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Final Report

Volume 10

The Chalkstone Vessels of the Early Roman Period

Their Contexts and Implications

Friederike Schöpf

Editors of the Tall Zirā'a Final Reports

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviated Journals and Series

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research	JIGRE	W. Horbury – D. Noy, (eds.), Jewish Inscriptions of Greco- Roman Egypt, with an Index of the Jewish Inscriptions of Egypt and Cyrenaica (Cambridge 1992).
ABG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte	JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
ADAJ	Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan	JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
ADPV	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins	JRS	The Journal of Roman Studies
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums	JSJ	Journal of the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology	JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal of the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums	JSP	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt	JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
BASOR	Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research	JSQ	Jewish Studies Quarterly
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium	LA	Liber Annuus
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies	LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature	NEASB	Near Eastern Archaeology Society Bulletin
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum	NTS	New Testament Studies
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium	PEF	Palestine Exploration Fund
DJD	Discoveries of the Judaean Desert	PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries	RHR	Revue d'histoire des religions
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament	SBFCM	Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Collectio Maior
HTR	Harvard Theological Review	SHAJ	Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan
IAA	Israel Antiquities Authority	SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies: Monograph Series
JAJ	Journal of Ancient Judaism	STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements	SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society		
JAR	Journal of Archaeological Research		
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature		

TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter	VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum / Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism	WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
VT	Vetus Testamentum	ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen-Palästinavereins

Abbreviations of Institutions

BAI	Biblich-Archäologisches Institut, Wuppertal	GPIA	German Protestant Institute of Archaeology
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Abbreviations of Primary Sources

Biblical Literature¹

Chron.	Chronicles	Man	Menahot
Dan.	Daniel	Meg	Megillah
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Miq	Miqwāôt
Ex.	Exodus	Nid	Niddah
Ezek.	Ezekiel		
Ezr.	Ezra	Oha	Ohalot
Isa.	Isaiah	Par	Parah
Joh.	John	Qid	Qiddushin
Jos.	Joshua	Shab	Shabbat
Lev.	Leviticus	Shevi	Sheviit
Mat.	Matthew	Sheq	Sheqalim
Mk.	Mark	SifrDeut	Sifre Deuteronomy
Neh.	Nehemiah	SifrZ	Sifre Zuta
Num.	Numbers	Sot	Sotah
Ps.	Psalms	t	Tosefta
Sam.	Samuel	Toh	Tohorot
		y	Jerusalem Talmud
		Yad	Yadayim
		Yom	Yoma (Kippurim)
		Zav	Zavim

Rabbinic Sources²

AZ	‘Avodah Zarah
b	Babylonian Talmud
Ber	Berakhot
Dem	Demai
Eru	‘Eruvin
Hag	Hagiga
Ḥal	Ḥalla
Ket	Ketubot
m	Mishna
Makh	Makshirin

Dead Sea Scrolls

CD	The Damascus Document
1QS	The Rule of the Community
4Q514	The Purification Rule
4QMMT	Miqsat Ma’ase Ha-Torah
4QTob	Book of Tobit
11QT (19)	The Temple Scroll

1 Unless otherwise stated, the quotations and translations of biblical literature are taken from Sefaria.org.

2 Unless otherwise stated, the quotations and translations of rabbinic sources are taken from Sefaria.org.

Other Literal Sources

1 Macc.	1 Maccabees	Hyp.	Philo, Hypothetica
2 Macc.	2 Maccabees	Jdt.	Book of Judith
Ant. Iud.	Josephus, Antiquitates Iudaicae	panar.	Epiphanius, panarion
Bell. Iud.	Josephus, Bellum Iudaicum	Spec.	Philo, De specialibus legibus
c. Ap.	Josephus, contra Apionem	Strab.	Strabon, Geography
HE	Eusebius, Historia Ecclesiastica		

General Abbreviations

c.	circa	no./nos.	number/numbers
ed./eds.	editor/editors	Pl./Pls.	plate/plates
e.g.	example given	Tab.	table
etc.	et cetera	TZ	Tall Zirā'a
Fig./Figs.	figure/figures		
max.	maximum		

Abbreviations for Pottery Ware Groups

ESA	Eastern Terra Sigillata A
ETS	Eastern Terra Sigillata

PREFACE

by Jutta Häser/Dieter Vieweger



Fig. 0.1 Tall Zirā'a, view from west to east (Source APAAME D. Kennedy 2011).

When the German engineer G. Schumacher explored Transjordan in 1885, he discovered among other sites, Tall Zirā'a¹ (Fig. 0.1). He was the first European since the time of the Crusaders to enter this region. However, after thousands of years of prosperity, the valley had changed significantly during the Ottoman Period. The bedouins told Schumacher that the wādī had degenerated into a “popular shelter for all sorts of refugees and criminal scum”.

Except for a few sugar mills that were operated by water power, there were only a few small hamlets. A water flow of about 0.75 m³ per second flowed through the Wādī al-‘Arab in June 1885, and the Wādī az-Zaḥar added the same amount of spring water. C. Steuermagel wrote:

“Where the valley widens and the water becomes shallow, there are large numbers of trout that are easy to

*catch. Once while bathing, Schumacher saw a black water snake, almost a metre long. These are said to be very common here and are highly dreaded”*².

The archaeologist N. Glueck visited Tall Zirā'a in 1942. He reported the

*“singularly imposing and completely isolated hill of Tall Zera‘ah (...)”*³

and mentioned a water source on the plateau of the tall as the

“result of a natural siphon phenomenon leading the underground flow of the water from the higher level of the hills beyond down to below the bottom and, as through a pipe piercing its center, up to the top of Tall Zera‘ah”.

1 Schumacher 1890, 110. 142 f. Schumacher visited Tall Zirā'a and described remains of rectangular buildings. His observations are published by Steuermagel 1926, 81.

2 Steuermagel 1926, 80. Citation is given in English translation; cf. also Schumacher 1890, 142 f. For Schumacher's travels see in general: Schumacher 1886.

3 Glueck 1951a, 182 Fig. 71.

Although the tall⁴ had already attracted attention due to its location and imposing appearance, no intensive research was conducted at that time, because of the hill's location close to the border of Israel to the west and Syria to the north. During the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and again during the Six-Day War in 1967, the western part of the Wādī al-ʿArab was declared a military zone. A passage which had been open in all directions for millennia was thus essentially cut off from sections of its surroundings. The territory around Gadara and the Wādī al-ʿArab, in the triangle between Jordan, Syria and Israel, became the northwesternmost corner of the Hashemite Kingdom, and there was not even a paved road to the tall.

Even the construction of the Wādī al-ʿArab Dam in 1978 did not make a significant difference to the status quo. The archaeologists who surveyed the area prior to the dam's construction as part of salvage investiga-

tions did not appreciate the archaeological potential of the tall that majestically overlooked the future reservoir. Some more time passed before the ratification of the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993, but it was not until after the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel, signed by King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on October 26, 1994, that the area became accessible to the public again. D. Vieweger, director of the Biblical Archaeological Institute Wuppertal (BAI), and, since 2005, also of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (GPIA), traveled to the northwestern part of Jordan several times between 1998 and 2000, exploring the area for a suitable tall site that would serve as authoritative chronological record for the region's long and important cultural history. He found it in the Wādī al-ʿArab.

4 The Arabic word 'tell' or 'tall' as well as the Hebrew word 'tel' will be written in this publication in the standard literary Arab version 'tall' or 'Tall NN'.



Fig. 0.1 Tall Zirā'a, view from west to east (Source APAAME D. Kennedy 2011).

Tall Zirā'a—located in the middle of the Wādī al-'Arab (Fig. 0.2 and Fig. 0.3)—was continuously inhabited for at least 5,000 years and offers a unique insight into the way of life of the region's people. Its outstanding archaeological significance results from the artesian spring at its center, which created optimal settlement conditions over thousands of years. For this reason, Tall Zirā'a offers a great opportunity to

compile a comparative stratigraphy for northern Jordan from the Early Bronze Age right through to the Islamic period, while at the same time tracing cultural developments in urban life, crafts and religious history over long periods of time. Moreover, it is possible to study the numerous remains from Biblical times in a broad cultural and historical context.

As mentioned earlier, a major trade route ran through the valley, connecting Egypt in the south with the Syrian-Mesopotamian region in the north. The Wādī al-‘Arab also connects the Jordan Valley with the Mediterranean coast via the northern Jordan ford at Ġisr el-Mağami‘ (Gešer Naharajim), and the plains of Jezreel and Tall al-Ḥiṣn (Beth Shean) with the eastern Jordanian highlands. It was possible to climb from the Jordan valley, at some 290 m below sea level, to the fertile and very early populated Irbid-Ramtha basin, which lies around 560 m above sea level. Direct routes led from the Irbid-Ramtha basin to Dimašq (Damascus) in the north, Baġdād in the east and Amman in the south. Since the Yarmūk valley in the north and the Wādī Ziqlāb in the south are too steep and narrow to serve as major transportation routes, the Wādī al-‘Arab played a prominent geopolitical role. Not surprisingly, economic success and the hard work of residents over the millennia have left a wealth of traces in the valley. More than 200 sites of human habitation, from the very earliest settlements to the Islamic Period, provide an eloquent testimony to the history of this region: Settlements, channels, water mills, cisterns, oil presses, wine presses, watchtowers and burial sites.

Tall Zirā‘a offered good living conditions for a settlement; the artesian spring ensured an unending water supply, and the hill provided security. The tall rises impressively (depending on the direction) between 22–45 m above the ground. As the only prominent natural elevation in the lower Wādī al-‘Arab, Tall Zirā‘a dominates the valley. From here, not only Gadara can be seen, but also the narrow entrance of the wādī to the west can be well monitored. The adjacent fertile wādī ensured adequate nourishment, with potentially arable land in the western and central valleys, terraced slopes and spurs suitable for rainfed agriculture in the east, and wādī slopes suitable for grazing small livestock, forming a broad semicircle from east and south to the west. Based on his observations, D. Vieweger decided to implement preliminary investigations here from 1998 to 2000.

The ‘Gadara Region Project’ was launched in 2001 by the Biblical Archaeological Institute (BAI) in Wuppertal, Germany. During the first survey season, the surface of Tall Zirā‘a was explored, the tall was accurately surveyed, and more than 24,000 pottery sherds and many other finds were systematically collected



Fig. 0.3 Map of the Tall Zirā‘a area (Source: BAI/GPIA; P. Leiverkus).

and analyzed⁵. The results of the survey helped to formulate the objectives of the excavation program and to select suitable areas (residential, religious, administrative and craft production) for investigation.

The first excavation season on the tall took place in 2003. The first team was financed by the ‘Society of Friends of the BAI Wuppertal’ and traveled under the direction D. Vieweger with a Volkswagen bus from Wuppertal via Turkey and Syria to Amman. A house of the Ottoman period in the Gadara/Umm Qēš archaeological site served as living and working quarters, which was in a very poor condition at that time, but was sympathetically renovated and equipped with modern sanitary facilities and kitchens in the following seasons. The results of the first season were so promising that the ‘Gadara Region Project’ was inaugurated, with a planned time frame of ten to twenty years.

Over the course of the subsequent 18 seasons, 25 strata were uncovered in three areas and several scientific processes and archaeological experiments were carried out; surveys were also completed for the area around Tall Zirā‘a and in the Wādī al-‘Arab.

5 Vieweger et al. 2017, 59–155; Vieweger et al. 2003, 191–216.

The slopes of the Wādī al-‘Arab from Tall Zirā‘a upward to the region of Šēdūr and Dōqara, as well as the region around the Wādī al-‘Arab dam, were surveyed in 2009; large parts of this region had not previously studied in detail. 78 sites, 30 of which were previously unknown, were documented. The environmental survey continued in 2010 in the region of Dōqara, which is near Irbid; 57 sites were documented at that time.

In 2004, the BAI Wuppertal under the directorship of D. Vieweger, and the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (GPIA) in Amman which also served as the research unit for the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), under the directorship of J. Häser, agreed on a close partnership, which ensured ongoing archaeological and interdisciplinary collaboration for the remainder of the archaeological seasons. The subsequent directors of the GPIA in Amman, F. Kenkel, K. Schmidt and B. Jansen, agreed to continue this co-operation.

In 2018, excavations in Area II resumed under the direction of K. Schmidt with a special focus on the Iron Age. The results of the 2018 and 2019 campaigns have been published in a printed and an online version⁶.

All finds were stored at the excavation house in Umm Qēs. Some of the more important finds were exported to the Biblical Archaeological Institute Wuppertal (BAI) and restored by M. Blana; they were returned to the Department of Antiquities of Jordan in several stages, with the last ones returning to Jordan in spring 2015. More than 50 objects discovered during the project are on display in the Jordan Museum in Amman. In July 2019, a special exhibition titled ‘Tall Zirā‘a – Mirror of Jordan’s History’ opened at the Jordan Museum in Amman, displaying 84 finds from Tall Zirā‘a that attest to the cult and religion, arts and crafts, and cultural contacts of the people at this site over thousands of years⁷. In 2020, the exhibition was also presented at the Museum of Jordanian Heritage at the Yarmouk University in Irbid.

The results of the excavations have been presented in the form of articles in several scientific journals as well as monographs and dissertations⁸. In addition, the Tall Zirā‘a website provides information in German and English about current activities on and around the tall⁹. After 18 intensive seasons exploring the tall and its surrounding, it was decided to interrupt excavation and survey activities in order to publish a complete record of the results so far. To this end, it was decided that work from 2012 onward would consist of study seasons in the excavation house at Umm Qēs to process the data and results gathered to date.

The following volumes of the final publication are already published or planned:

- Volume 1: Introduction¹⁰
- Volume 2: Early and Middle Bronze Age (Strata 25–17)¹¹
- Volume 3: Late Bronze Age (Strata 16–14)¹²
- Volume 4: Iron Age and Persian Period (Strata 13–9)¹³
- Volume 5: Hellenistic to Roman Period (Strata 8–6)¹⁴
- Volume 6: Hellenistic to Umayyad Period (Strata 8–3). Ceramic, Glass and Metal Finds¹⁵
- Volume 7: Byzantine to Umayyad Period (Strata 5–3)¹⁶
- Volume 8.1/8.2: Wādī al-‘Arab Survey¹⁷
- Volume 9: The Iron Age, Hellenistic and Early Roman Period in Area II¹⁸

All volumes will be or have been already published online in English, in order to make the results available free of charge and to a wide audience. The online publication also allows the integration of 3D-images, reconstructions and digital films. Furthermore, origi-

6 Schmidt (ed.) 2022.

7 Häser – Schmidt (eds.) 2019.

8 For a complete list of the publications concerning the ‘Gadara Region Project’ cf. <<http://www.tallziraa.de/Publikationen/0335.html>> (10.12.2022).

9 Cf. www.tallziraa.de

10 Several authors in: Vieweger – Häser (eds.) 2017.

11 Vieweger 2019.

12 Soennecken 2022.

13 Soennecken 2024.

14 Schütz 2024.

15 Kenkel 2020; Hoss 2020a; Hoss 2020b.

16 Häser 2024.

17 Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021.

18 Schmidt (ed.) 2022.

nal data from the excavations, such as plans and database extracts, are included. These additional documents are published in German¹⁹; however, they will be understandable to anyone with some knowledge of the German language and allow professional researchers to access the primary data.

The printed version of the publication can be ordered from Gütersloh Verlag in Germany. Volumes 1 to 9 have already been published.

General comments on the systems and processes used in the publications follow:

The Palestine Grid 1923 is the basis for the geographic grid system used for the project. It was first used in the autumn 2001 for 5 m x 5 m squares on Tall Zirā'a, for both excavation and survey work²⁰.

- The citation style is based on the guidelines of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), but has been adapted to the conventions of English language publications.
- In order to minimize misunderstandings, the problem of transliterating Arabic and Hebrew words into English orthography with Latin letters for local place and family names is solved with by the transcription system of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, which is based on the guidelines of TAVO (Tübinger Bibelatlas des Vorderen Orients).
- In this publication, the name of the site is called Tall Zirā'a. Other transcriptions include *Tell Zer'ah* (MEGA Jordan; Jadis; Kerestes et al. 1977/1978; Glueck 1951a; Glueck 1951b); *Tell Zer'a* (Reicke–Rost 1979); *Tell Zara'a/ Tell Zara'a* (Schumacher 1890; Steuernagel 1926); *Tell Zira'a* (Hanbury-Tenison 1984), *Tall Zar'a* (AAJ, SHAJ).
- All dimensions in the catalogs and in the captions are in cm unless otherwise stated.

19 Cf. the appendices to the present volume.

20 Cf. Vieweger – Häser (eds.) 2017, 235–237 for the grid system used on Tall Zirā'a.

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Friederike Schöpf

INTRODUCTION

This publication is based on my PhD thesis “Purity without Borders? Purity Concerns in the Early Jewish Diaspora during the Second Temple Period Regarding the Case of Tall Zirā’a, Northern Jordan.” My dissertation originally dealt with the archaeological evidence of chalkstone vessels from Tall Zirā’a in light of Jewish purity concerns in an interdisciplinary approach, analysing literary sources and archaeological material culture. Although the publication appears in the primarily archaeological series on Tall Zirā’a, the literary analysis and theoretical framework of the thesis remains an important part of the book. Thus, the contents follow a rather unconventional structure, as the archaeological evidence is found in the latter part of the discussion. However, by beginning with the theoretical bases and literary evidence of the late Second Temple period, I emphasize the special case of Tall Zirā’a as especially important in terms of further research. The evidence of some 100 fragments of chalkstone vessels on top of the tall in the mainly pagan environment of the Decapolis of Gadara pushes the boundaries of the ‘classical’ distribution patterns of this archaeological material. It demands that we think ‘out of the box’ and broaden our understanding of purity practices in the Hellenistic and early Roman periods and their meaning for the Jews who engaged in them. In a non-Jewish environment, purity practices and the related material culture were not solely religious matters, but statements of Jewish identity. The wish to separate from others, and to follow purity practices went beyond the known borders of the material culture, including chalkstone vessels. Those vessels were particularly important owing to their distinctive design and their ability to communicate identity.

Modern ethnologists emphasize that purity and impurity can give meaning to the environment and set social boundaries. The definitions may vary, but purity and impurity are sociological factors, which give order to an otherwise chaotic – or hostile – world¹. Purity laws influence daily life, social interactions, and every aspect of human life: birth, death, eating, and sexual activities.

In the Jewish religion, the laws of purity are defined and described in the Tanakh, primarily in the

Book of Leviticus. Those regulations were originally associated with the Temple, but purity became more a personal issue during the Second Temple period. The latter part of that period, from the second century BC to the first century AD, was a time of political upheaval, new religious developments, and sociological changes. Many Jews already lived outside of Eretz-Israel in various Diaspora communities. Thus, YHWH’s presence, the *šekinā*, was not confined to the Temple in Jerusalem, but followed His people and dwelt among them wherever they settled. The Torah and the Mosaic law are the bonds that unite Jewish communities and the individuals within those communities, and they facilitated the move to a personalized religious practice in the home².

Archaeologically, this development is evident in a material culture which evolved first in Eretz-Israel during the late second century BC and then spread into nearby territories. Those ‘Jewish’ household items include pottery, stone vessels, and architectural installations of ritual stepped pools. Simultaneously, the importation of some goods, such as Graeco-Roman wares, declined in the rural areas that Jews lived in. However, the new focus on purity and its practices evolved earlier than the material culture and can be found in Jewish Hellenistic literature. Stories about the experiences of the Babylonian exile and the struggle with Hellenistic influences from the time of Alexander the Great’s conquest in 332 BC emphasize the Jewish purity ideals and their role in maintaining one’s Jewish identity.

The structure of this book embodies discussions concerning relevant literature, material culture, and the archaeological evidence of Tall Zirā’a, Northern Jordan, and various Diaspora communities. Chapter 1 is a historical and methodological overview, designed to put things in context. As this work is based on several different academic disciplines, the first chapter includes an overview of the methodology and terminology. Owing to the philological and archaeological material discussed, the historical focus spans roughly from the third century BC to the second century AD. The political and religious changes in the southern Levant during those event-

1 Douglas 1998, 53–54.

2 Gafni 1997, 24; Hacham 2011, 401, 407–409; Kiefer 2005, 279, 435–436, 690.

ful decades are portrayed briefly. The historical background is then followed by a discussion concerning the theoretical basis of the way purity can function as an identity marker in society.

Chapter 2 deals with the purity regulations and the way they developed in ancient Judaism. It starts with the instructions in the Torah and the meaning of purity for the Temple in Jerusalem as the bases for further developments, which include the sociological factors of purity in the society of the late Second Temple period. During that period, practices became more of an issue in the private sphere and influenced the societal hierarchy. However, Jewish purity concepts were not unique phenomena during the Graeco-Roman periods. Purity had a crucial role in religious and political rites in Greek, Roman, and Near Eastern societies, and that is discussed as well. The rabbinic sources on the subject are explored at the end of the chapter, as they provide important context for the associated material culture.

Chapter 3 offers an overview of the literary sources concerning the concept of purity. It follows the development of a 'purity literature,' which emerged in the Tanakh during the Hellenistic periods. The sources discussed are texts from the Hellenistic period until the first century AD, including those by Diaspora authors. The selected texts were chosen for their direct references to purity and purity practices. That literature enables us to trace a chronological development of the role of purity in society from the Hellenistic period to Roman times. As literary sources are usually produced and used by an elite, the subsequent chapter on material culture conveys an insight into purity practices of a wider range of society and laypeople.

The section on material culture in Chapter 4 includes a detailed description of chalkstone vessels, ossuaries, ritual stepped pools, and pottery. The various objects and installations are presented

according to their typology, chronology, production methods, and geographical distribution; the discussion includes the use of these objects and their role in society. The knowledge of the material culture of the typical 'Jewish household' is crucial for Chapter 5, which explores the archaeological evidence on Tall Zirā'a.

Since the chalkstone vessel found at Tall Zirā'a are the core of this research, the archaeological work on the tall and the findings are presented in great detail in Chapter 5. The chalkstone vessels are described according to the established typology and integrated into the chronology. Further, the fact that Tall Zirā'a's was a gentile environment leads to a discussion of when and why Jews lived in that settlement. Thus, relevant archaeological material such as architectural relics, pottery, and coins are also part of the discussion.

In order to set Tall Zirā'a in its regional context, Chapter 6 presents the history of Jewish settlements in Transjordan and the related archaeological evidence. Again, that evidence includes chalkstone vessels, certain types of pottery, ossuaries, and ritual stepped pools, and the chapter demonstrates that the geographical distribution of the objects and installations goes beyond the boundaries known from previous research.

Chapter 7 on Jewish material culture in various Diaspora communities completes the picture and demonstrates that the discussed material culture found its boundaries of distribution farther away from Eretz-Israel. Chapter 8 combines the analysis of the texts, the material culture, and the case study of Tall Zirā'a within the theoretical framework and offers a new approach to the study of ancient Judaism, its material culture, and religious developments.

1. HISTORY AND METHODOLOGY

This work defines purity as a means of Jewish self-definition, beginning with the Hellenistic period. Exploiting the systematic adherence to purity as a political instrument can be ascribed to the Hasmonean dynasty, but the material culture associated with Jewish purity practices peaked during the Herodian reign. The basic chronological timeline of this study begins with the Maccabean revolt in 167 BC and ends with the destruction of the Temple, until max. 100 AD but owing to the scope of literary sources, evidence that dates prior to or after the nominal timeline might also be cited.

1.1. Terminology

Crucial for this book is a critical view of the terms related to nations and ethnicity, as well as the concept of archaeological material culture. The historical and sociological processes which fostered the idea of purity as a mark of Jewish identity from the Hellenistic period onwards, including the definition

Prior to a survey of the historical background, a brief discussion concerning relevant terminology is in order. As the theories about the ancient world and the language used to describe it are mainly modern academic constructs, they have to be set in context and explained. Moreover, since this publication deals with geographical regions many of which are labelled differently than they were in antiquity, certain geographical terms used in the work are explained. Only then, will the historical overview and the language used become coherent.

of ethnicity and group boundaries, are usually categorized in modern terminology. Moreover, geographical terms change with, among other factors, political strategies and cultural attributions, as well as over time; so to be clear about certain territories, the geographic labelling has to be dealt with as well.

1.1.1. Nation(s) and Nationalism / Ethnicity

The national state as we know it today is a modern invention associated with the age of industrialization³. However, aspects of a certain ‘national sentiment’ date earlier. The basis for those group identifications is a society with existing social hierarchies and divisions of labour⁴. There are several aspects in regard to central definitions of ‘national sentiment’:

- Territory
- Shared culture
- Historical memory and common myths

These aspects are comparable to features of an ethnic community, which include: a shared name and history, cultural habits, association with a defined territory, communal solidarity, and a common myth of descent. Ancient societies such as the Greeks and the Jews shared some of these ideas and relied on a common (imagined) ancestry, history, culture, religion, and specific territory, although they do not answer to the modern definition of nationalism⁵. The Greek term *ethnos* refers to the character or mentality of a particular group of people. That term became popular with the writings of Herodotus (490/480–430/420 BC), who ascribed specific social phenomena to Medians, Libyans, and Spartans. *Ethnos* can further refer to religious groups, gender,

3 In E. Gellner’s theory, the premise for modern nationalism is the participation of large parts of society in high culture, which necessitates a high level of literacy, education, and common forms of communication. This common sense of culture is the basis for political unity, see Gellner 1983,

39–43. This common sense creates a norm, which for the idea of the nation-state despite language barriers, see also Anderson 2006, 135.

4 Goodblatt 2006; Gellner 1983, 5, 138.

5 Goodblatt 2006, 11; Salazar 1998, 116.

or tribes⁶. However, as it relies on social constructs and subjective perception, not only in the universal sense owing to time and space, ‘ethnic identity’ is constantly changing. Thus, individuals are flexible in their ethnic and social definitions, from both an outsider’s perspective and in their own perception⁷. The definitions and the aspects of national and ethnic identity are constantly blurred since they share common features. Moreover, modern national states tend to use the idea of ethnicity to create loy-

alty towards the state. A clear distinction between nation(s), nationalism, and ethnicity is neither possible nor helpful. The use of the word nation in the context of ancient societies and in this work implies different associations than the national state after the age of industrialization. Owing to the lack of alternatives with which to describe this kind of concept of society, the term nation is used throughout the work in its non-modern sense.

1.1.2. Material Culture

Owing to its role in everyday life, material culture provides the key to identifying ethnic boundaries and beliefs. Whereas textual sources were produced and used by an elite and were not accessible to a mainly illiterate society, material culture was part of every household. The question of characterizing ethnic identity according to certain objects, such as pottery, has been an integral part of archaeology since the nineteenth century. Decorative styles and forms of pottery can be associated with particular ethnic groups. The analysis of pollen, seeds, or bones can help to identify dietary habits and architectural features can suggest a favoured house form. Archaeology in its early stages was influenced by the burgeoning nationalism in Europe and was used to trace the ‘origins’ of a nation via geographical units of material culture. In Germany, G. Kossinna’s approach to settlement archaeology, which should enable the identification of ‘archaeological cultures’ was later used to legitimize German superiority and land expansion by the National Socialist movement. Thus, archaeological research in recent years, as well as archaeological theory, grew cautious about the utilization of the concept of ethnic identity according to material culture. A critical theoretical approach in archaeology has pointed out that material culture does not function *a priori* as an ethnic identity marker. The material used to make objects, for example, is much more influenced by the available local resources⁸. Archaeological re-

search in Germany after 1945 took an a-theoretical approach to the subject, avoiding former theories such as G. Kossinna’s ‘siedlungsarchäologische Methode’, but the theory of material culture continued to be a prominent feature in Anglo-American archaeology. G. Childe adopted G. Kossinna’s ideas, but focused not only on territory and settlements but also on the cultural traits of a group and its social norms and notions. He interpreted material cultures in their chronological and historical context, so as to identify them with a particular culture. This enabled archaeology to distinguish groups and cultural entities and thus to reconstruct developments such as migration, conquests, and trade. Unlike the earlier assumptions that associated material culture with ethnicity and territory, new archaeological theories defined the concept of a group’s culture and ethnicity as one of shared ideas and beliefs which result in a normative lifestyle. As noted earlier, ethnicity is the idea of a common identity and is neither fixed nor stringent. Archaeological theories further raised awareness of cultural adaptivity to explain and interpret ancient material with our modern approach to the world⁹.

Despite all the justified criticism, material culture is never random. Objects result from a productive process connected to a certain activity. Objects had an integral part in society and social practices. Material culture reflects the knowledge and technology of a group through its production processes.

6 Burke 2005, 111–112; Emberling 1997, 301–302.

7 Goodblatt 2006, 11; Hall 1997, 19, 25, 28–29. The shared ancestry is a social factor as well, rather than a biological one. It enables the community to integrate groups or individuals larger than their own family or tribe, see Emberling 1997, 302.

