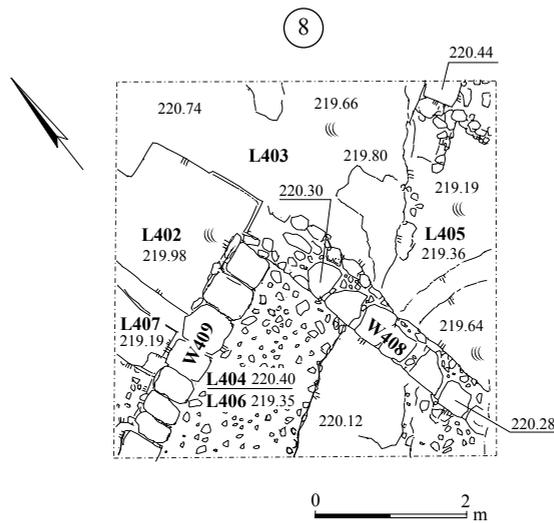
A vertical shaft in Sq 6 (L310; $1.0 \times 0.9 \times 1.8$ m) gave access to a small burial chamber (L309; c. $1.5 \times 1.0 \times 1.2$ m), both hewn out of the soft limestone rock. The chamber had carefully chiseled vertical back walls and an arched ceiling, and the entrance from shaft to chamber was blocked by a stone partition of three large ashlar slabs (0.2 m thick; Fig. 7). As neither bones nor accompanying goods were extant in the shaft or chamber, it is impossible to ascertain the date of this tomb. However, its proximity to the simple pit burials may be an indication of contemporaneity. To date, according to the author's knowledge, it seems that no other late Hellenistic burials have been excavated in Lower Galilee (Aviam 2004:257). It appears that Area B served as a small graveyard during this period.

Area C.— Part of a rock-hewn installation in Sq 8 was delineated by two 1–2 course stone walls (W408, W409), built directly on bedrock at a right angle to one another (Plan 3; Fig. 8). The installation appears to be a winepress, comprising a rock-cut treading floor (L402) and a rectangular collecting vat (L407). The leveled bedrock exhibited linear cutting marks, which were probably traces of quarrying for limestone building blocks. Several rim and body sherds of late Hellenistic storage jars found in the accumulations on the adjacent bedrock (L402, L403, L404, L405) suggest that the winepress was probably hewn out of the rock in the late Hellenistic period. Likewise, the presence of Early to Middle Roman sherds in and around the press may indicate that it continued in use during the Roman period.

Residual sherds of late Hellenistic storage jars came to light in all the excavated areas, some sporadically in the later buildings, and others, on open bedrock where it was exposed. It is



Fig. 8. Area C, Strata VI–V, winepress with bedrock treading surface (L402) leading to the collecting vat at left corner (L407), looking northeast.



Plan 3. Area C, Strata VI–V, plan of Hellenistic and Roman winepress (Sq 8).

likely that Area B was a burial area and Area C was an agricultural area of a yet uncovered late Hellenistic habitation site. The settlement was probably located on the hillslope, on the other side of the modern road, about 100 m south of the burial area.



Fig. 9. Area A, Stratum V, cistern (L136) in bedrock surface (L135), with the corner of W138 visible on right, looking southeast.

Stratum V: Early Roman Period (First–Early Second Centuries CE)

There were limited Early Roman remains of wall foundations and floors of a house, and a rock-cut cistern on bedrock (Area A). The Stratum VI winepress continued to be used during this period (Area C), and sporadic Early Roman sherds appeared in all excavated areas.

Area A.— The fragmentary remains of a house and courtyard were uncovered beneath the Stratum III building (see below) in small probes that cut through Stratum III remains and descended down to bedrock (Plan 4: Sections 1–1, 2–2). In Sq 1, a bell-shaped pit, probably a cistern (L136), with a circular opening and a slightly lowered lip (mouth diam. 0.5 m), was hewn out of the somewhat uneven limestone bedrock surface (L135) that probably served as an open courtyard (Fig. 9). The cistern seems to have been intentionally filled with compacted earth and small stones and some small Early Roman body sherds. Although its interior was excavated only to a depth of about 1.1 m due to safety considerations, its dimensions could be estimated as at least 1.4 m in diameter and its depth at over 1.5 m deep. Roughly hewn channeling marks in the slightly sloping bedrock around the cistern probably directed run-off water into its opening.

Adjacent to and south of L135 and Cistern 136, a corner segment of a stone wall (W138) founded on bedrock survived to the height of a single course. Remains of a possibly related



Fig. 10. Area A, Stratum V, W123 cut by Stratum III W105 and W106, looking west.

structure continue in Sq 2, where a 2.5 m long segment of a north–south wall (W123; width 0.7 m, surviving height c. 1 m), built of a several courses of various-sized ashlar blocks on a foundation, underlies and was cut by the later Stratum III wall (W105; Fig. 10). The bedrock on either side of W123 was cut away. Adjacent to W123 on the west, a small, shallow rectangular installation (L137) was hewn out of bedrock. Both Installation 137 and the lower western face of W123 were lined with white plaster. The western continuation of this installation was in the unexcavated balk between Sqs 1 and 2. However, it did not appear in Sq 1, and it was therefore probably a small plastered basin.

Patches of packed-earth floors (L122, L128, L129, L132) that ran up to the walls exhibited Early Roman pottery sherds, as well as fragments of soft limestone vessels. Beneath Floor 129 and above bedrock, an accumulation layer (L134) also exhibited Early Roman sherds. All these architectural remains were probably part of the ground story or basement of an Early Roman period house. Most of the limited pottery is characteristic of the late first century CE, within the later part of the Early Roman period. The Early Roman pottery in the cistern, without any later sherds, indicates that it was filled in before the Middle Roman period.

In Sq 3, about 10 m further east, was a small patch of a floor consisting of packed earth and crushed chalk (L117), upon which a few Early Roman and early Byzantine sherds were



Fig. 11. Area A, Stratum V, W118 with crushed chalk floor (L117) in the foreground, looking east.

found. Floor 117 meets the western face of a north–south oriented wall (W118; Fig. 11) built directly on the sloping bedrock. Wall 118 (width 0.45 m, excavated length c. 5 m) was constructed of a single row of ashlar blocks placed lengthwise and preserved to a height of two courses. This wall may have been part of an Early Roman house as a pile of stone chips containing Middle Roman-period potsherds (L109) was uncovered leaning against the outer eastern face of this wall (see below), giving W118 a *terminus post quem*. The pottery on the Early Roman floors indicates that the house was probably abandoned when the cistern was filled during the early second century CE.

Area C.— In Sq 8 of Area C, the late Hellenistic winepress probably continued to be in use during the Early Roman period, as several Early and Middle Roman sherds were found within mixed loci here (L402, L403; Plan 3). The intentional stone fill in the winepress cavities and the immediate vicinity (L402, L404, L406, L407) also contained some Byzantine sherds, which may indicate that the installation functioned until the Byzantine period.

Area D.— Due to time limitations and the depth of the deposits, the excavations in Area D were unable to penetrate below the Middle Roman stratum (Plan 5). Nonetheless, several Early Roman sherds, a Jewish Revolt coin from 67–68 CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. No. 1), and a small glass inlay found in the accumulation layer of the Stratum IV building (see Winter, this volume: Fig. 1) reflect an Early Roman occupation in the immediate vicinity.



Fig. 12. Area A, Stratum IV, limestone chip pile (L109), looking north.

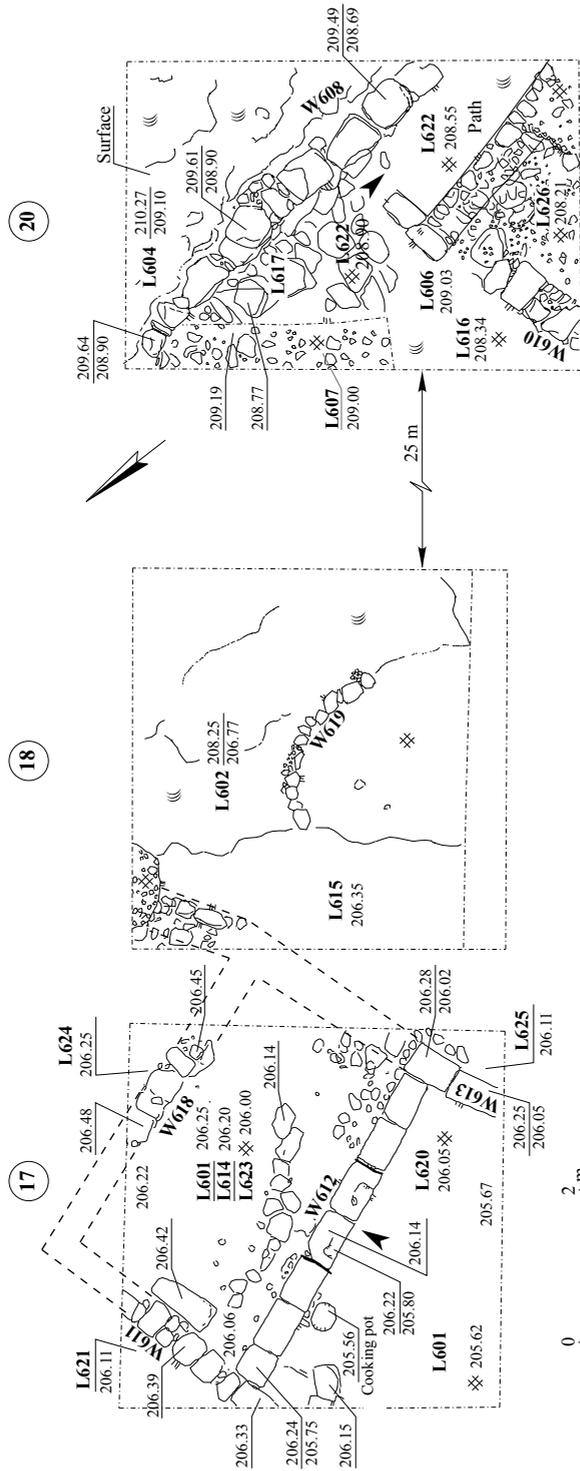
Area E.— In Sq 20, a stone-paved pathway (L616, L622) lined with a boulder wall was attributed to Stratum III on the basis of the predominantly Early Byzantine pottery (Plan 6). The presence of some Early Roman sherds in L616 raises the possibility that the path may have first been in use during the Early Roman period. Similarly, some Early Roman sherds were also found with the predominantly early Byzantine pottery in Area E, where bedrock was exposed close to the surface (Sqs 18–20).

Stratum IV: Middle to Late Roman Period (Third–Mid-Fourth Centuries CE)

Stratum IV consisted of an open courtyard in Area A, a stone-quarrying and stone-cutting area, also in Area A, and part of a house in Area D. In Areas B and C there was no evidence of activity from this period.

Area A.— A packed-earth living surface of an open area or courtyard (L121) overlaid the Early Roman house and the filled-in cistern (Plan 4; Sqs 1, 2). Middle to Late Roman-period potsherds were found in L121, predominantly including open and closed cooking pots of Kefar Hananya Forms 3B and 4B. There were also several large basins and a single coin dating to 315–316 CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. No. 4, Fig. 1:4).

In Sq 3, to the east of the Stratum V house, a large concentrated collection of small and medium-sized soft limestone chips was found on bedrock, piled approximately 0.75 m high (L109; Fig. 12). The pile contained significant quantities of Middle to Late Roman-period pottery sherds, including a few heavy basins. The stone chips abutted only the outer eastern face of the earlier Stratum V W118. It seems that during this period, the area was used as a local quarrying or stone chipping area, possibly for hewing building blocks.



Plan 6. Area E, Stratum III.



Fig. 13. Area D, Stratum IV, W533 and W537, overlaid by Stratum II W509, looking west.

Area D.— In Sq 15, on the southern side of the modern road, three well-built adjoining stone walls (W533, W537, W547) of a single room of a house were uncovered (Plan 5; Fig. 13). These walls were underlying and cut by the walls of the later Stratum II Byzantine building (e.g., W509). While only the top contour of W547 was exposed, the two other walls were excavated to their foundations. Both W533 and W537 measured about 3 m long, 0.6 m wide, and were extant for 2–3 courses. They were built of large, soft limestone ashlar blocks of various dimensions (some measured $0.60 \times 0.40 \times 0.25$ m), and were laid on top of a fairly compact clay-like soil layer. These three walls enclosed a room ($3.0 \times$ over 2.5 m) with a packed-earth floor (L536) partially overlain by a surface of small stone pebbles (L534; Fig. 14), upon which were found potsherds of Middle to Late Roman vessels, including several Galilean open bowls of Kefar Hananya Form 1E, as well as kraters, open and closed cooking pots, large basins, storage jars, a coin dating to 267 CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. No. 3, Fig. 1:3) and some glass-vessel fragments, including a solid base characteristic of the fourth–early fifth centuries CE (see Winter, this volume: Fig. 2:4). The accumulation layer (L516) overlaid Floor 536 and exhibited Middle to Late Roman sherds.

To the immediate west of this room, separated from it by the Stratum II W509, a small area of a stone slab floor (L527) was exposed. Some Middle to Late Roman sherds, as well



Fig. 14. Area D, Stratum IV stone pebble floor (L534) and packed-earth floor (L536), overlaid by Stratum II walls, looking west.

as some later sherds were found on Floor 527. The differences in elevation of Floors 527 and 536 is probably due to terracing techniques employed to accommodate the slope. To the east of Room 536 in Sq 15 an adjacent open area (L522), which was possibly the courtyard of the house, also yielded some Middle Roman sherds.

These building remains in Area D were probably part of a domestic dwelling that was abandoned by the mid-fourth century CE. The area was subsequently built over during the Byzantine period. It is unknown whether there were remains from the Middle Roman period in Sqs 12 and 13 of Area D, as the excavation there did not penetrate below the thick Stratum II Byzantine building layer of Stratum II.

Area E.— In Sq 17, sporadic Middle Roman-period sherds were found just below the floor of the Stratum III early Byzantine building (L623; Plan 6).

In summary, the limited Stratum IV remains indicate that a house on the lower hillslope was constructed and occupied in the third to fourth centuries CE, and probably abandoned around the mid-fourth century CE. The margins of the site on the northeastern side of the modern road were used for industrial activities, such as stone quarrying and working.

Stratum III: Early Byzantine Period (Late Fourth–Early Fifth Centuries CE)

Parts of two buildings are attributed to Stratum III—one in Area A, the other in Area E.



Fig. 15. Area A, Stratum III W106B and W106A, overlying Stratum V Floor 128, looking east.

Area A.— In Sq 2, two perpendicular adjoining stone walls, W105 ($4.8 \times 0.6 \times 1.3$ m) and W106 ($3.3 \times 0.5 \times c. 1.3$ m), formed a corner (Plan 4). Wall 105 was partially built over and partially cut a Stratum V wall (W123; Fig. 10). The Stratum III walls, constructed on a thin accumulation layer overlying bedrock, had foundation courses of roughly hewn stones (W105A, W106A; 0.8 m wide), over which 2–3 courses of varying-sized ashlar limestone blocks were laid lengthwise (W105B, W106B; Fig. 15). These ashlar blocks were not well-laid, and therefore may have been in secondary use. A small segment of a wall (W131) was attached to W106 (Fig. 16). Two superimposed packed-earth floors with plaster traces (L114/115 and L127) extended to the inner faces of W105 and W106 (Fig. 17). The pottery on Floors 114/115 and 127 dates to the early Byzantine period.

In Sq 11, a short segment of a single-course limestone ashlar block wall (W130) was oriented in the same direction as W106 and W131. It was built slightly higher up the bedrock slope, and may have belonged to the same building as W105 and W106.

In Sq 3, early Byzantine sherds in the accumulation layer (L103) overlie the Stratum IV stone-chip pile (L109), indicating a stone-working activity. This may have been where the dismantling of the ashlar stones of the Early Roman W118 took place. These ashlar stones may have been reused in the Stratum III building.

Immediately to the west and east of the Stratum III building were two superimposed living surfaces, possibly open courtyards (L107 and L111 in Sq 1, L119 in Sq 2, L110 and L113 in Sq 4), upon which were considerable quantities of early Byzantine pottery sherds. The pottery assemblage consisted of imported Late Roman Red Ware bowls, open cooking pots and lids, storage jars, jugs and many heavy basins, reflecting food preparation and

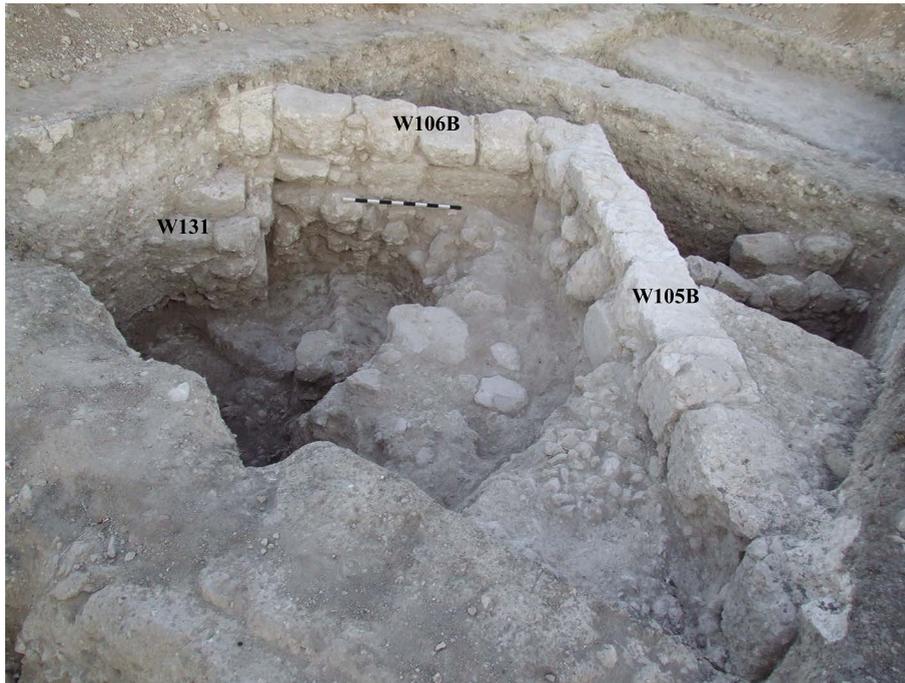


Fig. 16. Area A, Stratum III building, showing W105B, W106B and the small segment of W131, looking west.