8 Bernbeck 1997, 26–31; Hall 1997, 111, 129–130; Jones 1997, 1–8, 13–14.

9 Bernbeck 1997, 29; Jones 1997, 24–25, 123. The definition of ethnicity is an ongoing debate; the different approaches, and definitions are presented in Jones 1997, 56–83; further Shanks – Tilley 1992, 117.

In a social context, an object can function as a communicator by bearing symbolic significance, and some prestigious objects might well express power

1.1.3. Geographical Terms

The definition of the principal countries cited throughout this work differs greatly in Classical literature and modern states. Furthermore, even in the Classical sources, the designation is highly dependent on the time it was written.

For the mainly Jewish-inhabited areas of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, the term Eretz-Israel is used. The Land of Israel in this context includes Judaea, Galilee, and Peraea. The Jewish settlement expansion towards the north including the Galilee, the Golan, and parts of Transjordan can be dated to the second and first centuries BC the days of the Hasmonean Kingdom. Alexander Jannaeus further included the coastal plain into its territory (76 BC). However, the coastal cities remained primarily Graeco-Roman in character¹¹. Only speaking of Judaea would ignore the other territories that belonged to the Hasmonean political and religious entity and later to the Herodian Kingdom. The term Palestine for the whole region would be historically incorrect because the naming of the region as Syria Palestina dates to the second century AD, thus later than most of the material discussed in this work¹². Nor is the modern term Israel appropriate because it can be read as the modern State of Israel, which excludes integral parts of Judaea, nowadays the West Bank. Moreover, Eretz-Israel, or the Land of Israel, incorporates symbolic value. The Land of Israel was the territory where the Jewish halakha was in force and adhered to¹³.

Transjordan is another problematic term throughout the text which needs territorial definition. During the Classical periods, the land beyond the River Jordan can be differentiated into several different areas which were mainly under Hasmonean/Herodian, Nabatean, or Decapolis League control. It is therefore tricky to associate the name Transjordan with particular borders or regions. Unlike Syria, Judaea,

and hierarchies. In certain cases, these aspects lead to ethnic identity being reflected in the archaeological record¹⁰.

and Eretz-Israel, Transjordan was not an autonomous region, but was always divided into different political territories. When the term Transjordan is used, it describes the region beyond the River Jordan, including the Peraea, the area north of the Peraea, and the southern (Nabatean) territory. The designation can be loosely compared to the modern boundaries of the Hashemite Kingdom, although the eastern part of modern Jordan does not play any part in the present study.

The definition of Syria differs in both its political sense and textual description. Under the Ptolemaic rule, *Coele Syria* included Judaea, Samaria, Galilee, Iudamaea, and the coastal plain¹⁴. Later, in Strabo's *Geography*, Syria is divided into Seleucis, Coele Syria, Phoenicia, and Judaea. Coele Syria is said to be the valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, including the Sea of Galilee (Strab. XVI 2, 16). Several Jewish sources use the term for all of southern Syria, and Polybius (ca. 210–120 BC) defined *Coele Syria* as the land west of Anti-Lebanon¹⁵. The Hasmonean conquest under John Hyrcanus I and Alexander Jannaeus incorporated the territories described as part of Syria during the Ptolemaic era¹⁶. In rabbinic literature, Syria was used as a halakhic term for a region outside the Land of Israel, where purity regulations were still in force. The term is therefore not generally limited to the region north of Judaea and Galilee. However, in early rabbinic texts such as the Mishna and the Tosefta, Syria is sometimes used more explicitly for the territory north of the Galilee, and not generally for all regions outside the Eretz-Israel¹⁷.

Thus, the term Syria is used herein for the area north of the Galilee, as most of the included material dates to the Hasmonean and Herodian dynasties when the rule of Judaea incorporated the former Syrian regions under Ptolemaic rule.

10 Hall 1997, 132; Shanks – Tilley 1992, 131–133.

11 Safrai 2018, 49.

12 Ben-Eliyahu 2019, 23–29.

13 Safrai 2018, 79. Not meant is the modern political approach to the term Eretz-Israel, which associates a political claim towards the territory.

14 Sasse 2004, 103.

15 Bietenhard 1977, 220–261, 227–230; Gafni 1984, 5.

16 Schäfer 2010, 78.

17 Safrai 2018, 113–114.

1.1.4. Diaspora

The term Diaspora is both geographical and symbolic. The terminology derives from the Greek *διασπορά* (dispersion), which was used in antique Jewish and Christian sources exclusively for the dispersion of Jews¹⁸. Generally, it defines Jewish settlements outside Eretz-Israel, where the land was or is autonomously Jewish. Historically, this was the case during the First and Second Temple periods and in modern times since the establishment of the State of Israel¹⁹. During the late Second Temple period, large numbers of Jews settled outside Eretz-Israel, outnumbering the ones living in Judaea, the Galilee, and other Jewish territories²⁰. The various Jewish communities in the Near East, Africa, Asia Minor, and Europe had existed for generations and each had its own history and traditions, so it is challenging to find a definition of Diaspora that fits all. Moreover, the use of the term Diaspora was still valid after the end of the Jewish autonomy in Eretz-Israel in 70 AD.

1.1.5. Jew/Judaeans/Israelite

The Greek term *Ἰουδαῖοι* (*Ioudaioi*), the Latin *Iudaeus*, or Hebrew *Yehudi* referred primarily to the inhabitants of Judaea and described an *ethnos*. In late Second Temple period texts, the term Israel could both mean the nation and the land. The appellation Israel is usually used as a reference in the biblical sense and refers primarily to the tribes of Israel or the time of the United Kingdom under King David. Several scholars have suggested that the words changed their meaning over time. Whereas *Iudaeus* was used as an ethnic-geographic term until the middle or end of the first century BC, it became a description of one's religious affiliation. Conversion to Judaism was described as a change of ethnicity²². From the second century BC on, Greek documents

The early experiences of dispersion, for example, after the destruction of the First Temple, are sometimes cited as exile (*גלות*) in the Tanakh. However, exile and Diaspora are not equivalent and imply different things²¹. Especially in Leviticus, exile is the ultimate punishment for immoral acts done in the Land of Israel (Lev. 20:1–6). Thus, in a religious context, the word can be defined as punishment for misdeeds, whereas Diaspora can also have positive implications. For example, the diasporic experience in Babylonia paved the way towards a new understanding of Judaism and the possibility of living a righteous and good life outside of Eretz-Israel.

In the present study, the term Diaspora is used in describing settlements or communities of Jews living outside of Eretz-Israel. Although the same word is used for all such communities, it is not by any means suggesting that they were all the same, as clearly there were great variations among them.

from the Diaspora use the term *Ἰουδαῖοι* to refer to local citizens who probably never lived in Judaea. Thus, the term referred to religion and ethnicity rather than to geographical origin²³. Nevertheless, the geographical meaning was accepted during that time and could also be used without regard to an individual's religious affiliation²⁴.

Politically, the Hasmoneans and the Herodian dynasty favoured the name Judaea for their state, even though both kingdoms extended the original territory of the biblical Judah²⁵. The term Israel is used mainly in Jewish texts of the Hellenistic and Roman eras and in those of the rebels during the Great Revolt in 66–70 AD. The coins minted during the revolt are stamped as *ḥeqel yiśrāel*. The rebel

18 Van Unnik 1993, 80–81.

19 Stern 2007, 637.

20 Stern, 1974, 117.

21 Van Unnik 1993, 79–81.

22 However, S. Mason argues that the term ethnicity cannot be compared to the contemporary meaning of the word in antiquity, see Mason 2007, 480, 483, 491.

23 Ethnic terms such as Greeks, Germans, or Romans were simultaneously used in different geographical areas as well

as for people who never actually lived in Greece, Germany, or Rome, see Mason 2007, 510–512. *Vice versa*, the Greek *polis* (city) and its *chora* (surrounding territory) were not defined by territory, but by the people who lived in the city and its hinterland. Only the residents can make a *polis*, and inside a Greek city, many people of different *ethnos* would have dwelled, see also Ben-Eliyahu 2019, 97.

24 Ben-Eliyahu 2019, 20–21; Cohen 1999, 70–81, 105.

25 Goodblatt 2006, 121.

leader of the Second Revolt, Shimon bar Kokhva, used the term Israel in his letters²⁶. In speaking of the time of both the Great Revolt and the Bar Kokhva Revolt, the term can either refer to the political regime or the *ethnos*. The use of Israel instead of Judaea by the rebels could imply that they wanted to distinguish themselves from the Hasmonean and Herodian realms, which were associated with Roman rule. The later naming of the region as Syria Palestina under Hadrian after the Bar Kokhva Revolt is very rarely referred to in Jewish sources. The term Palestine appears only three times in rabbinic

literature, which uses the term Israel rather than Judaea (or Palestine) as those texts deal with a larger territory that includes the Galilee²⁷.

In this work, the modern English term ‘Jew/s’ is used as a general term for Jewish individuals in Eretz-Israel and the Diaspora communities, and the term Judaeian is only employed in a geographical context. The term Israelite is used in its biblical sense, that is, for the members of the twelve tribes or to refer to people who dwelled in the Kingdom of Israel during the Iron Age and Persian period.

1.2. Historical Background

In Eretz-Israel and in the southern Levant at large, several political systems and cultural influences were continuously present. From the Hellenistic period on, there were ever more frequent political and cultural changes. The conquest of Alexander the Great in 332 BC was particularly significant from a historical perspective, as profound changes in the society’s structure and religious concepts followed upon his arrival in the Levant. After Alexander’s death, the lands in the Near East were divided between the Ptolemies in the south and the Seleucids in the north²⁸. Whilst the Ptolemies were less interested in Hellenizing those regions, the subsequent Seleucid rulers (200–135 BC) forced Hellenizing programs on the captured areas, including Eretz-Israel and granted privileged status to the Greek *ethnos*. However, there were no attempts to force changes on the other ethnicities in the regions, which included the Arabs, the Syrians, and the Jews.

The Seleucid king Antiochus III allowed the Jews to continue to support the Temple cult and to follow their ancestral laws²⁹. Nevertheless, according to the Books of the Maccabees there were unwelcome changes in Jerusalem during that period, wherein the city was changed into a Hellenistic *polis* (city), which was detrimental to the political

standing of the conservative religious Jewish communities³⁰. The most important change in the Seleucids’ political agenda was ascribed to the rule of Antiochus IV (175–164 BC). Whereas Antiochus III had granted special rights to the Jews, especially the elite in Jerusalem, Antiochus IV banned the practice of Jewish ancestral rites, which resulted in the Maccabean Revolt (166/167 BC). That revolt, which would be followed by the beginning of the Hasmonean reign, was focused mainly on concern for the Temple, the religious life, and fellow (pious) Jews. Mattathias, a priest from Modi’in, who refused to sacrifice to the pagan gods, started the revolt by killing a fellow Jew who was about to do so (1 Macc. 2, 1ff). The revolt, which was also triggered by an economic crisis and high taxes, drew mostly *hasidym* (pious Jews) to fight with the Maccabean family³¹.

The rebellion achieved the renewed right to practice Jewish ancestral rites and the rededication of the Temple (2 Macc. 11, 27–28). After the death of Antiochus VII, Judaea gained full autonomy³². Subsequently, the Hasmonean rulers began a campaign of territorial expansion. Owing to the growing extent of the Hasmonean territory, the kingdom consisted of heterogeneous Jewish and

26 Ben-Eliyahu 2019, 24.

27 Ben-Eliyahu 2019, 23–29; Goodblatt 2006, 133–134, 136–137.

28 Hengel 1969, 97; Schäfer 2010, 15.

29 Hengel 1969, 12; Schäfer 2010, 33–35; Van Maaren 2022, 52–55, 59.

30 The Second Book of Maccabees (2 Macc. 4, 12) reports that the *gymnasio* as the core of the new *polis* was built near the Temple. For the participation in sports activities at the *ephebeion*, which were held naked, Jews even hid their circumcisions surgically (1 Macc. 1, 14–15).

31 Schäfer 2010, 57–58; Van Maaren 2022, 64.

32 Van Maaren 2022, 66–67.

non-Jewish communities that challenged the political unity. Moreover, under the growing influence of the Roman Empire, community and social bonds were vulnerable. Still, it was during the Hasmonean period that Jewish identity became more stable and cultural boundaries were drawn towards other non-Jewish groups³³. In terms of modern theory on nationalism, nation-building and the importance of nationalism increases when established systems are threatened by a new elite or outside group. Ethnic and cultural boundaries are generally latent in a stable society. Once a society has greater mobility and consequently more influences impacting on it, one's own culture becomes an even more important factor in sustaining one's identity³⁴. The same is true when new political influences arise which challenge established systems, and the Hasmonean rulers made use of aspects of nation-building and ethnic boundary-making to stabilize their reign and promote a firm Jewish self-identification³⁵.

The Hasmonean Empire's nation-building was, on the one hand, the absorption of Diaspora communities into the empire and, on the other hand, the expansion of its territory. The Hasmoneans were the first to establish a Jewish identity that was independent of territory by serving as protectors of Jewish communities. Judah Maccabeus, the initial successor to Mattathias, was the first to protect the Jews in the Levant who faced hostile neighbours, particularly in the Jewish-inhabited areas of the Galilee, Gilead, Transjordan, and Idumaea during Judah's reign (163 to 162 BC). Judah, and later his brother Jonathan Maccabeus (161–142 BC), rescued Jews from the northern region of Jordan who were threatened by the gentile population³⁶. In 153 BC Jonathan became the first Maccabean to be appointed High Priest and he was accepted by the Seleucid dynasty as the head of the Jewish nation (*stratēgos* of Judaea). He was thus able to stabilize the Maccabean rule in terms of religious power and legitimization as well as political recognition of his people.

The following reign under John Hyrcanus I (134–104 BC) is considered the start of the Hasmonean dynasty, with growing power and status that led to several conquests. John Hyrcanus I and his son Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BC) in turn enlarged the Hasmonean hegemony. People in the conquered areas had to pay tribute to the Hasmonean state. Moreover, the displacement of the non-Jewish population and the appropriation of their land led to enormous growth in Jewish land ownership³⁷. In the later days of the Hasmonean Kingdom, territorial expansion led to the integration of local non-Jewish communities. In the classical scheme of nation-building, this strategy of boundary expansion is named incorporation mode. In a development associated with the rule of Aristobulus I (104–103 BC), other ethnicities or groups were expected to 'fuse' into the established nation³⁸. During his short rule, Aristobulus I annexed Ituraea and is said to have forced Judaization on its citizens. The negative reports regarding forced Judaization probably relied on polemic sources. It is reasonable to assume that some Idumaeans and Ituraeans accepted conversion, since Judaism offered them the opportunity to participate in social and political life. Thus, the Hasmonean expansion exploited two modes of nation-building: forced assimilation and the possibility of integration³⁹.

Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BC) continued the expansion and regarded himself as being responsible for Jews living in the Diaspora, so he did his best to establish religious norms and engender a sense of belonging among the Hasmoneans Jewish leadership outside of Judaea. Unlike John Hyrcanus I, he did not attempt to force assimilation but made other *ethnē* pay tribute if they lived in Hasmonean territory. The ensuing peaceful period of the reign of Alexander Jannaeus's widow Salome Alexandra (76–67 BC) was characterized by agricultural prosperity. After her death, the Hasmonean dynasty declined owing to the fratricidal war between Salome Alexandra's two sons, Aristobul II and Hyrcan II.

33 Van Maaren 2022, 111.

34 Gellner 1983, 61.

35 Brass 1991, 43–44. The aspect of political power in the context of ethnic boundary making is described by A. Wimmer: "Ethnic boundary making is driven by hierarchies of power and prestige and is meant to stabilize and institutionalize these hierarchies", Wimmer 2013, 205.

36 This was after Judah Maccabeus established Jewish law again in Jerusalem, cleansed the Temple, and re-established the Temple cult on 25 Kislev 148 (14 December 164 BC), see 1 Macc. 5, 9ff; further Alt 1953, 363–435; Gafni 1984, 10–13; Schäfer 2010, 56–61.

37 Gafni 1984, 13; Schäfer 2010, 76–77.

38 Wimmer 2013, 50; Van Maaren 2022, 116.

39 Regev 2013, 276; Wimmer 2013, 60, 70.

The latter was defeated and Aristobul II took power in 67 BC. Antipater *stratēgos* (military commander) and the father of Herod the Great supported Hyrcan II in the struggle against Aristobul II and helped him to collaborate with the Nabatean king Aretas.

During that time of instability, the Romans under Pompey invaded the Hasmonean state and conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC. Jerusalem and the extended Hasmonean Kingdom became a tributary to the Roman Empire. As Aristobul II as the representative of the Hasmonean state during that time has fought against the Romans, Pompey appointed Hyrcan II the official ruler and High Priest under Roman aegis, where he served until 40 BC. Antipater remained an important figure in the political environment of Jerusalem and made his sons Phasael and Herod *stratēgoi* in Jerusalem and the Galilee, respectively. Herod gained respect in his fight against the rebels and robbers in the Galilee, which ensured him the support of the Romans⁴⁰. However, as the son of the Idumean Antipater and a Nabatean mother, Herod was not part of the Hasmonean dynasty and not Jewish by birth. In order to gain more power in a political environment which was still loyal to the former Hasmonean dynasty, he relied on the support of Rome, which considered him as a useful client king, and with the support of Antonius, appointed him king of Judaea in 40 BC⁴¹.

Unlike the Maccabean and Hasmonean families, Herod had no priestly descent and was unsuitable for the religious office. He named the High Priests, who came mainly from the Diaspora, and most of his political functionaries and officers were non-Jews. Unlike the Hasmonean dynasty, which identified itself as a Jewish/Judaeian autonomous government, Herod's rule was dependent on support from Rome. The Herodian royal family practiced a clear distinction between their appearance in Judaea and in the Graeco-Roman world. Herod presented himself as a Hellenistic king in a Graeco-Roman fashion and financed pagan temples but at the same time enlarged the Temple in Jerusalem and built the structures at the Cave of Machpelah (Hebron) and the place where Abraham settled (Mamre)⁴². His son, the pious Agrippa I, was cherished by the Jewish population for his piety. He participated in the purification rites

and offered daily sacrifices in the Temple but he also sponsored games in Caesarea Maritima and erected statues of his daughters⁴³.

After Herod's death, the kingdom was divided among three of his sons but was later completely overtaken by Roman rule. The regions of the Galilee and Jewish Transjordan (Peraea), which remained under Herodian rule for some time, were part of the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas until 39 AD. Roman rule in the former Herodian territories was suspended during the brief reign of Agrippa I (41–44 AD) but after his death, those regions were integrated into the Province of Syria⁴⁴.

The years under the Roman procurators were characterized by political tensions and upheavals. The first acts against the Roman rule were by rebel groups in the Galilee and the unrest spread from there into other regions. The resistance against the Romans, which was triggered by the imposition of religious restrictions against Jews and economic difficulties, culminated in the First Jewish Revolt. From 67 and 70 AD, the Romans countered the rebellion with the strength of several legions but after a after a siege in 70 AD, the Romans took Jerusalem and destroyed the city as well as the Temple⁴⁵. That crucial event signalled the end of Jewish political rule over Jerusalem and the destruction of the religious centre but also marked the beginning of a new religious development and Jewish resilience.

A new revolt led by Bar Kokhva, the 'son of a star', erupted in Eretz-Israel in 132 AD. The strongholds of this rebellion were in the Judaeian desert, where the rebels hid in caves, and the battles between the Romans and the rebels were comparable to a guerrilla war. The revolt was put down in 134/135 AD and Jerusalem became a gentile city, and Jews were forbidden to settle or even enter. The subsequent establishment of the rabbinic schools in the Galilee, as in Yavneh, mentored by such famous sages as Yoḥanan ben Zakkai, Gamaliel II, and R. Aki-ba, were crucial for Jewish religious development⁴⁶.

During those eventful times, a new approach to religion as well as to ritual purity emerged. The historic events were the bases for those developments, which are explored on the following pages.

40 Ant. Iud. 14, 4, 1; see also Schäfer 2010, 93–97, 101; Van Maaren 2022, 117–118.

41 Schäfer 2010, 99–101, 105.

42 Seeing these both enclosures, pilgrims would have been reminded of the architecture of the Temple and consider Herod the great builder behind the monuments for the Israelite ancestors, see Lee 2003, 13.

43 Gruen 2016, 393–394.

44 Alt 1953, 432; Bietenhard 1977, 241; El-Khoury 2009, 23; Gafni 1984, 21.

45 Schäfer 2010, 148–155.

46 Schürer 1973, 524–525, 543–553.

1.3. Purity as an Identity Marker

Between 167 BC and the successful reign of Salome Alexandra, the Hasmoneans laid the foundation for a new solidarity and unity of the Jewish communities, exploiting both political and religious factors. As Jews were the majority in the Hasmonean Kingdom and held political power, it was useful for other *ethnē* to identify as Jewish. Group affiliations, that is, belonging to a particular *ethnē* was an established concept from the Hellenistic period on. One characteristic of the Jewish religion and group affiliation was observance of purity rites, which became more and more important during Hasmonean times. Hellenistic Jewish literary sources suggest a changed attitude towards purity and its implication for Jewish identity⁴⁷. Texts from that period concerning the Babylonian exile emphasize the separation from others and non-righteous Jews in order to keep the state of purity. Important aspects of purity at that time included table manners, dietary habits, sexual relations, and the priestly service in the Temple. In those texts, purity became the identity marker for those Jews who remained in exile and later reconnected with the Judaeans. Both the authors and the audiences of this literature were among the literate elite, so the development of Jewish identity formation through purity started in that social stratum. It is reasonable to assume that it was only somewhat later that those new implications of purity and its ability to define cultural boundaries began to influence laypeople.

The Hasmonean kings were aware of the power of texts. The first two books of the Maccabees promote central aspects of the Hasmonean rule and political order: the centrality of the Temple in Jerusalem, the separation from Hellenizers (e.g., 1 Macc. 1, 11–15), and the protection of Jews outside the borders of the empire (e.g., 1 Macc. 5, 32). Judith, the heroine in a story from the peak time of the

Hasmonean dynasty, clearly describes purification practices and their implementation for separating from non-Jews. Early every morning Judith immerses herself in a spring to eat her food in purity, dining off her own plates (Jdt. 10, 5; 12, 7–9). Jerusalem and the Temple have a prominent place in the story as the setting where Judith's victory over the Assyrian siege was celebrated (Jdt. 15, 18).

The texts from the Hasmonean period utilized certain symbols and metaphors for Judaism. Those symbols and the textual rhetoric include the historical myths of a common Jewish origin and descent, circumcision, the Hebrew language, dietary habits, the Temple, and ritual purity⁴⁸. Symbols and their repetition were envisioned as a way to foster nation-building and identity formation. They were used to strengthen the connection of the individual to the inner group and simultaneously distinguish it from other groups. Choosing certain objects or rituals for this purpose is usually undertaken by a social elite⁴⁹. One example of an elitist element was language: Hebrew was not widely spoken or understood but had a strong symbolic value. Nevertheless, as the shape of its letters is unique, Hebrew could serve as an emblem of Jewish identity even among the illiterate⁵⁰.

To a great extent, purity symbols reached the people through relevant material culture, which first appeared in the Hasmonean residences and only somewhat later made its way into the private households of ordinary people. The Hasmonean palaces in Jericho serve as the best examples of the combination of the religious and purity needs of the priests and the secular representation of the Hasmonean kingdom: the 'Buried Palace', which probably belonged to the reign of John Hyrcanus I (125–115 BC), the 'Fortified Palace' of Alexander Jannaeus (ca. 93–86 BC), and the Twin Palaces constructed

47 Van Maaren 2022, 120. It is crucial to note that especially the texts from this period suggest the importance of knowledge of the Torah also for laypeople. As C. Newsom puts it concerning the teachings of Deuteronomy: "Shared knowledge of Torah constitutes the community." Newsom 2004, 33. Ezra appears as a teacher of Torah when he reads and interprets the law in public (Neh. 8:1–5). Even though knowledge is crucial for the formation of a community, it is still associated with a certain hierarchy in society, see Newsom 2004, 34.

48 An important aspect of symbols is their flexibility in different contexts and chronological settings. Some of them are still valid in modern times, see Katz – Katz 1977, 488, 494.

49 Those symbols are not necessarily objects but can be language, territory, or certain colours, see Brass 1991, 20–21.

50 Brass 1991, 22; Emberling 1997, 303; Goodblatt 2006, 69; Moore 2015, 246.

under Queen Salome Alexandra (76–67 BC) for her sons Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. In contrast to the Herodian palaces, they were modest monumental buildings with only limited public spaces. All of the Hasmonean palaces had several ritual stepped pools. The earliest documented chalkstone vessel was found in the palace of Salome Alexandra. Thus, the Hasmonean elite apparently practiced purity rites before they became a social norm⁵¹.

The material culture related to purity became popular on a larger scale and in ‘normal’ households during the reign of Herod and his successors⁵². At that point, most of the Jewish territories were under Roman rule. The population in the territories was already diverse under Herod’s rule and the Roman presence increased after the revolt. There was no longer a Jewish majority, so the ethnic boundary was less stable than during the time of the Hasmonean Kingdom⁵³. Unlike the Hasmonean dynasty, the Herodian royal family practiced a clear distinction between their appearance in Judaea and in the Graeco-Roman world. In a political system in which the royal family had a flexible ethnic identity and did not have the upper hand in religious practice, the observance of purity and its symbolic value shifted from the elite towards the public sphere. Some laypeople started to obey the laws of purity as an identity marker to separate themselves from the growing Roman cultural influence⁵⁴. Their ‘household Judaism’, which included locally produced pottery, chalkstone vessels, and ritual stepped pools, dates to the beginning of the first century BC. According to A. M. Berlin, the synchronized production of these household items in special workshops, independent of place and region, gave way to a unified Jewish identity⁵⁵.

Purity as an identity marker functioned in the symbolic sphere through the ideals established in the literary sources and in the physical reality through the material culture. Jewish religious practice needs rites and objects to establish bodily purity, but also requires a state of mind. To acknowledge the symbolic meaning of purity in its role as a cultural symbol, the term ‘imagined purity’ was established in the present study, relying on B. Anderson’s work on ‘imagined communities’ or ‘nations’. Those imagined communities always appear when a group of people forms a community without knowing all the members involved. Thus, all communities bigger than a small village are imagined. The people of those communities will never meet or know all their fellow members. However, those groups or nations share the idea of belonging together and having a certain boundary and shared out-groups⁵⁶. The members have an ideal vision of their community, including a shared history and values, which are not necessarily connected to real events. The ideals and elements of such an imagined community can change over time, as can the ethnic identity itself. This is important as the members of the Jewish community held different identities that were sometimes even ambiguous⁵⁷. The Herodian royal family, for example, practiced a clear distinction between their appearance in Judaea and in the Diaspora, which reflects the flexibility of ethnic identity⁵⁸. The representation of one’s own ethnicity, in this case, Jewishness, can be adapted to different contexts and political and economic interests. It is reasonable to assume that other Jews also played different roles in regard to their Jewishness when in a diasporic society⁵⁹. Comparably, material culture can function differently in every context, and the same item can have various implications.

51 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 406; Regev 2013, 225–226, 230–232, 254–255. For a detailed description and discussion on Hasmonean and Herodian palaces in Jericho, see Regev 2013, 224–265.

52 Emberling 1997, 307; Jones 1997, 91, 97–98; Van Maaren 2018, 434.

53 Van Maaren 2022, 170, 175, 236.

54 Van Maaren 2022, 38.

55 Berlin 2005, 467; Berlin 2013, 168–170.

56 Anderson 2006, 6–7.

57 Baker 2004, 122, 125; Stern 1994, 136–137; The concept of ‘imagined communities’ can go either way. Whereas in the given interpretation, one group defines itself in an im-

agined and idealized manner, a group can also define another group in imagined ways. Those definitions given by an out-group to another group can be also idealized or stereotypical without reference to the living reality. S. Stern made this observation in particular for rabbinic writings, which present non-Jews in a stereotypical and unreal manner, see Stern 1994, 6.

58 Lee 2003, 13.

59 Emberling 1997, 307; Jones 1997, 91, 97–98; Van Maaren 2018, 434.

B. Anderson's theory was originally applied to modern developments and national movements, such as the beginning of industrialization, which was a time when some hierarchies and world orders lost their meaning⁶⁰. However, owing to certain parallels, the aspects of the imagined community can be applied to ancient Jewish society by using the theory of 'New Analogy', originally developed by R. Ascher. Analogies in archaeology reconstruct human behaviour by comparing it to other sources –both literary and material. For a useful analogy, one might consider whether the living conditions and the technological standard of individuals and their society are comparable, which might not have been the case during Second Temple Judaism and the Industrial era. Still, the many political and socio-economic changes people experienced during the late Hellenistic period and the loss of old traditions can be compared to the new developments of the modern world⁶¹. Jews made use of certain aspects of (modern) nationalism: tales of common ancestry, religion, culture, and language, all of which were rather imagined than real. However, A. Baumgarten doubts that the concept of imagined community can be applied to Jews of the Second Temple period. He argues that Jewish identity during those years was subject to significant variants, and that the modern view of that antique identity is rather an idealized perception⁶². A. Baumgarten relied mainly on the textual evidence of the Second Temple period, which defined Jews or the 'Jewish nation' more as a legal entity rather than as a social community⁶³. However, the Jewish people of the late Hellenistic

and early Roman periods were probably aware of their differences and the resultant ambiguities. Still, they shared religion and values and had a religious centre in Jerusalem⁶⁴. In this concept of identity, purity and its related objects functioned as unifying elements of an imagined Jewish community. The objects combined the physical and immaterial aspects of (religious) symbols as well as their flexibility and ability to communicate cultural boundaries⁶⁵.

Purity and its rules were not followed with the same intensity or according to the same standards in the different social entities but nonetheless enabled Judaeans and Jews in different contexts and regions to rely on a shared idea, even though they never met.

60 Specifically, B. Anderson mentions three main aspects for the appearance of modern societies and nations: first the access to knowledge, which was mainly in the hands of a religious elite; second the 'natural world order', which was a monarchic hierarchy; and third simultaneity of cosmology and history, see Anderson 2006, 36.

61 Asher 1961, 317–325; Bernbeck 1997, 92–94; Goodblatt 2006, 26–27.

62 Baumgarten 2004, 17–36. Among the main aspects of modern national identity is the commemoration of fallen soldiers, rebels, or war stories as a collective remembrance. According to A. Baumgarten, this aspect is lacking in the ancient Jewish self-constitution. Despite the Maccabean revolt and

other later rebellions, the remembrance of the ones who fell in battle or memories of fights are not to be found in the Jewish historiography. He cites only one inscription in a synagogue in Antioch that mentions the memory of "holy Maccabees", which dates to the third century AD, see Baumgarten 2004, 28–31. A. Baumgarten's focus on the commemoration can be explained by B. Anderson's statement: "No more arresting emblems of the modern culture of nationalism exist than cenotaphs and tombs of Unknown Soldiers", see Anderson 2006, 9.

63 Baumgarten 2004, 31–32.

64 Berlin 2005, 468.

65 Brass 1991, 100; Katz – Katz 1977, 495.

2. JEWISH PURITY PRACTICES DURING THE LATE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD

by *Friederike Schöpf*

“וְלִהְיוּ לָכֵן בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין הַחֵל וּבֵין הַטְּמֵא וּבֵין הַטָּהוֹר:”

“For you must distinguish between the sacred and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean¹.”

The purity laws in the Jewish religion as laid out in the Torah focused on the Temple and the priests and concerned laypeople only when they went to the Temple to bring sacrifices or participate in religious festivals. However, during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, purity became a public and hierarchical issue. The religious system shifted towards a more individual approach. The purity requirements led to important concerns for the household in regard to the quality of food, sexual relations, birth, and death. Each individual and family was committed to following the commandments

and religious observances, which formerly had applied only to the Temple and the religious elite².

Modern knowledge regarding early Jewish societies and their members comes primarily from written sources, some of which have to be treated circumspectly as they emerged only after 70 AD³. Nonetheless, the biblical background and the later rabbinic sources are crucial to understanding the laws and practices of purity. The development of the material culture and ideological concern with purity is always associated with its religious roots.

2.1. Defining Purity and Impurity

The concepts of purity and impurity are defined in the Torah, mainly in the Priestly Code (P), that is, Lev. 11–15 and Num. 19⁴. The relevant terms include the root טמא for impure or unclean, and טהר the root for pure⁵, as well as נדה, the specific term for the impurity of menstruating and postpartum women⁶.

The priestly code describes ritual impurity as it applies to the human body at different stages of life. Ritual impurity was part of everyday life and unavoidable⁷. The contagion of people and objects owing to impurity was only temporal but mandated exclusion from the Temple and certain rites while one was defiled. The principal causes of impurity were:

- Contact with carcasses of certain animals (Lev. 11:24–40)
- Childbirth (Lev. 12:1–8)
- Skin diseases (Lev. 13:1–46; 14:1–32)
- Fungi on clothes and in houses (Lev. 13:47–59; 14:33–53)
- Genital discharges (Lev. 15:1–33)
- Corpse impurity (Num. 19:11–22)

The priests were obligated to maintain the separation between the pure and the impure (Lev. 10:10; reinforced in Ezek. 44:23), as the people of Israel as well as the non-Israelites who lived among them in Eretz-Israel had to be aware of their ritual status

1 Lev. 10:10.

2 Cohen 2006, 66.

3 Miller 2015, 179.

4 Balberg 2014, 20–21.

5 Less used are the roots זכה, ברה, and זקק, see Paschen 1970, 19–22.

6 During the Persian and late Hellenistic period, e.g., in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the term is not only associated with sexual unclean-

ness or impurity of women but generally with ritual and moral impurity, see Lichtenberger 1980, 85.

7 J. Neusner defines the causes of impurity as anomalies in everyday life. Death, menstrual flows, discharges, etc. were defined as aberrations of nature, see Neusner 1984, 74–75. This interpretation of mainly bodily causes for impurity is rather odd. Menstruation, death, and childbirth are certainly not abnormalities.

in general, (Lev. 17:15, 20:2, Num. 19:10). For example, gentile war captives had to be purified from corpse impurity and murder before entering the Eretz-Israel (Num. 31:19).

The duration of the defilement defined the severity of the impurity or the healing time in cases of disease. The longest period of impurity was related to childbirth and further depended on the gender of the newborn. For male infants the impure state lasted for 33 days, beginning after the circumcision on the eighth day (Lev. 12:24). For female infants the impure state began after two weeks and went on for 66 days (Lev. 12:5–8). The cleansing ritual and the sacrifices associated with both female and male infants were the same (Lev. 12:6–8). Diseases, genital discharges, and fungi could cause defilement for an unknown period of time and had to be examined regularly by the priests (Lev. 13–14). All these impurities called for specific purification procedures, which included bathing, washing one's clothes, and offering sacrifices⁸. However, the associated verb רחץ (to wash) for the act of bathing does not describe full-body immersion, which would be stipulated by the word טבל⁹.

Another kind of impurity was caused by horrendous acts, such as sexual sins (e.g., Lev. 18:22–24), idolatry (e.g., Lev. 19:31; 20:1–3), and the shedding of blood (e.g., Num. 35:33–34), but such acts would not have been matters that involved purity of the body and could not have been dealt with through rituals. This 'moral' impurity was called תועבה (abomination) and was used together with the verb הניף (to pollute) in the Torah. However, the exclusion of the sinner from the sanctuary was not part of the punishment¹⁰. The Torah states that the long-term consequences in serious cases of moral impurity

would be expulsion from Eretz-Israel (Lev. 18:28). On a sociological level, the immoral person might be shunned¹¹. Although, those heinous acts did not exclude the individual from the Temple and worship, if sins and impurities arose in the Land of Israel and were not atoned for or subjected to purification, in the long run the cult could have become ineffective¹².

New additions to the laws of purity regarding, e.g., objects and materials are found in the rabbinic writings. According to several rabbinic references, stone, dung, and unfired clay remain pure even in impure conditions, an assumption that was probably based on earlier practice. Since the Torah defines only objects and vessels made of metal, wood, leather, bone, and pottery liable to defilement (Lev. 11:32–33; Num. 31:22–23), it could be assumed that those made of dung, stone, and earthenware were not. Those materials are cited regularly in the same order, as in mOhal 5:5:

“היו כלי גללים, כלי אבנים, כלי אדמה, הכל טהור.”

“If there were vessels made of dung, vessels of stone, or vessels of [unbaked] clay, everything remains clean.”

8 Klawans 1998, 391–397; Klawans 2006, 121.

9 The verb is used in Deuteronomistic and Priestly sources for the immersion of animals and objects in water or other liquids such as blood, (Lev. 14:6; Num. 19:18; 1 Sam. 14:27), parts of the body (Lev. 4:6, 17; 9:9, 14, 14:16; Deut. 33:24; Jos. 3:15) or full-body immersion (2 Kings 5:14), see also Adler 2018, 3. For a further discussion on the vocabulary used especially in the Bible to describe washing, and cleansing, see Lawrence 2006, 25–26.

10 The Torah, Josephus, and rabbinic literature do not require that an individual be excluded from the Temple, but Philo did insist on such a consequence. In Philo's view, sacrifices are only valid when brought in a state of bodily and moral perfection. One can assume that Philo was influenced by the Greek moral concept, which banned sinners from pagan temples. Ancient Greek texts

and inscriptions in Asia Minor suggest that in some temples excluded murderers, thieves, or adulterers. Harrington 2019, 17; Regev 2004, 393.

11 According to Lev. 20:1–6, YHWH punishes persons who commit adultery together with their families and ancestors by erasing them from the nation. Interestingly, this also included non-Jews who dwelled in the land of Israel.

12 Harrington 2019, 17; Klawans 1998, 391–415. The division between ritual and moral purities can be blurry. Ambiguous regulations led to different interpretations regarding the different types of impurities. Philo, e.g., intertwined both kinds of impurity, as did several sectarian texts of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, see Harrington 2019, 34–35; Ottenheim 2000, 130; Regev 2004, 395–396.

For the ritual washing of hands before eating, mYad 1:2 states:

”בכל הכלים נותנין לידים, אפלו בכלי גללים, בכלי אבנים,
בכלי אדמה.”

“Water may be poured over the hands out of any kind of vessel, even out of vessels made of animal

dung, out of vessels made of stone or out of vessels made of clay.”

The purity of materials is emphasized in the tannaitic literature, which reflects the wish to remain pure even after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD¹³.

2.2. Practising Purity

The purity practices during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods were based on Leviticus and Numbers 19, which associate most of relevant rites with washing rituals and the exclusion from the Sanctuary for a certain period of time. From the late Hellenistic period on, new purity practices were established which expanded on the Levitical rulings and opened the way to a new material culture. According to the archaeological record, the large number of ritual stepped pools and chalkstone vessels in Jewish settlements throughout Eretz-Israel reflect a new culture in regard to ritual purity.

Washing in or with water remained the principal way to regain a state of purity. Bathing in water (רהץ במים) is mentioned on several occasions in Leviticus (14:8–9; 15: 5–10, 19), often in connection with changing and/or washing clothes¹⁴. The shift towards full-body immersion started in the late Hellenistic era. Archaeological data date the earliest ritual stepped pools to the late second or early first century BC. Such pools, or מקוואות (*miqwāōt*), were common from the first century BC on. These installations, which had steps leading down into the water, thus enabling full-body immersion, have been excavated in both urban and rural contexts¹⁵. Sources from the first century AD, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls (CD Col. 10) and Josephus (Ant. Iud. 3, 11, 3), define

immersion as the most effective purity rite. In regard to the texts, there was apparently no distinction between the verb רהץ, its Greek equivalent λούω, and טבל, as both verbs were used to describe purification by washing and immersion¹⁶.

The emergence of ritual stepped pools was probably strongly influenced by Hellenistic bathing culture, which was popular across large parts of the Mediterranean world. The model for the ritual stepped pools could have been the Hellenistic hip baths, which were introduced in the late sixth century BC. Those hip baths or bathtubs were small and narrow installations, with one step like a seat in the back¹⁷. They have been found in several Hellenistic period sites in Israel, which suggests widespread use during the late second century BC. The introduction of hip baths could have changed the way the local communities interpreted the action of washing one’s body. Full-body immersion in an architecturally distinguished ritual bath helped to differentiate between the profane act of washing and the ritual act of purification through immersion¹⁸. It was not only the practice of washing that changed during that time: Whereas the Torah says that a person who washes in living water has to wait until the evening to be pure (Lev. 11:24–28), the ritual stepped pools found adjacent to oil and wine presses indicate that

13 The extent of the writings on purity is reflected in the Mishna Tractate כלים (*Kelim*), which deals with the purity of vessels and takes up 30 chapters; Tractate אהלות (*Ohalot*), which deals with corpse impurity, has 18 chapters, see also Klawans 2000, 94.

14 For example, in the case of a leprosy person: Lev. 14:8–9; washing after touching or using an object that came into contact with a person with discharge or a *zāb*: Lev. 15:5–13, 16–17; washing after sexual intercourse: Lev. 15:18; washing after touching or using objects that came into contact with a menstruating woman: Lev. 15:20–22, 27; the priests preparing the Red Heifer: Num. 19: 7–8; washing after nocturnal emission: Deut. 23:12.

15 The pools could be connected to agricultural installations, such as grape and olive presses. The production of wine and oil was connected to liquids, which are the most likely substances to contracting and transmitting impurities, see Magness 2011, 16–17.

16 Adler 2018, 5, 10.

17 Adler 2018, Fig. 32.

18 Adler 2018, 2–17; Regev 2013, 252; Trümper 2010, 530, 535.

workers could begin or return to work immediately after immersion rather than waiting until the evening. Thus, they were able to achieve a certain level of purity right after immersion, which allowed them to handle agricultural products¹⁹.

Another purity rite connected to water is the washing of hands. Although it is easier to perform than bathing, the Torah only mentions it once in Lev. 15:11:

“וְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִגַע-בּוֹ הַזָּב וַיְדַיֵּי לֹא-שָׁטַף בַּמַּיִם וַיִּכְסֶה בְּגָדָיו
וַיִּרְתַּח בַּמַּיִם וַיִּטְמֵא עַד-הָעֶרֶב.”

“If one with a discharge, without having rinsed his hands in water, touches another person, that person shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening.”

In this case, the washing can remove part of the impurity of the person with seminal discharge (*zāb*), so he can interact with his environment without defiling anyone else. Handwashing in connection to purity in Eretz-Israel was not an issue before the early Roman period, but Jewish communities in the Diaspora were aware of the custom even earlier. *The Letter of Aristaeus* 305 and 306 notes that handwashing in the sea before prayers is a habit of all Jews. Josephus wrote that Jews in Egypt would wash their hands in the sea before translating the laws (Ant. Iud. 12, 2, 13)²⁰. Handwashing before eating is associated with the customs of the Pharisees in the Gospels. In

Mk. 7:15, Jesus and his disciples are invited to a Pharisee household, but he refuses to wash his hands before the meal, as the Pharisees would do²¹. While Mk. 7:15 portrays the difference in teaching and practice of Jesus as opposed to the Pharisees, the actual custom of washing hands before eating in Eretz-Israel was probably due to contemporary Graeco-Roman table manners. For instance, Greek and Roman sources refer to handwashing before the pouring of wine and to the use of napkins to wipe the hands²². The earlier practice of handwashing in the Diaspora can be explained by the strong Graeco-Roman influence.

While ritual immersion and washing helped an individual to re-establish purity after defilement, corpse impurity could not be resolved solely by water and waiting. The defilement through contact with a corpse is one of the most serious impurities and lasts seven days²³; moreover, it can be transmitted to other people or objects. A corpse-defiled person who touched another (pure) person defiled the latter for one day. In Numbers (19:14–15), the whole tent in which the dead body lay and any open vessels inside the tent were defiled for seven days. Purification of such individuals could only be achieved through the ritual of the Red Heifer in Jerusalem. The preparation of the ritual ashes of the cow was a matter exclusively to the Temple and the priests. The cow had to be slaughtered and the whole animal had to be burnt (Num. 19:1–10)²⁴. The slaughtering and burning had to take place outside

19 Adler 2007, 75.

20 Lawrence 2006, 57; Safrai – Safrai 2011, 261; Tomson 2019, 114.

21 For a discussion of the account, see Furstenberg 2008.

22 It is likely that handwashing was ‘normal’ for most of the commoners living in Eretz-Israel during the early Roman period, see Furstenberg 2008, 192–193.

23 The transmission of the impurity owing to contact with corpses or dead body parts continues even after burial. Rabbinic thought implies that the dead body emits the impurity in vertical lines, affecting everything underneath and above the corpse. The later rabbinic literature explains how the transmission of impurity caused by the corpse can be stopped by a ‘tent’ to keep the impurity in an enclosed space, with a roof. If a person or a vessel shares this place with a dead body, both are defiled. The case of *מֵאֵהֵל* (overshadowing) can occur when a dead body lies directly above or underneath a person or vessel, e.g., when one stands on a grave, see Maccoby 1999, 3–7; in general, Alon 1977, 226.

24 Balberg 2014, 33; The individuals that participate in preparing the ashes and sprinkling the water must be pure (Num. 19:9). However, the Red Heifer was a subject of discussion in connection with the *טבול יום* (immersed [on that] day) for Pharisees and Sadducees. The Sadducees ruled (mPar 3:7), that the priest must be completely clean and wait until sundown of the day of his immersion to be in a state of purity. The ruling is similar to the passage in Num. 19:7–8, which states that both the priest who touched the cow’s blood, the one who burnt it, and the one who gathered the ashes remained unclean until the evening (*רַטְמָא עַד הָעֶרֶב*). The Pharisees considered it sufficient to just immerse and not wait until sundown. Sectarian writings, as 4QMMT B 13–17 and 4Q277 1 ii 2, agree with the stricter ruling of the Sadducees, see further Birenboim 2009, 260–261.

the ‘camp’, so to speak, outside Jerusalem. The ashes were gathered and stored. Interestingly, the priests involved in the preparation of the offering and the ones who handled the ashes were considered impure²⁵. The prepared ash was mixed with water and sprinkled on the defiled person on the third and the seventh day of the defilement (Num. 19:12)²⁶. According to the Torah, after the seventh day and the last sprinkling, the person had to immerse him/herself in water and wash his or her clothes to be pure again.

According to the Talmud (bYom 2a), the utensils used to perform the rite were made of pure materials:

“[...] כלי גללים, כלי אבנים, וכלי אדמה”

“[...] in dung vessels, stone vessels, and earth vessels”

Further, the Talmud passage notes that the utensils employed are the reason that the house where the ashes are prepared is called בית האבן (the stone house)²⁷, but we do not know whether that passage reflects an actual historical reality²⁸. In any case, the strict rulings concerning the Red Heifer and its exclusivity to Jerusalem provoked a much-debated issue in sectarian as well as rabbinic literature. In regard to diasporic Judaism, that literature (mPar 12:10) states that anyone (except people with doubtful, or double sex, women, and children) to

can sprinkle the ashes. This could have been based on the Pharisaic practice of involving laypersons in the performance of some rituals. Since Pharisees did not interpret the Red Heifer as a sacrifice, they let layman prepare the water for the rite and sprinkle it. The ruling could hint at a more open practice, which enabled people to use the ashes of the Red Heifer outside Jerusalem or after the destruction of the Temple, independent of priests and place²⁹.

The ritual of the Red Heifer and other rites associated with sacrifices were not realizable in everyday life so easier strategies were needed to strengthen religious identity. Dietary practices were among those strategies. A group can reveal aspects of its identity by whether it accepts food processed by outsiders or with whom it is ready to share a table. All of the ancient Jewish groups developed their own dietary practices. The biblical foundation defines the unique standard of food for Israel. Food practices, intermarriage, and idolatry are strongly interwoven (e.g., Ex. 34:15–16). Thus, sharing food with gentile neighbours was difficult, if not impossible, and gentiles often considered Jews unsocial or even misanthropic owing to the social separation caused by their dietary laws³⁰. Such complaints from gentile authors are known throughout the first century BC to the late second century AD³¹. During that period, especially Jews refusal to eat pork was recognized by gentiles and emphasized in Jewish sources. Throughout the Roman Empire, pigs were

25 For a detailed discussion, see Baumgarten 1993. The ritual of the Red Heifer is not the only example of the twofold nature of purity regulations. For example, the paradoxical nature of water lies in the fact that it can either purify or defile. Although water is normally associated with cleansing bodies and objects from ritual impurity, it can transfer impurity to dry foods which are normally not liable to defilement. In Lev. 11:34–38 we read that dry food can only be defiled when it comes into contact with water. The water changes the quality of the food by adding moisture to the dry foodstuff, which makes it liable to impurity, see Ottenheijm 2000, 132.

26 Additionally, in 11QT 49:16–21, and 50:13–16 it is written that one should immerse oneself on the first day of the defilement. This first immersion would enable an unclean individual to eat at least non-sacred food, see Birenboim 2009, 254–255, 258.

27 While according to the Book of Numbers, the preparation of the Red Heifer should take place outside the camp, bYom 2a says that the בית האבן (the stone house) was in the northeastern corner of the Temple courtyard. The Mishna locates the place

of the ritual on the Mount of Olives, which the priests performing the rite and the cow could have reached by a bridge leading from the eastern gate of the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives. The bridge would have ensured that the cow and the priests were safe from corpse impurity, which could be transmitted from underground (mPar 3:6).

28 Tomson 2019, 113.

29 On the nature and performance of the ritual of the Red Heifer, see Birenboim 2009, 268, 271.

30 Rosenblum 2010, 96. In bAZ 8a–b, and tAZ 4:6, the prohibition in regard to participating in a gentile banquet holds even if the invited Jews bring their own food, servants and no gentile would touch their food and drink. The context is limited in this passage to weddings, probably in connection to pagan ceremonies, see further Stemberger 2012, 219. For further analyses of dietary laws and their development, see also Stemberger 2012.

31 Schäfer 1997, 77–81.

the usual sacrificial animal and even played an important role in (Roman) purification rituals, which made the pig an identity marker in Roman culture for both Jews and Romans³².

Food consumption not only distinguished Jews from non-Jews but also defined a hierarchy within the Jewish communities themselves. The priestly class as the purest members of society ate the sacrifices and מעשרות (*tithes*) brought by laypeople³³. The Tosefta notes that the Pharisees would not give offerings and מעשרות to the עם הארץ (*'am hā-āreṣ*, people of the land), would not prepare sacred food with them, and generally ate non-sacrificial meat in a state of purity (tDem 22).

The Essenes are known for their strict dietary and community laws. Members were only allowed to partake of the common food after three years, during which time the postulant was supervised and had to take oaths of piety (Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 7). When the postulant was permitted to eat the common food, he was regarded as a full member, but he was no longer allowed to eat the food of others. The food of the Essenes was described as simple (Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 5) and was placed on a single communal plate which offered only one kind of food, together with bread (Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 5; Philo, Hyp. 11, 11). The described eating habits were archaic compared to the new habits that emerged during the Ptolemaic era when it became usual to use individual plates and bowls. The Essene way might be interpreted as a protest against the 'modern' way of

eating³⁴. The meals were organized in line with the ceremonies taking place in the Temple, including the wearing of special garments (Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 5). Those actions have been identified as attempts to imitate the priestly customs and so enable the Essene community to separate from Jewish society and mainstream institutions. In so doing, they not only excluded outsiders from their meals, but separated themselves from Jewish society³⁵.

Apart from the meagre information in gentile sources that describe Jews who refrained from eating with non-Jews, little is known about the dietary habits of lay people. The rabbinic literature describes the both contemporary people of the land, עם הארץ (*'am hā-āreṣ*), as well of those in the time of the Second Temple Period, as naïve and ignorant³⁶. While the term could have different meanings in the literature of the Tanakh, its first interpretation and use as a synonym for laypeople is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls³⁷. The *'am hā-āreṣ* are portrayed as being unaware or lax regarding impurity, but later rabbinical texts reflect lengthy discussions on the inclusion of the *'am hā-āreṣ* in Temple worship and sacrifices (bHag 3:22a–b). This was even more important during the festivals, which were times when social unity was strengthened (bHag 26a). At least during the pilgrimage festivals, all the members of the society were regarded as הבררים (*hāḇerym*, members of the ritually pure groups), even the *'am hā-āreṣ*, and all participated in the communal meals³⁸.

2.3. The Hierarchy of Purity

The ability to practice purification rites and abide by the laws of purity in everyday life was strongly linked to one's living conditions and status in society. Washing in water, separating from impure house members, and eating proper foods were much easier for priests, who possessed luxury mansions with convenient facilities and sufficient room. This social hierarchy of purity is still reflected in early rabbinic halakhic writings (mHag 2:7), probably dating from

the end of the Second Temple Period. On the lowest level, the *'am hā-āreṣ* are considered impure owing to their indifference towards ritual impurity. Thus, a Pharisee was not allowed to touch the garments of the *'am hā-āreṣ*, which transferred the same level of impurity as a *zāḇ* onto the Pharisee. The garments of a Pharisee were then considered to be like a *zāḇ* impurity for the priests eating heave offerings. Intermingling of those groups was forbidden. The

32 Throughout time, pigs gain even more symbolic value. In rabbinic literature, pork or pigs become a metaphor for foreign rule, see Rosenblum 2010, 96–98, 103.

33 Oppenheimer 1977, 23–25.

34 Furstenberg 2016, 376–377; Harrington 2019, 25; Klawans 2006, 60; Neusner 1984, 705.

35 Baumgarten 1997, 108–109.

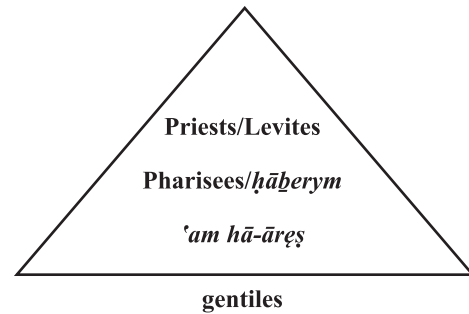
36 Baumgarten 1997, 50.

37 Furstenberg 2015, 61–63.

38 Oppenheimer 1977, 93–95.

presented hierarchy demonstrates the impossibility of becoming a member of a group outside one's own social affiliation. The level of individual purity was determined by one's social group and could not be changed by purification rituals. In a diverse society, the separation helped to recognize groups and maintain the hierarchy. The Temple Mount as the centre of this purity system reflected the social hierarchy³⁹. The religious buildings of the Herodian Temple and their singular architecture shaped a perception of space that could be divided into pure and impure. The platform in front of the Temple, enlarged by Herod's building efforts, accommodated several new courts. The arrangement of different courtyards represented different levels of purity. The outer court was accessible to foreigners and all Jews, except women in a state of impurity; the second court was for Jewish men and women in a state of purity; the third one was for ritually pure male Jews; and the fourth one was for priests in a

state of ritual purity when garbed in their priestly vestments. The inner courtyards were narrower and enclosed by high walls. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies⁴⁰.



Graph 2.1 Schematic representation of the hierarchy of purity

Despite the wish for separation and for maintenance of the social hierarchy, Jewish purity practices did not evolve in a vacuum. There were ongoing influences from other cultures and religions.

2.4. Gentile Influences on Jewish Purity Practice

The idea of purity and impurity was not solely a concept of Israelite or Jewish religious thought. Jewish and gentile conceptions of purity and its practices overlapped. Various early Sumerian and Akkadian texts, dating to the third and second millennia BC, reflect a system of defining pure or impure individuals in terms of access to the temple. For instance, people who ate onions, garlic, or pork were impure, and could not enter a temple. The same was true of men who had a seminal emission at night⁴¹. Moreover, one had to wear clean and proper (*ebbu*)

clothing and be washed and shaved before entering the sanctuary. Several cuneiform texts also note the requirement of washing one's hands before entering the temple or bringing a sacrifice. Physical disabilities could also lead to exclusion from the temple, as could some illnesses, such as leprosy⁴². Bodily discharges were labelled as impure, and a menstruating woman was a *musukkatu*, a woman under taboo (*asakku*). One was not allowed to touch or even approach a *musukkatu*, as one would risk becoming polluted for six days. The menstruating woman was

39 Furstenberg 2015, 50–52, 67; Furstenberg 2016^b, 20. However, the foregoing passage mHag 2:7 emphasizes the personal intention in cases of full-body immersion:

“בגדי עם הארץ מדרס לפרושין. בגדי פרושין מדרס לאוכלי תרומה. בגדי אוכלי תרומה מדרס לקדש. בגדי קדש מדרס לחטאת. יוסף בן יעזר היה חסיד שבכהנה, היתה מטפחתו מדרס לקדש. יוחנן בן גדגדא היה אוכל על טהרת הקדש כל ימיו, היתה מטפחתו מדרס לחטאת.”