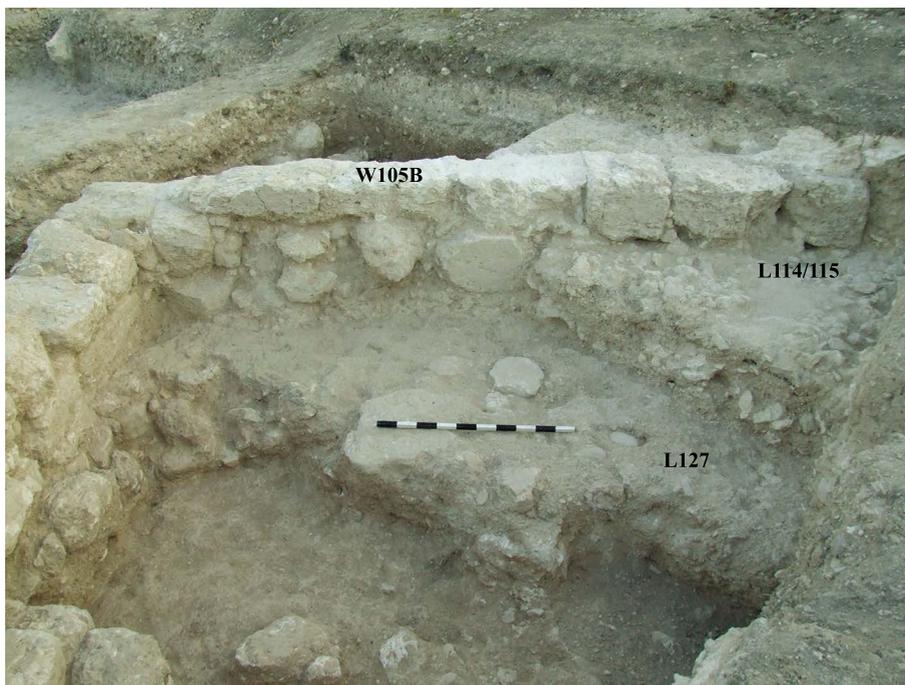


Fig. 17. Area A, Stratum III, Floors 114/115 and 127, looking north.

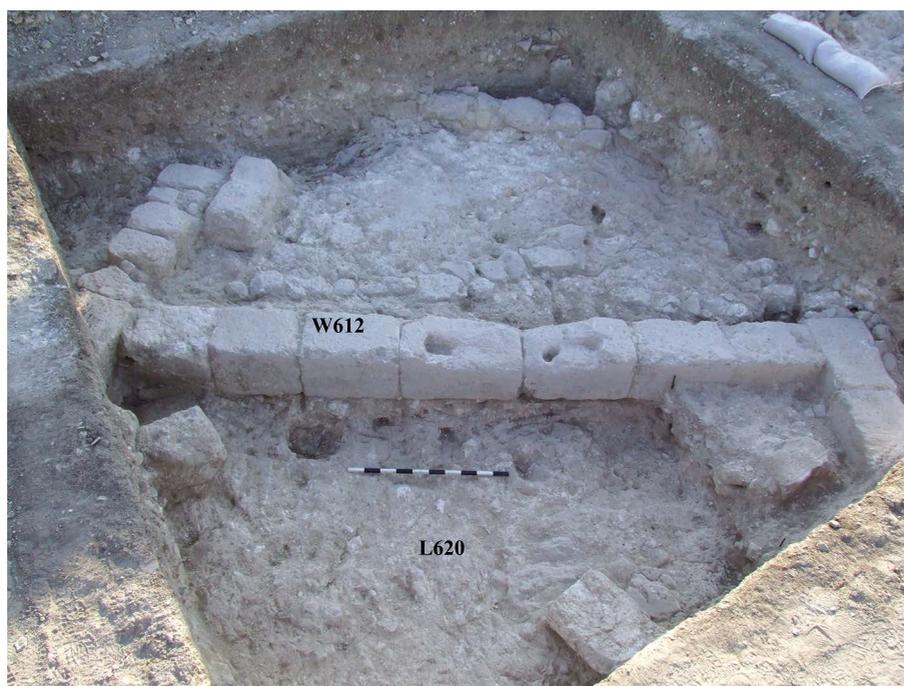


Fig. 18. Area E, Stratum III building showing threshold in W612 and Floor 620 in foreground, looking east.

various household activities, as well as a significant number of inhabitants. Glass fragments of characteristic early Byzantine bowls and beakers were found in L111 (see Winter, this volume: Fig. 2:3, 5, 7). No coins were found in the building, but four coins found in adjacent open areas (two in L110, one in L111, and one in the accumulated fill overlying a Stratum V floor, L117) date to the second half of the fourth century CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. Nos. 5, 7, 12, 21). Based on the strewn pottery, the Stratum III building may have been abruptly abandoned in the early Byzantine period.

Area C.— The Hellenistic–Roman winepress was probably intentionally filled with a layer of medium–large stones, amongst which were several early Byzantine and Roman sherds (L402, L403; Plan 3).

Area E.— In Sqs 17 and 18, four adjoining walls (W611–613, W618) delineate rooms of a house (Plan 6; Fig. 18). The walls, preserved to a maximum height of two courses, were constructed of soft limestone ashlar blocks laid directly on bedrock. A double stone threshold entrance in W612 leads from the rectangular interior space (L623; 4.5 × 2.4 m) to another room or possibly an internal courtyard (L620). The thinly packed earth-and-plaster floors (L620 and L623) slightly evened out the chalky bedrock. A debris layer (L614) overlying the floor of Room 623 contained stone collapse, a few sherds and several roof tile fragments, indicating that at least part of the building had a tiled roof.

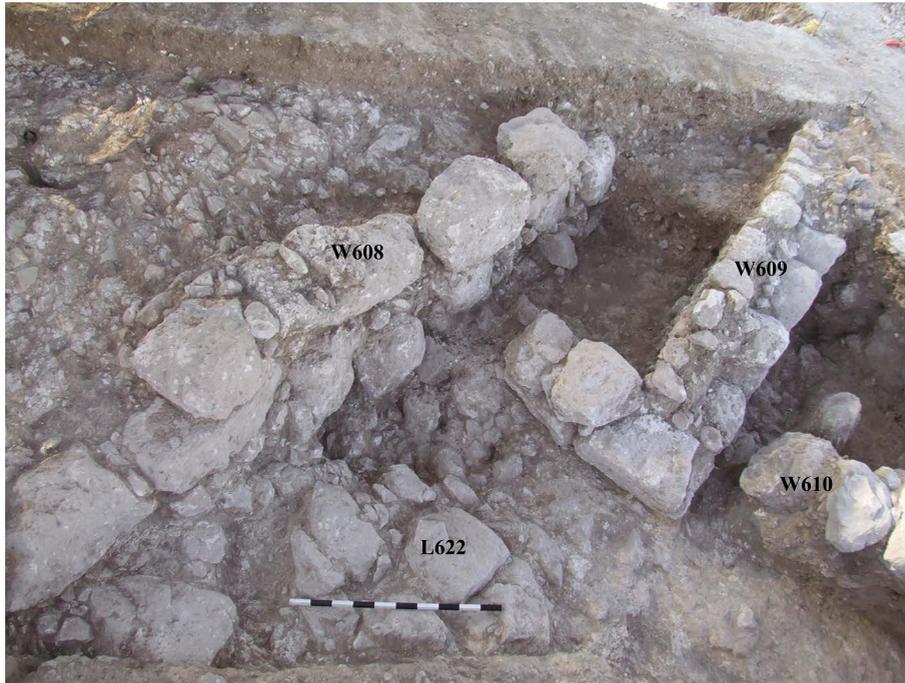


Fig. 19. Area E, Stratum III, W608 and W609 bordering the stepped stone-paved pathway (L622); part of W610 overlies the pathway, looking south.

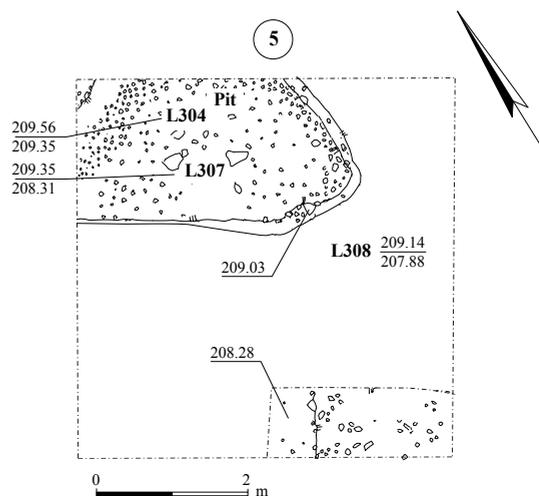
In Courtyard 620, close to the threshold in W612, a disintegrated globular cooking pot was found *in situ* in a small circular hollow intentionally dug out of the soft bedrock. The cooking pot (Fig. 32:2) contained three worn bronze coins dating to the fourth century CE; a fourth coin dating to 383–395 CE was found in close proximity (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. Nos. 9, 16, 17, one unidentified). The cooking pot may have been stored in the hollow next to the threshold when construction of the building began, as the coins were intended to be a small monetary deposit in the foundation to bring good luck (for references to this custom, see Bijovsky 2004).

Four coins (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. Nos. 8, 10, 11, 22) from L614, the debris layer above Floor 623, dated between 378–408 CE; another is more generally dated to the fourth century CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. No. 19), and two other coins, found on the open uneven bedrock courtyard immediately to the south of the building (L615), dated to 383–395 CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. Nos. 13, 14). Based on these coins, the Stratum III building was probably occupied in the late fourth and early fifth centuries CE.

In Sq 20 of Area E, about 30 m southeast of the house (Plan 6), a stone-paved stepped pathway (L616, L622) was bordered by a retaining terrace wall of boulders (W608) and by a corner of two roughly hewn fieldstone walls (W609 and W610; Fig. 19). Pathway 622 might have been a stepped route connecting the village to the fields. No other building remains were found on the uneven bedrock surfaces exposed in nearby Sqs 19 and 21 (for location of squares, see Plan 1).



Fig. 20. Area B, Stratum II, Pit 304/307, looking northeast.



Plan 7. Area B, Stratum II, plan of Byzantine remains (Sq 5).

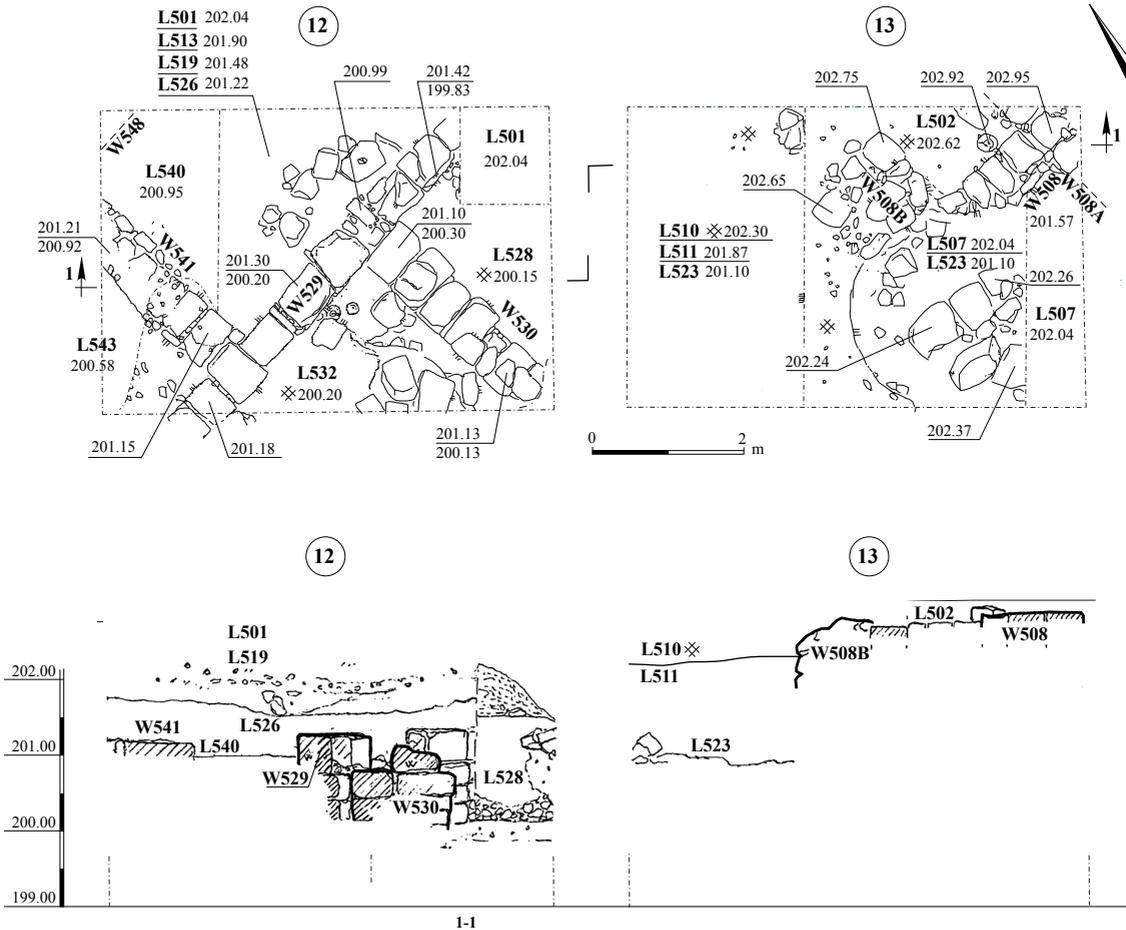
Early Byzantine pottery was found throughout the excavated areas, reflecting significant activity and habitation during this period.

Stratum II: Byzantine Period (Mid-Fifth–Early Sixth Centuries CE)

Area A.— In Area A, the Stratum III house fell out of use and was overlaid by open courtyard areas with packed-earth living surfaces (L101 and L102; Plan 4: Section 1–1).

Area B.— A large deep layer (L308) included a large amorphic pit (L304/307) and superimposed layers of small stones, stone chips, mudbrick material, roof tile fragments, glass fragments and significant quantities of Byzantine potsherds (Plan 7; Fig. 20). The interpretation of this accumulation is not clear, but it seems to have been a dump of dismantled building material rather than the remains of industrial activity.

Area D.— On the southern side of the modern road, two separate buildings were attributed to Stratum II. In Sq 12, four adjoining walls of a house (W529, W530, W541, W548) with at least four rooms were preserved 4–5 courses to a height of over one meter (Plan 8; Fig. 21). The large, roughly worked, carelessly laid stones are an indication that the stones may have been in secondary use, possibly taken from an earlier building. In two of the rooms (L528, L532), small areas of packed-earth floors adjoin the walls. Rooms 528 and 532 were strewn with smashed pottery vessels and some glass fragments, which were further overlaid by destruction debris and stone collapse (Fig. 22). In the other two rooms, the floors were not exposed, but the accumulated debris layers overlying the presumed floors also contained Byzantine pottery (L540, L543). In the eastern corner of Sq 13, three intersecting stone wall segments (W508, W508A, W508B) and an adjoining floor (L502), upon which stood



Plan 8. Area D, Strata II and I, plan of building remains from the Byzantine and Late Byzantine–Early Islamic periods (Sqs 12, 13).

a broken limestone basin, are remnants of a room that may have been part of the same building (Fig. 23). An adjacent packed-earth floor (L510) and its make-up layer (L511) may also have also been part of this building. Floor 502 was at a higher elevation than the rooms in Sq 12, possibly indicating the existence of an upper story.

Approximately 30 m southeast of the house walls in Sq 12, a second building was uncovered in Sqs 14 and 15 of Area D (Plan 5). This building had four adjoining stone walls (W509, W518, W524, W531) with an orientation similar to that of the house in Sq 12. The north–south running wall (W509) was exposed to a length of about 8 m and preserved up to five courses, approximately 1.3 m high. It appears to have been an external wall built of various-sized ashlar-cut limestone blocks (0.5 × 0.3 × 0.3 m), and clearly cut the extant wall (W537, W547) of the earlier Stratum IV building (Fig. 24).

A packed-earth floor (L506, L521A) overlaid the walls of the Stratum IV building and adjoined the outer eastern face of W509. In Sq 16 to the east, two superimposed packed-earth floors (L512, L520) were at a similar elevation, but without associated walls or building

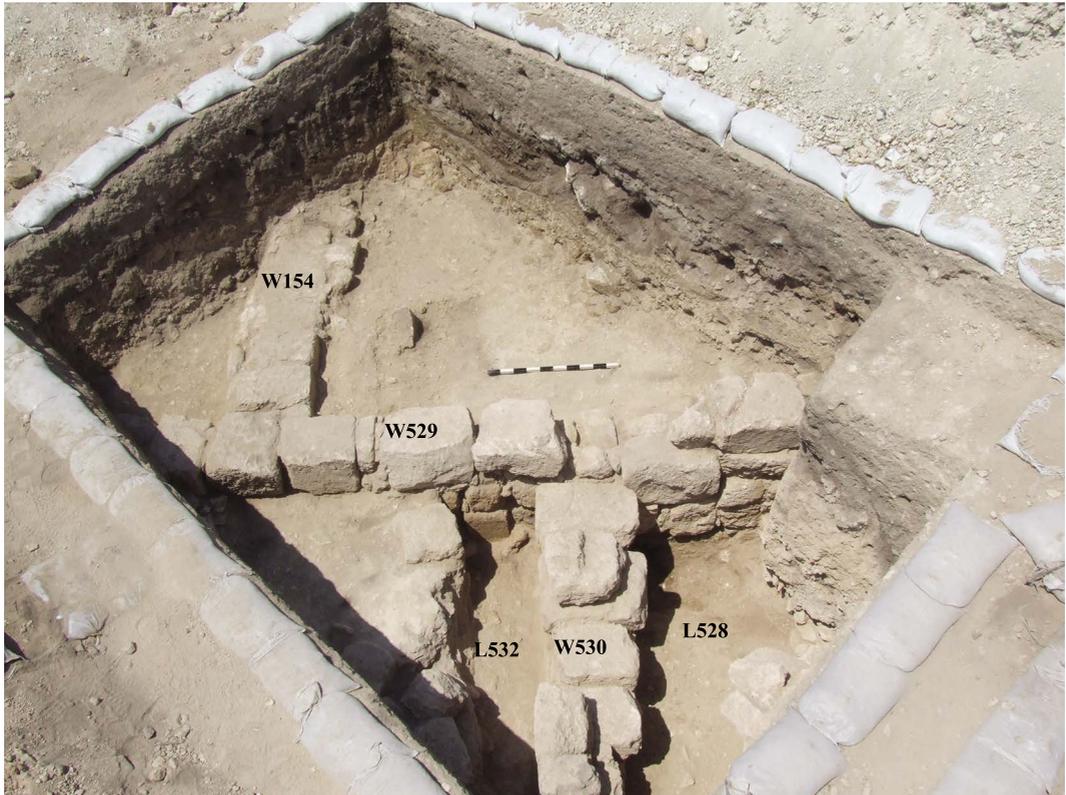


Fig. 21. Area D, Sq 12, Stratum II building, looking north.



Fig. 22. Area D, Sq 12, Stratum II Floor 528 with strewn pottery, looking north.