(“The garments of an *'am hā-āreṣ* are ‘highly impurifying’ [i.e., impurify even through minor contact, due to assumed discharge] for individuals who are scrupulous with regard to impurity [*peruṣyn*]. The garments of *peruṣyn* are ‘highly impurifying’ for [priests] who eat *terumā* [offerings]; the garments of [those] who eat *terumā* are ‘highly impurifying’ for [those who eat] sacrificial [food]; the garments of [those who eat] sacrificial [food]

are ‘highly impurifying’ for [those dealing with the preparation of the] purification waters. Yosef ben Yo’ezer was the most pious of the priesthood and yet his cloth was ‘highly impurifying’ [of a *zāb*] for [those who ate] sacrificial [food]. Yoḥanan ben Gudge da would eat [non-sacred food while following the laws of] ritual purity for sacrificial food all his days, and his cloth was ‘highly impurifying’ for [those preparing the] purification waters.”)

Both assumptions, that is, the social order of a distinctive group and the individual approach towards purity, existed in parallel during that time frame.

40 Lee 2003, 57–59; McLaren 2013, 98–101.

41 Regulations are listed in the text *Šumma ālu ina mēlê šakin*, see Van der Toorn 1989, 342.

42 Van der Toorn 1989, 342–347.

excluded from the temple and from bringing offerings or sacrifices. During the second millennium BC, the concept of purity was extended to a moral and spiritual sphere. The keeping of the regulations was not only reflected in the physical state of the body but enabled the individual to gain divine grace and separate from everyday life⁴³. In that regard, the tradition of Mesopotamia is somewhat similar to the rulings of the Torah, but the former does not include the concept of corpse impurity.

During the Classical periods, new influences reached the Near East owing to the conquests of Alexander the Great. Like Judaism, the Greek religion defined contact with death or birth and skin diseases as common reasons for impurity. The main consequence of impurity was the exclusion from temples and sanctuaries, which were to be free of death, birth, and the shedding of blood. Sacred areas were to be entered only after cleansing oneself and the sacrificial animals. For example, a dead body polluted the house in which it was lying, as well as the people entering the place. Those rules of impurity appeared in Greek contexts during the sixth century BC. The rite of the scapegoat, also known from the Jewish religion, wherein a scapegoat was sent outside the living area to carry away the impurity of the public, is documented in Athens in the fifth century BC⁴⁴.

The practice of the Roman religious was to purify their places of assembly, such as the *templa*, only once after which they remained in a state of purity. Priests of Jupiter had to remain in a special state of purity even in their private sphere, which had impacted their food, their social relationships, and the objects that they were allowed to touch⁴⁵. Individuals required purification rituals after the death of a community member or a transgression of sacral laws. However, the transgression of sacral laws was rather a transgression of formal

procedures. This link between formal procedures and purity is related to the centrality of Rome. During the establishment of the Roman Republic, Rome became the political and cultic centre. Thereby, Roman society believed that it had divine powers in their midst. The individual component of impurity and purity was less important than in Greek society, which aimed to preserve and re-establish purity and holiness⁴⁶. In some ways, these practices all differ, but all of them were designed to enable one to engage with divinity and separate oneself from earthly impurities.

Jewish as well as gentile sources emphasize the differences in purity practices to maintain social boundaries. The idea that gentiles were generally impure dates to the end of the Second Temple Period and was mainly a political agenda. The widening of the gap between Jews and gentiles together with the idea of gentile impurity emerged during the First Jewish Revolt and in the light of the gathering strength of Christianity⁴⁷. During the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods contact with gentiles, their bodies, clothes, beds, or cooking vessels was interpreted as a defilement⁴⁸.

A comparable chronological development is reflected in the gentile sources. First accounts about Jews in the Hellenistic world were characterized by curiosity and interest⁴⁹. During the Roman period, the revolts against Rome, as well as the earlier Hasmonean phase, made the reception of Jews and Jewish religion less positive. Jews were described as anti-social, misanthropic, and strange in their religious behaviour, and in consequence were not able to integrate into Roman society⁵⁰. The non-Jewish authors frequently described Jews as impure. A repeating motif in this regard was the Jewish pseudo-history of leprosy in Egypt, which led to their separation and expulsion⁵¹.

43 Van der Toorn 1989, 348–349, 354–356.

44 Linke 2013, 291; Parker 1991, 23–24, 34–37, 53; Robertson 2013, 195–196, 198.

45 Linke 2013, 293, 296–298.

46 Linke 2013, 304.

47 Stemberger 2012, 209–213.

48 The general assumption that gentiles are impure, comparable to people with genital discharge is frequently mentioned in Persian and Hellenistic sources, such as Ezra/Nehemia or Jubilees. According to Jewish purity laws, suffering from genital discharge requires regular checking of the genitals. Being in a constant state of *zāb* impurity is comparable to the requirements of women, who have to check on their genitals regularly regarding menstruation. Since the abnormal discharge and menstruation are both associated

with dead flesh leaving the body, gentile men are considered ‘unmanly’ and womanlike. The rhetorical degrading of men is also known from the Graeco-Roman tendency to associate ‘barbarians’ with effeminate characteristics, see Balberg 2014, 122–123, 126–132, 144–145.

49 Baltrusch 2016, 404–405; Bloch 2002, 27–28, 178–179.

50 Baltrusch 2016, 404–407, 410–411, 414, 417; Bloch 2002, 27–28, 178–179.

51 Just as in Judaism, Greek religious thought delineates skin diseases as impure, see Parker 1991, 23–24, 34–37. On the historical background of the anti-history of the Jewish lepers leaving Egypt, see Schäfer 1997, 163–169.

2.5. Individual Purity of the Rabbis and its Decline in Jewish Society

Clearly purity practices in the late Hellenistic and early Roman Jewish societies were an integral part of everyday life, and the discussions on impurity and purity remained vibrant in rabbinic literature long after the destruction of the Temple. Serious impurity, such as defilement through contact with a corpse, was a constant threat in society, even though the consequences of not participating in Temple rites vanished. The Red Heifer purification rite in cases of corpse impurity could be still practiced if a cow's ashes remained from the Temple. It has been suggested that this was practiced until the Tannaitic period or even the Amoraic periods (from the middle of the third to the second half of fourth century AD)⁵².

The rabbinic literature reflects the evolution of a new mindset regarding the concept of purity. The school of Hillel embraced an individual notion which helped to shape a more metaphorical or symbolic sense of purity. Whereas the society of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods knew purity hierarchy in terms of groups and sects, Hillel (end of the first century BC to the early first century AD) emphasized the individual intentions towards purity. Under Rabbi Akivah (second century AD), the concept of an individual and intended purity was widely accepted⁵³. The personal intention made it possible to stay pure in an impure world. Things that were not obvious or visible for a person were generally defined as pure, which eased the standards and enabled an individual to stay pure⁵⁴.

To what extent the rabbinical writings and teachings were accepted during their early stages is debatable. Early writings, such as the Mishnah and Tosefta, are highly theoretical and their influence on everyday life must have been minor. It was only during the third century AD or even later, that rabbis tried to gain more influence in communities and concern themselves with social welfare, synagogues, and schools⁵⁵. It is quite likely that antique individuals continued to follow ritual purity practices to remember the Temple times or as a commemoration without much regard for the various rabbinic discussions.

Owing to the loss of the Temple and the consequent need to adapt to the new reality, the concept and practice of purity changed significantly during the early rabbinic period. Purity practice in the absence of the Temple became more individual and symbolic. During that period, there were fewer ritual stepped pools and chalkstone vessels, so it is harder to trace purity practices in the archaeological material. Moreover, from the third century on, the expanding Christian communities followed an approach to purity that was similar to that of the Jewish communities. Early Christians often used the same means, including eating habits, to differentiate themselves from the pagan population. The rabbinic elite responded with even stricter dietary regulations and a polemical rhetoric against Christians and Jewish believers in Jesus. Purity as a marker of Jewish identity and hierarchy became less significant, but as a religious practice underwent another transformation after the destruction of the Temple and adapted to the new reality.

52 The Mishnah notes that seven Red Heifers were burnt from the time of Ezra and that the last Red Heifer was prepared by Ishmael son of Piabi (mPar 3:5). The name also appears in Josephus (Ant. Jud. 18, 2, 2) as high priest in the first century AD. The use of the ashes for several decades or even centuries after the Temple destruction suggested by scholars probably relies on the low number of Red Heifers in general; see also Adler 2017, 280–281.

53 Furstenberg suggests that this concept of intentionality was known by the Pharisees during the Second Temple Period, in contrast to the traditional priestly concept, see Furstenberg 2016b, 17; Ottenheijm 2000, 142–143.

54 A quite similar concept is articulated in the Mishnah regarding immersion. Body parts that are not visible (mMiq 8:5) cannot be defiled, so they do not have to be immersed in water. 'Hidden places' of the body, such as the genital area, are do not have to be washed (mMiq 9:3). The only exception is made for women as the vagina can be defiled by menstruation and therefore must be cleansed even before immersion. Balberg 2014, 43–44, 68–69.

55 Stemberger 1999, 97–98. The only ongoing purity practice connected to rabbinic rulings is the development from the ritual stepped pool to the *miqwē* (מִקְוֵה). The continuous use of ritual baths is attested by various archaeological finds of installations dating up until the fourth century AD. The first regulations on the amount of water in a *miqwē*, its origin, and its use can be found for the first time in the Mishna. According to the rulings, the water must always be collected naturally. Since poured or drawn water can be associated with profane acts of bathing, the regulation could be a further specification of ritual immersion. Another fundamental ruling prescribed in rabbinic sources is the minimum amount of water needed: Forty סֵא (se'á) of rain or spring water are required to fill the installation, comparable to about half a cubic meter (e.g., mMiq 1:7; 2:1–3, 5, 10; 3:1; 4:4; 5:6; 6:8; 7: 2–3, 6), see also Adler 2018, 17–20; Adler 2017, 270–273.

3. THE EMERGENCE OF PURITY LITERATURE

There was a significant change in the meaning of purity in the Jewish literary sources dating from the Hellenistic period. The rulings regarding purity of the Priestly Code (Lev. 11–15; Num. 19) and stricter laws promulgated throughout the Torah (e.g., Deut. 23:14–15) deliver clear definitions of ritual and moral impurity. Those regulations are related to the authority of the Temple and the Israelites in the exceptional circumstance of the war camp, described in Deut. 23:10–15. After the Persian period and the experience of exile and Hellenization, the issue of purity moved into the private sphere and for the first time became an identity marker. Thus, through the laws of purity the people of Israel were able to create a boundary line and separate themselves from other groups and nations. Within Jewish families and groups, purity rulings became more gender-related and hierarchically structured. In particular, the polluting powers of the female body were emphasized – an issue that was obviously not relevant to the male Temple personnel.

The concept of an individual approach to purity was later integrated and expanded in the tannaitic sources of the Mishna and the Tosefta. The biblical and rabbinic sources are not germane to the present discussion. The selected sources here including diasporic texts, portray the chronological development of the new approach to purity from the third century BC to the first century AD.

In regarding to the literary sources, it must be kept in mind that those texts are not normative, nor are they a direct reflection of everyday life. Rather, those written sources mirror the lives of the religious and political elite during the First and Second Temple periods. Literacy was generally limited to the priests, the Temple personnel, and the social elite¹. Nevertheless, those texts offer a reflection of contemporary thought, which influenced social and religious life as a whole.

3.1. The First Phase of a New Purity Approach: Texts in the Tanakh

The starting point of texts related to personal and ritual purity can be found in the Tanakh. Ezekiel and Ezra/Nehemia were the first to emphasize that the separation from the others or non-righteous Jews was an essential requirement for one who wished to remain in a state of purity. Important aspects of purity included table manners, dietary habits, sexual relations, and the priestly purity of the Temple. The relevant terminology changed as well – for the first time, the term impurity was used to define immoral others (non-Jews) and abandoned land to mark the boundary between religious and ethnic groups².

Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemiah experienced exile and disconnection from their homeland. They shared

a negative image of exile and the wish to return to Eretz-Israel and Jerusalem. Chronologically, Ezekiel's prophesy first dated to the fifth year of Jehoiachin's exile in (593 BC) is the earliest of those texts. It refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and ends with of the vision Temple in 573 BC³. Ezekiel presented a traditionally disastrous view of the exile, which, he contended was caused by the misdeeds of his own people. The purity of the people was connected to the land, and living in exile was tantamount to living a life of impurity.

The writings of Ezra and Nehemia date to the final Persian period and tell of their return from exile. The books were eventually redacted around 400 BC, but they record historical events dating from the end of

1 Grabbe 2000, 35. Nevertheless, the ability to read during Josephus' days was definitely higher and more widespread than the literacy in earlier centuries and also influenced the number of pseudepigraphies, see Baumgarten 1997, 122, 126–131. Diasporic Jews, their literacy, and their reception of texts were strongly influenced by the Septuagint. LXX influenced the Jewish-Hellenistic literature, as well as the language of the religious service, see Dellling 1987, 33.

2 In D. Erbele-Küster's analysis, the term נִדָּה (*nidā*) became "a literary indication of what is outside the systems, suggesting that clear-cut boundaries could be set", see Erbele-Küster 2017, 122.

3 Greenberg 1997, 3–11.

the sixth to the middle of the fifth century BC⁴. They posited a new approach to purity, which took it one step further and paved the way for the relevant Hellenistic literature. The two books are intertwined in the Tanakh by their mission to resettle in Judah and rebuild the Temple. Nehemiah portrayed the practical political part, ensuring building projects and social order, whereas Ezra advanced the religious component, geared to the rebuilding of the Temple⁵.

3.1.1. Ezekiel (יחזקאל)

Ezekiel's text refers to the misdeeds and heinous acts of moral impurity that led to the exile: sexual sins (e.g., Lev. 18:22–24), idolatry (e.g., Lev. 19:31; 20:1–3), and the shedding of blood (e.g., Num. 35:33–34). The terminology associated with these acts is characterized by the word תועבה (abomination), which appears eighteen times in connection with idolatry, sexual sins, bloodshed, and fraud⁶. The related terms טמא (impure) and טהר (pure) are used differently in the texts. Whereas טמא is used to describe heinous acts and fraud throughout the text, טהר only appears late in the text and occurs mainly in reference to YHWH. Moreover, Ezekiel was the first to use the term נדה, related to female impurity, in a broader sense. In Ezek. 36:17, YHWH says that the way Israel defiled the land with their deeds reminds one of the “impurity of a menstruating woman” (“כטמאת הנדה”). The comparison between a menstruating woman and the polluted land was new to the terminology of purity. This blending of ritual and moral impurity into one word was widely adopted in later sources, including the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In order to restore the purity of Israel, YHWH has to take his people away from the other nations and bring them back into the land (36:24). Before the resettling, YHWH has to purify his people with purifying water (טהורים מים) from all their impurities (36:25) because the people are not able to purify themselves. This could be related to the statement in 22:26, that the priest failed to ensure the rule laid down in Lev.

Nehemiah returned from exile to Jerusalem together with other men determined to rebuild the city and its fortifying walls. Despite hardship and difficulties, the city walls were completed and in Neh. 8, Ezra appears as a priest and reads from the Torah to all the people of Israel in Jerusalem. Both texts have a strong focus on separation from the others, especially in regard to the problem of intermarriage.

10:10 to divide between the pure and impure. By not ensuring the divide, they also violated ritual purity. Hence, all rituals, sacrifices, and prayers performed in the Temple were useless. Towards the end of the text, especially the description of the new Temple and its rites (40–48), the terms relevant to purity and impurity are almost absent, despite the ruling for the priests to separate between pure and impure (44:23).

The only reference to individual purity in that text is Ezekiel's compromise in 4:12–15 about baking and eating his bread in a purer way:

“וַעֲנַת שְׁעָרִים תֹּאכְלֶנָּה וְהָיָא בְּגִלְלֵי צִאֲת הָאֲדָמָה תִּעֲנֶנָּה לְעֵינֵיהֶם: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה פֶּכֶה יֹאכְלוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־לֶחֶמָם טָמֵא בְּגוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר אֲדִיחֶם שָׁם: וַאֲמַר אֱהֵה אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הַנֶּה נִפְשֵׁי לֹא מִטְּמָאָה וְנִבְלָה וְטֶרֶף לֹא־אֶכְלֵתִי מִנְּעֻנְרֵי וְעַד־יְעֹתָהּ וְלֹא־בָא בְּפִי בָשָׂר פְּגוּל: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי רְאֵה נִתְתִּי לָךְ אֶת־[צְפִיעֵי] (צַפּוּעֵי) הַבָּקָר תַּחַת גְּלִלֵי הָאֲדָמָה וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־לֶחֶמְךָ עָלֵיהֶם:”

“A barley-cake you shall eat and it – on pellets of human excrement you shall bake it in their sight and YHWH said: So shall the Sons of Israel eat their bread impure among the nations to which I will banish them, and I said: Ah, my Lord YHWH, here my throat is undefiled; from my youth till now I have not eaten the flesh of a carcass or of an animal torn by wild beast, nor has fouled meat ever entered my mouth. And my God said: See, I allow you to use cattle dung instead of human pellet; make your bread on that⁷.”

4 Becking 2011, 19; Myers 1965, S. LXX.

5 Myers 1965, S. LVII.

6 5:9, 5:11, 7:3, 7:4, 7:8, 7:9, 8:9, 8:17, 9:4, 12:16, 16:2, 16:58, 18:12, 18:13, 18:24, 22:2, 33:26, 43:8

7 Greenberg 1983, 99. Translation slightly changed by the author. In this passage, Ezekiel relies on Deut. 23:15, where human excrement was considered impure. This notion was presumably a common one during the Second Temple Period.

3.1.2. Ezra and Nehemia (עזרא־נחמיה)

A returnee to Jerusalem, Ezra experienced the reconstruction of the Temple and the new Israelite covenant with YHWH. The Book of Ezra emphasizes the separation from foreigners, especially in the context of keeping one's own purity (6:20–21). The Israelites who returned from exile separated (הנבדל) themselves from the “impurity of the nations” (“טמאת גוי-הארץ”, 6:21). The verb *בדל* to describe this separation in the texts of Ezra and Nehemia (e.g., 6:21; 9:1; 10; 11; Neh. 9:2; 10:29) is significant. In earlier writings, the verb *בדל* generally describes the separation between pure and impure, which was crucial in connection with the work of the priests in the Temple (Lev. 10:10). What the priests had to do in the Temple, the people had to do in their everyday life, as they were the holy nation⁸.

The terminology associated with impurity and purity appears mainly in Ezra 2, 6:19–22, and 9–10⁹. The term *תועבה*, used in Ezra to describe the defiling through marriages with foreign wives is crucial; it implies, that the book defines marriage, and first and foremost the sexual contact with gentiles, as a morally impure act. Thus, the separation from foreign wives is a prominent issue in Ezra. The idea of a “holy seed” (“זרע הקודש”, 9:2), for the whole nation was new in Jewish thought during that time, and the influence of foreigners was considered a threat to the ‘holy seed’¹⁰. In this regard, by associating it with the concept of the holy seed, Ezra/Nehemiah rendered the prohibition of intermarriage universal. However, that prohibition was limited to foreign women, and did not mention

foreign men¹¹. The separation from others and purification were also necessary for the Israelites who stayed in the land and then reconnected with the returnees from Babylonia¹².

The terminology concerning impurity and purity in Nehemia can be found primarily in Neh. 7, 12, and 13, and is reflected by the root *טהר*, which is used six times in the text¹³. Thus, the terminology is different from Ezra's and lacks the connection to moral abominations. The prohibition of marrying foreign wives is interwoven in Neh. 10:31–40 with rulings regarding Shabbat, the sabbatical year, and dues to the Temple and the priests. Whereas Ezra was mostly troubled about the abomination already done by his fellow Israelites by marrying foreigners, Nehemiah was concerned about the future and the female members of the society. He asked to refrain from giving “our daughters in marriage to the people of the land” (“לֹא־תִתְּנוּ בְּנֹתֵינוּ לְעַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ”, 10:31)¹⁴. Contrary to the Book of Ezekiel, Nehemia and the priests were able to restore purity and to purify themselves, as well as the people (12:30). Moreover, Nehemia was able to tell YHWH that he purified the Israelites from all foreign elements and put the priests and Levites in place (13:30). The difference probably lies in the fact that Nehemia and the priests were already living in Jerusalem and had rebuilt the Temple.

8 Schwarz 1982, 83–84.

9 B. Rausche points out that the root *טהר* is used once in the text (6:20). *טמא* can be found twice (6:21, 9:11), and *נדה* once (9:11). *תועבה* appears in 9:1, 11, 14, see Rausche 2013, 459.

10 B. Becking suggests that it represents a combination of the concept of a ‘holy nation’ for Israel known from Deuteronomy 26:18 and the ‘seed of Abraham’ as a synonym for the people (Isa. 41:8; Jer. 33:26; Ps. 105: 6; 2. Chron. 20:7), see Becking 2011, 37; Harrington 2019, 105–106.

11 The identity of foreign individuals or others in contrast to the Yehudites or Israelites in the narrative of Ezra remains obscure. One can even assume that the so-called foreign women were Yehudites, but belonged to another religious group or had a connection to sanctuaries outside Yehud, see Becking 2011, 38–39, 72. However, the taboo of marrying women of other

descent was not unique to the Ezra-Nehemia group during the Persian period. In 450 BC, Pericles ordered that only persons with a full Attic background would be accepted as members of the Athenian civil community. In Zoroastrianism, intermingling with persons of other descent was an abomination, see Becking 2011, 62.

12 Interestingly, there is no reference to an equivalent practice among exiles who stayed in Babylonia. Hayes 1999, 13; Rausche 2013, 461, 472–473.

13 Two times in Neh. 12:30; further 12:45; 13:9, 22, 30. *טָהַר* appears as a verb in Ezra 2:62 and Neh. 7:64, see Rausche 2013, 459.

14 When Nehemiah returned to Babylon (Neh. 13), the Israelites again married foreign wives and were rebuked (13:23–26).

3.1.3. Conclusion

The negative image of exile and the wish to return to Eretz-Israel and Jerusalem are inherent in the books of Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The Temple as the cultic centre represents the core of Yehudite/Judaeen identity.

Although the texts give no explanation regarding the actual purity rites in the Diaspora or Eretz-Israel or cite any material objects related to purity, they do discuss the principal tool for the maintaining purity and the hierarchy of purity in society: separation from the others. Moreover, the idea of a pure community runs as a common thread through the texts. One crucial aspect of this idea is the separation from gentiles, which begins with the Book of Ezekiel. Ezra and Nehemia describe gentiles as impure and a source of pollution¹⁵. The wish to separate from gentiles was enhanced by the experienced realities: life in exile and the loss of their land, their Temple, and their religious identity, as well as the problems that confronted the returnees in Eretz-Israel. Separation was needed to safeguard the identity of the people and restore and ensure the bond with YHWH. This was even more of an issue, as the areas occupied by returnees to Jerusalem and its environs were small and surrounded by foreigners¹⁶.

Separation allowed for the establishment of a clear divide between insiders and outsiders of the Jewish cult. Further, that the Jews abided by the dietary laws even in exile indicates that the rules of purity went beyond the locality and existence of the Temple. Ezekiel's mention of his personal purity during baking and eating is one of the main motifs in the subsequent purity literature, as is the aspect of separation from other nations.

According to Ezekiel, the people are dependent on the purification powers of YHWH, but Ezra and Nehemia see the personal and especially the family aspect of purity becoming more prominent. The people of Israel are distinguished by their 'holy seed', which intermarriage would profane, for the first time, contemporary texts generally rule against intermarriage¹⁷.

Hence, Israel was not only defined by the territory but by its people, who abided by a particular level of purity. Monotheism and communal belief as defined in the Torah make up the common ground for Jewish communities independent of their dwelling places. Although the texts mirror a negative image of exile, the posited concepts provided the basis for a righteous life in the Diaspora.

3.2. Entering the Private Sphere: Purity, Family and Individuals in the Apocrypha

In the texts of the Tanakh discussed above, the protagonists apply the laws of purity in the private sphere and demand separation from the others and from impurities not only for priests but also for laymen. This approach is taken further in several apocryphal books, including Tobit, Judith, and 1 Maccabees. The protagonists of those books are portrayed as righteous Jews,

concerned about their state of purity in their private lives. The Book of Tobit, which was probably written between 250 and 175 BC, deals mainly with religious deeds and pious living in a private context and emphasizes the family aspect¹⁸. Tobit, an Israelite from the tribe of Naphtali of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, was exiled to Niniveh during the reign of Assyrian

15 Grätz 2013, 73–88, 85; Harrington 2019, 112; Klawans 1998, 398–402; Rausche 2013, 474.

16 Becking 2011, 21; Myers 1965, S. XXXI. B. Hensel identifies the Samaritans as a particular religious threat to the returnees from exile. As the Samaritans also defined themselves as 'Israel' and shared a 'common Pentateuch', the separation was needed to ensure the uniqueness of the Judean religious practices, see Hensel 2018, 148.

17 Harrington 2019, 102; Hayes 1999, 10–11. The only earlier occurrence of a punished intermarriage is reported in Num. 25:10–18; Pinhas kills the Israelite Simri and his wife Kosbi,

a Midianite woman. The Midianites are delineated as enemies of the Israelites in the text, so the intermarriage had to be ended. However, in this text, the killing was not due to a universal prohibition of foreign wives, but rather to a concrete conflict between the two tribes.

18 Four manuscripts of the book written in Aramaic (4QToba-d) were found in Cave 4 at Qumran and another manuscript written in Hebrew (4QTobe) all are fragmentary. The translated text incorporates several Greek, Latin, and Semitic manuscripts and fragments. For further discussion on his origins, see Fitzmyer 2002, 44; Moore 1996, 33–35, 39, 40–42.

king Shalmaneser (ca. 727–722 BC)¹⁹. Tobit's adherence to the tenets of his religion is in both his home and his consciousness, and is reflected in his pious actions in regard to his family and his surroundings. Tobit is described as a pious Jew, who married a woman from his own tribe and had a son named Tobiah²⁰. His avoidance of gentile food in exile (1:10–22), his keeping of the dietary laws, and his proper observance of religious festivals ensures the connection with his Jewish faith and his loyalty to Jewish tradition²¹. This loyalty is also reflected in Tobit's charitable acts, including burying the dead (1:16–22). Interestingly, the problem of corpse impurity is not mentioned here²². Nevertheless, Jerusalem and the Temple remained a focal point²³. The Book of Tobit was obviously partially based on other literature works, such as deuterocanonical (e.g., Sirach) and/or pseudepigraphic works (e.g., 1 Enoch and the Book of Jubilees)²⁴.

In the story of Judith, the purity of the individual is specified, as is its meaning for the community. The work probably dates to the Hasmonean period, more precisely to the end of the reign of John Hyrcanus I (135–104 BC) and the beginning of Alexander Jannaeus' rule (103–78 BC). The original language was Hebrew, but only its Greek version in the LXX is known. The Book of Judith's identification as a He-

brew work is due to linguistic characteristics that were in evidence in the Greek translation²⁵. The story itself is set in Judaea during a time when Nebuchadnezzar (mistakenly named king of the Assyrians) waged war against Arphaxad, the king of Media²⁶. As none of the countries and regions in the west wanted to join Nebuchadnezzar's battle – including Judaea – he sent General Holofernes to take exact revenge. During Holofernes' siege of Bethulia, Judith, the heroine of the story, decided that with the help of YHWH she could defeat him. Through her intelligence and beauty, Judith manages to get into the Assyrian camp, beheads Holofernes, and leads the Israelites to victory.

1 Macc. is the main source for an understanding of the political meaning of purity under the Hasmoneans. The book includes the events from the revolt against Antiochus IV (167 BC) until the end of the reign of Simon (134 BC), with a further look at the reign of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BC). It was actually written sometime before the conquest of Pompey in 63 BC. The author justified the Maccabean reign on religious grounds and emphasized their political standing during the second century BC²⁷. He characterized Hellenization as evil and portrayed the Jews who refused to separate from the gentiles as the antitheses to the pious Maccabees and their followers.

3.2.1. Tobit

The separation from others in Tobit is reflected by the prohibition of intermarriage and the choice of friendships and professional relationships (5:1–6:1). Tobit asks his son Tobiah to only marry a woman from the same tribe (4:12)²⁸. Keeping up the tribal lineage ensures the possession of the land should there eventu-

ally be a return. The separation is also reflected in the fact that even though it takes place in Niniveh and Assyria at large, the Jewish protagonists never encounter native residents.

Although Tobit is able to live a pious life in exile, he still views exile as a divine punishment for the Jewish

19 Historically, the tribe of Naphtali was taken captive by Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 BC). Niniveh is said to be located west of the Tigris, instead of east. Moreover, there are mistakes regarding the distances and location of places in Mesopotamia. The lack of knowledge regarding the geography of the eastern Diaspora suggests an author who did live in the Diaspora, see Moore 1996, 3, 7–10.