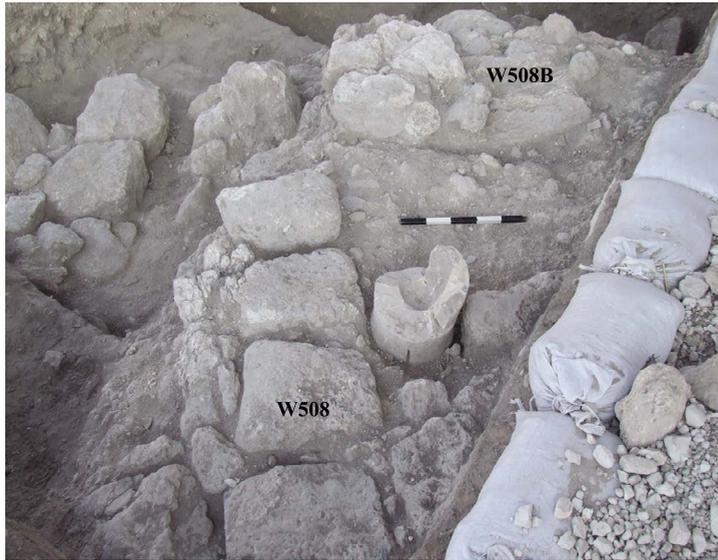


Fig. 23. Area D, Sq 13, Stratum II Floor 502 with stone basin, delineated by W508 and W508B, looking west.



Fig. 24. Area D, Sqs 14 and 15, Stratum II building overlying Stratum IV walls, showing long W509 and stone base (L525; upper slab removed), looking northwest.



Fig. 25. Area D, Sq 14, Stratum II stone collapse (L514B) and destruction layer (L538) overlying Floor 544, looking east.

debris, and the upper floor (L512) was strewn with some pottery sherds and glass fragments. This floor may have been an open courtyard adjacent to the house in Sqs 14 and 15.

At the southern end of Sq 15, built against the outer corner of W509 and W524, was a somewhat circular stone installation (L525), which was constructed of what appears to be four layers of small stones. A large, circular, flat stone slab was placed upon this installation, suggesting that the feature may have been the base of a pillar or a pilaster that flanked an entrance of the building (the southern side of this hypothetical doorway would be beyond the excavation limits).

Three walls (W518, W524, W531) perpendicularly abutted the western face of W509, dividing the building into three rooms. The southern room of the building is delineated by W509, W524 and W531. It is 3.4 m wide, of unknown length, and had Byzantine sherds on a packed-earth floor (L517), which ran up to the base of W509.

The middle room is delineated by W509, W531 and a collapsed wall (W518). This room had a packed-earth floor mixed with crushed chalk (L544), which abutted the stone foundation of W509. Floor 544 was about 1 m lower than Floor 517 in the southern room, perhaps indicating terracing within the building in order to accommodate the hillslope, or that this space was part of a basement. A small probe (not illustrated), dug below Floor 544 with a mechanical digger after the excavation season, revealed W509 to be built on what appeared to be a dense earth layer about 1 m thick, which likely descended to bedrock. A burnt destruction layer approximately 1.5 m thick (L538) completely filled Room 544 and contained a number of fallen ashlar stones (L514B), possibly from the collapse of W518 or upper story walls (Fig. 25). A segment of a living surface within the debris (L514A) may



Fig. 26. Area D, Sq 14, plastered installation (L546; Stratum II or possibly earlier), looking south.

have been part of a floor fallen from the upper story. The rubble layer (L514B) contained roof tiles, Byzantine pottery, iron nails, animal bones and glass fragments. The Late Roman and Byzantine pottery found in these two rooms included considerable quantities of Byzantine cooking wares and imported Late Roman Red Ware bowls.

To the north of W518, the small area of the northern room that was exposed consisted of a packed-earth floor that sloped down to the west (L545) and part of a shallow rectangular white plastered installation (L546) sunken into the floor (Fig. 26). Installation 546 was located at the base of W518, and it is therefore possible it may have been part of an earlier building (Plan 5: Section 1–1). The building debris on Floor 545 contained many stones from the collapsed walls (L539), and was possibly disturbed later (L515).

The two latest coins in the debris (L514 and L539) date to Maurice Tiberius (582–602 CE), possibly providing a *terminus post quem* of the end of the sixth century CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Cat. Nos. 24, 25; Fig. 1:24, 25).

The thick burnt destruction layer suggests that the Stratum II building came to a violent end, possibly in an earthquake or at the hands of an enemy. The Byzantine inhabitants likely occupied not just the Stratum II building but the entire area, as Byzantine pottery was found throughout the excavated areas.

Stratum I: Late Byzantine–Early Islamic Periods (Sixth to Seventh Centuries CE)

Area D.— The final occupation at the site seems to have been a short-lived industrial activity. This was carried out in part of Area D after the Stratum II buildings were in ruins.



Fig. 27. Area D, Sq 12, Stratum I burnt layer (L519) overlying Stratum II W529 and W530, looking northwest.



Fig. 28. Area D, Sq 12, Stratum I burnt layer (L519) overlying Stratum II W529 and W530, looking north.

A very thick (approximately 1.4 m) layer of burnt powdery ashy debris (L501, L519) overlaid the destruction layer of the Stratum II Byzantine building in Sq 12 (Plan 8: Section 1–1; Figs. 27, 28). This industrial activity involved intensive burning, and the debris contained considerable quantities of Byzantine pottery, small glass fragments and several animal bones, including camel mandibles which exhibited evidence that they had been directly exposed to fire, possibly used as clamps to hold objects in fire (see Marom, this volume: Fig. 2). The nature of the industrial activity is unclear, but it was probably not pottery firing as no wasters or kiln debris were found. Some sherds and glass fragments in this layer (L501, L519) date from the late Byzantine

to the Early Islamic period, dating the industrial activity to the late sixth or early seventh century CE.

Other elements in Area D attributed to the final occupation are large amorphous disturbances, most likely pits: L505, L515 in Sq 14 (Plan 5) and L523 and L507 in Sq 13 (Plan 8). Many pottery sherds were found in these pits, as well as some glass fragments of Byzantine vessels, including wineglasses and oil-lamp stems (see Winter, this volume: Fig. 3:2, 3, 5). These pits may be related to digging earth for the Stratum I industrial activity, or possibly to more recent disturbances.

Another large pit (L523, incorporating L507) was dug into the corner of the walls of the building in Sq 13, and may indicate the removal of additional walls at this time.

THE POTTERY

Methodology

The pottery was sorted at the site and all rims, as well as certain diagnostic pieces, were retained; body sherds were reburied. The rims were classified according to a typology based on defined forms from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine periods, and the quantity of each type was recorded for each locus. There were altogether about 3350 rim sherds: about 50 Hellenistic, 160 Early Roman, 320 Middle to Late Roman, 520 early Byzantine, 2000 Byzantine, 300 late Byzantine to Early Islamic and about 100 unidentified. It should be noted that no reduction was made in cases of multiple rim sherds from a single vessel, nor was any calculation attempted of the number of actual vessels based upon some statistical formula. Moreover, although the pottery count provides a basis and reference for the pottery analysis, in some cases, because the count was carried out prior to the more in-depth pottery processing, the classifications were not sufficiently specific and sometimes include more than one type.³

The pottery discussion and figures are presented typologically, according to stratum and period. Wherever possible, an effort was made to illustrate the vessels from clearly stratified loci. Nonetheless, in order to present a full typology of the assemblage, in certain cases examples were taken from mixed contexts. The quantities of the pottery reflect the varying intensity of architectural remains from the different periods exposed at the site. Additionally, large quantities of Byzantine pottery were found strewn on open surfaces and not contained within the walls of buildings, possibly reflecting substantial outdoor activity.

Very few whole or almost whole pottery vessels were retrieved from the excavation. These include some cooking pots in a very disintegrated state from Area E—from the Byzantine Stratum III house (L620; Fig. 32:2) and from the pathway where a pot was covered by a

³ Due to time constraints, we were unable to implement a second count of the rims after the in-depth pottery processing, and therefore, no frequency breakdown or statistical analysis of the data is presented in this report.

collapsed stone (L622; Fig. 32:1). Various almost whole pottery vessels were also found in the destruction layer of the Byzantine Stratum II building in Area D, although only limited pottery restoration was carried out (L528, L532; Figs. 33:10–12; 34:10–12; 35:1, 10).

Several of the illustrated sherds were examined visually with the aid of a magnifying glass ($\times 10$) by Anastasia Shapiro, of the Israel Antiquities Authority, who offered important comments on the various fabrics, and three Byzantine sherds were subjected to a petrographic analysis. Helpful comments on the Byzantine pottery were offered by Nimrod Getzov, also of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

A Note About the Byzantine Pottery

The overwhelming majority of the pottery collected in the excavation was from the Byzantine period, dating from the late fourth to the late sixth and possibly into the early seventh centuries CE. The pottery repertoires of Strata III and II were not clearly distinguishable, as some forms appear in both strata, reflecting a long duration for the types and/or a considerable degree of uniformity as a result of mass production. In addition, it was not always possible to isolate the pottery from the Area A Stratum III building from the Stratum II pottery. Regarding the pottery found in the Area D Stratum I thick burnt 'industrial' layer, it is possible that some may have originated from the earlier Stratum II habitation level, and accumulations containing the Stratum II pottery were disturbed by later Stratum I activity.

Nonetheless, the pottery sherds found in the different strata are presented separately in order to demonstrate the similarities and differences between the repertoires.

Late Hellenistic Period (Fig. 29:1–4)

The Hellenistic pottery was extremely limited in scope, consisting of about 50 rim sherds, almost all of bag-shaped storage jars, scattered around the site and only rarely from what seems to be a clear Stratum VI context. Most of these jars were made of a buff-colored sandy fabric, and had a short neck and a turned-out thickened rim with a short rounded or squared rim profile (Fig. 29:1, 2). Buff fabric jars with thickened rounded or squared rims from the Hellenistic period were also found at Shiqmona (Elgavish 1974: Fig. 10: No. 212; 1976:74, Fig. 6:19) and at Dor, from the later part of the Hellenistic period, where it was noted that Jerusalem Rouletted Type 1 jars were manufactured in the northern coastal region of Israel (Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.37:1, 2), probably in the vicinity of Dor. Bag-shaped storage jars with buff sandy fabric and similar rounded and squared rims are also characteristic of late Hellenistic strata in sites in the Lower Galilee, for example at Ḥorbat Lubieh and at Karm er-Ras, but these have not yet been published (Alexandre, in prep.; Alexandre, Paskal and Tzioni, in prep.).

The thickened rims of some of the Ḥorbat 'Ofrat buff-fabric jars taper slightly to form a point at the lip (Fig. 29:3); this tapered rim also appears on a few bag-shaped jars made of a reddish brown fabric (Fig. 29:4). Similar late Hellenistic jars exhibiting tapered rims also appear at Capernaum in both buff and pinkish brown fabrics (Loffreda 2008: Type

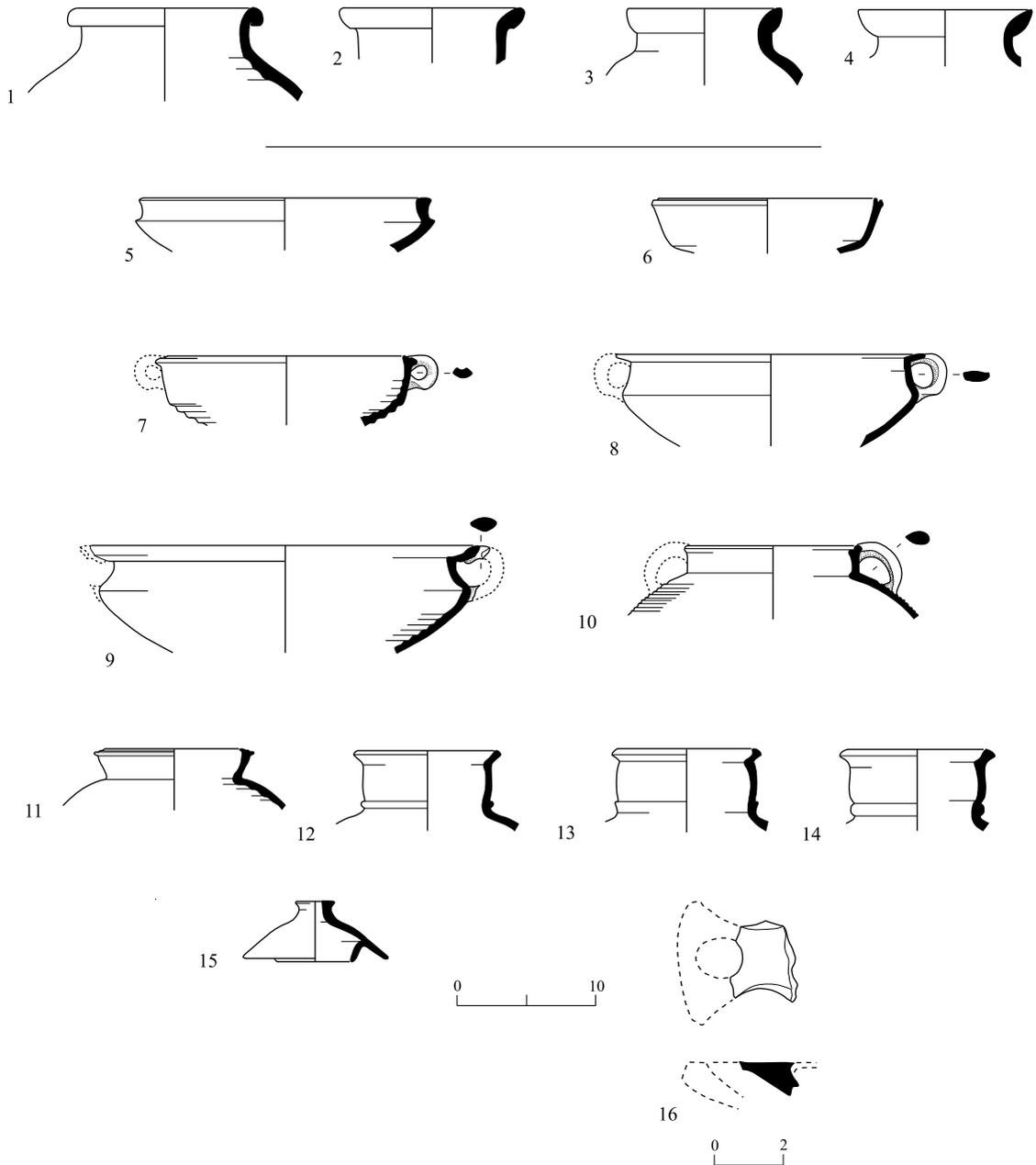


Fig. 29. Late Hellenistic (Stratum VI; 1–4) and Early Roman (Stratum V; 5–16) pottery.

ANF 3). Jars with a pinkish or reddish brown fabric and a lens-shaped rim profile were also common in late Hellenistic Yodefat, where they have a smaller body than the buff-fabric jars (Aviam 2005:112, Fig. 59:5–8). A single example of the reddish brown ware storage jars with the more tapered rims was found at Hellenistic Shiqmona, where the exceptional reddish brown fabric of this smaller jar is noted to be in contrast to the buff fabric of most of the jars (Elgavish 1974: Fig. 27:268).

◀ Fig. 29

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Stratum	Description
1	Storage jar	E	20	604	6036	Surface	Buff fabric
2	Storage jar	A	3	103	1007/14	Surface	Buff fabric
3	Storage jar	C	8	402	4007	Surface	Buff fabric
4	Storage jar	A	3	103	1007/3	Surface	Reddish brown fabric
5	Carinated bowl	A	1	135	1091/2	V	Buff, sandy fabric
6	Cooking bowl	A	1	135	1091/1	V	Red cooking-pot fabric
7	Cooking bowl	A	2	128	1083	V	Red cooking-pot fabric
8	Casserole/open cooking pot	A	2	137	1101/1	V	Red cooking-pot fabric
9	Casserole/open cooking pot	A	2	134	1094/2	V	Red cooking-pot fabric
10	Cooking pot	A	2	112	1034	V	Red cooking-pot fabric
11	Cooking pot	A	1	136	1092	V	Red cooking-pot fabric
12	Storage jar	A	1	136	1096	V	Red
13	Storage jar	A	2	134	1094/1	V	Brown with a gray core
14	Storage jar	A	2	133	1089	V	Reddish brown
15	Lid	A	1	136	1099/1	V	Red
16	Knife-paring lamp	A	11	125	1071	V	Orange-brown

Summary

A detailed classification and dating of Hellenistic pottery repertoires from the Lower Galilee has not yet been published. The dominant form of bag-shaped sandy buff storage jars from Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat appears in second century BCE late Hellenistic sites in the Lower Galilee, and are similar to the coastal storage jars found around Dor, continuing a long-lived storage jar tradition from the Persian to the Hellenistic period. The slightly smaller bag-shaped storage jars with a thick rim tapering to a point at the lip in a pinkish brown, soft fabric are characteristic of the inner Lower Galilee, where they were probably first produced in the later second century BCE. The date proposed for the limited Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat Hellenistic storage jar repertoire is the second half of the second century BCE into the beginning of the first century BCE.

Early Roman Period (Fig. 29:5–16)

The Early Roman pottery numbered approximately 160 rims: 70 were found in and around the Stratum V house in Area A (L128, L133–137); about 45 sherds, around the winepress installation in Area C (L402, L404–406); and another 45, mostly residual and surface rim sherds, in Areas D and E. The examples chosen for illustration are all from Area A.

The pottery consisted predominantly of cooking ware forms characteristic of Kefar Ḥananya (Adan-Bayewitz 1993, and see therein for further parallels) and of ridge-necked storage jars, the ubiquitous storage jar form of Early Roman Lower Galilee.

Carinated Bowl (Fig. 29:5).— A single unusual carinated bowl was made of a soft buff-colored fabric more similar in color and texture to the buff fabric of the late Hellenistic storage jars than to the fabric of the Roman pottery. In fact, this was the only Early Roman bowl that was not made of cooking-ware fabric.

Cooking Bowls (Fig. 29:6, 7).— All these bowls were characteristic Kefar Ḥananya forms manufactured from cooking-ware fabric. They were rounded cooking-ware bowls with either a single groove on the rim similar to Kefar Ḥananya Form 1A (Fig. 29:6) or with two grooves on the rim, similar to Form 1B (Fig. 29:7). Based on their appearance in other Galilean stratified sites, Kefar Ḥananya Form 1A bowls are attributed to the late first–late third centuries CE, and the Form 1B bowls—from the late first or early second to the mid-fourth century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:88–97).

Casseroles or Open Cooking Pots (Fig. 29:8, 9).— A few small sherds of Kefar Ḥananya Form 3A open cooking pots or casseroles (not illustrated) were found in the Stratum V house in Area A and around the winepress in Area C. Most of the open cooking pots, however, were of an intermediate shape, Form 3A/B (Fig. 29:8, 9), with a more rounded, lower carination than the sharper, higher carination of Form 3B. Form 3A ranges from the mid-first century BCE to the mid-second century CE, and Form 3B appears from the early second to the late fourth century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:111–124).

Closed Cooking Pots (Fig. 29:10, 11).— The regular closed cooking pots include Kefar Ḥananya Form 4A with an inner ridge on the rim (Fig. 29:10) and Form 4B with two grooves on the rim, the latter coming from the filled-in cistern (Fig. 29:11). Forms 4A and 4B overlapped in the late first and early second centuries CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:124–128), a similar range as that of the open cooking bowls at the site.

Storage Jars (Fig. 29:12–14).— Almost all storage jars were barrel-shaped with somewhat thin walls, a ridge around the base of the concave neck, and a step or channel on the inner lip of the rim. These Shihin-type jars, classified as Type 1.5 in Díez Fernández' corpus of common Roman pottery from the Galilee (Díez Fernández 1983:107–108, 137), were found at all Early Roman sites throughout the Lower and Central Upper Galilee, including Zippori (Balouka 2004:37–38, Pl. 2:3), Nazareth (Bagatti 1969:274, Fig. 217:3), Karm er-Ras (Loffreda 1975:48:9) and Capernaum (Loffreda 2008:123–124, Type ANF 10). These jars probably range from the second half of the first century CE to the first half of the second century CE.

There were a few small sherds (not illustrated) of the bag-shaped storage-jar type with an everted neck and simple rim, classified by Díez Fernández as Type T1.3 in the common Roman pottery from the Galilee (Díez Fernández 1983:107, 135, see therein for illustrated examples from several Lower Galilee sites, namely Zippori, Nazareth, Karm er-Ras, Magdala). The T1.3 jars have been found inside Early Roman period pottery kilns at Yodefat (Aviam 2005:66–68, 125, Fig. 74) and Karm er-Ras (Alexandre, in prep.), and it is probable that this type was manufactured at several sites. Jar Type T1.3 has an earlier chronological range in the Galilee than T1.5, dating from the mid-first century BCE and ceasing by the late first century CE.

Lid (Fig. 29:15).— An unusual, delicate lid was found in the filled-in cistern. It has a hole at the top and was probably made to fit a small jar or jug. The fabric indicates that it may have been manufactured at Kefar Ḥananya.

Lamp (Fig. 29:16).— A small sherd of a Herodian knife-pared nozzle lamp was found in Area A outside the Stratum V house on bedrock (L125) with later Byzantine sherds. Microscopic examination of the fabric indicated that it was manufactured in the Jerusalem area, as were the majority of knife-pared lamps (Adan-Bayewitz et al. 2008).

Summary

The limited pottery assemblage, consisting mainly of Kefar Ḥananya cooking-ware forms and ridged-neck Shiḥin-type storage jar forms, is characteristic of Early Roman repertoires in the Jewish Lower Galilee. The microscopic examination of the ware indicated that the cooking pots were probably produced in the major cooking-ware manufacturing center at Kefar Ḥananya, 25 km from Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat, or possibly in the vicinity of Shiḥin—which of these two options could not be ascertained. The presence of a few cooking pot Forms 3A and 4A and some sherds of storage jar Type T1.3 indicated that the house was probably occupied in the early first century CE, whilst the more common cooking pot Forms 3A/B, 3B and 4B and the storage jar of Type T1.5 date the end of the occupation to the late first or early second century CE.

Middle to Late Roman Period (Fig. 30)

A total of about 320 rims of pottery vessels from Middle to Late Roman periods (third to mid-fourth centuries CE) was collected at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat. The pottery came from Area A—both in the stone-chip waste pile in Sq 3 (L109; about 50 rims) and in the packed-earth surface (L121; about 55 rims) of the courtyard area overlying the Stratum V Early Roman house in Sq 1—and Area D, Sq 15, from accumulations on the floors of the Stratum IV house (L516, L527, L534, L536; about 185 rims), as well as sporadically around the site (about 30 rims). The illustrated pottery were chosen from the Area A stone pile (L109) and the Area D house. Most parallels are from Díez Fernández’ (1983), with additional parallels

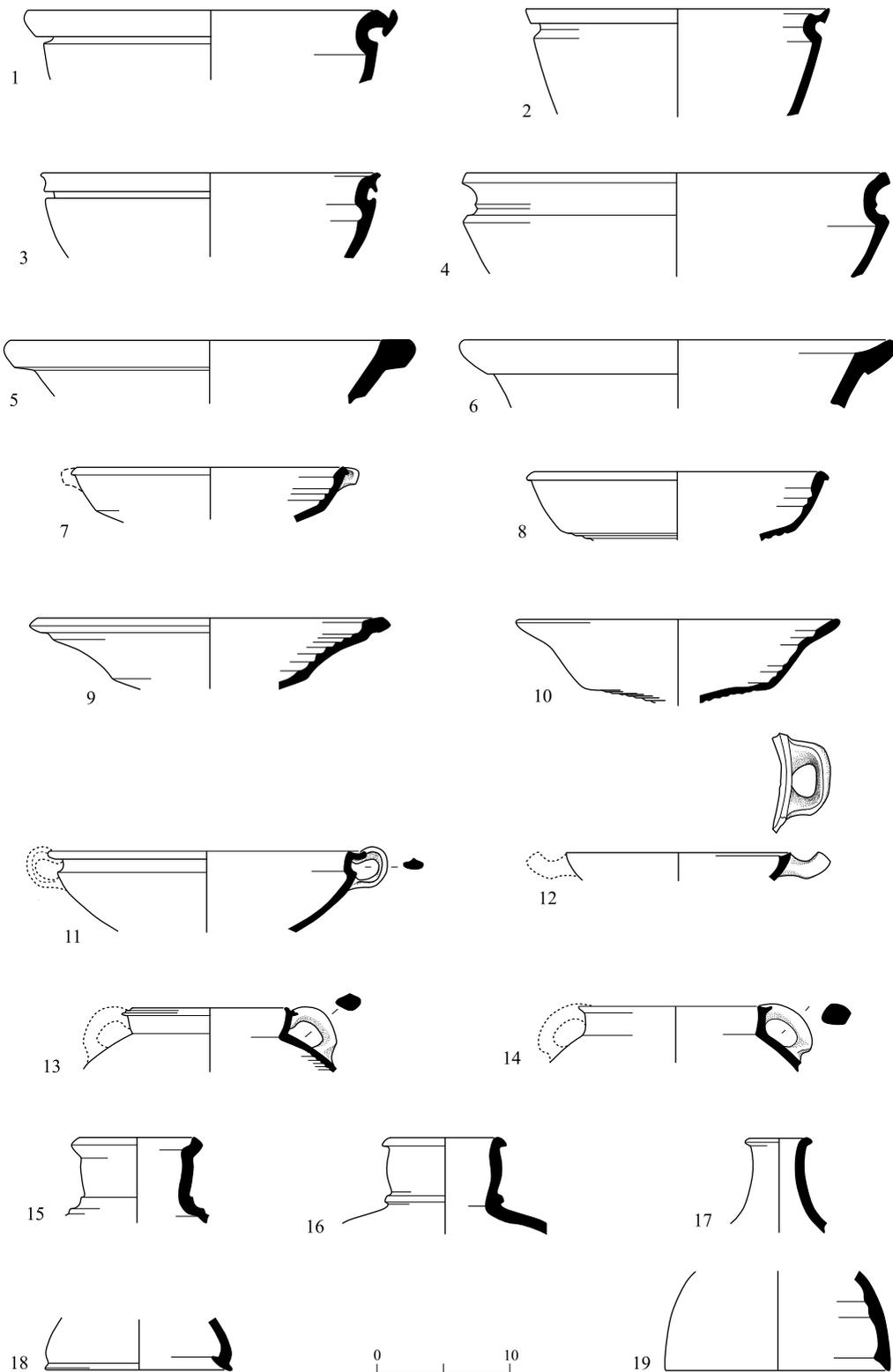


Fig. 30. Middle to Late Roman pottery (Stratum IV).

◀ Fig. 30

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Description
1	Krater	A	3	109	1086	Reddish brown fabric
2	Krater	D	15	536	5142/6	Reddish brown
3	Krater	D	15	516	5046	Reddish brown
4	Krater	D	15	516	5059/3	Brown with an orange-brown inner surface
5	Mortarium basin	A	3	109	1023	Buff fabric
6	Mortarium basin	D	15	536	5163/2	Buff fabric
7	Cooking bowl	A	3	109	1065	Red cooking-pot fabric
8	Cooking bowl	A	3	109	1016/2	Red cooking-pot fabric
9	Cooking bowl	D	15	516	5113/3	Red cooking-pot fabric
10	Cooking bowl	D	15	536	5142/2	Red cooking-pot fabric
11	Open cooking pot/ casserole	A	3	109	1080	Red cooking-pot fabric
12	Casserole/pan	D	15	536	5163/7	Brown-gray cooking-pot fabric
13	Cooking pot	A	3	109	1039	Red cooking-pot fabric
14	Cooking pot	D	15	536	5142/3	Red cooking-pot fabric
15	Storage jar	D	15	516	5059/2	Reddish brown fabric
16	Storage jar	A	3	109	1016/1	Reddish brown fabric
17	Bottle/jug	A	3	109	1012/1	Orange-brown fabric
18	Lid	D	15	516	5113/2	Pinkish brown fabric
19	Lid	D	15	536	5142/5	Orange-brown fabric

cited from the assemblages of Kefar H̄ananya (Adan-Bayewitz 1993) and Z̄ippori (Balouka 2004).

Kraters (Fig. 30:1–4).— There were several kraters with high body-carinations and everted axe-shaped rims (Fig. 30:1–3). These are the characteristic later versions of the basic Roman krater form, exhibiting thicker walls and a degenerate axe-shaped lip that sometimes almost joined the wall of the vessel at the carination. This deep-bowled krater form, which usually stood on three handle-shaped legs, is considered to be a production of the Shih̄in workshops (Adan-Bayewitz and Wieder 1992:196, Fig. 5). A later version of this krater (Díez Fernández 1983:132, 178, Type T21.4) was found at Z̄ippori, where it is attributed to the late third and fourth centuries CE (Balouka 2004:43, Pl. 4:10–12).

A single example of a krater of a different form was made of a different light brown ware (Fig. 30:4). No parallels were found for this krater; it was probably manufactured at a different pottery production and not at the Shih̄in center.

Mortarium Basins (Fig. 30:5, 6).— There were several mortarium-shaped basins with out-turned straight or sloping rims made of a hard buff fabric which contained many tiny

pink and gray grits. These basins were imported, and based on a visual examination of the fabric, they may have been produced in Cyprus or along the southern coast of Turkey. A similar provenance is proposed for the Middle to Late Roman imported clay coffins found in western upper Galilee and in Cyprus (Shapiro 1997). A couple of mortarium basins of a similar buff fabric were found in Stratum III (not illustrated) and the Stratum II destruction layer (Fig. 33:10), suggesting these vessels have a long lifespan; a similar basin was also found in previous excavations at Ḥorbat 'Ofrat (Peleg 1990: Fig. 5:8).

Cooking Bowls (Fig. 30:7–10).— The bowls were almost entirely Kefar Ḥananya cooking wares. They included some Form 1C bowls found in L109 (Fig. 30:7, 8) and many Form 1E bowls (Fig. 30:9, 10), of which several were found on the floor of the Area D room (L534/536). Form 1C dates from the mid-third to late fourth century CE, and Form 1E has a long chronological range from the mid-third to the early fifth century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:98–109).

Casseroles and Cooking Pots (Fig. 30:11–14).— Many open cooking pots or casseroles were of Kefar Ḥananya Form 3B (Fig. 30:11), which has a chronological range from the early second to the late fourth century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:119–124).

A single example of a completely different, somewhat small open casserole—or pan—with an angular, inward sloping rim and two horizontal handles, was found in Room 536 in Area D (Fig. 30:12). This vessel type occurs at Jalame (Johnson 1988:200–201, Figs. 7–43:634) and in the 363 CE destruction level at Zippori (Balouka 2004:40–42, Pl. 3:9). However, this casserole form appeared much earlier in Judea—for example, in the first century CE at 'Aro'er (Hershkovitz 1992:310–311, Fig. 4:13), in the second century CE along the coast at Shiqmona (Elgavish 1977: Pl. 4:21) and at Ḥorbat 'Aqav (Calderon 2000:95–97, Pl. 3:3). Therefore, it would seem that this casserole form was originally an Early Roman southern type that sporadically appeared in the Galilee during the Middle Roman period. The later forms of this type became an integral part of northern pottery repertoires during the Late Roman and Byzantine periods. In effect, this 'southern' casserole form is probably the only example of a cooking vessel in Stratum IV that was not a product of the Kefar Ḥananya workshop, and according to the visual examination of the fabric, it is possible that it was locally manufactured.

A few of the closed cooking pots found in L109 were Kefar Ḥananya Form 4B (Fig. 30:13), however, the more common type was Form 4C (Fig. 30:14), which is similar but with less distinct grooves on the rim. Form 4B cooking pots have a chronological range from the late first to mid-second century CE; Form 4C—from the early second to mid-fourth century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:126–130).

Storage Jars (Fig. 30:15, 16).— The relatively few storage jars were of the barrel-shaped type with a protruding ridge at the base of the slightly concave neck, and sometimes, an internal step on the rim (Fig. 30:15, 16). Despite their similarity to the earlier jars in concept

(Fig. 29:12–14), these jars were clearly distinguished as later, as the vessel walls were significantly thicker, and the necks and rims were less finely profiled (Díez Fernández 1983:109, 139–140, Type T1.7 or T1.8). These jars were manufactured in the Galilee, and one of the illustrated jars seems to have been manufactured from clay in the vicinity of Kefar Hananya (Fig. 30:15).

Bottle/Jug (Fig. 30:17).— A single semi-thick neck and rounded rim was either a handleless bottle or a single-handled jug.

Lids (Fig. 30:18, 19).— Lids such as those from L109 in Area A were probably for covering storage jars. This type (Díez Fernández 1983:176: Nos. 535–543, Type T19) was widespread in the third to fourth centuries CE at Middle to Late Roman sites in the Galilee, including Zippori, Jalame and Bet She‘arim (Balouka 2004:43–44, Pl. 4:7).

Summary

The pottery from the Area A stone pile (L109) seems to date slightly earlier than the pottery found in the Area D house, as the pottery from Area A finds parallels to some vessel forms dating to the late second and third century CE, whereas the pottery from the Area D house dates from the third into the mid-fourth century CE. The vessels from the Area D house are similar to some of the forms that appear in the Zippori 363 CE destruction layer, and this, combined with the absence of certain later forms found at Zippori—such as ‘Byzantine cooking pots’ (Balouka 2004:40, Fig. 3:2–6), characteristic storage jars with ‘diamond-shaped rims’ (Balouka 2004: Fig. 4:1–4), and most noticeably, imported Late Roman Red Wares (Balouka 2004: Fig. 4:15–20)—supports dating the end of Stratum IV at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat to earlier than the mid-fourth century CE.

Early Byzantine Period (Figs. 31, 32)

Considerable quantities of early Byzantine pottery were found, with about 400 rims in the Area A Stratum III building, adjacent courtyard and open spaces, and about 120 rims in the Area E Stratum III house. The assemblages consisted of imported Late Roman Red Ware bowls, heavy basins, cooking bowls and pots, storage jars, amphorae, jugs and lamps. The pottery illustrated here came mostly from the Area A Stratum III house floors and adjacent courtyards (L108, L110, L111, L114, L125) and from the Area E Stratum III houses and pathway (L614, L615, L620 in Sqs 17 and 18; L616, L622 in Sq 20). The parallels presented are mainly from Hayes’ typological classification of the Late Roman Red Wares (Hayes 1972) and excavations at Jalame (Johnson 1988), Zippori (Balouka 2004), Ḥorbat ‘Uza (Avshalom-Gorni 2009) and Capernaum (Loffreda 2008). Additional parallels for the various types can be found in all the above publications.

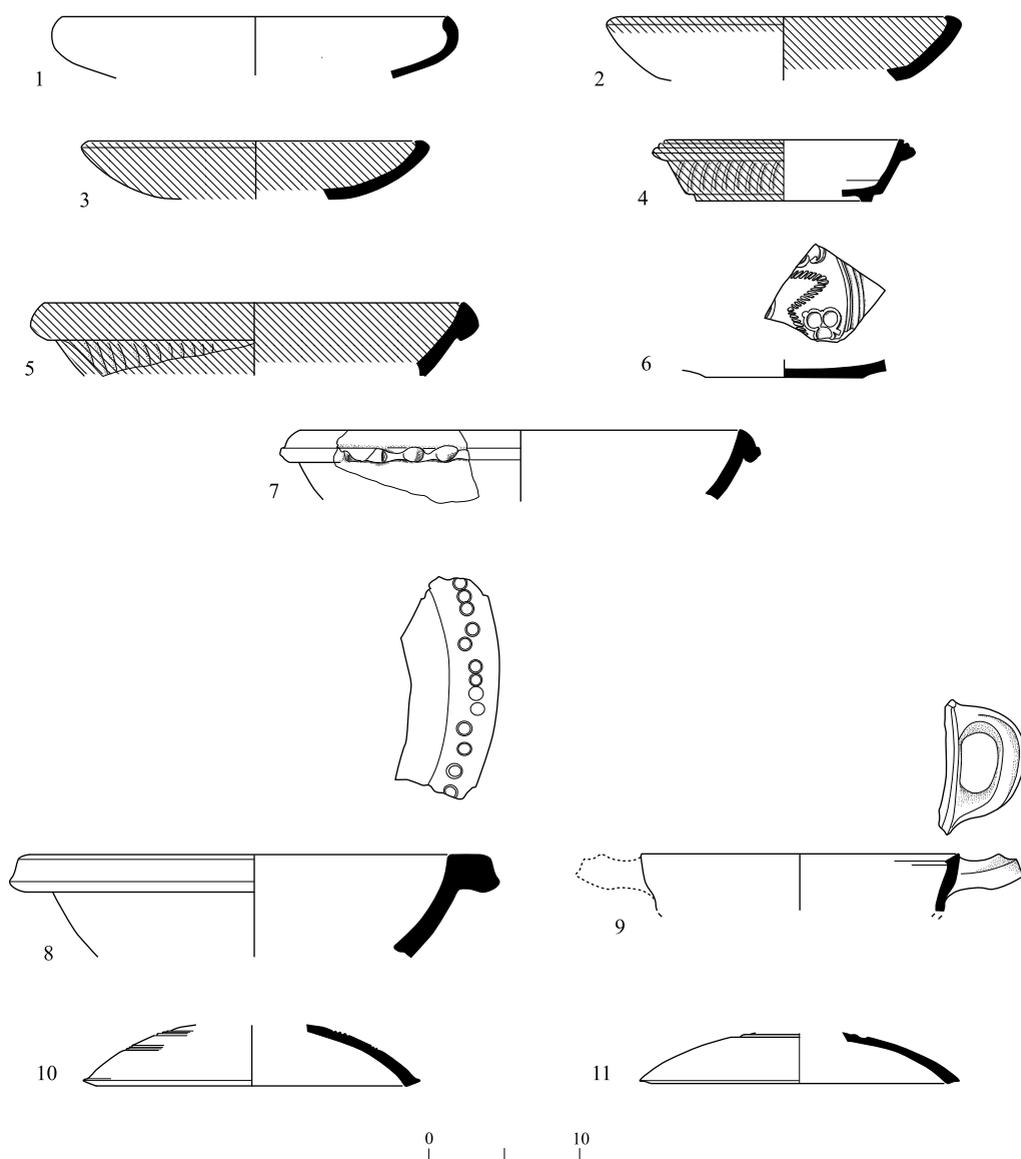


Fig. 31. Early Byzantine bowls, a mortarium basin and cooking vessels (Stratum III).