20 Moore 1996, 104–105.

21 Ego 2002, 270–276; Harrington 2019, 136.

22 Moore 1996, 115–116, 125–126, 137–138. Even when it came to an encounter with the dead, Tobit only washed himself, without any regard for ritual purity. His son Tobiah and Azariah bathed after their journey to Ecbatana and before dinner with Raguel and Edna (7:9). During the journey to Ecbatana, Tobiah washed his

feet in the River Tigris, before trying to fish (6:3). Those washing are always set against a practical background and are never connected to purity, see Moore 1996, 195, 215–216.

23 Moore 1996, 27.

24 “Tobit's literary genre is best described as a short Jewish romance”, see Moore 1996, 21.

25 Moore 1985, 66–67, 70–71.

26 The story is obviously full of geographical and chronological errors, which were probably intentional and polemic, see Moore 1985, 31–37.

27 The original text was probably written in Hebrew, see Attridge 1984, 171–176; Goldstein 1976, 14. 1 Maccabees is presumed to be Hasmonean propaganda, see Van Maaren 2022, 128.

28 Moore 1996, 162.

people (13:3–4). As YHWH caused exile in the first place, he is the one who “gathers you from all the nations” (13:5). Thereby, Tobit holds to the diasporic tra-

dition that hopes for a return to Jerusalem, which will “be rebuilt as his house for all ages” (13:15).

3.2.2. Judith

The Book of Judith conveys important insights into the purity practice of individuals, including full-body immersion. For this study, however, Judith’s avoidance of gentile food includes an important notion. In 10:5, when she decided to go to Holofernes’ camp with her maid, she took her own food with her:

“She then handed her maid a skin of wine and a jug of oil, filled a bag with roasted grain, dried fig cakes, and pure bread; then she packed all her dishes and had her maid carry them²⁹.”

Apart from her own food, she even packed “all her dishes”, implying that the impurity was not only inherent in the food but also extended to the utensils. This is important, as the dating of the book (late second century BC) parallels the beginning of the rejection of gentile and/or imported pottery in the Jewish areas of Judaea and Galilee³⁰. This is the first mention of refusal to eat from gentile tableware prior to rabbinic texts. The text also includes the first mention of full-body immersion in a natural water source (12:7–9):

“So she stayed in the camp three days, and each night she would go out into the valley of Bethulia and at the spring would bathe herself from the uncleanness.

3.2.3. 1 Maccabees

The first book of the Maccabees conveys an important reference to the quality of stone. During the purification and restoration of the Temple under Judah, the stone altar was removed and reinstalled (4:42), which suggests that the stones themselves were defiled:

“He [Judah] appointed unblemished priests, lovers of the Torah, 43 who purified the sanctuary and removed

[...] 9 Having made herself ritually pure, she would go back and stay in the tent until her meals was brought to her in the evening³¹.”

Going out by night to bathe probably means during the early morning. Judith then bathes in the living waters of a spring. Living waters refer to the Levitical regulations to erase impurity after sexual intercourse (Lev. 15:18), in the case of leprosy (Lev. 15:8–9), or after coming into contact with a person with a discharge (Lev. 15:5–13, 16–17). Judith, however, is not affected by those impurities. Her intention to immerse herself in living waters derives from her wish to consume her food in purity. She even waits until evening, so that the purification is valid. In this respect, she abides by a priestly purity concern regarding the consumption of offerings and sacrifices in the Temple (Lev. 7).

At the end of the book, the victory over Holofernes and the Assyrians is celebrated in Jerusalem. In order to be allowed to bring sacrifices, the Israelites had to be purified, probably from corpse impurity wrought by the battle (15:18)³². The Temple was the central place for political as well as religious concerns. Jerusalem as a religious and political centre reflected the Hasmonean practice of combining the office of the king and the high priest.

the stones of the loathsome structure to an unclean place. 44 They deliberated over what they should do with the profaned altar of the burnt offering, 45 and they came up with the good idea of dismantling it lest the fact that the gentiles had defiled it should be held to their disgrace. Accordingly, they dismantled the altar, 46 and put its stones away on the Temple Mount in a suitable place until a prophet should come to give an oracle concerning them.³³”

29 Moore 1985, 17. The refusal to eat the food served in Holofernes’ camp is repeated in 12:3–4, see Moore 1985, 21.

30 Berlin 2013, 151–175.

31 Moore 1985, 21.

32 Moore 1985, 28.

33 Goldstein 1976, 272.

The “good idea” to dismantle the altar but preserve its stones was a compromise between the commandment to destroy gentile altars in Eretz-Israel (Deut. 12:2–3) and

the commandment not to destroy the altar of YHWH (Deut. 11:4)³⁴. However, no hint regarding the purity status of stone or its special characteristics can be found.

3.2.4. Conclusion

All of the Apocrypha discussed here emphasize that the maintenance of one’s purity depended on separation from the other. Tobit and Judith practice separation through their avoidance of the others’ food. Moreover, Tobit wants his son to marry a woman of his own tribe, Naphtali. 1 Macc. describes the separation from ‘Hellenizers’, who would act against Jewish religious law. The separation created a hierarchy of purity in

Jewish society. Pious Jews had a higher purity status than the Hellenized part of the society.

There was no contradiction between the emphasis on purity practices in private life and the Temple as the principal communal religious institution. Moreover, in Judith and 1 Macc., the Temple receives political significance, probably influenced by the Hasmonean rule.

3.3. Taking Purity to a New Level: The Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls are an important corpus in the study ancient Judaism, especially in the late Second Temple period. The texts refer to various purity practices, sometimes in detail, expanding on the literary works discussed above, which focus primarily on the purity of the Temple, the general separation, and abiding by tradition to ensure the purity of the individual and the family. The texts found in the caves around Qumran probably include religious tracts belonging to different Jewish groups during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods³⁵. Some of the scrolls are associated with specific contemporary Jewish sects³⁶. Most of the known texts from Qumran date between the second century BC and the first century AD. Whereas the settlement of Qumran was inhabited mainly from 150 BC to 68 AD, it is thought that older manuscripts were brought there from elsewhere. The conclusion that Qumran was a sectarian settlement, and its inhabitants produced the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls is still a matter of debate. The assumption of a connection between settlement and sectarian activity is supported by literary sources; for example, Pliny wrote that the Essene settlement was located north of ‘Ēn-Gedi (“in-

fra hos Engada”). Unlike the Essene towns and villages of Judaea that were described by Josephus and Philo, Qumran was an isolated dwelling place of Essenes who separated themselves from the original Essene movement. The Groningen hypothesis suggests that a few Essene priests grouped around the Teacher of Righteousness during the reign of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BC) and established a splinter group in the desert. Cited reasons for the separation are problems with the calendar and disagreements regarding the organization of festivals and purity practices³⁷. Even though there seem to be parallels between Essene sectarian notions and the Dead Sea Scrolls, the connection remains uncertain, as the scrolls reflect the thought of a wide range of Jewish groups. Moreover, the texts reflect different stages of composition and redaction and include various approaches towards ritual purity³⁸. Moreover, from an archaeological perspective, the settlement of Qumran was an agricultural site. It is known that similar agricultural and military settlements were established around ‘Ēn Gedi and in the Araba during the Hasmonean period to fortify the area of Jericho and ‘Ēn Gedi³⁹. In view of those factors,

34 Goldstein 1976, 285.

35 The corpus found at Qumran includes more than 900 manuscripts, which are divided into canonical (biblical) scrolls, Apocrypha, and pseudepigrapha. Charlesworth et al., 2006, S. XXVI.

36 However, the texts found in the Qumran caves are not necessarily connected to an actual existing sect. Moreover, what can

be defined as a sect, is not always clear. For a longer discussion on sects and their definition, see Jokiranta 2013, 42–44.

37 Martínez 1995b, 11.

38 Baumgarten – Schwartz 1995, 2; Jokiranta 2013, 44–45; Golb 1994, 181; Werrett 2007, 7.

39 Dimant 1984, 483–487.

another hypothesis suggests that in order to preserve them, the scrolls were taken from Jerusalem and brought to Qumran during the Jewish revolt⁴⁰.

The texts used for the present analyses are the Damascus Document (CD)⁴¹, the Rule of the Community (1QS)⁴², the Temple Scroll (11Q19)⁴³, the Purification Rule (4Q514), 4QMMT⁴⁴, and the Book of Jubilees⁴⁵. The various interpretations of halakha and legal matters in

those texts reveal a wide range of contemporary opinions in the late Second Temple period⁴⁶.

The texts do not convey a coherent purity system that combines the principles of moral and ritual purity. However, they do deliver the first detailed references to full-body immersion, the enhanced purity laws for Jerusalem, the total separation from the others, and the purity or impurity of stone, which is particularly crucial for the present study.

3.3.1. Separation from the Others and Unrighteous Jews

Separation from the others and unrighteous Jews is at the core of self-definition in the texts. Documents CD, 1QS, and 4QMMT were written from the viewpoint of pious Jewish groups that wanted to separate themselves from fellow Jews who they described as wicked or unrighteous. In CD, the righteous followers of the Torah even left “from the land of Judah” (“מֵאֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה”, Col. 6, 5) to separate from the wicked behaviour of the officials of Israel. The priests, they wrote, were not fulfilling their duty to separate between pure and impure in the Temple, so they decided that they had to separate themselves from the Temple and the priests (Col.

6–7 [MS A])⁴⁷. The idea of separation to divide impure from pure had become not only a priestly motif within the Temple, but a practice that separated Jewish people from one another and, in this case, forced them into exile. The new covenant removed to Damascus, where its members were required to separate from all impurities (Col. 7, 3–4) in order to keep their Jewish identity while in exile⁴⁸.

In 1QS, the separation from non-members of the defined group guarantees purity (Col. 5, 13–14); non-members could also include Jews. Moreover, an individual’s purity status depended on the time he spent in the community and how long he

40 Golb 1994, 179, 183.

41 Other than the Dead Sea Scroll, the CD was found before the discovery of Qumran in the Geniza of the old Karaite synagogue in Cairo. After similar scriptures were found in Qumran (4QD), the CD was included in the Dead Sea Scroll corpus. Altogether, eight manuscripts of the Damascus Document were found in Cave 4 (4QD). They offer an extensive corpus with 689 lines preserved, about half of them similar to CD. The copies can be dated between the first half of the first century BC and the late Herodian period. The original text dates not later than 100 BC, see Baumgarten et al. 2006, 1.

42 This document is well preserved, with the best copy known from Cave 1 (1QS), which was found with two other documents belonging to the same scroll (1QSa and 1QSB). Ten more copies of the texts were found in Cave 4 (4QS MSS A–J) and another in Cave 5 (5Q11), all written on papyrus or leather. Some of the texts are written in the Hasmonean script (e.g., 4QS MS C), and some in the Herodian script (e.g., 4QS MS D). The oldest copy from Cave 4 can be dated to the end of the second century BC, whereas the original text was dated between 100–75 BC, see Charlesworth – Qimron 1994, 1–3.

43 11Q19 can be dated between the end of the first century BC and the beginning of the first century AD. The oldest version of the text

was found in Cave 4 (4Q524) and dates to the Hasmonean period (ca. 150–100 BC), see Schiffman 2011, 1–3.

44 The six extant manuscripts (4Q394, 4Q395, 4Q396, 4Q397, 4Q398, and 4Q399) can be dated to the early and middle years of the first century BC, whereas the text itself dates from the middle of second BC, see Qimron – Strugnell 1994, 1.

45 The original text was written in Hebrew and then translated to Greek. The Greek copies were used for the Latin and Ethiopic translations. The Ethiopic version is the only fully preserved text of the Jubilees, which is extant in 27 copies. Owing to the included historical facts, the original version can be dated around 167–140 BC, see Vanderkam 1989, S. V–VII, XVIII–XIX.

46 An analysis of purity regulations in the Qumran corpus as a whole was undertaken by I. Werrett, see Werrett 2007. For a comparison chart concerning the different purity rulings in the texts, see Werrett 2007, 289–290.

47 Charlesworth 1995, 23–27.

48 Charlesworth 1995, 24–25. M. Himmelfarb defines the work as a guide for sectarian Jews who live among gentiles or non-members of the sect since gentiles and gentile lands were considered as defiling and unclean, see Himmelfarb 2006, 117. I. Werrett, to the contrary, argues that the purity concept in CD is not unified and does not reflect a representative approach to ritual purity, see Werrett 2007, 106.

partook of pure food and drink (Col. 6,16; 6,20)⁴⁹. The separation between pure and impure defined interaction with the others and identified the individual and his place in the hierarchy. The purity of the body could only be sustained by keeping the sectarian laws. As a punishment for transgressing the laws of the community, the member might be prohibited from touching pure food and pure drink (Col. 7,19–20)⁵⁰. As in CD, the marked group had already left the wicked Temple and its priests to “depart into the wilderness” as a covenant of priests⁵¹.

In 4QMMT, non-Israelites are not allowed to enter the sanctuary and intermarriage is forbidden (B 45–48). Sexual involvement with gentiles and the resulting defilement is comparable to pollution of the sanctuary⁵². In B 80–82, intermixing with the others is described as “defiling the holy seed” (“מטמאים את זרע הקודש”, B 81), especially in the case of priests. The metaphor of the holy seed is comparable to the thought of Ezra and Nehemia⁵³.

Document 11Q19 posits a strict interpretation of halakha and uses the related purity terminology

more often than any other text discussed herein, but it mandates a less strict practice regarding separation. Despite the general rule about separating from other nations (“ולוא תעשו כאשר הגויים עושים”, “and you shall not do as the nations do,” Col. 48,11), the text follows the Torah concerning marriage with captive women⁵⁴. As in Deut. 21:10–14, one can take a woman whom he desires from among war captives if he shaves her head, trims her fingernails, and changes her clothes (Col. 63,12–13). However, the purity status of the wife remains lower, as she is forbidden from touching pure things or eating from the peace sacrifice for seven years (Col. 63,14–15)⁵⁵.

The Book of Jubilees follows the aspects of separation known through the books of Ezekiel and Ezra. Other nations or peoples are considered impure and are described as practicing abominations. The avoidance of gentile food (22:16) is crucial. Further, a marriage with a gentile is said to be impure because of sexual impurity and lewdness, and is to be punished by death (25:1–3, 30:6–7, 12–14)⁵⁶.

49 Charlesworth 1994, 29.

50 Charlesworth 1994, 32–33.

51 Charlesworth 1994, 37, 39.

52 Qimron – Strugnell 1994, 51–53, The root for the connection of sexual defilement and the pollution of the Sanctuary may lie in Deut. 23:2–9, where gentile groups are prohibited from entering the assembly of YHWH. The assembly can be interpreted as the Temple and people of Israel. The physical Jewish body and the Temple are strongly connected and are sometimes equated in the sectarian texts.

53 Hayes 1999, 29.

54 Charlesworth 2011, 119.

55 Charlesworth 2011, 164–165. The rules concerning the purity status of the wife are absent in Deuteronomy. The expanded regulation was an attempt to combine the different laws in the Torah, while the seven years of waiting probably has symbolic value. In Exod. 34:11–17 and Deut. 7:1–4, the marriage of foreign women of certain peoples is prohibited, but Deut. 21:10–14 allows the taking of female war captives as wives.

The acceptance of the ruling regarding female war captives, in combination with the stronger purity regulations for these women could have been a compromise to reconcile the different accounts in the Torah, see also Werrett 2007, 163.

56 Vanderkam 1989, 159, 192–193, 195–196. Probably the authors of Jubilees were influenced by earlier works, also in regard to the story of Pinhas (Num. 25:11–15), see; Hayes 1999, 5; Klawans 1998, 399. Moreover, the strict regulations regarding intermarriage were probably influenced by the Hasmonean expansion, including to the Idumean territories. A marriage between an Idumean, even after conversion, with a ‘native’ Jew would have been labelled as an intermarriage in the eyes of the authors of Jubilees. In 1 Macc., the Idumeans are portrayed as sons of Esau, former Edomites. In Jubilees, Esau is characterized as wicked, in contrast to his brother Jacob. Owing to the chronological aspect, M. Himmelfarb suggests a later dating for Jubilees, around 125–100 BC, see Himmelfarb 2006, 61, 74–76.

3.3.2. The Purity of the Temple

Despite the negative image of the Second Temple in the cited texts, they all emphasize the purity of the Temple, of Jerusalem, and of the cities of Israel. Especially 11Q19 implies an ideally pure state of Jerusalem and Israel. Men with nocturnal emissions were banned from entering the sanctuary for three days⁵⁷. Men who had had sexual intercourse with their wives were banned from the entire city of Jerusalem also for three days. Apparently, sexual relations were forbidden in Jerusalem and women were not supposed to be inside the city. The rules concerning men with nocturnal emission are stricter than those in Lev. 15:16, where the man is simply obliged to bathe himself in water and then wait until the evening. In the war camp described in Deut. 23:11–12, the man has to leave after nocturnal emissions, bathe, and only return at sunset. Further, 11Q19 demands that people with skin diseases or discharges, as well as postpartum women be separated from all the cities of Israel (Col. 48:14–17)⁵⁸. It suggests that three places east of the city should be established, where such people can abide (Col. 46,16–18)⁵⁹. Moreover, the latrines should be constructed outside the city of Jerusalem, 3000 cubits

from the northwest side (Col. 46,13–16), and there should no longer be any sight of excrement (Col. 46,15)⁶⁰. A comparable rule was applied to the war camp in Deut. 23:13–15, where one had to leave the camp to relieve oneself and then cover it up. Josephus described the same practice for the Essenes (Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 9). Document 11Q19 can be read as a counterprogram to the existing order, especially in regard to the Temple, which posits an ideal religious, cultic, and political life⁶¹.

In CD, sexual relations are prohibited in the city of the Sanctuary (Jerusalem), as they would defile the city⁶². Document 4QMMT mandates a less exclusive practice in regard to the expelling of unclean persons from the camp. Unlike 11Q19 and 1QS, 4QMMT does not demand that *zābym* leave the camp, which indicates that it follows the Levitical ruling rather than the more extreme purity laws of Num. 5:2 or Deut. 23:12⁶³. I. Werrett points out, that the text is focused on protecting sacred food from contamination through being handled by individuals deemed to be unclean, rather than on protecting the Sanctuary and its city⁶⁴.

3.3.3. Corpse Impurity and the Impurity of Stone

A major impurity of everyday life highlighted in most of the texts is corpse impurity. In particular, CD and 11Q19 extend the regulations of impurity of a corpse described in Num. 19. In both texts, the defilement of

a house owing to the presence of a corpse includes “all the vessels” within it (“כל כלי”, CD Col. 12, 15) and materials from which it is made, but Num. 19:15 excludes the contents of sealed vessels from defilement.

57 Lev. 15:18 demands a purification for both men and women after sexual intercourse, whereas 11Q19 mentions only purification for men and does not discuss the prescribed rites, Werrett 2007, 160.

58 Charlesworth 2011, 118–119.

59 Charlesworth 2011, 112–113; The expelling of people with leprosy or discharges is known, e.g., from Num. 5:2; see also Birenboim 2012, 29.

60 Charlesworth 2011, 112–113.

61 Charlesworth 2011, 108–173; Schiffman 2011, 3–5; Werrett 2007, 110. In regard to the idealized Temple, which hardly reflected reality, I. Werrett questions the effectiveness of purity rulings. The high level of purity, especially in Jerusalem, could not possibly have been achieved by the laity and pilgrims. The idealized Temple of the text would be associated with an idealized world, which could be hardly realized, see Werrett 2007, 112, 172, 179.

62 Col. 11 (MS A), 14–15, 18–23, Col. 12 (MS A), 1–2, see Charlesworth 1995, 49–51.

63 People with skin diseases were allowed to enter the city after healing that was followed by a purification ritual which included shaving and bathing. However, they would not have been allowed to enter the tent or house for another seven days and could only enter on the eighth day and partake of sacred food after sunset, see also Werrett 2007, 186–187, 204.

64 The text further assumes that sacred food was served in private homes in Jerusalem, see Werrett 2007, 186–187, 204. Y. Sussmann argues, that the halakha noted in 4QMMT represents a framework that was valid for all Jews, with a focus on ritual purity and the Temple with its priesthood, see Sussmann 1994, 186–187. However, in the same text, Y. Sussmann notes that the document “reflects the sect’s own conception of its uniqueness, of what distinguished it from the rest of the Jewish community”, see Sussmann 1994, 191.

In 11Q19, all clay vessels are considered impure (Col. 49,8) and everything inside an open vessel is defiled (Col. 49,9–10; comparable to Num. 19:15)⁶⁵. All liquids inside the house where the corpse lay have to be removed and everything has to be cleansed owing to the strong tendency of liquids to become defiled (Col. 49,11–14). We see the same focus on liquids inside a house where there is a corpse in CD Col. 12,18: the house itself gets defiled when its material (wood, stone, and dust, CD Col. 12,15–16) comes into contact with oil. The passage in CD makes it clear that every object of every size and all materials, including stone are liable to corpse defilement when liquid is involved (CD Col. 12, 15)⁶⁶. In 11Q19, the cleansing of the house after the corpse is removed (11Q19, Col. 49,9–13) includes the purification of stone tools and the removal of all liquids. According to both texts, stone vessels could become impure, which would render them unfit for use.

Another difference between the texts discussed above and Num. 19:14 is that the latter refers to a corpse in a tent, whereas in CD and 11Q19 it is in a house (CD Col. 12, 18; 11Q19 Col. 49,14)⁶⁷. In CD and 11Q19, the house and its building materials, including objects made of stone, are defiled by the corpse. V. Noam sees the reference to stone in connection with the idea of the whole house becoming defiled, just as is the tent in Num. 19. The house becomes the equivalent of the biblical tent⁶⁸. L. H. Schiffman suggested that the shift in setting from the tent to a house changed the regulations regarding purity. Unlike a tent, all immobile things, that is, everything attached to the ground, such as straw, wood, or stones, can contract impurity⁶⁹. Further, 11Q19 declares that anyone who is in or enters the

defiled house has to bathe and wash his/her clothes on the first day and sprinkle water of purification on the third day (Col. 49, 16–50). These rules are not found in Num. 19 nor are they included in the ritual of the Red Heifer⁷⁰. The rigorous cleansing of the house and the bathing of a person and washing of clothes on the first day could reflect the notion of a layered impurity. The removal of the first layer of impurity on the first day can enable the defiled to at least participate in ordinary daily life. It is only after all of the purification rites that the status of purity is achieved, and the person can again participate in the sacred realm⁷¹. Moreover, the ruling regarding the first-day ablutions as in 11Q19 could indicate that this practice met with widespread acceptance in the society of the late Second Temple period. The regulation is also mentioned in Philo Spec. 3, 206–207 and Tobit 2:1–9⁷².

As some of the stricter regulations mentioned in the two sources discussed above were at least accepted to some extent in society, the liability of stone to defilement described in the texts seems contradictory to the contemporary material culture of chalkstone vessels. H. Eshel tried to resolve this contradiction by noting that there was defilement only when the vessels came into contact with oil⁷³. Y. Adler suggests that stone vessels were only defiled in cases of corpse impurity, but otherwise could still be used. That interpretation is probably the closest to the related Torah passage in Num. 19:14–15, which declares that every vessel in a tent where a person died is unclean. Moreover, another passage in Lev. 11:32–35 renders every vessel in which a dead insect fell impure. Y. Adler contends that CD and 11Q19 those combined rulings and exhorted the populous to follow them.

65 While in Num. 19:15 it is said to become impure, the text rules that the content of the vessels is also defiled, see also Schiffman 1990, 142.

66 Eshel 2000, 43.

67 In the translation of Num. 19:14 in LXX, the place is defined as house as well, so CD could rely on the LXX in this regard; see also Werrett 2007, 96.

68 Noam 2010, 424.

69 Similar assumptions can be found in *Sifre Be-Midbar* 126 and the Targum Ps. Jon, see also Schiffman 1990, 143.

70 CD rules concerning the ritual of the Red Heifer, wherein children are not allowed to act as sprinklers of the ashes. 4QMMT delineates the ritual, which is described as a series of steps in Num. 19, as a single rite. All of these regulations

expand the descriptions of the Red Heifer rite in the Torah. Other texts from Cave 4 extended the sprinkling of the מֵי נִדָּה (water of purification) to other severe kinds of impurities. In 4Q277, 4Q284, and 4Q512, the מֵי נִדָּה was interpreted as being able to clean individuals from corpse contamination and bodily discharges alike. Further, the sprinkling of the ashes is said to be prohibited on Shabbat (4Q251, 4Q265, 4Q274).

71 Himmelfarb 1999, 20; Milgrom 1995, 66–67; Schiffman 1990, 139–140; Werrett 2007, 138–141, 144.

72 The Dead Sea Scrolls 4Q277, 4Q414, and 4Q512 mention first-day ablutions, see Werrett 2007, 231–232, 263, 273, 275.

73 Eshel 2000, 47–48.

According to the Torah, except in a case of corpse impurity, stone vessels remain pure⁷⁴. Although this explanation may seem valid, a closer look at these writings reveals that impure persons had to separate themselves from their homes and families. What purpose, then, could the stone vessels serve if not to enable unclean persons to interact in their communities? The actual need to explain a further use of the chalkstone vessels despite the passages in CD and 11QT19 was engendered by the archaeological record of chalkstone vessel finds at Qumran. If one assumes that the writings found in the caves actually reflect the living reality of sectarians in Qumran, the fact that such vessels were found is puzzling⁷⁵. However, as noted above, there is no proof of a connection between the inhabitants of Qumran and the texts found in the caves.

The cited texts not only extended the purity rulings of Numbers, but also those of the later tannaic

literature, which declares that only man-made objects are vulnerable to defilement, whilst CD and 11Q19 apply the liability to raw materials as well. According to Noam, those texts do not reject the idea that the raw materials (of a house) cannot be defiled, but rather delineate wood, stone, and other building materials of a house as man-made. Thus, those materials were considered part of the cultural world, rather than objects in their natural state, so chalkstone vessels were part of the cultural man-made world⁷⁶. Not only, then, were chalkstone vessels obsolete as impure people were banned from cities and households, but, according to the above passages, they were also useless as they could be defiled. CD and 11Q19 suggest that at least for some part of Jewish society, or some sectarian groups, stone was not considered a pure material and chalkstone vessels were not used as dining utensils or indeed not used at all.

3.3.4. Full-Body Immersion

Full-body immersion was also dealt with in those writings. At least two of the discussed texts – CD and 4Q514 – mention full-body immersion. CD, Col. 10 (MS A) describes the rite of immersion in water to purify oneself: the body has to be entirely covered by fresh water. If the immersion for purification cannot be fulfilled owing to a lack of water, the water which the defiled person touched becomes impure (Col. 10, 10–13). Further, the associated statement in Col. 12 and 13,

“[...] וכל גבא בסלע אשר אין בו די
מרעיל אשר נגע בו הטמא וטמא מימיו במימי הכלי”

“[...] And any pool in a rock insufficient to cover (a man), which is touched by an unclean person, its water becomes unclean, like the water of a vessel.”⁷⁷

underscores the archaeological record of ritual stepped pools by mentioning a “pool in a rock”.

Document 4Q514 refers to bathing and laundering of clothes on the first day of the purification period. Afterwards, the person may eat pure food with the community (Frq. 1, Col. 1,5–9)⁷⁸. All the other texts at least note the washing rituals to regain purity. In 1QS, the mentioned water sources of “streams and rivers” (“ימים ונהרות”, Col. 3,4–5) hint at the practice of full-body immersion in natural water sources⁷⁹. The early dating of the text to the end of the second century BC could account for the fact that there is no mention of ritual pools. As in the Book of Judith, natural water sources were used for full-body immersion before ritual stepped pools became the norm.

However, unlike the other texts, 1QS notes that washing in water alone will not help to restore purity if the mind is not freed from wickedness and stubbornness (Col. 3, 3–8). As in Philo and Greek ideas of purity, the moral value of purity was an important factor in entering the covenant.

74 Adler 2015, 98–101, 104; Adler 2020, 14, 17–18.

75 Both Y. Adler and H. Eshel assume that the writings originated in Qumran, see Adler 2015; Eshel 2000.

76 Noam 2010, 419, 425, 427.

77 Charlesworth 1995, 44–47.

78 The first-day ablution is not related to the Levitical purity regulations (Lev. 11–15), which only mandate first-day cleansing

for scale-diseased persons (Lev. 14:8). Other texts known from Qumran also forbid the eating of pure food before the end of the purification period, which is also contradicted by 4Q514, which is closer to the Pharisaic טביל יום (immersed [on that] ‘day’) ruling. Milgrom 1994, 177–179, 179.