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Description
1	Bowl	E	18	615	6039	Reddish, fairly well-levigated fabric
2	Bowl	A	1	111	1037	Red slip, pinkish brown fine fabric
3	Bowl	A	1	111	1047/2	Red slip, orange fine fabric
4	Bowl	A	2	114	1038	Red slip, orange fine fabric
5	Bowl	A	1	111	1047/1	Red slip, orange fine fabric
6	Bowl	A	1	107	1021	Red slip, orange fine fabric, stamped decoration
7	Large bowl or basin	A	4	110	1027/2	Light brown coarse fabric, handmade
8	Mortarium basin	A	1	111	1033/1	Light brown heavy fabric with large black grits
9	Open cooking vessel	A	4	110	1017/2	Brown cooking-pot fabric
10	Cooking bowl lid	E	17	614	6045	Brown cooking-pot fabric
11	Cooking bowl lid	A	4	110	1027/1	Brown cooking-pot fabric

Late Roman Red Ware Bowls (Fig. 31:1–6).— All tableware bowls were imported Late Roman Red Ware bowls, with about 60 rims from the Area A building and about 24 rims in the Area E building. A single bowl with a curved-in rim (Fig. 31:1) was probably a Phocaean Red Slip bowl (PRS, also designated by Hayes as “Late Roman C”) of Form 1 Type A, which Hayes dates to the end of the fourth century CE (Hayes 1972:325–326, Fig. 65).

Almost all the other bowls in Areas A and E were Cypriot Red Slip bowls (CRS, also designated “Late Roman D”), of three main forms: CRS Form 1 is a bowl with simple sloping walls (Fig. 31:2, 3; Hayes 1972:372–374, Fig. 80: Form 1:1, 2, 4); Form 2 is usually a medium-sized bowl, but is sometimes smaller with steep rouletted walls (Fig. 31:4; Hayes 1972:373–376, Fig. 80: Form 2:1, 2), and Form 9 Type A is a larger bowl with lightly applied rouletting on the walls and a thick projecting rim (Fig. 31:5; Hayes 1972:379–382, Fig. 82: Form 9:11).

According to Hayes (1972), Form 1 ranges from the late fourth to the late fifth century CE, Form 2, from the late fifth to early sixth century CE, and Form 9, to the sixth century CE. However, these three forms were the most popular types at Jalame, where they were all found in late fourth to early fifth-century CE contexts (Johnson 1988:154–163). Examples from Capernaum and other sites indicate that these bowls continue to appear in the Galilee in the fifth and into the sixth centuries CE (Loffreda 2008:98–100).

A single base fragment with a stamped floral decoration may be an African Red Slip bowl (Fig. 31:6); its small size and the absence of a full profile preclude establishing a date range or parallels.

Large Bowl/Basin and Mortarium Basin (Fig. 31:7, 8).— Completely different from the fine red slip tableware bowls were many medium and large bowls and basins that were probably used for processing agricultural products and preparing foodstuffs. These included several roughly handmade local coarse bowls or basins with thumb-indented decoration on the rim (Fig. 31:7). Parallels of handmade basins of coarse fabric containing straw with various rim forms and tool or thumb indentations on the rim were found at late fourth century Jalame (Johnson 1988:184–187, Fig. 7-32:508, 509) and Ḥorbat ‘Uza Strata 8 and 7 from the mid-fourth to mid-fifth century CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009: Fig. 2.28:1, 3, Type RB.Kr.7).

A couple of large local handmade basins with flat bases and straight sides (not illustrated) are similar to basins in Stratum II (Fig. 33:11, 12).

Several heavy-duty mortarium basins made of light brown clay containing many black glass inclusions were characterized by a wide rectangular rim with a jutting profile that is rounded off on the outer edge. The flat top of some of the rims was decorated with unequally spaced reed impressions (Fig. 31:8). An unillustrated example with a slightly wider, downturned rim and similar reed impressions was found in L622 of Area E. These basins belong to a specific type called North Syrian Mortaria, and were produced at Ras el-Basit along the coast of Syria in the late third and fourth centuries CE (Hayes 1967). Although such basins are often stamped in Greek with the potter’s name, at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat there were no stamped sherds. A large concentration of North Syrian Mortaria was found at Caesarea

(Riley 1975:37–41, Fig. 2.65–2.67). Similar vessels were also found at Jalame, where they were dated to the late fourth century CE (Johnson 1988:180–181, Fig. 7-29:475: Variant 2), and one basin was found at Ḥorbat 'Aqav, where a chronological range into the sixth century CE was proposed for this type (Calderon 2000:148–150, Pl. 25:78).

Cooking Bowls (not illustrated).— There were only a few open cooking ware bowls of the Kefar Ḥananya Form IE in Stratum III (for form, see Fig. 30:9, 10)—a form that was still being produced at Kefar Ḥananya in the early fifth century CE (Adan Bayewitz 1993:103–109). The cooking ware market was now dominated by cooking wares of different fabrics, which points to manufacturing taking place at other sites.

Open Cooking Vessel and Lids (Fig. 31:9–11).— The many cooking vessels were all Byzantine forms, manufactured of a characteristic Byzantine 'brittle' fabric. These included open cooking vessels, sometimes designated as frying pans or casseroles with slightly carinated walls, twisted horizontal handles (Fig. 31:9) and compatible lids (Fig. 31:10, 11). Similar open cooking vessels were found at many Galilean sites: Jalame, where they were dated to the late fourth and fifth centuries CE (Johnson 1988:200–203, Fig. 7-43:630–634); Zippori, where they first appeared in the 363 CE destruction layer and continued in the Byzantine layers (Balouka 2004:40–42, Pl. 3:9); Capernaum, in the fourth to early fifth centuries CE (Loffreda 1974: Fig. 11:1–10; 2008:197, Type TEG 19); and in Ḥorbat 'Uza Stratum 8, and to a lesser extent in Stratum 7, where they are considered to have been manufactured from the second half of the fourth to the first half of the fifth centuries CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:37–39, Fig. 2.31:1–3, Type RB.CB1).

Cooking Pots (Fig. 32:1–4).— The predominant cooking pots were globular with high inward-sloping or straight necks, a groove on the rim lip and two large vertical loop handles (Fig. 32:1, 2). This type was common in the Galilee, appearing in the late fourth century CE, including Jalame, between 351–383 CE (Johnson 1988:188–189, Fig. 7-34:526–530), Zippori, within and after the 363 CE destruction layer (Balouka 2004:40, Pl. 3:2), Capernaum, in the late fourth century CE (Loffreda 2008:190, Type PENT 14.2) and Ḥorbat 'Uza Stratum 8, where this form was manufactured in the second half of the fourth century CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:41–42, Fig. 2.33:5–8, Type RB.CP.3).

Adan-Bayewitz labeled these cooking pots as Competing Form C4B based on being similar in form to the latest Kefar Ḥananya cooking pot (Form 4E), but of a different fabric (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:162–164). He dated Form 4E from the late fourth to the late sixth century CE. However, these cooking pot forms are noticeably distinct from the Kefar Ḥananya cooking pot repertoires, and it is equally possible that they were originally produced as brittle ware, and copied in the Kefar Ḥananya potteries toward the end of their production phase. The petrographic examination of the brittle ware revealed that they contained limonitic oolites, possibly pointing to a source of clay from Lebanon or Syria (Anastasia Shapiro, pers. comm.).

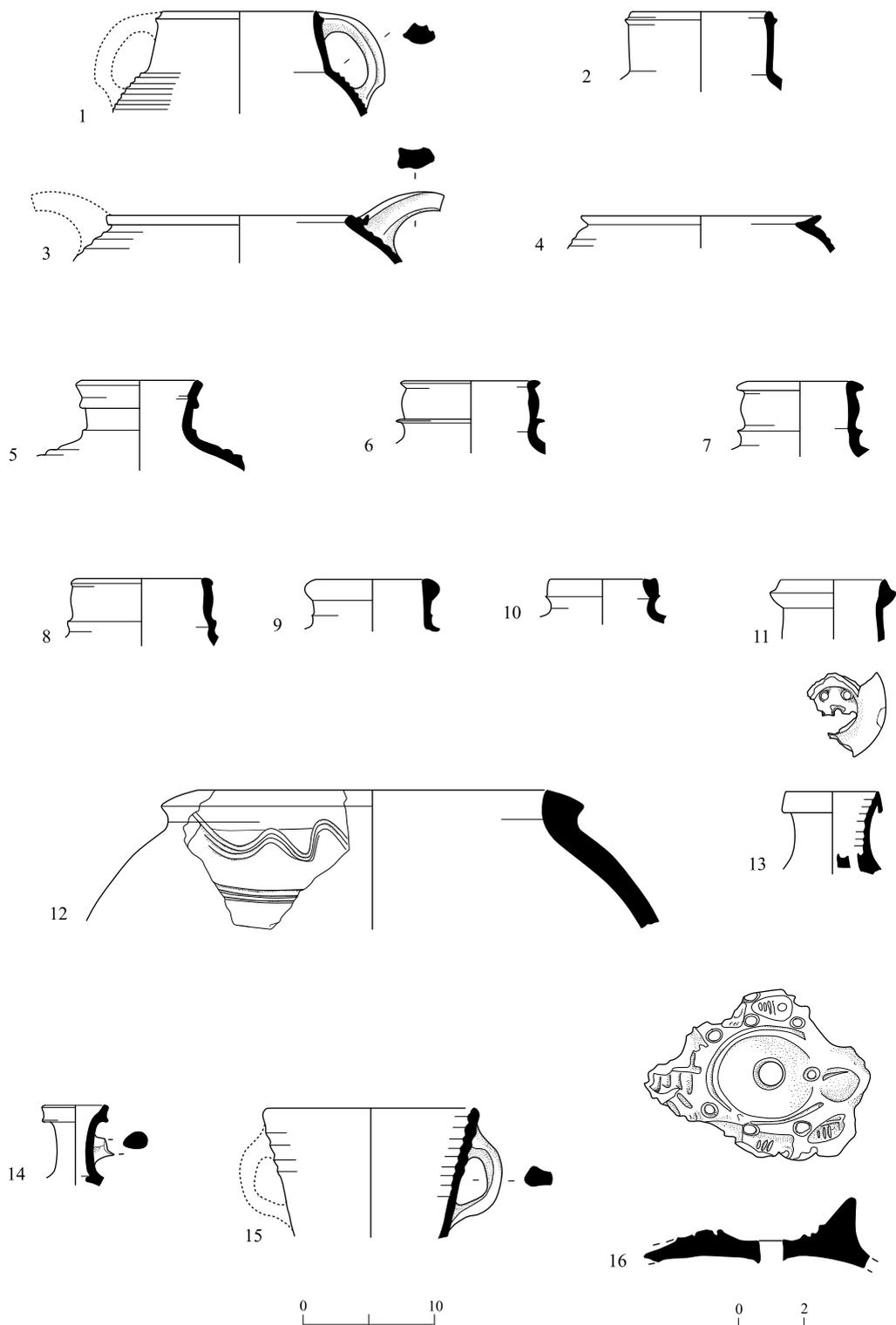


Fig. 32. Early Byzantine cooking vessels, storage jars, amphora, jugs and lamps (Stratum III).

◀ Fig. 32

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Description
1	Cooking pot	E	20	622	6078/4	Brown cooking-pot fabric
2	Cooking pot	E	17	620	6083	Brown cooking-pot fabric; cooking pot containing coins
3	Cooking pot	E	17	614	6038/20	Reddish brown cooking fabric
4	Cooking pot	A	1	111	1042	Brown cooking-pot fabric
5	Storage jar	E	20	616	6056	Orange-brown fabric
6	Storage jar	A	1	111	1033/2	Black surface, gray core
7	Storage jar	A	4	110	1017	Reddish brown fabric
8	Storage jar	E	20	622	6078/1	Black surface, brown core
9	Storage jar	A	4	110	1024	Reddish fabric
10	Storage jar	E	20	616	6142	Reddish brown fabric
11	Amphora	E	20	622	6078/3	Light brown, sandy fabric
12	Large handmade jar	A	2	108	1015	Partial orange slip, light orange-brown fabric, handmade
13	Jug with strainer	E	20	622	6078/2	Black surface, brown inner surface, red fabric
14	Jug	A	1	111	1042	Black surface, red fabric
15	‘Sabbath lamp’	A	11	125	1071	Light brown fabric
16	Lamp	E	20	616	6042	Light brown fabric

Less common in Stratum III were neckless, globular cooking pots with vertical loop handles and a thickened everted rim that either had two grooves (Fig. 32:3) or was flattened and slightly concave (Fig. 32:4). These cooking pots appear at several other sites from the late fourth century CE and later, including Jalame, which had both rim variants (Johnson 1988:194–195, Fig. 7-39:575–590, Cooking Pot Form 10: Variants 1 and 2), Zippori, in the 363 CE destruction layer and later (Balouka 2004:40–41, Pl. 3:3–6), at Capernaum (Loffreda 2008:191–192, PENT 16 and 17) and in Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 8 (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:44–45, Fig. 2.34:6–10, RB.CP.8a and 8b).

Storage Jars (Fig. 32:5–10).— Appearing in small quantities was a late variant of the Galilean barrel-shaped storage jar made of the orange-brown fabric characteristic of Roman period wares (Fig. 32:5). This storage jar was characterized by a folded-out rim that was slightly concave on the outer surface (Díez Fernández 1983:109–110, 142, Type 1.10). Similar jars were found in the Zippori destruction level attributed to 363 CE (Balouka 2004:42, 44, Pl. 4:1), late fourth century CE Jalame (Johnson 1988:213–215, Fig. 7–51:773–777), Capernaum (Loffreda 2008:127, Type ANF 14) and Ḥorbat ‘Uza (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:53–55, Fig. 2.37:9, 11).

The bulk of the Stratum III storage jars was no longer of the softer Roman Galilean fabric produced at Shihin and other Galilean sites, but instead, the vessels were manufactured of

the characteristically rougher and more brittle Byzantine fabric. The jars had a rounded rim profile, and were ribbed and barrel-shaped with a ridge at the juncture of the shoulder and the straight or slightly concave neck (Fig. 32:6–8). They were made of a grayish black or reddish brown, hard, fairly brittle fabric, with variation in the surface and core colors as a result of technical differences in the firing process. Commonly decorated with white-painted lines, these jars are often called ‘Beisan’ storage jars since they were also the standard jar at Bet She’an and the Jezreel and Jordan Valleys (Landgraf 1980:67–80, noting many parallels). Their wide distribution throughout the country and beyond during the Byzantine period (fifth into the eighth centuries CE) suggests that they were also manufactured at multiple sites. Nonetheless, there was a great deal of uniformity in storage-jar forms produced in Byzantine Galilee and the northern valleys.

There was a single example of a jar with a shorter neck and a round out-turned thickened rim of a well-levigated red fabric (Fig. 32:9).

Another single rim sherd found in the Stratum III house was of a jar form more common in Stratum II at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat (Fig. 32:10). This jar had a short, narrow neck and a well-fashioned, flat, thickened rim with an inverted square section, and was made of a reddish brown fabric characteristic of the northern Israel coast. This jar type was also manufactured at Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 7 in the fifth century CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:55–57, Fig. 2.38:7, Type RB.SJ.2b; earlier dated parallels quoted there are not from well-stratified deposits). This jar form was not found in the Zippori 363 destruction level, nor at late fourth century CE Jalame, but does appear in the middle to late Byzantine levels at Capernaum (Loffreda 2008:138, Type ANF 37). It is possible that this single rim sherd came from a later context.

Amphorae (Fig. 32:11).— A few amphorae were found in Stratum III (here the term amphora is for large jars primarily used as shipping containers). One jar rim was made of light brown clay, and had a thickened, gently curving, triangular rim profile thinning toward the lip. This sherd bore a similarity to amphorae from Ḥorbat ‘Uza found mostly in Stratum 8, which was dated to the second half of the fourth century CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:49–50, Fig. 2.36:13, Amphora Type RB.Am 3), and Jalame, where the fabric of the amphora type was considered to be locally manufactured rather than imported (Johnson 1988:209, Fig. 7-49:721–724, Amphora Form 1).

Large Jar (Fig. 32:12).— A very large handmade jar with a wide opening and a thick, flattened rim was found on Floor 108 of the house in Area A. This jar was made of a light orange-brown ware and a somewhat soft fabric similar to some of the large handmade basins from Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat. It was decorated with an unevenly applied, partial orange slip and irregularly spaced incised parallel lines which were both wavy and straight. A large body sherd from a similar jar (not illustrated) was found in a Stratum III locus (L626) in Area E, and a few others came from the Stratum II destruction layer (L528). Like the handmade basins, the jars may have been produced locally.

Jugs (Fig. 32:13, 14).—A jug made of fairly brittle red clay that had been fired black featured a sharp triangular rim, a tall neck and a strainer perforated with five or possibly six holes at the base of the neck (Fig. 32:13). An almost identical jug from Jalame, which had a loop handle preserved from the rim and a strainer with three holes larger than the holes from the Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat example, was dated to post-383 CE (Johnson 1988:204–205, Fig. 7-45: No. 670). Another jug, also of red clay fired black, had thick walls, an out-flared axe-shaped lip and a handle from mid-neck (Fig. 32:14). A similar jug was found in the 363 CE destruction layer at Zippori, where it was classified as a cooking-jug form between Adan-Bayewitz’s Forms 6B and 6C, and was considered to represent the transitional vessels between the Roman and Byzantine repertoires (Balouka 2004:42). The Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat example is also similar to one of the illustrated examples of Adan-Bayewitz’s Kefar Ḥananya Form 6C jugs, which was dated from the early fourth to the early fifth century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:144–146, Pl. 6C:1). The microscopic examination of the ware of the Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat example indicated that it was probably produced at Kefar Ḥananya.

‘Sabbath Lamp’ (Fig. 32:15).—A single cup-like vessel with fairly thin, sloping walls and a vertical, slightly twisted loop handle, was made of a light brown clay. Similar vessels with three handles were found in Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 8, where they were most likely manufactured (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:65–66, Fig. 2.42:5–11). The three handles would enable the vessel to be suspended from the ceiling, similar to glass hanging lamps. An inscription engraved on a parallel three-handled bowl from Ḥorbat ‘Uza disclosed that at least some of these vessels were used as Sabbath lamps (Avshalom-Gorni 2009: Fig. 2.42:11). No other parallels are known, providing support that the Ḥorbat ‘Uza potteries supplied the pottery at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat.

Lamp (Fig. 32:16).—A fragment of a lamp with a small filling hole in a sunken disc and a triangular handle was decorated with leaf imprints and sporadic, reed-impressed circles. This lamp sherd bears decoration similar to the Byzantine Northern Stamped oil lamps first defined at Bet She‘arim and found at many sites in western Galilee. These lamps were probably manufactured along the Phoenician coast from the fourth to the seventh century CE (Sussman 1989:37, Type 6A; Aviam and Stern 1997:92–94, Fig. 3:6).

Summary

The many varied vessels found in and around the Stratum III buildings point to intensive activity at the site during the early Byzantine period. The repertoire, including many Late Roman Red Ware bowls predominantly of Cypriot origin, bears affinities to the repertoire at Jalame, located about 12 km to the southwest. It is possible that Shiqmona was one the ports used to import the Late Roman Red Ware (as suggested by Tsuf 2003: English summary, no page number), and Jalame, located at the westernmost opening from the coast into the Jezreel Valley, was on the trade route whence the wares were distributed inland.

The similarity of many Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat vessels to forms found in Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 8, located about 15 km away, suggests that Ḥorbat ‘Uza was a major pottery supplier for Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat in the late fourth century CE.

Furthermore, the recurrent parallels between the Stratum III assemblage at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat and the early Byzantine pottery repertoires of the 363 CE destruction layer at Zippori, the late fourth-century CE glass factory at Jalame and late fourth-century CE Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 8, points to a late fourth and possibly early fifth century date for Stratum III at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat.

Middle Byzantine Period (Figs. 33–35)

Considerable quantities of Byzantine pottery were uncovered in all excavated areas of the site, with a rough estimate of over 2000 rims attributed to Stratum II, including a large amount from surface loci, open areas and courtyards overlying the earlier remains, as well as from well-stratified loci in Areas D and B and a pit in Area B. The Stratum II pottery assemblages exhibited a variety of vessels including substantial quantities of imported Late Roman Red Ware bowls, large basins, cooking vessels, storage jars, a few jugs and a variety of imported amphorae.

The pottery illustrated here came predominantly from the destruction levels in the two Area D Stratum II buildings (over 155 rims from L514, L515, L538 in Sqs 14 and 15, and L528, L532, L543 in Sq 12) and some from the large amorphous accumulation in Area B (about 300 rims from L304 and L307). A few additional examples came from accumulations close to the surface, overlying the Area E Stratum III building and pathway (L601, L604 in Sqs 17, 20). Parallels for the Stratum II pottery are from Hayes’ typology (Hayes 1972) and sites such as Ḥorbat ‘Uza (Avshalom-Gorni 2009), Ḥorbat ‘Aqav (Calderon 2000), Jalame (Johnson 1988), Capernaum (Loffreda 2008) and Tel Kison (Tell Keisan; Landgraf 1980).

Late Roman Red Ware Bowls (Fig. 33:1–7).— As in Stratum III, tableware bowls were imported Late Roman Red Ware (Fig. 33:1–6). Cypriot Red Slip bowl Forms 1 and 2, which were already found in Stratum III, continued to appear in Stratum II (not illustrated here, see Fig. 31:2–4). Both forms have a chronological range covering the fifth century CE (Hayes 1972:372–376). A new and commonly found form appearing in the destruction layer in Area D (L514, L515, L528, as well as surface loci overlying the Stratum III house in Area E) was the Phocaeian Red Slip bowl, PRS Form 3, with a distinctive rim profile. Some bowls in Stratum II were PRS Form 3 Type C with a rouletted or latticed decoration on a thinner rim (Fig. 33:1), whilst most were Form 3 Type F with a slightly thicker rim (Fig. 33:2).

Hayes dated the PRS Form 3 bowls and their variations to the fifth and sixth centuries CE (Hayes 1972:329–334, Figs. 68, 69), and they are thought to have appeared in Israel during the fifth century CE (Tsuf 2003:80). However, similar PRS Form 3 Types C and E bowls were dated to the late fourth century CE at Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 8 (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:72–73) and at Jalame, as well as at other sites in Israel (Johnson 1988:149–152, Figs. 7–9, and see n. 19 therein for many parallels). The absence of Form 3 from the Zippori

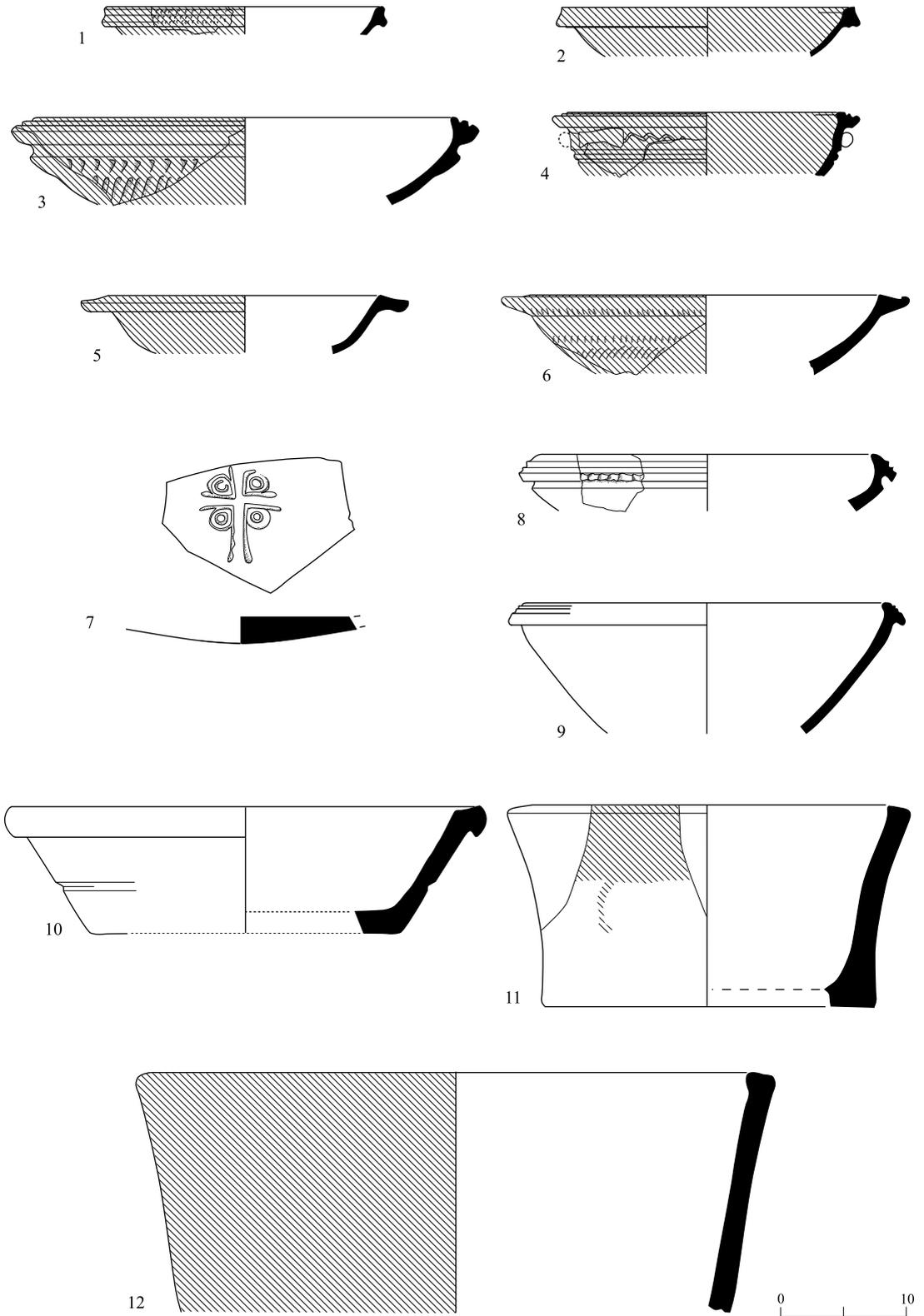


Fig. 33. Byzantine bowls and basins (Stratum II).

◀ Fig. 33

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Description
1	Imported bowl	D	14	515	5040	Red slip, red fine fabric
2	Imported bowl	D	12	528	5135/7	Red slip, red fine fabric
3	Imported bowl	B	7	307	3032/2	Red slip, red fine fabric
4	Imported bowl	E	17	601	6027/2	Red slip, brown fine fabric
5	Imported bowl	B	7	307	3032/1	Red slip, red fine fabric
6	Imported bowl	D	12	543	5162/4	Brown slip, brown fine fabric
7	Imported bowl with impressed cross	E	20	604	6018	Orange fine fabric
8	Large bowl	D	14	514	5120	Light brown, gray core
9	Large bowl	D	14	514	5083	Pink-brown fabric
10	Mortarium basin	D	12	528	5146/3	Buff fabric
11	Basin	D	12	528	5135/4	Orangey slip, light brown coarse clay with straw, handmade
12	Basin	D	12	528	5146/2	Orangey slip, light brown coarse clay with straw, handmade

363 destruction layer, however, suggests that it did not appear before the end of the fourth century CE.

Some bowls had thicker rouletted walls and heavily grooved rims, which protrude outward and are marked from the body of the vessel by a gutter and an angular offset (Fig. 33:3). One example had a wavy line below the rim and a horizontally attached vestigial handle (Fig. 33:4). These bowls were classified as Cypriot Red Slip Form 7, dating mostly to the late sixth century CE (Hayes 1972:377–379, Fig. 81, Form 7–1; 1980:529). At Jalame, some of these bowls also had short, incised, zigzag lines and horizontal vestigial coil handles below the rim, and were considered to be early versions of Form 7 (Johnson 1988:159–169, Figs. 7–14).

Far less common were the Late Roman Red Ware bowls with wide out-turned ledged rims. One bowl with a wide flat-ledged rim and a smoothed bulge on the underside of the ledge (Fig. 33:5) may have been African Red Slip Form 107, dated by Hayes to the early seventh century CE (Hayes 1972:170–171, Fig. 33:1, 2) but considered by Tsuf to appear in Israel earlier, during the sixth century CE (Tsuf 2003:132–133). Another bowl had a wide, flat ledge terminating in a slight upward hook (Fig. 33:6), and was classified by Hayes as Cypriot Red Slip Bowl Form 8, with a date range within the sixth century CE (Hayes 1972:378–379, Fig. 81).

A single sherd of a bowl base with an impressed motif of a cross with four circles, one at each intersection between the vertical and horizontal arms (Fig. 33:7), was found in a surface locus (L604) in Area E, together with other Byzantine pottery sherds. Similar crosses on PRS (Late Roman C) bowls are dated to around 500 CE (Hayes 1972:363–364, Fig. 78:m, n), and a cross with two circles appears on a PRS bowl base sherd from a late sixth to seventh century CE context at Ḥorbat ‘Aqav (Calderon 2000:112–113, Pl. 10:68).

Large Bowls (Fig. 33:8, 9).— The large local bowls included a variety of wheel-made bowls with circular grooves decorating the rim, and sometimes a tool-made notched decoration around the rim. The plain fabric of these bowls was characteristically coastal in origin. Parallels found at Capernaum were attributed to the middle and late Byzantine period (Loffreda 2008:237, 238, Types PIAT 40 and 41).

Basins (Fig. 33:10–12).— A few large mortarium basins made of buff fabric and with squared horizontal rims were found in Stratum II (Fig. 33:10). Similar imported mortarium basins appeared at Ḥorbat 'Ofrat as early as Strata IV and III (Fig. 30:5, 6).

There were many large, thick-walled basins with straight sides and flat bases, handmade of a soft local fabric with many straw inclusions and often finished with a partial red slip (Fig. 33:11, 12). Such handmade basins were also found in Stratum III (not illustrated). Several similar basins were found at Jalame during the late fourth century CE (Johnson 1988:183–185, Fig. 7-32:494–498) and at Capernaum throughout the Byzantine period (Loffreda 2008:249).

Open Cooking Bowls/Casseroles and Cooking Pots (Fig. 34:1–9).— The three basic cooking vessel forms of local manufacture in Stratum II were the same as those found in Stratum III: open cooking bowls or casseroles, high-necked cooking pots and neckless cooking pots. The Byzantine brittle ware of Stratum II included casseroles with a carination on the upper body, plain-cut rims or rims angled inward and horizontal handles (Fig. 34:1, 2). Many of the horizontal handles in the Stratum II cooking bowls were larger and heavier than the handles of the earlier Stratum III vessels, possibly reflecting large-scale cooking activities in Stratum II rather than a chronological distinction. The chronological developments of this long-lived vessel form, common from the fifth to the seventh century CE, are not clearly defined (Calderon 2000:140). Matching cooking bowl lids were also an integral part of the repertoire (not illustrated; see Fig. 31:10, 11).

The globular cooking pots, also manufactured from the characteristic Byzantine brittle ware, had upright or slightly sloping-in necks and a groove on the rim lip (Fig. 34:3–6). The necks of the Stratum II cooking pots seemed to be slightly shorter than the high necks of the Stratum III cooking pots. Both higher and shorter necks are illustrated by Adan-Bayewitz as belonging to Competing Form C4B (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:162–164).

The neckless globular cooking pots were also fairly similar to those in Stratum III, but the Stratum II examples are characterized by a thicker, squarish rim with two grooves (Fig. 34:7, 8). Only a few examples of this cooking pot appear at Ḥorbat 'Uza Strata 8 and 7, suggesting that it was probably not produced there (Avshalom Gorni 2009:44–45, Fig. 2.34:4–5, Type CP 7c).

A single example of a different thick-walled, heavily grooved, small globular cooking pot with a concave neck was also found in the Stratum II destruction layer (Fig. 34:9). Similar cooking pots with concave or angled rims were found at Ḥorbat 'Ovesh and were common at many sites in the Upper Western Galilee in the late Byzantine period (Aviam and Getzov 1998:68–69, Fig. 9:11).

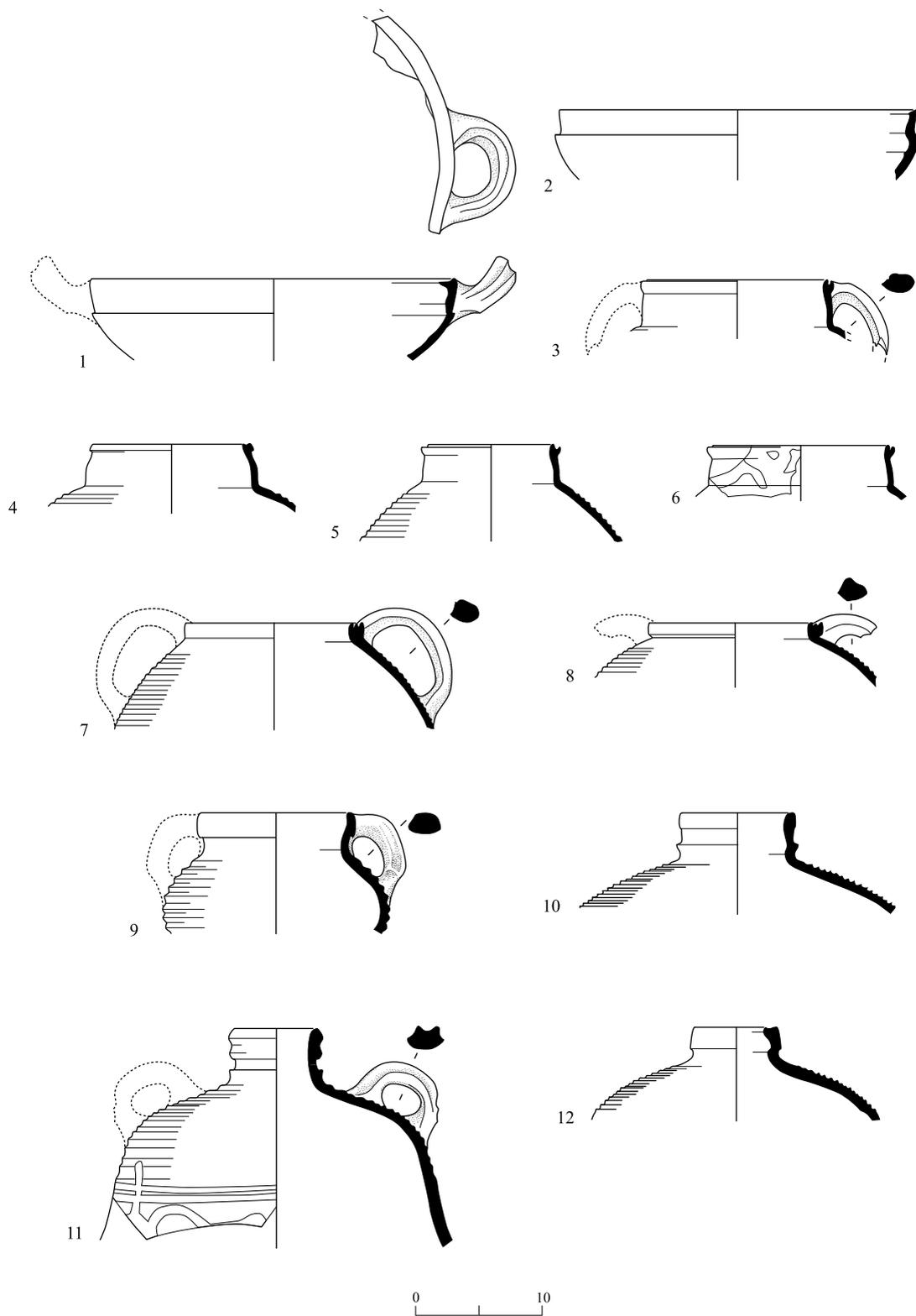


Fig. 34. Byzantine cooking vessels and storage jars (Stratum II, Area A, Sq 12).

◀ Fig. 34

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description
1	Open cooking bowl/casserole	528	5124/2	Brown cooking-pot fabric
2	Open cooking bowl/casserole	528	5110	Brown cooking-pot fabric
3	Cooking pot	528	5135/8	Brown cooking-pot fabric
4	Cooking pot	528	5135/2	Brown cooking-pot fabric
5	Cooking pot	528	5146/1	Brown cooking-pot fabric
6	Cooking pot	528	5135/1	Black surface, dark red cooking fabric
7	Cooking pot	528	5117	Brown cooking-pot fabric
8	Cooking pot	528	5135/3	Brown cooking-pot fabric
9	Cooking pot	538	5151/5	Black cooking-pot fabric
10	Storage jar	528	5135/10	Black surface, brown core
11	Storage jar	532	5168/1	Reddish brown fabric
12	Storage jar	528	5117/2	Reddish brown fabric

Storage Jars (Fig. 34:10–12).— As in Stratum III, the many storage jars were large, barrel-shaped and ribbed. Three restorable storage jars of different types and fabrics were found in the destruction layer in two adjacent rooms (L528 and L532). The grayish black jars were large, ribbed and barrel-shaped, with wide openings (diam. c. 8.5 cm), medium-sized necks with fairly simple rims that were folded out and over, a smoothed join forming a slight mid-neck ridge or band, and another ridge at the juncture between the shoulder and neck (Fig. 34:10). These jars were produced in a relatively thin, fairly brittle, light-weight fabric, and the vessel body was often decorated with white-painted lines.