79 Charlesworth 1994, 12–13.

The heart and mind have to be righteous for the person to be purified. Thus, the text rejects the idea of full-body immersion or washing in water for purification as a single rite, which was a contradiction to both Levitical law and common practice during the late Second Temple period⁸⁰. In H. Harrington's view, the IQS transfers the physical Temple to a symbolic space and interprets the community as a

3.3.5. Female Polluting Powers

The role of female impurity is highlighted in the books of Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemia, which expand on the Levitical laws. The use of נדה in this context links moral to female impurity. The Dead Sea Scrolls adopted this new terminology of female impurity and the term נדה is used in connection with impurity in general. In CD, נדה can be found four times (Col. 2,1; 3,12; 3,17; 12,2), but only once in connection to sexual pollution (Col. 12,2); otherwise, it is used to mean general impurity. In IQS, it can be found seven times (Col. 3,9; 4,5; 4,21; 4,22; 5,19; 10,24; 11,14), usually to denote impure actions.

Although 11Q19 does not reflect this terminology, the text notes that men who engaged in sexual intercourse were banned from the entire city of Jerusalem for three days (Col. 45,7–12)⁸². Apparently,

temple⁸¹. A comparable approach can be seen in the Book of Jubilees. In 1:23, purity is associated with a righteous mind and soul, rather than with the state of the body. This purity cannot be achieved by rituals but is given by YHWH. Jubilees does not deal with washing in water as a means of restoring ritual purity, which is in accord with Ezekiel's contention that can only YHWH can grant purification.

sexual relations were forbidden in Jerusalem and women were not supposed to be inside the city. According to 11Q19, it was mainly women who were excluded from Israelite cities owing to impurity. Menstruating women, individuals with skin diseases or discharges, and postpartum women were separated from society, unlike in Lev. 12 and 15, which imply that such impure people are to remain in their homes⁸³. Further, the text notes that a woman with a dead foetus inside her womb is considered as "impure as a grave" ("תטמא כקבר", Col. 50, 11)⁸⁴. This defilement is comparable to corpse impurity and requires the rite of the Red Heifer. This assumption expands on known purity regulations and later halakhot⁸⁵. Jubilees refers to bodily impurity in connection with purification for a postpartum woman (3:8–14) but has no other references to ritual purity⁸⁶.

80 Himmelfarb 2001, 30–31; Lichtenberger 1980, 118–120. M. Klinghardt stated that the text is comparable to the general structure of Hellenistic associations. In his view, the reflected religious association can be interpreted as a synagogue community. According to M. Klinghardt, additional similarities to Hellenistic associations can be found in 4Q513 and 514, see Klinghardt 1994, 256, 259. The comparison to Hellenistic associations is even more convincing when one considers the highly spiritual character of purity in Greek religion. 'Righteous thoughts' and the concept of the pure mind were common obligations for purity from the fourth century BC on, see Robertson 2013, 196, 229.

81 Harrington 2019, 156–157.

82 The purity regulation of Lev. 15:18 demands a purification for men and women after sexual intercourse. 11Q19 only mentions the purification of men after sexual intercourse but does not specify the required purification rites, see also Werrett 2007, 160.

83 Himmelfarb 1999, 17–18.

84 Charlesworth 2011, 123.

85 In the traditional halakha, the mother of the dead foetus is not impure, as long as it remains inside (mHul 4:3). Martínez 1995^b, 147; Werrett 2007, 148, 151.

86 L. Ravid assumes that the missing concept of purity is a matter of chronology. Before Moses received the Commandments and before the Sanctuary was built, the concept of impurity and purity was not valid for Israel, see Ravid 2002, 84. However, this kind of chronological understanding is unusual in ancient texts.

3.3.6. Summary

The various halakhic interpretations and legal matters in the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect a wide range of contemporary opinions during the late Second Temple period, but the texts fail to present a coherent purity system that combines the principles of moral and ritual purity⁸⁷. As M. Himmelfarb notes especially for CD, 1QS, and 4Q412, combined the ritual purity aspects of the Priestly Code (P) in Leviticus and the moral sins defined in the Holiness Code (H). As in H, the mentioned sources refer to sexual immorality as *ḥḥ*⁸⁸.

The texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls discussed above not only cite the laws of purification in Lev. 11–15 and Num. 19, but combine several passages in the Torah or increase the required level of purity, especially for Jerusalem, which is often compared to the Israelite camp, as in Num. 5 and Deut. 23. In the case of purity, this attempt reconcile different Torah sources seems to be a repeating motif⁸⁹. The texts of the Tanakh which introduce a new kind of purity-related literature – first and foremost the books of Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemia

– are in evidence in the purity regulations in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Separation from others, intermarriage, and the new utilization of the word *ḥḥ* were discussed by various authors and extended. The regulations on corpse impurity in CD and 11Q19 are particularly important for the present study. Both texts describe the liability to defilement of stone materials in cases of corpse impurity. According to CD and 11Q19, stones can contract corpse impurity if they come into contact with oil⁹⁰.

Regarding the material culture, the texts cite full-body immersion and mention rules for man-made ritual bath facility but make no mention of other objects, such as chalkstone vessels. Like no other texts, the Dead Sea Scrolls detail purity rulings and rites. However, the strictness of regulations cited implies that the texts portray a utopian society rather than the contemporary reality. Nevertheless, the similarities in the various texts might reflect a common contemporary acceptance of certain purity rites.

3.4. Historical Sources: Josephus

Josephus' works (*Bellum Iudaicum* [Bell. Iud., 75–79 AD], *antiquitates Iudaicae* [Ant. Iud., 93/94 AD], *vita* (unknown date), and *contra Apionem* [c.Ap., second half of the 90s AD] are the chief sources for knowledge regarding the history of the Jews towards the end of the Second Temple period⁹¹. His books were meant for Greek and Roman as well as Jewish readers and were designed to engender respect for the Jewish people and their history⁹².

Josephus' descriptions of Jewish laws and religious practice are mainly general. He used of the term “laws of the fathers” for the laws of the Torah and contemporary halakha when dealing with the ban

on images, idolatry, the keeping of Shabbat, and the prohibition of mixed marriages⁹³. Those laws are best described in *contra Apionem*, where he writes about the dietary laws, which are strongly associated with separation from the others and faithfulness to tradition (c. Ap. 2, 173–175). He linked the idea of separation from the others and the keeping of one's own identity to the basic concepts of so-called Common Judaism: dietary laws, reading or hearing the Torah, and keeping Shabbat (c. Ap. 2, 173). The laws regarding separation and the pure status were also valid for Jews in the Diaspora (c. Ap. 2, 277).

87 Werrett 2007, 218; for a comparison chart concerning the different purity rulings in the texts, see Werrett 2007, 289–290.

88 Himmelfarb 2001, 13.

89 Himmelfarb 2001, 15. Moreover, J. Milgrom pointed out that in 4Q274, the impurity of a *zāḥ* was equivalent to that of a menstruating woman. In contrast, Lev. 15:14–15 and 29–30 required that the *zāḥ* bring sacrifices the morning after his purification period, while the menstruating woman only has to

undergo ablutions. Thus, the Torah delineates the two impurities differently by requiring different purification rituals, whereas 4Q274 treats them equally, see Milgrom 1995, 64.

90 Werrett 2007, 276–277.

91 Schröder 1996, 12–13.

92 Maier 1999, 12; Schürer 1973, 48.

93 Schröder 1996, 264.

The idea of separation from the others is enlarged in *antiquitates Iudaicae*, including the separation from Israelites/Jews who were not faithful to the law (Ant. Iud. 12, 286). In this regard, Josephus followed the regulations laid out in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Similarities to the various sectarian writings can also be found in his assumptions in connection with corpse impurity and the purity of Jerusalem. As in 11Q19, Josephus likened serious corpse impurity to the impurity of a *zāb* or a leper⁹⁴. The expelling of males with discharges and menstruating women from the cities of Eretz-Israel in Ant. Iud. 3, 261–264 is comparable to a similar ruling in 11Q19⁹⁵.

Regarding full-body immersion or washing in water, Josephus mentioned the use of cold water (e.g., Bell. Iud. 2, 129; Ant. Iud. 3, 263), which could imply the utilization of ritual stepped pools, as unlike Graeco-Roman baths, they were not heated⁹⁶. The obligation of purification by bathing after legitimate sexual intercourse is mentioned in c. Ap. 2, 203, and Josephus wrote that “there is a defile-

ment contracted hereby, both in soul and body”⁹⁷. The related law to wash after sexual intercourse in Lev. 15:16, 18 refers solely to bodily purity. The reference to the soul is a usual motif in diasporic texts, which were highly influenced by philosophical subjects, but were not typical of Josephus’ writings. It remains uncertain as to whether Josephus tried to make the Jewish purification rites more understandable to a Graeco-Roman audience, for which the purity of mind and soul was crucial⁹⁸.

Despite washing in water and the purity regulations related to earlier sources such as the Temple Scroll (11Q19), Josephus’ works do not relate to actual purity practices. His halakic assumptions are characterized by a mixture of different religious approaches, including Sadducee, Pharisaic, and sectarian rules⁹⁹. In this regard, the texts may not serve as a source for purity practices, but rather as a mirror of society during the early Roman period, which was characterized by a wide range of religious ideas and practices.

3.5. Purity of the Soul: Diasporic Literature

Textual evidence, especially regarding religious practice among Jewish communities in Asia Minor, Coele Syria, and Europe during the late Hellenistic and early Roman period is meagre. Most of the diasporic literature comes from Egypt, especially Alexandria. As the texts written in Eretz-Israel reflect a wide range of religious thought and practice, one can assume that the different communities in the Diaspora were similarly multi-layered and complex. *The Letter of Aristeas* and the works of Philo only convey a small glimpse of the understanding of

purity in the Diaspora, especially the Alexandrian Jewish Diaspora. The letter Aristeas to Philocrates, otherwise known as *On the Translation of the Law of the Jews*, is a fictitious text about the historical events of the translation of the Septuagint and its entry into the library of Alexandria by Ptolemaios II (285–247 BC)¹⁰⁰. The text can most probably be dated to the middle of the second century BC. The narrator of the story, Aristeas, is portrayed as a gentile, but the knowledge of Jewish customs and the LXX points to a Jewish authorship¹⁰¹.

94 It is likely that Josephus relied on Num. 5:2: “Remove from the camp anyone with an eruption or a discharge and anyone defiled by a corpse”, see also Noam 2012, 135–136, 138, 142.

95 Birenboim 2012, 53; Regev 2011, 60.

96 Trümper 2010, 530, 535.

97 Maier 1999, 973.

98 Robertson 2013, 196. Philo mentioned the obligation for purification after legitimate sexual intercourse in Spec. 3, 63.

99 Regev 2011, 52; Schröder 1996, 130, 149.

100 Kiefer 2005, 353–356; Wright 2015, 51.

101 Wright 2015, 16–17, 28.

3.5.1. The Letter of Aristeas

In *The Letter of Aristeas*, purity and dietary laws were means of self-definition in the Diaspora and served as an invisible fence to separate from the others while still participating in society (142, 144–157). Even though integration into a gentile society is described as being desirable in Aristeas, the fine line to assimilation was not to be transgressed. In lines 128–133, Eleazar, the high priest of the Jews, refers to clean and unclean animals and the general dietary laws. In these lines, idol worship delineates Jewish boundaries and the separation from idolatry. The wish to separate is described in more detail in line 139:

“[...] and he [YHWH] fenced us around with unbroken palisades and with iron walls so that we might not intermingle at all with any other nations, being pure in both body and soul¹⁰².”

Thus, purity expands on the concept of the pure body and includes the purity of the soul, which was typical of Greek religious thought.

The extreme symbolism of separation to protect the Jewish identity by “impenetrable fences” and “iron walls” is belied by the Hellenistic character of the text and its general benevolence towards the gentile world¹⁰³. Further, the text discusses a washing ritual unknown in Eretz-Israel during the Hellenistic period in line 305:

“And as the custom of all the Jews, when they had washed their hands in the sea in order that they might offer prayer to God they turned to reading and explication of each detail¹⁰⁴.”

The text refers to the translators of LXX, who wash their hands in the morning before they begin their work but, in fact, handwashing is portrayed as a custom among all Jews¹⁰⁵. The use of seawater was common in Greek purification rites and that might have had an influence on Jewish purification rituals in the Diaspora¹⁰⁶. As ritual stepped pools were not known in Alexandria nor anywhere else in Egypt, handwashing in seawater could have represented a blend of Greek purity rites and Jewish purity regulations.

The Letter of Aristeas conveys an extraordinary portrayal of an elite Jewish community which is anxious to preserve its own identity while simultaneously taking part in Greek society. Unlike in the texts of Eretz-Israel, the author differentiated between righteous and unrighteous gentiles (e.g., 152), and suggested that some gentiles shared moral values with Jews and were desirable fellow men¹⁰⁷. Nevertheless, purity through food and separation remained an important aspect of the Jewish identity, even though the purity was not achieved by physical purity rites or strict separation, but in a more symbolic way through a state of mind.

3.5.2. Philo of Alexandria (15/10 BC–45/50 AD)

Philo came from a wealthy and influential family in Alexandria. He was raised and educated in the Greek fashion and acquired a wide knowledge of Greek literature. In his own works, he described himself as an active participant in the social life of Alexandria. Given his knowledge, as evident in *De specialibus legibus* (Spec.), he was probably a political

administrator serving in the Jewish law courts¹⁰⁸.

Philo’s writings reflect a diasporic Jew who was concerned with religious worship and a righteous life. He had a profound knowledge of the Torah, Temple rites, and the high priesthood. One of his principal aims was to inspire his readers to follow the revealed Law of the Torah. Most of his works

102 Wright 2015, 257.

103 Hacham – Sagiv 2019, 184. For further discussion, see Hacham – Sagiv 2019, 184–188.

104 Wright 2015, 434.

105 It is reasonable to assume that hand-washing before prayer or Torah reading had been a widespread practice as early as during the Second Temple period in Eretz-Israel, but textual evidence for this practice only appears later in the rabbinic literature, Lawrence 2006, 57; Poirier 2003, 251–252; Safrai – Safrai

2011, 261; Tomson 2019, 108–109, 114. yShab 1:4; yKet 8:11; bShab 14b–15a.

106 Adler 2008, 64.

107 Hacham – Sagiv 2019, 283.

108 Moreover, in Spec. 1, 3 he claims that his intellectual works were interrupted frequently by “civil cares”, see Colson – Whitaker – Marcus 1984, 477; see also Niehoff 2001, 8.

have biblical backgrounds and serve as commentaries on certain passages of the Torah¹⁰⁹. To some degree, he followed the Sadducee and Pharisaic halakha and was certainly familiar with the hermeneutical rules implied by the school of Hillel. In *Quod omnis probus liber sit* (*Every Good Man is Free*) he referred to the Essenes (73–87) as a group of people in “Palestinian Syria” (75)¹¹⁰.

Philo discussed the sacrifices and the first fruits that had to be delivered to the Temple, as well as to the synagogue and religious services held in Alexandria¹¹¹. In his praise of the purity and righteousness of the high priesthood, he followed a purity concept that relied on the traditional observances described in the Torah¹¹².

He combined Greek philosophical thought and Levitical purification rulings in a unique fashion. The Greek word *ἀγνεία* that he used for purity can be translated as purity, chastity, strict observance of religious duties, purifications, and ceremonies. Thus, it included the metaphorical level of the purification of the soul and the more abstract righteous attitude of the soul¹¹³. The concept of ‘purity of mind’ is strongly connected to Greek philosophy, as is his description of several purity rulings as matters of natural conditions¹¹⁴. Nature as a stable entity is the only authentic ruling force, so anchoring Jewish law in nature helps to legitimate it. Thus, he implied that dietary laws lead to a healthy lifestyle and keep both the body and the soul in good condition. He also suggested that intercourse with a menstruating woman was prohibited not because it is connected to impurity but rather because it does not serve a reproductive purpose (Spec. 3, 32)¹¹⁵.

Another crucial aspect in Philo’s work is the notion that separation from the others manifests one’s purity. That idea was associated primarily with the

priestly class and their obligation to separate between the holy and the profane and the pure and the impure (e.g., Spec. 1, 101–161). Laypeople were obligated to keep their distance from impurity, especially when they intended to sacrifice or to visit the Temple (Spec. 1, 250, 257). Purification rites were invalid without the inner purity of the soul. He interpreted the inability to distinguish between profane and sacred things and between the pure and the impure as a sign of an individual’s lawlessness and lack of discipline¹¹⁶.

Philo portrayed Egyptians as the others per se negatively in contrast to his positive approach towards Jews (e.g., *Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum* 1, 10). While it is not contradictory to be both Roman and Jew or Greek and Jew, the same is not true for Egyptian and Jew. Philo was thus able to integrate Jews into the civilized nations of the West, who stood in opposed to barbarism¹¹⁷. Like the author of Aristeas, Philo had no problem in participating in gentile society or interacting with righteous non-Jews. He contended that unreliable individuals reveal themselves through their inability to distinguish between the holy and the profane and purity and impurity (Spec. 2, 6).

Philo’s discussion of corpse impurity is important in regard to the practical manner of purification. In Spec. 1, 262, he mentioned sprinkling the waters of seas, rivers, or wells in order to purify a person from corpse impurity. Since the purification rite with the ashes of the Red Heifer was limited to the Temple, the use of water from natural sources could have served as a substitute for such purification in the Diaspora. Moreover, in Philo’s description, the sacrifice and rite of the Red Heifer required clean bodies and souls (Spec. 1, 269). In Spec. 3, 205–206, Philo presented a strict purity regulation regarding

109 The obligation to pay the Temple tax is written in his *Quis rerum divinarum heres*: 186 “[...] We are meant to consecrate on half of it, the drachma, and pay it as ransom for our own soul [...]”, see Colson – Whitaker 1985, 377.

110 Belkin 1940, 34–35; Colson 1954, 53–61.

111 Philo defined Shabbat as the day when the laws of the Torah are read out loud to the community. *Hypothetica* 7, 12–13, in Colson 1954, 431–433. For descriptions of the celebration of Jewish festivals and Shabbat as described by Philo, see Leonhardt-Balzer 2007, 37; Niehoff 2001, 18–19, 81.

112 The role of the priesthood and the priests special purity status, see, e.g., *De fuga et inuentione* 113–115, in Colson 1984, 71–73 and *De somniis* 1, 210–214, in Colson 1984,

409–413; on the obligation of the high priest to stay pure even from unintentional impurities, see *De vita Mosis* 1, 231, in Colson 1994, 397.

113 Leonhardt 2001, 256, 258.

114 Purity of mind was obligatory for entering sacred places or temples from the fourth century BC on, see Robertson 2013, 229–230.

115 For a detailed interpretation, see Niehoff 2001, 247–266.

116 For example, *De ebrietate* 143, in Colson – Whitaker 1988, 393–395.

117 For a lengthy discussion on the interpretation of Egyptians as ‘others’, see Niehoff 2001, 45–74.

corpse impurity, which was known through contemporary sources Eretz-Israel. Corpse impurity defiles everyone who touches the body and all the objects in the house. The defilement of “anything else that happens to be inside” (Spec. 3, 206) is comparable to the rulings on corpse impurity of 11Q19 Col. 49, 14–16b and CD Col. 12, 15–18. The sprinkling of the ashes of the Red Heifer had to be done on the third and seventh days of pollution¹¹⁸. One had to bathe and wash one’s clothes directly after contact with the corpse. This immediate act of purification is not mentioned in Num. 19 but can be found in the writings of Josephus (c. Ap. 2, 198) and, for example, in 11Q19 50:13–16, 4Q512, and 4Q414¹¹⁹. In Spec. 3, 207, Philo tried to explain the defilement through a corpse by the departure of the soul, which seeks another home and leaves everything behind defiled¹²⁰.

In Philo’s works, regular washing rituals were associated mainly with the Temple. In *Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum* 1, 2, he noted the washing of feet before entering the Temple, but this reference is not further described or explained. Concerning the impurity of priests, Philo followed the Levitical rulings regarding bathing. In Spec. 1, 119, he wrote, “If a priest touches any impure object or, as often happens, has an emission during the night”, he is not allowed to partake of the sacred food and he has to bathe. He is clean again only after sundown. The purity regulation described by Philo is comparable to, for example, Lev. 15:18, “they shall bathe in water and remain unclean until the evening”.

Philo mentioned full-body immersion for lay-people – more precisely for women after menstruation – only once in *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim* 4, 15. Although he commented on the bib-

lical ruling in Gen. 18:11, one can assume that he was familiar with the ritual of immersion for women after menstruation. Probably the monthly immersion was also undertaken by some of the Jewesses of Alexandria. He did not refer to the obligation of *zābym* or other polluted men to immerse themselves in water.

According to Philo, a married couple was obligated to wash after intercourse (Spec. 3, 63), and neither husband nor wife was allowed “to touch anything before washing”. The regulations regarding legitimate sexual intercourse were also connected to the general avoidance and accusations of adultery (Spec. 3, 63). That rule was similar to Josephus’ statement in c. Ap. 2, 203: “after the man and wife have lain together in a regular way, they shall bathe themselves; for there is a defilement contracted thereby, both in soul and body”¹²¹. The rule regarding the touching of anything could have derived from a Babylonian influence. Herodotus wrote that a Babylonian who had intercourse with his wife shall sit at the burnt offering of incense and [both shall] wash themselves at dawn. Meanwhile, they are not allowed to touch even a vessel. In Greek tradition, purification after intercourse was intended to prevent sexual licentiousness¹²².

Philo’s texts demonstrate the concept of ‘purity of the soul’, as influenced by Greek religious thought. The strong connection between body and soul and the right mindset to achieve bodily purity make it impossible to draw a distinction between the obligations of ritual purity and moral purity¹²³. The highly moral value of purity and the idealistically pure status associated with high priests raise the question as to whether purity was more a symbolic and philosophical concept than a practical issue.

118 Leonhardt 2001, 266.

119 Regev 2011, 52.

120 Colson et al. 1984, 605.

121 Maier 1999, 973.

122 In this matter, Philo’s view is like one of the later rabbinic rulings. According to the tannaitic literature men and women are not allowed to touch food before immersion but could touch anything else in the house.

123 Especially in *Quod deterius potiori insidari soleat*, in Colson – Whitaker 1979, 202–322.

3.6. Conclusion

The texts discussed above trace a chronological development of the role of purity in society. From the Hellenistic period onwards, purity became a tool of separation from the others and for Jewish self-identity. In these texts from the Tanakh, purity was a communal factor that also affected the land of Israel. It was no longer restricted to the Temple but was a matter of concern in the domestic sphere. The new focus on food and marriage cannot be explained by earlier rulings. The Torah delineates certain dietary laws but never prohibits eating with foreigners. There are several occasions when the Israelites shared their food and celebrated their feasts with non-Israelites: Abraham eats bread and drinks wine offered by Melchizedek, king of Salem (Gen. 14:18); Isaac invites the Philistines Abimelech and Phicol to a feast (Gen. 26:30); and Jacob shares his food with Aramean kinsmen (Gen. 31:46, 540)¹²⁴. It was only during the Hellenistic period that the separation from the others' food became a crucial factor of self-formation¹²⁵. Moreover, the earlier Tanakh literature is full of Israelites marrying women from other nations, among whom we find David, Judah, Joseph, and Solomon. The children of those marriages would have been considered Israelites since the matrilineal principle of Judaism was only established in the second century AD. The texts dating from the first exile are the first to use the prohibition of intermarriage as an instrument for separating from gentiles and strengthening the identity of the group. This identity relied heavily on the idea of the purity of Israel. The described development reflects a stricter religious practice that emerged during the Hellenistic period in order to facilitate separation from the gentile world¹²⁶. Especially in regard to women, the terminology changes as well, as the word נדה (*nidā*) is used to describe ethical or moral impurity, for the Levitical meaning of *nidā* refers only to the limited time of seven days during menstruation (Lev. 15:19). During that time, women were not allowed to enter the Sanctuary, but

were not excluded from the family or society. The expansion of the term *nidā* was likely due to the moral aspect in Lev. 18:19, which forbids sexual relations with menstruating women. From the texts of Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemia on, *nidā* is used to describe immoral others or religious misdeeds¹²⁷. The focus on female aspects of impurity is further visible in the prohibition of intermarriage. The texts delineate foreign women as dangerous to the Jewish religion and nation.

The development continues in the Apocrypha with a focus on the purity of the family and individual piety. For the first time, purity is set in context with individual rites and actions. Judith, for example, bathes in a spring as a purification rite before eating. Moreover, even while in the camp of Holofernes, she eats her own food from her own dishes.

The Dead Sea Scrolls enlarge upon the idea of separation not only from other nations or gentiles, but from non-sectarians, other Jews, and the Temple and its priests. 1QS in particular describes a certain hierarchy of purity which separated group members from each other. The status of a member was defined by his/her purity or, more precisely, by the ability to partake of pure meals and purity rituals. What began as a Jewish self-consolidation against the others during the Hellenistic period became a mechanism to differentiate Jews from one another.

In the diasporic literature, purity is more symbolic than real. Aristeas and Philo described Jewish communities that took part in the gentile society, but still kept their religious identity¹²⁸. The terminology, which emphasizes the symbolic character of purity, is the 'purity of the soul'. The idea of the purity of the soul was strongly influenced by Greek philosophical thought. This influence was not limited to the Diaspora, as some of the Dead Sea Scrolls and writings of Josephus discuss the righteousness of the mind and soul to achieve purity.

124 For a more detailed overview on biblical sources, see Freidenreich 2011, 18–20.

125 Freidenreich 2011, 39.

126 Cohen 1999, 135–136, 263–265.

127 In D. Erbele-Küster's analysis, *nidā* became "a literary indication of what is outside the systems, suggesting that clear-cut boundaries could be set," see Erbele-Küster

2017, 122. Thereby, "impurity becomes a feminine concept and impurity as such is associated with women", see Erbele-Küster 2017, 123.

128 Thus, they would not refrain from eating gentile food, as long as it does not inherit forbidden ingredients, see Freidenreich 2011, 43–44.

In view of the strong new focus on purity, the lack of reference to specific objects involved in religious practice is striking, especially compared to the frequent citing of washing in water and references to ritual stepped pools. Moreover, the liability of stone to defilement in some of the texts is opposed to the archaeological record of chalkstone vessels. Is the absence of reference to objects in the texts a sign of their irrelevance?

Material culture, that is, items of everyday life, is seldom cited in Antique literary sources. The later rabbinic literature rarely mentions typical Jewish symbols that appeared regularly in other late Antique contexts. The *menorâ*, the *lûlâv*, the *šofâr*, and the incense shovel are frequent motifs in the decoration of synagogues and can be found as well on coins and in funeral contexts in both Eretz-Israel and the Diaspora. Yet, rabbinic literature does not refer to the symbols. The same is true for the *māgen Dāwid* (star of David), which became the principal Jewish symbol during the eighteenth century, but is not mentioned in rabbinic writings dating to that period. Thus, one can assume that symbols served in the religious and sociological spheres without being explained, but the connection between rabbinic lit-

erature and symbols differs from that between Second Temple period literature and material culture¹²⁹. Chalkstone vessels did not only have a symbolic function but were probably in practical use. Citing full-body immersion and even mentioning the rules for ritual bathing, as in CD, while not referring to chalkstone vessels suggests that the latter were less important. This interpretation is underscored in CD and 11Q19 by the notion that stones can be defiled.

Another reason for the missing link is chronology. The texts with the enhanced purity regulations date prior to the establishment of the related material culture of purity in Eretz-Israel. The former were produced by a religious and political elite, which formulated a new concept of purity. The change in material culture followed and made its way into ordinary households – but apparently not into the sources. The subsequent appearance of text and material culture describes a certain hierarchy from the higher social level towards the lower. The texts laid the ideological foundation well before the notions of purity and its materials became relevant to everyday life. All of these aspects probably account in some measure for an absence of chalkstone vessels and other purity-related objects in the texts.

129 Stern 1994, 85–86.

4. 'PURE' MATERIAL CULTURE

The previous chapters demonstrated that domestic purity concerns became an integral part of everyday life for a majority of the Jewish population during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods. The new focus on purity required a new material culture, such as chalkstone vessels, stone furniture, local pottery, and ritual stepped pools, which would allow lay people to maintain their purity in everyday life¹. The development of this material culture reflects the new religious, economic, and cultural influences that the Jews had to deal with in Judaea and its environs. The domestic items were produced with identical typological features, which characterized 'household Judaism'². The earliest signs of a change in the use of pottery at Jewish sites date to the Hasmonean period. From the late second century BC on, the material culture of Judaeian villages and rural settlements reflected a significant differ-

ence in terms of the Hellenistic influence on their surroundings and nearby such cities as Marisa, Dör, or Samareia-Sabastīya.

In contrast to the literature associated with purity, which was produced by an elite, material culture was of interest to a wider population, as it pointed to the ways in which the concern for purity was part of everyday life. The various items that constituted the contemporary material culture had slightly different chronologies, distribution patterns, and significance. Chalkstone vessels accounted for the most important group of relevant objects. The study of ossuaries, objects that were made of the same material as vessels, helps to determine Jewish burial customs, and the description of pottery and ritual stepped pools completes the picture of the 'household Judaism' of the late Second Temple period.