The red or reddish brown jars were also bag-shaped ribbed jars with a ridge at the base of the neck, but with a smaller opening (diam. 5–6 cm) and an overturned rim which was smoothed to form a more profiled rim and upper neck ridge (Fig. 34:11). These jars had thicker walls, and were manufactured from a sandier, heavier, dark reddish brown fabric, and were also often decorated with white-painted lines. They were manufactured at Ḥorbat ‘Uza Strata 8 and 7 in the fifth century CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:53–54, Fig. 2.37:4, Type RB.SJ.1d).

A third jar type, found in smaller quantities in Stratum II, had a low neck, a very narrow opening (diam. c. 4 cm), and a well-fashioned, flat, thickened rim with an inverted square section (Fig. 34:12). These jars had somewhat thick walls and were made of the reddish brown colored fabric that characterized the reddish brown jars described above. This vessel type is common at Ḥorbat ‘Uza Stratum 7, and was probably part of the potters’ repertoire in the fifth century CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:55, 57, Fig. 2.38:7, Type RB.SJ.2b; earlier dated parallels quoted there are not from well-stratified deposits).

Amphorae (Fig. 35:1–8).— Stratum II was characterized by a variety of imported and local amphorae. A single, unusually complete, large table amphora was found *in situ* in the destruction layer in Area D (L528; Fig. 35:1). It had a large globular body with slight mid-

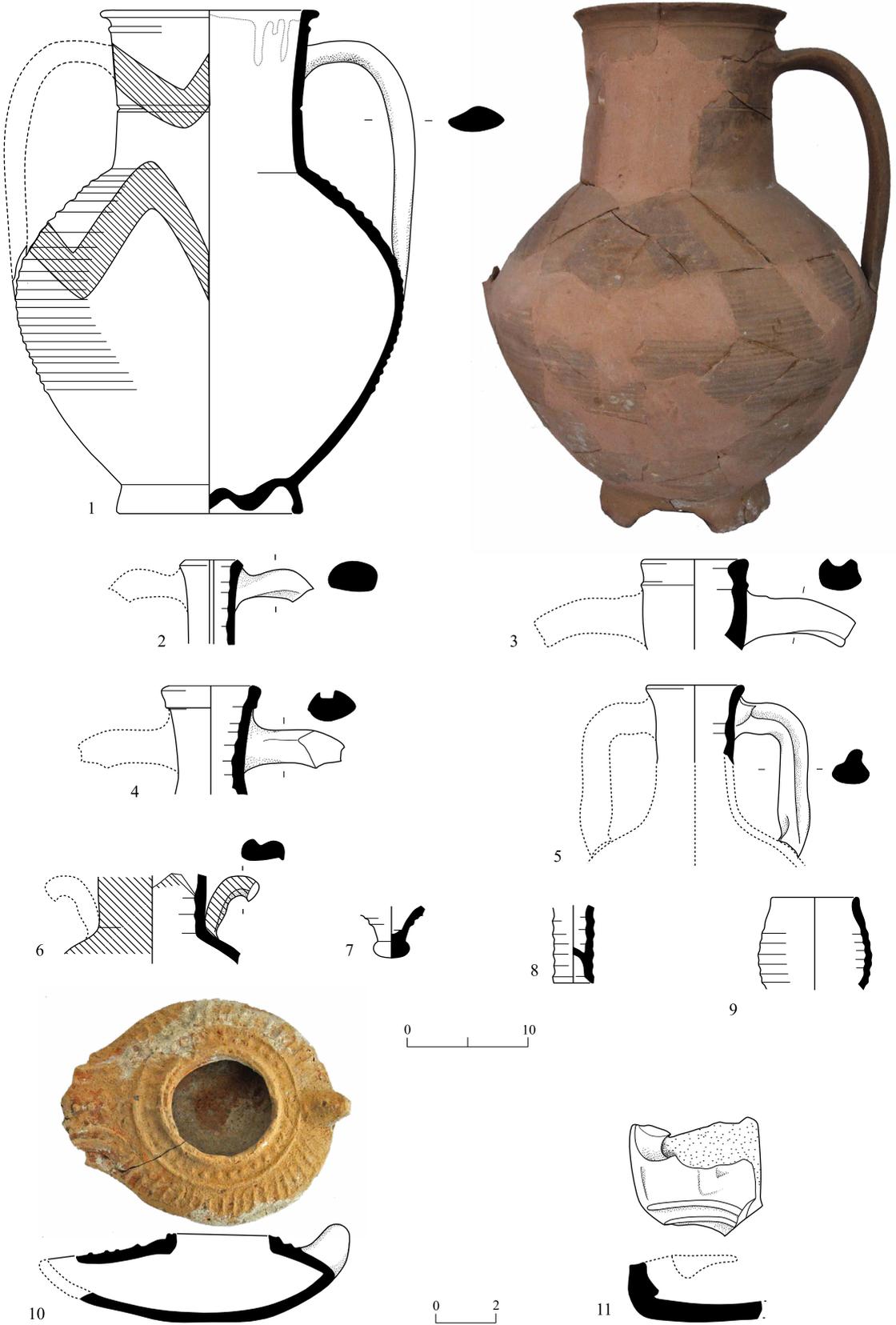


Fig. 35. Byzantine amphorae and lamps (Stratum II).

◀ Fig. 35

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Description
1	Table amphora	D	12	528	5124/1	Orange-brown fine fabric with mica
2	Amphora	B	7	307	3040	Buff sandy fabric
3	Amphora	E	17	601	6032	Pinkish buff sandy fabric
4	Amphora	A	1	111	1025	Buff sandy fabric
5	Amphora	D	12	528	5146	Buff sandy fabric
6	Amphora	D	12	532	5150	Red slip, very fine red fabric
7	Amphora base	E	17	601	6027	Yellowish buff sandy fabric
8	Amphora base	B	7	307	3038	Red fabric with mica
9	Jug neck	D	12	528	5135/6	Brown local ware
10	Oil lamp	D	12	528	5145	Red slip, light brown fabric
11	Oil lamp	B	7	307	3038A	Buff fabric

body carination, a carefully profiled ring base, a straight high neck with a simple outwardly ledged rim, and two large strap handles from below the rim to mid-body (Fig. 35:1). It was made of a finely levigated orange-brown fabric containing sand, and notably, a high percentage of tiny mica grits, which caused the vessel to glitter. The shoulders and neck of the jar were painted with black, broad wavy bands that are still faintly visible. No parallels were found.

Significant quantities (31 rim sherds) of narrow-necked amphorae of a distinct yellowish or pinkish buff sandy fabric were found around the site, several of which came from the Stratum II destruction layer. These amphorae had widely spaced ribbing on the bodies, tall and fairly narrow necks, and two thick, sometimes square-angled handles attached from below the rim to the shoulder (Fig. 35:2–5). Similar jars were found at many other sites, including Ḥorbat ‘Aqav (Calderon 2000:133–135, Figs. 26–29, Pl. 20) and Caesarea Stratum 5, dated to the fifth and sixth centuries CE (Bar-Nathan and Adato 1986:132, Fig. 1:1–4). These jars are known as Yassi Ada amphorae as they were found in large quantities in a 625–626 CE shipwreck off the coast of Yassi Ada in Turkey. They are a widespread type in Israel, Syria, Asia Minor and Turkey from the early fifth to the mid-seventh century CE, and may have been manufactured at Antioch (Peacock and Williams 1986:185–187, Fig. 105, Class 44).

A neck sherd with a double handle and a dark red sheen to its finish came from a very high quality table amphora made of a non-micaceous fabric (Fig. 35:6). It was probably a product of the Greek mainland, but its amphora form was not identified. An amphora button base from a surface locus above the Area E house was made of a sandy buff fabric, but once again, the amphora form was not identified (Fig. 35:7).

An open, hollow, tubular foot of a reddish brown highly micaceous fabric was the base of a very common late fourth to fifth century CE amphora (Fig. 35:8; Peacock and Williams 1986:188–190, Class 45). This amphora type was of east Mediterranean origin, probably from Asia Minor, and there are examples from Jalame and the agora at Athens (Johnson 1988:210–211, Fig. 7-50:730–731).

Jug (Fig. 35:9).— There was a single example of an unusually shaped vessel, which may have been a ribbed jug missing its handle. A possible, fairly similar parallel may be a jug from Ḥorbat ‘Aqav, where it was considered to be unique (Calderon 2000:145–147, Pl. XXIV:70).

Oil Lamps (Fig. 35:10, 11).— One lamp found in the destruction layer (L528) was a mold-made lamp of light brown clay with a pyramidal knob handle, a large filling hole and a shoulder decorated by a ring of dots and a ring of short lines (Fig. 35:10). The wide, rectangular, although broken nozzle had a small wick hole, and there were remains of red slip. This lamp has a close parallel from Bet She’an, where it is considered to be the latest version of local imitations of the Bet Naṭṭif lamp type (Hadad 2002:56–61, No. 270, Type 22). The other lamp fragment also had a wide rectangular nozzle with a small wick hole, and was made of a buff-colored clay (Fig. 35:11). The wide rectangular-nozzled lamps are also common at Capernaum, where they are dated from the mid-fifth to the mid-seventh century CE (Loffreda 1974:94, 187).

Summary

The Stratum II pottery assemblage, consisting of many imported bowls, a variety of imported amphorae, common kitchen wares, storage jars and large basins, reflects a substantial settlement. The considerable number of basins and mortaria may point to large-scale food processing, and the cooking pots and large casseroles may indicate cooking activities for a sizeable number of people. The many Yassi Ada amphorae distributed over the site points to interaction with a nearby trading route running inland from the coast. Finally, the large, fine table amphora in the destruction layer may be a sign of some prosperity or luxury.

The Stratum II pottery repertoire is very close to that of Stratum III, reflecting only a few developments. The similarity of some of the vessels in the two assemblages suggest a chronological proximity, Stratum III being dated to the end of the fourth and early fifth centuries CE, and Stratum II to the fifth and sixth centuries CE.

Late Byzantine–Early Islamic Periods (Fig. 36:1–8)

Late Byzantine pottery was uncovered in a thick ashy accumulation in Area D. The approximately 300 pottery rims from L501, L511, L513 and L519 include a variety of vessels fairly similar to the pottery in Stratum II, including Late Roman Red Ware bowls, basins, cooking vessels and some storage jars and jugs. The illustrated pottery mostly comes from L511 and L519. Some of the forms continued to be used into the middle or the end of the sixth century CE, and therefore, possibly belong to the Early Islamic period.

Bowls (Fig. 36:1–3).— Two variations of Cypriot red-slip bowls are represented in Stratum I: a number of CRS Form 10 bowls (Fig. 36:1) and a single example of a wide-ledged CRS Form 7 bowl rim made of fine red clay covered with a smooth slip and decorated

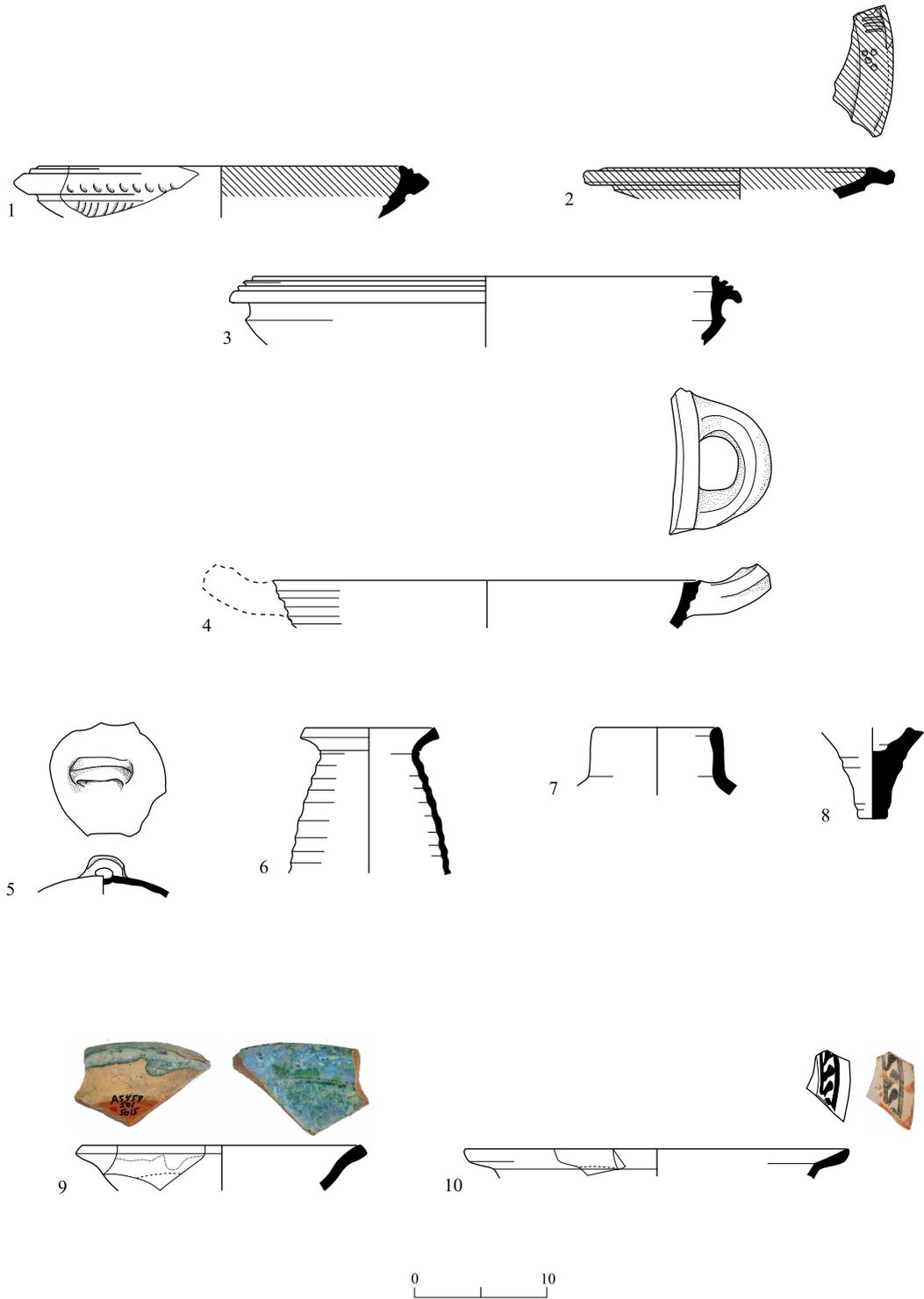


Fig. 36. Late Byzantine to Early Islamic (1–8) and Fatimid (9, 10) pottery (Stratum I; Area D).

◀ Fig. 36

No.	Vessel	Square	Locus	Basket	Stratum	Description
1	Imported bowl	13	511	5043	I	Red-slipped fine fabric
2	Imported bowl	12	501	5027	I	Orange slipped, red fine fabric
3	Bowl	12	519	5152/2	I	Brown, gritty fabric
4	Open cooking pot	12	519	5080/2	I	Brown cooking-pot fabric
5	Cooking-pot lid	12	513	5033	I	Brown cooking-pot fabric
6	Antilia jar	12	519	5152	I	Brown fabric
7	Storage jar	12	519	5042	I	Gray ware
8	Amphora base	13	511	5028	I	Brown fine fabric with mica
9	Glazed bowl	12	501	5015	I	Brown fine ware, turquoise glaze
10	Glazed bowl	14	505	5029	Surface	Orange fine ware, white slip, dark brown painted decoration

with impressed dots and lines (Fig. 36:2). Both forms dated to around 550–650 CE (Hayes 1972:377–378, 380–383). Some large bowls of a rougher local ware had a carination below their sloping ledged rims, and three pronounced grooved rings around the rim (Fig. 36:3).

Cooking Pots (Fig. 36:4, 5).— The cooking vessels included a large open cooking bowl with heavy horizontal handles (Fig. 36:4) and a cooking-pot lid with a small loop handle which might not have been ribbed (Fig. 36:5). Fairly similar lids were found at Ḥorbat ‘Aqav (Calderon 2000:140–142, Fig. 35, Pl. XXIII:52).

Jars (Fig. 36:6, 7).— An antilia jar of brown clay with a narrow neck and everted rim for tying to a water-drawing wheel was found (Fig. 36:6), identical to antilia vessels from Ḥorbat ‘Uza Strata 9 and 8, where they were probably manufactured in the late fourth and fifth centuries CE (Avshalom-Gorni 2009:60–63, Fig. 2.41:2–8, Type RB.An.1). The few sherds of the black storage jars from Stratum I feature simple necks and rims (Fig. 36:7). They are characteristic of the end of the Byzantine and beginning of the early Islamic period, and are dated to the late sixth or even early seventh century CE.

Amphora (Fig. 36:8).— A few amphora sherds were found, including a pointed base of a fine, highly micaceous, brown fabric.

Summary

The nature of the thick burnt ashy layer without any accompanying walls is unclear. Much of the pottery from this ashy layer bears a similarity to pottery uncovered in Stratum II, suggesting that there may have been some reuse of earth accumulations containing potsherds from the previous period. The presence of the late Byzantine to Early Islamic black storage jar rim found in the middle of the burnt layer may date the earth accumulation to the end of the Byzantine period in the late sixth or early seventh century CE.

Fatimid Period (Fig. 36:9, 10)

A few rim fragments of glazed bowls—one with a turquoise glaze on the interior and over the rim (Fig. 36:9) and the other with dark brown decoration over a white slip (Fig. 36:10)—can be dated to the Fatimid period. They reflect a sporadic presence at the site around the eleventh century CE.

ADDITIONAL FINDS

In addition to stone and metal finds and ceramic roof tiles described below, the excavation at Horbat 'Ofrat yielded some 400 glass fragments (see Winter, this volume), 31 coins (see Bijovsky, this volume) and a small number of faunal remains (see Marom, this volume).

Stone Finds (Figs. 37, 38)

Stone Vessels (Fig. 37:1–4).— Four chalkstone (*qirṭon*) vessel fragments came from the Area A Stratum V Early Roman-period house. There was a body fragment of a characteristic shaved mug (Fig. 37:1), also called a measuring cup, a widespread form in Jewish settlements in Judea and the Galilee during the Early Roman period. Two lids or stoppers (Fig. 37:2, 3) and a fragment of a large bowl or basin (Fig. 37:4) were found; these are also well-known components in the Jewish stone-vessel repertoire. Parallels to all these vessels are found from the first to the early second century CE at Jewish sites in Judea and the Galilee. See Magen 2002 for comprehensive studies on such vessels, including their production and related notions of purity in early Judaism (see Reed 2009 for examples from Nabratein and several other parallels). Galilean production centers have been found at er-Reina in the Nazareth hills (Gal 1991).

Basalt Grinding Stones and Vessels (Fig. 37:5, 6).— Several fragments of basalt grinding stones of the Olynthus-type 'hopper-rubber' millstones, and a complete upper hopper millstone was found on the ground surface (Fig. 37:5). The 'hopper-rubber' was commonly used in the grain-grinding system in the Roman and Byzantine periods (Frankel 2003). In addition, a three-legged mortar bowl came from the Stratum II destruction layer (Fig. 37:6), and some fragments of round basalt mortar bowls and a basalt ring were also uncovered (not illustrated).

Marble Platter (Fig. 38:1).— A fragment of a marble platter came from the fill in the Stratum II Byzantine pit in Area B.

Whetting Stone (Fig. 38:2).— A rectangular stone made of dark gray-black polished serpentine was probably used for sharpening knives and other tools.

Stone Whorl (Fig. 38:3).— A small stone whorl with a pyramidal shape was a surface find.

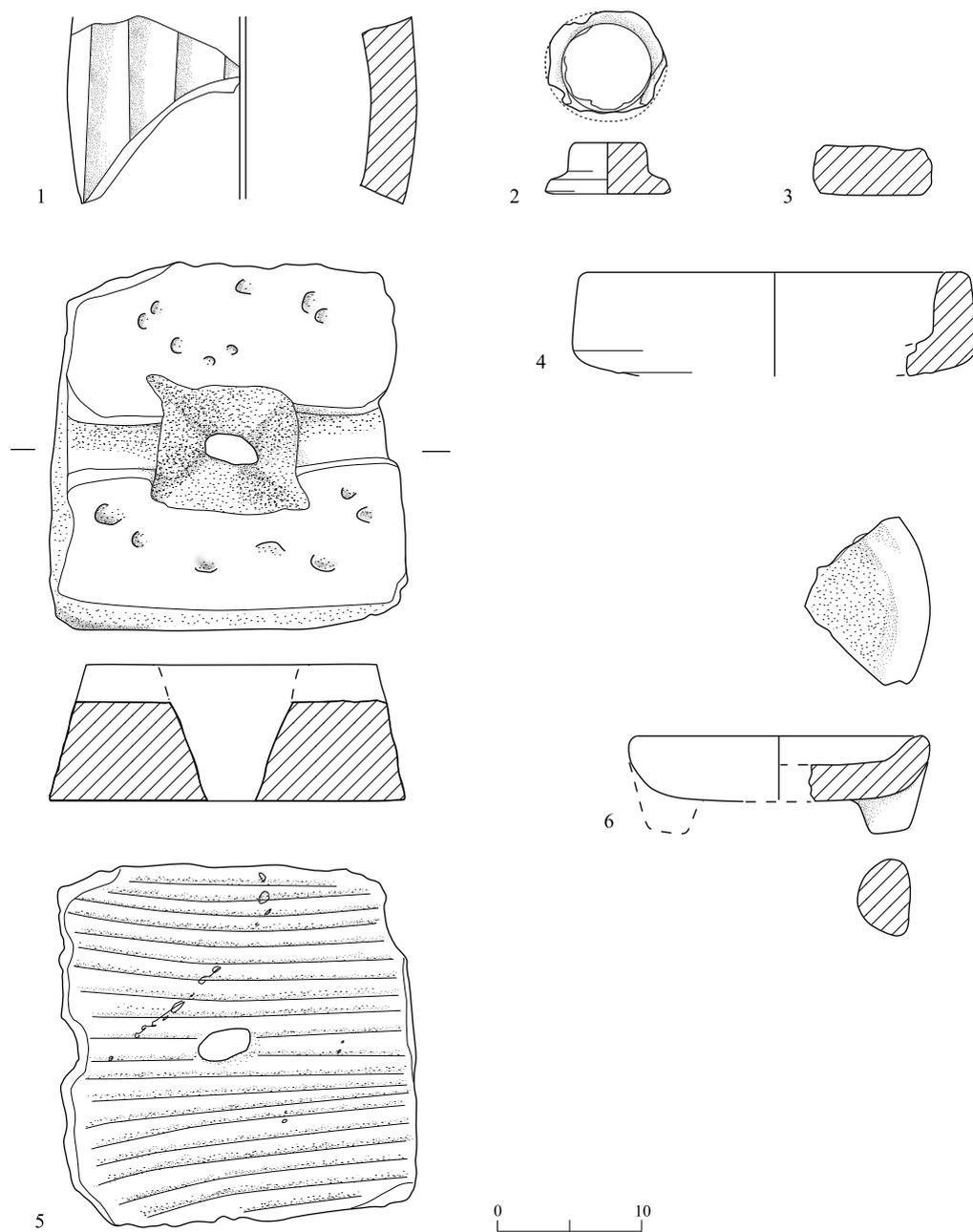


Fig. 37. Chalkstone and basalt vessels.

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Stratum	Description
1	Mug	A	2	122	1057	V	Chalkstone
2	Lid	A	2	129	1084	V	Chalkstone
3	Lid	A	2	137	1101	V	Chalkstone
4	Basin	A	4	120	1059	V	Chalkstone
5	Olynthus hopper-rubber millstone			Surface find		Surface	Vesicular basalt
6	Mortar bowl	D	12	528	5146	I	Vesicular basalt

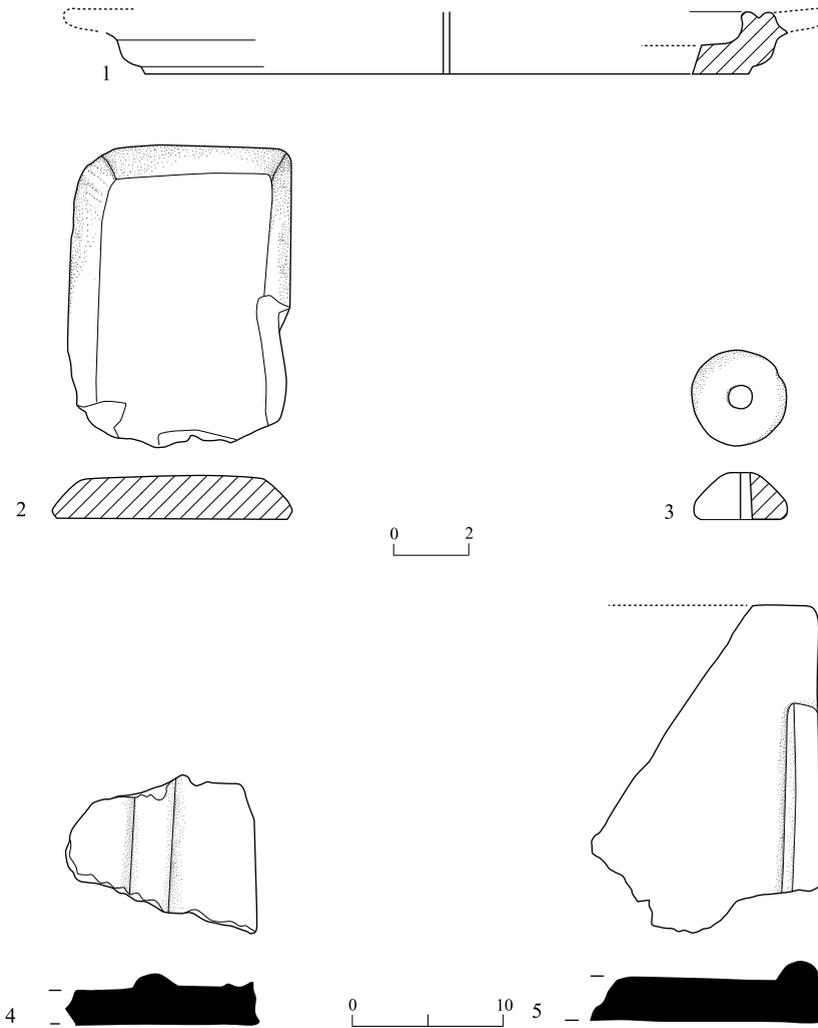


Fig. 38. Stone artifacts and roof tiles.

No.	Vessel	Area	Square	Locus	Basket	Stratum	Description
1	Platter	B	7	307	3024	II	Marble
2	Whetstone	D	12	528	5135	II	Dense gray-black serpentine stone
3	Stone whorl	E	21	605	6009	Surface	Brown-black stone
4	Roof tile	E	17	617	6041	II	Clay
5	Roof tile	D	14	530	5155	II	Clay

Ceramic Roof Tiles (Fig. 38:4, 5).— Over 50 fragments of ceramic roof tiles (*tegulae*) were found in Areas A, B, D and E, mostly in Byzantine Strata III and II. The roof tiles were flat clay tiles with an upturned border, enabling them to be attached to the neighboring roof tile with a semi-cylindrical tile (*imbrex*), examples of which were not observed. The tiles were likely made of local clay.

Metal Artifacts

The metal finds at the site were predominantly iron nails (about 22), a couple of fragments of iron tools and small undefined pieces of bronze or copper (not illustrated).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The twenty-square excavation exposed limited archaeological remains on the northern and eastern margins of the low hill of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat. The occupation remains, classified as Strata VI–I, were attributed to the late Hellenistic, Early Roman, Middle to Late Roman, early Byzantine, middle Byzantine and late Byzantine–Early Islamic periods. In addition, a few glazed sherds dated to the Fatamid period provide evidence of some kind of settlement in the eleventh century CE. Some observations on the site’s settlement history can be tentatively proffered based on evidence from the present excavation and supplemented by data gleaned from earlier surveys and excavations. Further extensive work on the hill itself would certainly expand our understanding of the settlement history at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat, no doubt substantiating or refuting some of the preliminary remarks offered here.

The Late Hellenistic Period (Stratum VI)

It seems that in the late Hellenistic period, the excavated areas had been exploited as agricultural land and a graveyard on the fringes of a small village, which was probably located on the hillslope about 100 m to the south. Urman’s excavations on the hill slope revealed some late Hellenistic and Early Roman pottery associated with fragmentary walls (Urman 1993–1994:38, 41). Peleg’s excavations also retrieved some late Hellenistic sherds without architectural context (Peleg 1990:92). On the basis of the similarity between the limited late Hellenistic repertoire—mostly storage jar rims—from Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat and the pottery found at several other Lower Galilean sites, it is possible to tentatively propose that the late Hellenistic village was first settled in the late second century BCE during the Hasmonean period, possibly by Judean colonizers. This issue may be addressed in depth through sites with significantly more exposed data, for example, the author’s excavations at Karm er-Ras–Kana (Alexandre, in prep.).

The Early Roman Period (Stratum V)

The fragmentary architectural remains on the bedrock in Area A were part of an Early Roman domestic dwelling, an associated bell-shaped cistern and fragmentary remains of a shallow, white-plastered basin. The pottery remains were characteristic Lower Galilean forms, including Kefar Ḥananya wares; a few chalk stone vessel fragments were also found in the house. The faunal remains indicated an economy that was probably based on agricultural production (see Marom, this volume). These characteristics, namely the pottery and the chalk vessels, coupled with Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat’s proximity to several Jewish villages such as Usha, Shefar‘am and Qiryat Ata, hint at the Jewish identity of the site’s inhabitants, who probably first settled the site in the late Hellenistic period.

A Jewish *pruta* coin dating to the second year of the Great Revolt of the Jews against the Romans (67 CE) was found in a disturbed, later context in Area D. This find also supports the Jewish identity of the inhabitants, and further points to activity at the site during the Great Revolt. In light of the site's location—between the 'Akko plain and the Lower Galilee and close to the main road taken by the Roman army—the villagers most likely had taken some action in the context of the Jewish revolt, such as preparing hiding places, storing food, or deserting the village for a safer location. At present, however, this must remain conjecture pending further examination of the site.

Most of the Early Roman pottery dates to the late first and the early second centuries CE, indicating that the village continued to be occupied after 70 CE, and possibly, at least in the part excavated, was abandoned at some point in the early second century CE. This conclusion is corroborated by the previous excavations. Urman uncovered Early Roman sherds together with late Hellenistic sherds associated with the fragmentary walls, indicating a continuity of settlement from the late Hellenistic into the Early Roman period (Urman 1993–1994:38). Peleg did not reveal any building remains from this period; however, surface finds included two Herodian coins and another coin dating to the mid-second century CE (Peleg 1990:92). A loculi (*kokhim*) burial cave to the east of Ḥorbat 'Ofrat had a stone-slab door and contained three clay sarcophagi and a clay ossuary. The cave was probably hewn during the first to second centuries CE, and may have continued to be utilized in the third century CE (Peleg 1990:93; Aviam and Syon 2002:162).

The Middle to Late Roman Period (Stratum IV)

In the Middle Roman period, there was renewed activity at the site, most likely after an occupation gap during the second century CE. This renewal took place in the form of stone-quarrying and stone-working activities in Area A, and a house located closer to the hill in Area D. The house exhibited predominantly Lower Galilean pottery forms, including Kefar Ḥananya wares characteristic of Jewish settlements in the Lower Galilee from the third to fourth century CE, and the site was probably abandoned in the early or mid-fourth century CE.

Based on the similarity between the pottery assemblages from Stratum IV and that of Peleg's excavation, we may conjecture that the associated architectural features from Peleg's dig—the large ashlar stone, a two-phased public building with roof tiles, colored stucco and fresco fragments—are contemporary with our Stratum IV house (Peleg 1990). It is probable that the heart-shaped corner column observed by early visitors to the site, as well as the mosaic patches with geometric decorations exposed in the building uncovered in Urman's excavation (Urman 1993–1994:38–39, Fig. 1), belonged to further contemporary monumental buildings at the site, possibly including a synagogue. It can also be conjectured that the stone-quarrying and stone-working activities uncovered in Area A were connected to these monumental buildings.

The limited remains of Stratum IV from the present excavation, the heart-shaped column, and the building remains and the burial caves uncovered in the Urman and Peleg

excavations were probably all part of a Middle to Late Roman village at Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat. The identity of the inhabitants of the Roman-period village as Jews finds support in several characteristics: the architectural fragments visible on the surface and traces of monumental structures that have been interpreted by various scholars as synagogue remains (albeit not entirely in consensus), the few chalkstone fragments from the earlier Stratum V village, the Jewish villages in the vicinity known from historical and archaeological data and the above-mentioned burial cave.

The abandonment of the site, or of at least part of the site, around the middle of the fourth century CE is supported by the small hoard of 11 coins with issue dates between 324 and 346 CE found concealed in the building uncovered in Urman’s excavation (Urman 1993–1994:43). The fact that the latest coins in this group do not postdate 346 CE led Urman to suggest that the site was damaged during the Gallus Revolt in 351–352 CE, which started in Zippori and spread throughout the Galilee. The details regarding the extent of this revolt and its repercussions in the Galilee are not well-established, and the archaeological data cited as evidence for the revolt is disputed and often equivocal. A recent reexamination of the numismatic evidence attributed to the Gallus Revolt has revealed that several of the hoards exhibit coins post-dating the revolt (Bijovsky 2007). Bijovsky considers there to be no clear gap between the isolated coins during the second half of the fourth century CE and the issues dating from 335–337 CE to 355–361 CE in the 1962 coin hoard of 274 coins—thus some post-dating the Revolt—and argues against an upheaval at the site as the result of the Gallus Revolt of 351–352 CE (see Bijovsky, this volume). Nonetheless, the absence of coins dated 361–383 CE, in both the limited isolated coins and in the hoards, may be incidental or may reflect a short occupation gap at the site, possibly associated with the earthquake of 363 CE, political disturbances, or economic pressure.

The Early Byzantine Period (Stratum III)

Stratum III saw the construction of new houses in Areas A and E. The occupation is characterized by new ceramic traditions, the wares now including many Late Roman Red Wares and characteristic Byzantine local wares. The pottery shows clear affinities to sites in the western Galilee, specifically to Ḥorbat ‘Uza which is located approximately 15 km to the north–northwest, and may be where some of the pottery was manufactured, especially the storage jars (Getzov et al. 2009). The glass shows clear affinities to vessels manufactured at Jalame, located about 12 km to the west (see Winter, this volume), and it is probable that some of the glass from Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat was produced there. based on the pottery and the foundation deposit of coins in a cooking pot found in the Area E house, it seems that the house may have been built in the last decade of the fourth century CE and abandoned in the early fifth century CE. The building in Area A was probably also abandoned at this time, although there was later activity in the courtyard area in Stratum II. There is no unequivocal indication as to whether the settlement was still a Jewish village, although this is probable. In this case, the short-lived duration of Stratum III could be attributed to Christian pressure on the Jewish population of the Galilee in the fifth century CE.

The Middle Byzantine Period (Stratum II)

In Stratum II, new buildings were erected in Area D. It is probable that at least one was a large building complex rather than a domestic family house. The many large basins and cooking casseroles at the site suggest that some kind of large-scale food-processing took place.

In some aspects, the pottery follows a ceramic tradition similar to that of Stratum III. However, new elements include a variety of imported Yassi Ada and other amphorae, one Late Roman Red Ware bowl with a cross, and a fragment of a marble bowl. Although the appearance of a single cross cannot serve as an indication of a Christian population, the accumulated data from excavations and surveys carried out at nearby sites reflect Christian expansion into former Jewish areas in western Lower Galilee during the late fifth and sixth centuries CE. Thus, Byzantine fifth to sixth-century churches were uncovered, for example in Bethlehem of Galilee (Oshri 1998), Ramat Yishay (Oshri 2000), and at least two large churches at Zippori from the late fifth or early sixth century CE (Weiss 2008:2034). At the adjacent village of Shefar'am, Byzantine rock-hewn tombs exhibit unique scenes combining unusual faunal, vegetal and human motifs with crosses (Conder and Kitchener 1881:340–343). The possibility that this Christian funerary art was influenced by artistic concepts from Hauran has been noted, and it has been tentatively proposed that this art may even have been executed by immigrant monks from Syria who settled in the Jewish village (Aviam 2004:308). Therefore, it is probable that the inhabitants of Ḥorbat 'Ofrat were now Christian.

On the basis of the many large utensils for food preparation, it is possible (although there is no solid evidence) that the Stratum II buildings uncovered in Area D were associated with a monastery, a Christian monastery-controlled farm, or a lodging inn for Christian pilgrims *en route* from 'Akko to the Galilee. The faunal remains in Stratum II indicate a possible, though only conjectural, shift away from agricultural production toward a consumption economy relying on external supplies of sheep and goats for meat (see Marom, this volume). The settlement came to an end with violent destruction dating to the end of the sixth or possibly in the early seventh century CE, with a *terminus post quem* from two coins found in the destruction debris (L514, L539) dating to 587/588 and 582/583 CE (see Bijovsky, this volume: Table 1:24, 25, Fig. 1:24, 25). If a historical context for the destruction is sought, in 629–630 CE, Euthychius of Alexandria records that during the Persian invasion of 614 CE the Jews of Nazareth and the Galilee collaborated with the Persians against the Byzantines, exploiting the opportunity to damage Christian sites in the country (*Patrologiae Cursus Completus*:1083). However, the last coins date about thirty years earlier, and there is no clear evidence pinpointing the date of the Persian invasion.

The Late Byzantine to Early Islamic Periods (Stratum I)

The activity in Stratum I consisted only of some small-scale industrial burning activity, possibly using camel mandibles as clamps to hold artifacts in the fire. On the basis of the ephemeral archaeological remains and the animal bones, including the camel bones, this

activity may have been carried out by a new short-lived mobile, or tribal population at the site in the early seventh century CE (see Marom, this volume).

In conclusion, it must be reiterated that the limited archaeological remains of Strata VI–I render conjectural preliminary comments on the settlement history of the site. Additional excavations on the hill may provide a richer and further substantiated narrative of the settlement history of Ḥorbat ‘Ofrat.

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