4.1. Chalkstone Vessels

Chalkstone vessels are the most distinctive material group in the research of Jewish material culture of the late Second Temple period. The lathe-turned or hand-carved vessels were manufactured from soft chalkstone and were turned out in a wide range of shapes. In general, the earliest finds were uncovered at Hasmonean sites, especially in Jericho and Jerusalem. The earliest documented chalkstone vessel, apparently a polished hand-carved mug, came from Jericho and dates to the reign of Salome Alexandra (76–67 BC)³. A. Zilberstein's analysis of early chalkstone vessels from the Givati Parking Lot excavation near the City of David in Jerusalem indicates that there were chalkstone vessels as early as in the second century BC, which predate the find from Jericho. According to the stratigraphy, these were deep round vessels with disk bases that can be dated to the late 120s BC.

A. Zilberstein suggests that the find from Jericho with polished walls represents a kind of transitional state between the early Hasmonean models and the later early Roman mass-produced chalkstone vessels⁴. The Herodian period saw a wider distribution and use of such vessels. The latest examples date to the late first and the beginning of the second century AD and somewhat beyond⁵.

Although the vessel forms are similar to contemporary types made of other materials, such as pottery or wood, the white stone vessels can only be found in areas inhabited by Jews, especially in Judaea, the Galilee, and the Golan. There were fewer finds on the coastal plain and in Idumaea, Samaria, and Transjordan. The archaeological evidence within the excavated sites indicates that smaller chalkstone vessels were used primarily in private household contexts⁶. The presence of chalkstone

1 Miller 2015, 179.

2 Berlin 2005, 467; Berlin 2013, 168–170.

3 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 406.

4 Zilberstein 2022, 282–283.

5 The early assumption that the vessels went out of use after 70 AD relied on the fact that most of the excavated material came from Jerusalem and major sites, which were destroyed by

the Romans. Moreover, the purity regulations in the biblical texts associated with the vessels were interpreted as only relevant to the Temple. Thus, it was reasonable to assume that the vessels disappeared after the Temple was destroyed. Adler 2016, 240; Sherman et al. 2020, 88.

6 Adler 2016, Fig. 4; Berlin 2005, 430; Reed 2003, 384.

vessels in rural settlements and private homes suggests their general availability and importance for commoners.

R. A. S. MacAlister and J. G. Duncan offered the first description of chalkstone vessels in their 1920s report on the excavation at the Ophel in Jerusalem, in which they distinguished between lathe-turned and hand-carved vessels. The remnants of so-called soft stone vessels were mainly small fragments of mugs or bowls, which they described as simple and of low quality, and so were only of meagre scientific interest. In the late 1960s, the number of excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem increased, as did the number of chalkstone vessel assemblages⁷.

4.1.2. Vessel Types

The vessel types can be roughly divided into those made on a lathe and those that were hand carved. The lathe-turned vessels are further subdivided based on whether they were turned on a large or a small lathe.

The hand-carved vessels were the earliest and most widely distributed stone vessels. The most common hand-carved type was the barrel-shaped vessel with one or two handles (*Fig. 4.1*). It was usually referred to as a mug, but if it had a spout it was sometimes called a pitcher. Small bowls with flat or ring bases belong to the regular assemblage of hand-carved vessels. Other forms such as lids, trays, and tubs were not found as often¹⁰. The hand-carved vessels had either polished outer walls or chisel-marked decorations. The natural white colour of the chalkstone is thus the most striking feature¹¹.

The stone mugs and pitchers are identical in shape, size, and appearance wherever they have been found. Only the production technique might have been slightly different. Whereas the outer walls were always hand-carved, the cores were

hollowed out either by hand or with the help of a lathe¹².

Y. Magen published the first typology in 1988. He relied on the finds from the excavations near the Temple Mount and on the excavations and research carried out at the Hızma stone vessel quarry, north-east of Jerusalem. His study deals with the quarrying and production methods that might have been used by the craftsmen of the Second Temple period⁸. His ground-breaking research was followed by several projects devoted to the same topic, including J. Cahill’s work on the finds from the City of David⁹. Both works provided the basis for further typological work on chalkstone vessels.



Fig. 4.1 Hand-carved mugs and pitchers at the Wohl Museum, Jerusalem (Source: F. Schöpf).

hollowed out either by hand or with the help of a lathe¹².

Lathe-turned vessels found in the Jericho excavations first appeared during the reign of Herod. The form and typology of these models were influenced by the Eastern Terra Sigillata (ETS) pottery wares, which were popular among the elite of Judaea dur-

7 MacAlister – Duncan 1926, 147; Gibson 2003, 287.

8 Magen 1988. In 2002, Y. Magen’s publication from 1988 appeared in English with some new additions: Magen 2002.

9 Cahill 1992.

10 Cahill 1992, 209–215.

11 The colour white as a sign of purity may seem anachronistic, nonetheless, in Dan. 11:35 and 12:10 the verb לָבַן is used in *hif’el* and *hitpa’el*, and can be translated to *clean something and to prove oneself pure*, see Paschen 1970, 22.

12 Magen 2002, 117. The suggestion that the removal of the core by a lathe was unique to the workshops in the Galilee is not plausible. Hand-carved vessels found in the workshops of Reina in the Galilee and Mount Scopus in Jerusalem had their cores removed by lathe, see Gibson 2003, 295, 300; Magen 2002, 3.

ing the first century AD¹³. The small lathe-turned vessels had a wide range of shapes and there were comparable counterparts made of ceramic, metal, wood, and glass¹⁴. The main vessel types are bowls, dishes (shallow bowls), goblets, and stoppers. The sides of the vessels were smoothly polished, and the bowls were frequently decorated with incised lines, at either the rim or the centre of the vessel¹⁵.

Vessels turned on a large lathe, one that measured some 55.00–80.00 cm in height, were made of the same chalkstone material. The *qalal* is the most common form. That barrel-shaped container had a hollowed trumpet base and ended in a wide opening. The outside could be adorned with incised lines or with more elaborate decorations. The walls were polished, with the more sophisticated patterns appearing around the rim. The inside of the vessel was modelled by hand. The other type, the so-called (hole mouth) jar, was tall with a footed base. The body was round and ended in a hole mouth (Fig. 4.2)¹⁶. Whereas the small lathe-turned vessels can be thought of as similar to imported fine ware pottery, the *qalal* can be compared to Graeco-Roman krater/*calyces*. The latter were made of bronze, granite, marble, or alabaster and were used as decorative containers for mixing wine and water¹⁷. Large chalkstone vessels were found in Jerusalem, at the



Fig. 4.2 Assemblage of large lathe-turned vessels, including *qalal*, and jars at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (Source: F. Schöpf).

Herodeion, in the Galilee (especially Sepphoris), Jaffa, and Samareia-Sabaṣṭiya. Kraters, large jars, and *qalal* vessels were probably used mainly by an elite, as can be seen from the finds from the Jewish Quarter, the Tyropoeon Valley in Jerusalem, Area C in Jaffa, and Sepphoris¹⁸. The excavations reveal a wealthy Jewish community or individuals that owned chalkstone vessels, furniture made of the same material, and large jars that were status symbols, none of which can be accounted for solely by the needs of private purity.

4.1.3. Production Methods and Sites

The contemporary chalkstone vessel industry employed techniques known for metal and wood vessel production as wood, in particular, has some of the same qualities as chalkstone. The production line with the quarrying of the raw material, the rough cutting of the stone, and the fine work involved craftsmen with different skills. The raw material in the quarries included chalkstone and soft limestone, which occur naturally on the surface in the region between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea and in the Shefela, Samaria, the Galilee, and Transjordan. Chalkstone constitutes the upper geological formation in these areas. Senonian rock, the upper chalkstone sediment, is the softest material¹⁹.

Those chalk layers (*huwwar*) suitable for the production of chalkstone vessels lay above the lower *kakula* rock. The harder *nari* limestone on top of the soft chalkstone layers could be as much as 2 m thick. In the Jerusalem region, the chalk and soft limestone are white to pale yellow in colour. The Nebi Musa area is known for the harder greyish bituminous material, which was mainly used to produce large vessels and furniture²⁰. The colour and quality can be one way of tracing the original site where the material for any particular vessel was quarried, but scientific traceable isotopic characteristics of chalkstone objects is more reliable. While the chemical characteristics of chalk are similar at sites

13 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 408; Magen 2002, 162.

14 Gibson 2003, 293.

15 Cahill 1992, 201–205; Magen 2002, 174–180.

16 Cahill 1992, 207; Gibson 2003, 294; Magen 2002, 80–90.

17 Zangenberg 2013, 549–550.

18 Adler – Amit, 542; Reed 2013, 395–397; Zilberstein – Ben Efraim 2013, 225–228.

19 Deines 1993, 48–49.

20 Magen 2002, 1, 116.

located near one another, the isotope composition of Judaeen and Galilean chalk differs²¹. The isotope composition of 60 fragments from Sepphoris suggests that the main difference lies in the amount of oxygen ($\delta^{18}\text{O}$) and carbon ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$). Generally, it can be said that the samples from production sites and settlements in the Galilee have more $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ than the ones from the Judaeen hills. Some of the probes at Sepphoris differed from all others taken in the Galilean and Judaeen workshops, suggesting workshops or quarries used for their production which are as yet unknown²².

The first stage of production was the cutting of the stone blocks to the approximate size of the intended vessel by using a denticulate hammer, after which the stones were soaked in water to soften them, which resulted in the vessel having a smoother finish²³. The form of mugs, pitchers, and bowls minus the handles and spouts were then generally outlined by using a hammer and a broad chisel, which was then followed by the removal of the core. The core was gouged out by cutting from the outside to the inside. The fine work on the outer walls was only done after the core was removed. The fine work included the finishing of the outer and inner walls with a fine chisel and curved blade. The inner walls were smoothed out, whereas the outer walls were usually worked with vertical strokes. The core could also be removed by a lathe, which left tall, conical cores. The handles were finally added by piercing them in with a drill or knife. The decorative marks on the outside were worked with chisels, knives, and drills²⁴.

The stone blocks intended for lathe-turned vessels were first shaped by hand to the approximate size required and then soaked in water before working. Before setting the stone blocks into a lathe, the upper and lower surfaces of the block were straightened. As the excavated material from Hizma and other sites generally has no traces of an attachment of a spike or central turning point, the vessels were probably fixed to the spindle with strong glue. The outer surface was then worked with a sharp blade. The inner core was removed by gradually incising around the sides to the bottom. The craftsman re-

duced the inner core to a size at which he could easily gouge the part remaining out with a hammer and chisel. Nevertheless, as with the hand-carved vessels, the removal of the core was the most difficult part. The vessel was finally smoothed and could be further decorated with a sharp knife, engraving lines while turning the vessel. The smoothing and polishing were probably done using one of several materials such as sand, ground glass, or stones²⁵.

Owing to the absence of any archaeological evidence because they were made of wood and textiles, which soon decay, researchers know very little about the lathes that were used. Based on traditional stone vessel production and ancient iconography as well as illustrations, it has been suggested that the craftsmen used bow-powered and/or wheel-powered lathes for the production. The material was usually set between two wooden beams and turned with the help of a bow or an attached wheel²⁶.

The large vessels called for other working methods and had to be produced using the same technique as for stonecutting for architectural purposes. The vessels, which weighed about 100 kg were produced from raw stone blocks weighing some 475 kg. After the stone was quarried, it had to be roughly shaped by hand and probably soaked in water. The exterior of the vessel was then cut on a lathe. The production required massive lathes that could be rotated at high speeds²⁷.



Fig. 4.3 View of the excavated chalkstone quarry at Einot Amitai (Source: F. Schöpf).

21 Adler et al. 2020, 2, 4, 13; Sherman et al. 2020, 89–93.

22 Sherman et al. 2020, 90.

23 Magen 2002, 116–118.

24 Cahill 1992, 224–225; Magen 2002, 116–118.

25 Cahill 1992, 224; Magen 2002, 127–129, 219.

26 For detailed descriptions of ancient small lathes, see Cahill 1992, 219–225; Deines 1993, 41–45; Magen 2002, 116–131; Gibson 2003, 297, 299, Fig. 13.

27 Cahill 1992, 224; Magen 2002, 130–131.

The absence of large cores or wasters at the excavated quarries and workshop sites is not surprising, as the cores were so big that they could have easily been reused as raw material for smaller vessels²⁸.

The main known manufacturing centres were in Jerusalem and its environs and the Galilee, and some smaller centres have been found in the Shefela²⁹. Typical for such a quarry and workshop are finds of unfinished vessels, cores, and wasters. The work at the quarry involved stonemasons, who manufactured

the vessels at the site. The quarries and included workshops produced stone vessels, ossuaries, and tabletops³⁰.

Quarries exploited especially for the production of chalkstone vessels, such as Ḥizma, did not necessarily yield stone blocks that were uniform in size, unlike quarries that were worked for building material. The softness of the material made random extraction possible. The stone blocks were extracted with the help of hammers, chisels, and pickaxes³¹.

4.1.4. The Significance of Chalkstone Vessels

Chalkstone vessels were widely distributed and were found in common household contexts. However, their actual use and significance remain unclear. The relevant literary sources never mention chalkstone vessels or even refer to the notion that stone could be defiled³². The interpretation of chalkstone vessels as pure objects relies mainly on later rabbinic sources, which note that vessels made from stone, dung, or unfired clay are not liable to defilement. However, chalk and soft limestone are highly porous materials and absorb liquids more easily than burnt ceramics or glass³³.

According to the rulings in Leviticus and Numbers, impurities can defile all kinds of vessels in various ways. The so-called שׂרץ, a small crawling animal, would defile vessels and their content if they fell inside them dead (Lev. 11:31–38). Individuals with discharges can defile vessels by touching them. The only statement on the quality of a vessel in Leviticus is one related to pottery in 11:33, and repeated in 15:12: Earthenware had to be broken if it came into contact with שׂרץ or a person with a discharge; vessels made of other material could be

reused, but they would have to have been washed in water and would have been deemed unclean until sunset. This ruling could also have been influenced by the easy availability and relative cheapness of earthenware.

Vessels made of metal could be treated with fire and sprinkled with water to re-establish their purity (Num. 31:23). The Torah never mentions stone vessels explicitly but says that all vessels apart from pottery can be cleansed by water or fire³⁴. As the impurity is only transmitted through contact with the inside of the vessel it could be protected by a tight seal (Num. 19:15).

Further, the Torah does not mention stone, dung, and unfired earthen vessels, so the rabbinic literature labelled these as not liable to defilement, which was probably a reflection of the accepted contemporary standards. All three materials are unfired and made of naturally available resources³⁵.

That rabbinic categorization was not generally accepted during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods. Texts such as the Damascus Document (CD) or the Temple Scroll (11Q19) of the

28 Cahill 1992, 224.

29 Excavated quarrying and manufacturing sites include Tell el-Ful, Ḥizma, Mount Scopus (Jerusalem), and Ġabal Mukabbar in Judaea. In Galilee, Reina and ‘Einot Amitai near Nazareth and another in Bethlehem-in-Galilee is known, see Gibson 2003, 288, 300; Magen 2002, 2.

30 Gibson 2003, 288–289, 291. S. Gibson’s assumption that those intra-mural workshops could provide better and finer artwork since the workers would identify themselves as artisans cannot be proven by the archaeological material. One can assume that in the big stone quarries, different kinds of craftsmen were employed for the different steps of the procedure. Known in tra-mural workshops in Jerusalem were identified through

excavations near the Temple Mount, City of David, Ophel, and near the Golden Gate, see Magen 2002, 1.

31 Magen 2002, 17.

32 See CD, Col. 12 (MSA), 15–16, and 11QTa 49:13b–16a.

33 Gibson 2003, 302–303.

34 In the New Testament, Mk. 7:4 mentions certain Pharisee purity rites, including the immersion of cups, pots, and bronze kettles after they had purchased them in the market. Ancient Greek religion refers to ‘purifying fire’, which could purify persons and rooms, see Parker 1991, 227.

35 Magen 2002, 138–141.

Dead Sea Scrolls corpus note that stone is liable to defilement. The status of dung was comparably controversial. Among some Jewish groups, excrement was considered impure and defiling. Ezek. 4:12–15 describes a situation in which the protagonist refuses to cook on a fire made with human excrement because it might cause him to become defiled. In his description of the Essenes, Josephus notes that they cover their excrement and wash “as if defiled” afterwards, and refrain from relieving themselves on Shabbat (Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 9)³⁶. According to CD, “No one should bathe in water which is dirty”, as dirty water (מים צואיים) should be understood as water defiled by excrement³⁷. Although in several sections, the Mishna and Tosefta state that vessels and utensils made of dung, stone, and earth are pure, there were still some exceptions and different views on that matter.

Perceptions of stone vessels and their susceptibility to impurity are discussed in tMakh 2:1 by R. Yose ben Ḥalafta³⁸:

”הבית שהיא מליאה פירות ונתונה בתוך המשקין א”ר יוסי בד”א בשל חרס אבל בשאר כל הכלים אינן שואבין. וכלי אבן הרכין הרי הוא ככלי חרס.”

“A jar is full of fruit that is placed in liquids. R. Yose said: ‘What are the circumstances? – Where the jar is made of earth. But where all other vessels are concerned – they do not absorb [liquid]. And *kele ‘even harakkin* [soft stone vessels?] are similar [in this regard] to earthenware’³⁹”

The context of the debate is the intentional situation of “and water is put onto dry food” (“וְקִי יִתֵּן מַיִם עַל-יָרֵעַ”) (Lev. 11:38), which renders the food and seeds impure. A jar full of fruit that absorbs a liquid would fall into the same category, and would be considered impure. The interesting point in the debate is R. Yose’s opinion that some stone vessels are as liable to defilement through the contact with liquids as earthenware. Y. Magen interprets R. Yose’s terminology הרכין as belonging to the root רך (soft) and suggests that tMakh 2:1 describes chalkstone

vessels. If this interpretation is right, R. Yose would deny the special status of the material group under discussion. In view of the years when R. Yose was active, this debate on soft stone would have emerged during the mid-to-late second century AD, a time when the use of stone vessels was gradually declining. Other tannaitic and amoraic writings do not reflect any change in the perception of stone vessels. Rather the rabbinic literature generally insists on the notion that stone, dung, and unfired earthenware vessels are pure. Either R. Yose had a singular opinion regarding the matter or the specific הרכין (soft stone vessels) differ from our archaeological findings⁴⁰.

The most important purity rite, the preparing and sprinkling of the ashes of the Red Heifer, was connected to the use of stone vessels and utensils. Stone cups were used by children serving the Temple to collect water from the Shiloa Pool for the ritual, as described in mPar 3:2:

”ומביאים שורים ועל גביהן דלתות, ותינוקות יושבין על גביהן וכוסות של אבן בידם. הגיעו לשלוח, ירדו ומלאום, ועלו וישבו על גביהן.”

“And they brought oxen, upon whose backs were placed doors, and the children sat upon them with stone cups in their hands. When they reached the Shiloah spring they got down and filled the cups with water and then they ascended and sat again on their backs.⁴¹”

The notion of stone cups is probably the most interesting since it is the only explicit mention of cups or pitchers with handles. Even though the description of the Red Heifer ritual is interwoven with mythological aspects and probably exaggerated in its description by the Tannaim, it is grounded in fact⁴².

Mishnaic sources have also been called upon to explain the use of chalkstone vessels in an ordinary household but the chronological difference between the finds of chalkstone vessels and the later Mishnaic sources causes difficulties. Further, accessibility to early rabbinic writings was limited to a small group

36 Magness 2012, 57, 63.

37 Magness 2012, 65.

38 R. Yose ben Ḥalafta from Sepphoris also had a central role in the discussions about matters of purity in Tractate mToh, see Miller 2015, 160–161.

39 Miller 2015, 162.

40 Miller 2015, 163–165.

41 Translation slightly changed by the author.

42 E. Regev points out that the detailed description of the ritual is based on an oral tradition which predates the Mishna redaction, see Regev 2006, 141–142.

of intellectuals, so any interpretation of chalkstone vessels with the help of rabbinic sources is likewise problematic⁴³. Nevertheless, the Mishna and Tosefta present a textual tradition that stands chronologically close to the time that such vessels were used. The rabbis might have had an extreme and idealistic view regarding purity and other religious matters, but to some degree the texts do reflect the contemporary reality⁴⁴.

Handwashing is another function associated with chalkstone vessels by modern researchers in connection with rabbinical texts. It has often been suggested that hand-carved stone mugs were used for pouring water over one's hands, but no rabbinic source gives a concrete reference to the use stone vessels for that rite; see mYad 1:2:

”בכל הכלים נותנין לידים, אפלו בכלי גללים,
בכלי אבנים, בכלי אדמה.”

“Water may be poured over the hands out of any kind of vessel, even out of vessels made of animal dung, out of vessels made of stone or out of vessels made of clay.”

The passage thus declares that all kinds of vessels were acceptable for pouring water over one's hands. On the contrary, the addition that even stone, dung, and earthen vessels can serve this purpose points to the exceptionality of the cited materials for handwashing rather than their regular use⁴⁵.

Despite the critical reading of the texts and the different functions of the vessels in various contexts, the idea that stone was not liable to defilement was widespread as early as during the Hellenistic and early Roman periods. One can assume a strong tie between dining and the use of these vessels, at least the ones suitable for use as tableware. Y. Magen suggests that they were ‘pure replacements’ for objects made of other materials. They could help to maintain purity in the family, which also delineated the level of social status⁴⁶.

The use of small chalkstone vessels as domestic tableware or as storage containers for food and liquids could have helped one to avoid impurities in everyday life. Dead insects, menstruation, childbirth, death, or impure liquids are constants in life. Stone vessels might have made it possible to store food and liquids safely and eat in purity as a family. The transfer of impurity through sharing the table, food, liquids, and vessels could be avoided⁴⁷. The chalkstone vessels enabled everyone to participate in communal dining, with the profane food remaining in a state of purity while being consumed by impure individuals. Not only impure persons could profit from the stone vessels, but also pure ones, who were anxious about keeping their food pure⁴⁸.

Hand-carved vessels could also be used for washing or pouring water. One sign of the different aspects of use could be the size of the hand-carved mugs and pitchers. The bigger ones could hold up to 100 ml, whereas the smallest ones held a maximum of 20 ml. Y. Adler suggests that the larger vessels were used to serve wine or water at the table and that the smallest ones were used for oil⁴⁹. However, it is also possible that at least in some households the big cups and pitchers were used for washing rituals.

A. M. Berlin's study on the number of chalkstone vessels in one household in the settlement of Gamla in the Golan suggests similar functions. According to the archaeological record, during the first century AD some 7 to 10 stone vessels per household had been in use over the course of two generations, in comparison to 18 to 22 small pottery bowls and 4 to 7 pieces of pottery used as serving dishes. Everyday use would have been unlikely. According to A. M. Berlin, the vessels might have served for hand-washing rituals or weekly ceremonies⁵⁰.

The large stone containers that were found were assumed to have been the property of wealthy households and must have had other uses apart from those discussed in connection with the small chalkstone vessels. Moreover, those stone containers are the only ones that can be directly associated with a

43 Stemberger 1999, 97–98.

44 Adler 2019, 15; Furstenberg 2016, 3, 14.

45 Deines 1993, 196–197.

46 Magen 2002, 146–147. Y. Magen further suggests that glass was avoided during the late Second Temple period, since it was associated with Greek and pagan customs. Y. Adler follows Y. Magen regarding the idea of the replacement of wooden or pottery vessels, see Adler 2019, 4.

47 Sanders 1990, 149.

48 Especially the production of wine and oil was connected to strict purity observance during the production and transportation to market, see Adler 2007, 63–67, 76.

49 Adler 2019, 5–6.

50 Berlin 2006, 150.

passage in the Gospel of John, and the wedding in Canaan in 2:6:

“Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.⁵¹”

Later Christian Bible commentators suggested that those vessels served to provide a replacement for ritual immersion. Pseudo-Maximus B is said to have taught that those jars were used by Pharisees to wash their hands before dining. Christians claimed that the stone material rendered the hearts of the Pharisees hard and indifferent to temptation⁵².

4.2. Stone Ossuaries

Ossuaries, or ‘bone boxes’, were not found during the excavations on Tall Zirā’a, but they nevertheless represent an integral part of the chalkstone assemblage of the late Second Temple period⁵⁴. The description and typology of these boxes are crucial for further comparisons of finds at other archaeological sites in Jordan. Further, their dating and first appearance coincided with the rise in the popularity of the chalkstone vessels. The first ossuaries date to the last third of the first century BC in rock-cut tombs in Jerusalem but they were in more common use at the end of the Hasmonean and the beginning of the Herodian period⁵⁵. Ossuaries became popular during the first century AD and were used by different groups⁵⁶. Delicately decorated ossuaries first made their appearance about 20–15 BC in Jerusalem. One generation later, they came into use in Jericho (ca. 5–10 AD), and from 25–70 AD, they were to be found within a radius of 25 km around Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple and the decline of stone masonry, the simpler types prevailed. Cheaper variants of soft limestone ossuaries have been found in Judaea and towards the coast. In the Galilee, finds of undecorated bone boxes, large in

size and coarsely made could indicate the practice of secondary burial, which lasted until the fourth century AD. It is likely that it was only somewhat later (the late first to mid-second century AD) that use of ossuaries became common in the Galilee⁵⁷.

The tradition of secondary burials in bone boxes was not a solely Jewish practice of the late Hellenistic and early Roman period in the southern Levant but had its forerunners in the Chalcolithic period. Secondary burial during the Chalcolithic period can be dated between 4500 and 3700 BC. The ossuaries of that time were produced in a wide range of shapes, including boxes, tubs, architectural models, and vessels. They were made of clay or stone and often decorated with geometrical paintings in red and sometimes anthropomorphic or zoomorphic depictions. The vessels have been understood as symbolic representations of houses, silos, and even cocoons. In most cases, a connection to reincarnation or protection of the remains of the deceased is assumed⁵⁸.

The rectangular boxes of the early Roman period were made of chalk or limestone and were used to gather the bones of the deceased after the flesh

51 <https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/john/2/>; last seen 27.11.20, 12:11.

52 Deines 1993, 29–30.

53 Adler 2019, 16–17.

54 ‘Bone Boxes’, or sarcophagi made of wood or clay which date ‘to the same period as stone ossuaries are not further discussed here. For an overview of wooden coffins, see Hachlili

2005, 75–94. For details on clay ossuaries, see Hachlili 2005, 111–112.

55 Altshul 2015, 2; Magen 2002, 135.

56 Magen 2002, 135.

57 Rahmani 1994, 21–24.

58 Ilan – Rowan 2019; Nativ 2008.

had decayed. The Hebrew terminology גלוסקמא (*gelusqemā*) derives from the Greek γλωσσόχομον (*glossochomon*), which is a box or a casket. In the contemporary Jewish literature, they are referred to as ossuaries or coffins. Another applicable Hebrew term was ארזין, which could be related to ארז, meaning cedars, which probably derives from the production of wood ossuaries⁵⁹. That they appear solely in Jewish settlements and their inscriptions hint towards an explicit Jewish use of ossuaries during the Classical periods in Eretz-Israel.

Usually, ossuaries have four short and levelled legs and flat, vaulted, or gabled lids. The outside walls are plain or incised with non-figural decorations and are sometimes coated with a reddish paint (*Fig. 4.4*). In some cases, the name of the deceased and his/her occupation or title are engraved⁶⁰. The size of an ossuary was usually determined by the length of the deceased pelvis, and the box ranged from 45.00–75.00 cm in length, 25.00–30.00 cm in width, and 25.00–40.00 cm in height⁶¹. The bones were carefully arrayed in the box, the longer ones were placed lengthwise on the bottom, arms and hands at one side and feet and legs on the other. The remaining bones were arranged above them with the skull on top⁶².

Ossuaries were usually made of large blocks of hand-hewn limestone. Unlike stone vessels, which were found in great numbers as unfinished objects in the quarries and workshops, only one unfinished box from Mount Scopus, Jerusalem is known⁶³.

4.2.1. The New Burial Custom

Purity concerns were probably not the driving force behind the development of ossuaries, as, in any case, burials are generally considered impure⁶⁶. The need for those bone boxes was often connected to resurrectional beliefs associated with the Pharisees. During the second century BC, resurrection became a popular concept among pious Jewish groups.



Fig. 4.4 Different ossuaries at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (Source: F. Schöpf).

Since the material of the ossuaries is comparable to that used for the chalkstone vessels, working it required only simple tools, and the craftsmen used mainly hammers and chisels. The manufacture required several steps. The stone block had to be worked to a rectangular shape, approximately matching the size of the intended bone box. The outside was worked down with hammer and chisel, but the way the interior was gouged out remains uncertain⁶⁴. The soft limestone allowed the craftsmen to combine non-figural decorative motifs with depictions of trees and plants. Some ossuaries had yellow or red wash applied on all sides before carving. Sometimes, the wash itself was scraped off to achieve a bichrome decorative effect⁶⁵.

Early references can be found in the Book of Daniel (12:2) and in 2 Macc. (7, 14:46) and the Pharisees probably adopted the idea (Ant. Iud. 18, 1, 3, Bell. Iud. 2, 8, 14)⁶⁷. Archaeological evidence does not support the interpretation of ossuaries as signs of resurrection beliefs, as body parts of several individuals have been found in the same ossuary and

59 Rahmani 1994, 3.

60 The inscriptions for deceased males give their first name, their social status, and their occupation, whereas those for deceased female list only their first name and sometimes with their father's name as well. In cases where several people of different sexes were buried in one ossuary, the bone box was usually inscribed with the name of the male deceased, see Peleg 2002, 70.

61 Magen 2002, 132–133; Magness 2011, 151.

62 Hachlili 2005, 462.

63 Magen 2002, 133; Seligman – Amit – Zilberbod 2008, 326.

64 Magen 2002, 133.

65 Hachlili 2005, 356–357; Magen 2002, 133; Rahmani 1994, 4, 7–8.

66 Magen 2002, 135.

67 Rahmani 1994, 53.

in some cases parts of the encased skeleton are missing. Many elite burials in ossuaries, first and foremost those of priests in Jerusalem, can be associated with the Sadducees, who rejected the idea of individual resurrection⁶⁸. Late antique Jewish funerary inscriptions rarely refer to the concept of an afterlife. Rabbinical texts account for ossuaries by noting that owing to its durability, stone protects the bones far better than linen or wool⁶⁹.

The use of ossuaries was suggested by Roman material culture. Cremation was the typical funerary rite among Romans from the late first century BC to the first century AD. The ashes were then placed in small casket-shaped stone containers with gabled lids (so-called *cineraria*). Like the Jewish ossuaries, the Roman stone containers have incised decorations and could hold the remains of more than one individual. As the Jewish religion forbids cremation, Jews used stone caskets to store bones rather than ashes. The Graeco-Roman influence is

also reflected in the pagan decorations seen on some of the Jewish ossuaries⁷⁰.

Apart from the influences of other cultures and practical considerations, social development also played into the established burial practice. Ossuaries with bones of different people of different sexes and ages suggest that the burial custom was important to families. Men and women were buried with their spouses and their children. If the name was inscribed onto such a family ossuary, it mentioned only the name of the husband. Unmarried women had the name of their fathers inscribed on their bone boxes. Hence, the lineage and social identity of a family could be preserved in the afterlife. The idea of individualization of families and their members derived from the change in attitudes wrought by the Hellenistic influence, as the traditional Israelite society defined itself primarily by group and tribal identities⁷¹.

4.3. Pottery

During the middle of the first century BC, new pottery workshops emerged in the Jewish areas of Judaea, the Galilee, and the Gaulanitis. The most important among them were the Binyanei Ha’uma workshop on the outskirts of Jerusalem and Kefar Hananya in the lower Galilee, which produced mainly household items such as pots and casseroles. The high demand for the new kitchen and household items can be accounted for by the wish to acquire wares that were compatible with the purity regulations⁷².

Kefar Hananya was the most important workshop for cooking ware in the Galilee, the Golan, and nearby areas such as the cities of the Decapolis from the mid-first century BC to the fifth century AD. The workshop specialized in cooking wares but produced other household items as well, including tableware⁷³. Distinctive features of the wares were their orange-brown or red colour and smooth surfaces. The high quality of its vessels is marked by their thin walls, which were hard fired. Despite their main distribution in Jewish settlements in the

68 Altshul 2015, 3; Magness 2011, 151–152.

69 Miller 2003, 414. The meagre remains of afterlife references on funerary inscriptions can also be a result of practical assumptions. Funerary inscriptions served as a description of the life of the deceased. Moreover, the naming of the deceased and perhaps the family helps to identify the grave and clarify the ownership, see Rutgers 1998, 163.

70 Altshul 2015, 3; Hachlili 2005, 104; Magness 2011, 152–154. Finds of marble ossuaries in Asia Minor suggest that local adoption of these burial customs was not uncommon. About 109 ossuaries in Ephesos date from the late Hellenistic period to the second century AD. The rectangular containers were made of white marble and featured legs and flat or gabled lids. They were used to collect bones after cremation, like the *ciner-*

aria in Roman Italy. Like that of their Judaeian counterparts, the decoration of those boxes is similar to contemporary art and architecture, depicting garlands, rams, and bulls. Rhodian ossuaries dating to the late Hellenistic period were made of limestone with gabled lids and undecorated sides. Those ossuaries held the ashes of the deceased, see Hachlili 2005, 114. L. Y. Rahmani argues that the form of the Rhodian containers is not comparable to their Roman counterparts and points to the chronological, cultural, and geographical distances among Rhodes, Asia Minor, and Jerusalem, see Rahmani 1994, 58.

71 McCane 2007, 239; Peleg 2002, 71.

72 Berlin 2005, 420–425.

73 Adan-Bayewitz 1993, 211; Chancey 2002, 111; Vriezen 2011, 72.

Galilee and in part of Golan, the cooking ware and other pottery vessels from Kefar Hananya appeared in gentile cities along the Mediterranean coast and in areas east of the River Jordan⁷⁴. However, the distribution remained limited, as the routes towards the Golan and across the Jordan Rift, in particular, were treacherous. The difficulties involved in transporting the fragile pottery to these areas likely led to an increase in the price. Fewer of Kefar Hananya wares were found in those areas than in places in the lower Galilee. It is clear that the distribution patterns were the outcome of economic and practical considerations⁷⁵. However, the special wares produced in the Galilee were frequently cited in tannaitic sources. Further, the references to Kefar Hananya's wares in rabbinic sources imply that they were considered ritually pure (mOhal 16:2; mToh 7:1). At least in some cases, the demand for the special pottery was linked to the observance of certain purity obligations. At the same time, the trade in the wares with gentile and later Christian towns and settlements reveals evidence of Jewish and non-Jewish trading relations during the Roman and Byzantine periods⁷⁶.

The other typical pottery items associated with Jewish sites are knife-pared oil lamps, which were generally produced in cities, rather than in rural environments, in the Jerusalem area and Judaea, and in parts of the Galilee. The body of the lamp was wheel-made; the characteristic feature was the nozzle, which was fashioned by hand and then attached to the body. The nozzle was bow shaped and the edges were knife-pared. The lamps that have been unearthed do not feature any kind of figurative decoration, but some have stamped circles or decorative lines on the nozzle. These undecorated wheel-made knife-pared lamps date from the end of the first century to shortly after 70 AD. Subsequently, new mould-made knife-pared lamps appeared which were decorated with floral or geometrical designs. Petrographic analyses have shown that many of the lamps found in the Galilee were made of Jerusalem clay. The lamps were apparently popular not only in Judaea, but also in the Galilee, Gaulanitis, and Transjordan. In smaller numbers, such lamps were

part of the pottery assemblages at Caesarea Maritima, Dōr on the Mediterranean Coast, and in other gentile or mixed areas such as Samaria, Idumea (Marisa), and the Nabatean Negev. The widespread and intensive use of these lamps provides proof of commercial contacts between Jerusalem/Judaea and the Galilee and Golan during the first century BC. That they were sent all the way up north suggests a strong connection between the Jewish populations in Judaea and the Galilee⁷⁷. Moreover, chemical composition analyses of knife-pared lamps found in the Galilee and those from Jerusalem indicate that inhabitants of Jewish areas preferred lamps that were produced in Jerusalem, whereas lamps from Galilean workshops dominated at gentile sites, such as Dōr and Scythopolis. The ceramic composition of the lamps found in Gamla, Iotapa, and Sepphoris have a is similar to that of the pottery from Jerusalem and its environs. The difference between the gentile and Jewish sites can also be seen in the Hula Valley. At Tēl Ānāfā in the Hula Valley, only 0.60 % of the Roman lamps were knife-pared; in Gamla, just 31 km northwest of Tēl Ānāfā, the same lamps dominated with 93 %. Other than Kefar Hananya's wares, which were traded and bought frequently locally in the Galilee, such lamps were all brought from Jerusalem. This preference for lamps made in Jerusalem could have had religious implications, as lamps served for lighting on Shabbat, so they had a special standing in the ritual⁷⁸.

Simultaneously with the emergence of new pottery workshops and wares, there was a change in connection with imported wares. A precisely dateable occurrence is the use of traded Rhodian amphora, as owing to their stamped impressions, they can be categorized into seven periods (Period I–VII). From the latter part of the third until the middle of the second century BC, a large number of stamped amphorae attest to the intensive trade in Rhodian wine. Their numbers declined during the second half of the second century BC (Period IV, 175–146 BC), and they are entirely absent from the Jerusalem archaeological record between 145 BC and the beginning of Herod's rule.

74 Kefar Hananya ware has been found in Tēl Ānāfā, Caesarea Maritima, and Pella. The distribution is mainly concentrated in the Central and the Eastern Galilee, see Adan-Bayewitz 1993, 206; Vriezen 2011, 72.

75 Adan-Bayewitz 1993, 213–218, 220.

76 Adan-Bayewitz 1993, 230–231, 236–237, 247.

77 Adan-Bayewitz et al. 2008, 41; Berlin 2005, 424, 436; Berlin 2012, 97.

78 Adan-Bayewitz et al. 2008, 55–56, 70, 73, 75, 76.

In regard to imported fine wares, the situation in the urban centres differed from that in the rural settlements. The Hellenistic pottery assemblage from Jerusalem (205–146 BC) includes many imported fine wares from the Eastern Mediterranean. The late Hellenistic and Roman imported fine wares, such as those from Eastern Terra Sigillata (ETS), are again well represented (Fig. 4.5). However, contemporary pottery assemblages from Jewish villages, such as Pisgat Ze’ev near Jerusalem are made up mostly of undecorated local wares. The same is true of the villages of the Galilee, where Eastern Terra Sigillata A (ESA) fine wares were found in sites dating from the first century BC but disappear from the record during the first century AD. The pottery found from second century BC Gamla does not include any Judaeans wares but rather was made mainly of material from the gentile northern and coastal areas. However, the Hasmonean coins, which were found in great numbers in Gamla, suggest that its residents were primarily Jewish. During the first century BC, Gamla household pottery changed and was made up of essentially local wares⁷⁹. Since the quantity of imported fine wares increases at least in Jerusalem during the first century AD, there was clearly no general lack of imported goods. It seems that the Jewish communities in the Galilee refused to buy wares that were associated with the Roman presence in the region⁸⁰. Surveys in the Hula Valley, which is between the Golan and the upper Galilee, indicated the presence of Kefar Hananya ware along with chalkstone vessels in the Jewish area in the south-eastern Hula Valley. In the gentile northeastern part, ETS ware alongside with Iturean pithoi were prevalent during the first century AD. The presence of the different pottery types marked the border between the ethnic groups in this area⁸¹. However, whereas imported fine ware, chalkstone vessels, and ritual stepped pools were all found in the priestly and elite households in Jerusalem, settlements that yielded

many chalkstone vessels, knife-pared lamps from Jerusalem, and ritual stepped pools, such as Gamla and Iotapata, had clearly favoured the Romanized stucco décor and Roman-style casseroles⁸².



Fig. 4.5 ETS Wares from Jerusalem in the Wohl Museum, Jerusalem (Source: F. Schöpf).

The use of certain pottery and objects is further associated with social status and relationships. Pottery not only indicates where things came from but tableware in particular, can be linked to dining habits. Small ESA bowls and dishes reflect the individual dining culture of the Hellenistic Mediterranean societies. The decrease in the number of individual dining vessels found in the rural sites of the Galilee and Judaea could indicate that the residents stopped dining at home, but rather began to partake of communal meals. Instead of eating from a personal dish or bowl, the food was served from the cooking pot or pan that was used to prepare it⁸³. The simplicity of those communal meals rendered them quite different from those of former generations and Jewish contemporaries in Jerusalem. They represented not only a rejection of Roman culture and influences but also a departure from the Jewish elite, which embraced the cultural norms of the Graeco-Roman world.

79 Ariel 1990, 16–21; For A. M. Berlin, this could be a sign of the emigration of Jews from Judaea to the Gaulanitis, see Berlin 2006, 133, 143.

80 Berlin 2012, 85; Berlin 2013, 154–157. U. Leibner suggested in regard to pottery development in the Galilee during the early Roman period that the preference for local wares could be also explained by higher taxation during the time of the *Provincia Iudaea*, see Leibner 2009, 337. However, since the *Provincia Iudaea* was only founded in 6 AD, this would not explain the trend already evident during the last half of the first century BC.

81 Shaked–Avshalom-Gorni 2004, 28, 31, 34, Fig. 3.1. On ‘Roman’ and ‘native’ pottery styles, and their use in various ways in Great Britain, see Jones 1997, 134–135.

82 Berlin 2002, 58–59, 69; Berlin 2006, 151; Berlin 2012, 90, 95, 99; Berlin 2013, 157, 160–161.

83 Berlin 2006, 138–140, 146, 150. A. M. Berlin further suggests that from the first century BC on, the communal meals took place in the synagogue.

4.4. Ritual Stepped Pools



Fig. 4.6 Ritual stepped pool with divided staircase next to the Temple Mount, Jerusalem (Source: F. Schöpf).

Ritual immersion was practiced both by men and women during the late Hellenistic and Roman periods. According to textual sources, such immersion was practiced after sexual intercourse and nocturnal emissions, and in cases of corpse impurity. Ritual stepped pools have been found in both rural areas and urban centres. The earliest such installations date to the late second or early first century BC and they became common from the first century BC on. The pools had steps leading down into the water, which enabled full-body immersion⁸⁴. The number of excavated ritual stepped pools now exceeds 850 but except for some in Caesarea Maritima, no such pools have been uncovered on the coastal plain from Tyre to Gaza. It was not unusual to find about a dozen of these installations in a single village or

rural site in Eretz-Israel. They were clearly private facilities and had probably been in use daily. Small-sized ritual stepped pools in several settlements in Judaea and the Galilee were built next to oil and wine presses, where they probably served the workers, so that they could produce the wine and olive oil in a state of purity⁸⁵. Ritual stepped pools adjacent to tombs reflect the common custom of immersing oneself after attending a funeral and such installations along the roads were clearly for the use of Jewish pilgrims⁸⁶.

The architectural features of the ritual stepped pools varied from site to site. In urban environments, the baths were usually in the basements of the houses, and the finds generally manifest a combination of rock-cutting and building methods⁸⁷.

84 The pools could have been associated with agricultural installations, such as grape and olive presses. The pressing process in the production of wine and oil involved liquids, which are very likely to contract and transmit impurities, see Magness 2011, 16–17.

85 The conversion of fruit into liquid (משקיק) could render the final product impure. Liquids could easily defile other foods and

drink, so the process mandated special purity regulations, see also Adler 2007, 72–76.

86 Adler 2016, 233, 236, Fig. 1; Adler 2014a, 70; Zissu – Amit 2008.

87 Zissu – Amit 2008, 51–52.

The pools in Jerusalem often have a divided staircase leading down to the water (Fig. 4.6), a feature that was not found in the installations in the Galilee and the Golan. The separation has been interpreted as a feature that divided the impure people going into the pool and the pure people leaving the water. The frequently cited passage from the *Letter of Aristeas* and mSheq 8:2 about the separation of the pure and impure in Jerusalem does not actually mention with full-body immersion, so that aspect is questionable⁸⁸.

The large number of ritual stepped pools found in single households in the Upper City of Jerusalem and the Tyropoeon Valley excavations is probably a reflection of the high standard of living that those elite households could afford (Fig. 4.7). The Siloam Pool and the Pool of Bethesda were both public baths for pilgrims and commoners. Those monumental pools allowed for a many pilgrims immersing themselves at the same time before going up to the Temple. In rural areas, baths were usually installed next to the house. The building method was dependent on topographic conditions, rock structure, and the space available. Ritual baths in the rural settlements in the Judaeian countryside, for instance, were generally hewn out of limestone. Larger ritual baths inside rural settlements that were not



Fig. 4.7 Ritual stepped pool inside a priestly household, near the Temple Mount, Wohl Museum, Jerusalem (Source: F. Schöpf).

connected to private households could have served communal needs, accommodating both locals who did not own private baths and those whose baths dried up during the summer⁸⁹. The installations dated from the first century BC through the first century AD do not reflect any regulation regarding the quantity of water prescribed for such a pool to serve as a ritual bath. Specifications dealing with the required level of water in a *miqwē*, its origin, and its use can be found for the first time in the Mishna⁹⁰.

4.5. Conclusion

Finds of chalkstone vessels, ossuaries, ritual stepped pools, and certain types of pottery were concentrated in the Jewish areas. Those objects and installations with their unique styles developed in a time of political changes and new cultural influences in the region of Judaea. In terms of the dating of the finds, there were important shifts in regard to pottery development in the second century BC⁹¹. Chalkstone vessels appeared for the first time during the reign of Alexandra Salome, so that development began later than the concern with purity in the literary sources.

The emerging ‘Jewish’ material culture was also influenced by Graeco-Roman culture. Political and trade connections during the early Roman period and Herod’s ties to the Roman Empire brought new wealth to Judaea⁹². However, Jews in rural areas refrained from using imported Graeco-Roman pottery wares. The emergence of local pottery and the use of chalkstone vessels and ritual stepped pools are associated with the increasing importance of private purity practice, which facilitated the separation from non-Jews. The described objects thus convey

88 Miller 2015, 113.

89 Adler 2008, 72; Adler 2014a, 68; Adler 2016, 229–230, 233, 236–239; Adler 2018, 1; Adler – Amit 2007, 138; Magness 2017, 43.

90 According to the rabbinic sources, forty *seá* of rain or spring water are required to fill the installation, comparable to about half a cubic meter (see, e.g., mMiq 1:7; 2:1–3, 5, 10; 3:1; 4:4;

5:6; 6:8; 7: 2–3, 6). Artificial water could be added when the minimum of forty *seá* of the original living water remained in the *miqwē*. However, many ancient ritual pools probably had less water, see Adler 2018, 17–20; Trümper 2010, 546.

91 Berlin 2006, 133, 143.

92 Altshul 2015, 2–4; Deines 1993, 43; Miller 2015, 174–177, 180–181, footnote 100.

a certain identity and allow for group identification through shared material culture⁹³. This aspect can be considered in regard to finds in border regions such as the Galilee, the Golan, and Transjordan⁹⁴. In the Judaean context, the vessels could have helped to maintain a high level of purity, which would also have spoken to the special status of an individual and his/her family⁹⁵. The ability to maintain a state of purity also depended on a family's economic situation⁹⁶.

Detailed descriptions of these objects and installations helped identify the archaeological material excavated at Tall Zir'ā and Transjordan, which is an indication of how far these objects spread outside of Judaea, the Galilee, and the Golan. This can shed new light on the purity practices of Jews in gentile environments and their attempts to preserve their Jewish identity.

93 Jones 1997, 113–115.

94 Berlin 2002, 65–66.

95 Magen 2002, 147.

96 Sanders 1990, 160–161.

5. THE EVIDENCE FROM TALL ZIRĀ'A

Tall Zirā'a (32°37'14.19"N. 35°39'22.01'E) is in the Wādī el-'Arab at the confluence of the Wādī az-Zaḥar. The significant tall formation, which rises 22.00 to 40.00 m above the surrounding ground level, was documented by in 1885 G. Schumacher, and his remarks were published by C. Steuernagel in 1926¹. The thick cultural layer of Tall Zirā'a is a maximum of 16.00 m high and the tall formation itself is the only natural exaltation in the wādī². N. Glueck, who visited the tall in 1942, was the first to note the artisan spring on the top; he went on to conduct surveys in the region of the Wādī el-'Arab. Glueck was followed by S. Mittmann in 1963–1966, by T. L. Thompson in the late 1970s, and by Hanbury-Tension in the 1980s.



Fig. 5.1 Tall Zirā'a (Source: F. Schöpf).

All of those surveys focused on the major sites in the Wādī el-'Arab, including Tall Zirā'a, near the Decapolis City Gadara, under the name of Tall Zirā'a or Zarā'a³. But there were no archaeological digs in the area until the Gadara Regional Project was begun in 2001 with a survey in the region under the guidance of the Biblical Archaeological Institute Wuppertal (BAI) and the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (GPIA) in Amman, headed by Prof. Dr. Dr. Dr. hc. D. Vieweger and Dr. J. Häser⁴. The decision to focus on Tall Zirā'a was based on the fact that the 2001 survey indicated that it would

provide promising findings. Most of those findings were concentrated on the northwestern slope (Area I), and the first eight trenches were opened there in 2003. The excavations carried out in 2003 and 2004 yielded five strata running from the Byzantine/Roman era to the early Bronze Age⁵. From 2003 to 2011, a total of three areas were opened to investigate the different stages of occupation⁶.

Various natural and man-made conditions account for the fact that Tall Zirā'a was an attractive place for settlement, and, indeed, it was inhabited for more than 5000 years. An abundance of water from the tributary streams flowing into Wādī el-'Arab, which has its origin in the hill country west of Irbid, hardly imaginable today, was just one of the many reasons for the long habitation, but it was probably the most important one. The wādī also has several springs further west, some of which are thermal and sulphurous. The Jordan Rift Valley has been well known for its therapeutic mineral water since antiquity. Hammat-Gader or Ammatha, 5 km north of Gadara, in the Yarmouk Valley, is just one of many examples⁷. Even during the 1980s, some 28.8 million cubic metres of water was still flowing through the valley, but today's farming methods and the use of mechanical pumps has seriously depleted the rich supply of water. Owing to the artesian spring on top of the tall, managing the settlement's water supply was an easy matter. The surrounding area could then and can still be agricultural land, and nowadays commercial fishing is feasible owing to a man-made dam⁸. Temperatures vary from 15° C in winter to 33° C in the summer, with an average rainfall from December to February of 380 mm, but the summers are entirely dry⁹. The perfect living conditions were complemented by access to vibrant trading routes. The wādī has its end at the northern ford of the Jordan River, which connects the Mediterranean Sea over the Jezreel Valley and Scythopolis to the Jordan Valley and further to the Transjordan's high plateau. In pre-Classical times, this route linked Egypt with Syria and

1 Vieweger – Häser 2017, 1; Steuernagel 1926, 81.

2 Häser – Vieweger 2005, 135.

3 Hanbury-Tension 1984, 385.

4 Vieweger and Häser 2017, 1–2.

5 Häser – Vieweger 2005, 135–146.

6 Vieweger and Häser 2017, 27–57.

7 Hanbury-Tension 1984, 385; El-Khoury 2009, 16.

8 Vieweger – Häser 2005, 1–2.

9 Hanbury-Tension 1984, 386; El-Khoury 2009, 16.

Mesopotamia and provided the only possible ascent from the Jordan Valley (290.00 m below sea level) to the East-Jordanian high plateau (at a height of 550.00 m above sea level)¹⁰. Damascus and Mesopotamia were accessible from the East-Jordanian

high plateau. The finds on Tall Zirā‘a bear witness to this frequented trade route¹¹. After significant changes in the Roman road network, Tall Zirā‘a was no longer accessible via the official roads¹².

5.1. Tall Zirā‘a in its Regional Context

Neither textual nor archaeological sources offer much evidence regarding an Israelite or Jewish presence in the northern region of Transjordan, but according to the Tanakh, areas in Transjordan were settled by the Israelite tribes גַּד (Gad), מְנַשֶּׁה (Manasseh), and רְאוּבֵן (Reuben) from the Iron Age on, but according to earlier sources Transjordan was not within the Promised Land¹³. The oldest account of Israelite settlement through colonization near the Jabbok River in Transjordan can be found in Num. 32:34–42¹⁴. Texts dating to the pre-monarchical period focus on the southern region of the Jabbok River, which suggests that the region north of the river was less settled by Israelites (Judg. 12:4–5; 2 Sam. 18:6). In Joshua, when the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh had built an altar “אֶל־גְּזֵלֹתַי” “in the region of the Jordan,” (Jos. 22:11), their land was considered unclean (Jos. 22:19)¹⁵. In the texts dated to the reign of Saul, the first king of Israel, owing to his victories over Moab, Edom, and Ammon, Transjordan is generally portrayed in a more positive light. The Transjordan region became even more important during the reign of King David, and the Transjordanian leaders were considered equal to the ones of Judaea and Israel. King David is said to have ruled over the whole of Transjordan,

extending from the Arnon River north to the Yarmouk River and beyond. After the division of the kingdom, Israel held possession of Moab and the region between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee, while Judaea took Edom. During the rule of the United Monarchy, Transjordan was considered to be part of the Promised Land¹⁶. In the Deuteronomistic tradition, Transjordan gains its full legitimization as a settlement area and part of the Promised Land (Deut. 34:1–3). The boundaries in Deut. 3:16–17 were even extended and stretched from Gilead at the north of the Jabbok River and the Arabah region to the Sea of Galilee¹⁷.

In fact, the regions with actual Israelite settlements were mainly between the Jabbok River and the Dead Sea and between the Jordan River and the Ammonite territory. Thus, whether or not Transjordan was considered part of Eretz-Israel depended largely on political circumstances, rather than on religious factors. Like some of the inhabitants of Israel, the Israelites in Transjordan faced exile in 722 BC, but textual evidence only reports on the Tobiad family, which came back to Transjordan after the exile¹⁸. The Tobiad settlement of ‘Irāq al-‘Amīr is the only verifiable Israelite/Jewish community prior to the second century BC¹⁹.

10 Tall Zirā‘a stands 20.00 m below sea level, see Hanbury-Tension 1984, 389.

11 Häser – Vieweger 2017, 21–22; Vieweger – Häser 2005, 1–2.

12 Vieweger – Häser 2008, 390.

13 Ben-David 2009, Ben-David 2011, 309; 64; Kiefer 2005, 106.

14 Weinfeld 1983, 59–62.

15 The priestly tradition (Num. 34; Ezek. 47) defined the Jordan River as the eastern boundary. In 2 Kings 14:25, the Dead Sea is mentioned as the boundary of Israel.

16 A. Porter suggests that Transjordan had been viewed as a favourable region for Israelite settlement since the time of King Saul, see Porter 1999, 23–24, 29, 31, 34, 43. As A. Porter further observes, the biblical sources mention the cities of

Gad more often than those of Manasseh and Reuben, which leads to the assumption that Israelites occupied the Gadite territory for a longer period of time, see Porter 1999, 37, and Weinfeld 1983, 66.

17 Weinfeld 1983, 67–68.

18 Porter 1999, 51, 54–55. However, it is reasonable to assume that apart from the cited Tobiad family, other returnees also settled in the area.

19 Ben-David 2009, 65; Kokkinos 2016, 276; Porter 1999, 63; Josephus mentioned the fortress in his *Ant. Jud.*, and associated the building of the fortress with Hyrcanus, son of Joseph (*Ant. Jud.* 12, 4, 11). Moreover, Hyrcanus is said to have built caves, and splendid gardens around the building.

During the Classical period, the main area of Jewish settlement was Peraea, which was under the political influence of the Hasmonean and later Herodian rulers. Its realm is generally defined by the territory of Pella of the Decapolis in the north, by Gerasa and Philadelphia in the east, and by the fortress of Machaerus in the south. The western boundary was marked by the Jordan River²⁰. Gadara and its territory lay outside its borders. As a Ptolemean stronghold, Gadara came under Seleucid rule in 211 BC, but Seleucid control weakened towards the end of the second century BC and local powers became stronger. Gadara was taken by the Hasmoneans under Alexander Jannaeus shortly after 85/84 BC²¹. The conquest was probably part of his military campaign in the Golan Heights during the last years of his reign²². Alexander Jannaeus mounted an attack on the city and held it under siege for more than 10 months. The eventual conquest was accompanied by massive destruction. During the Hasmonean occupation, Gadara lost its sovereignty, its status as a polis, and its control of its city *chora*²³.

The Hasmonean restoration efforts included settling Jews in areas that had formerly been dominated by the gentile population. Greek inscriptions bear witness to the expropriation of private land and the practice of exiling the former owners or selling into slavery, probably by the new Jewish inhabitants of the area. Gentiles did remain in the conquered Decapolis cities, but archaeological evidence suggests that former gentile urban centres lost their political and strategic positions and smaller sites gained influence²⁴. There was probably a similar development in the region of Gadara.

Settlements were founded in various parts of Transjordan during Herod's reign, including the areas of the Gaulanitis and Batanea east of the Kinneret. Further, Josephus reported on 3000 Idumeans and 500 Babylonians who were resettled in northern Transjordan under Herod (Ant. Iud. 16, 9, 2; 17, 2, 1). In view of this settlement activity, which included people from the Herodian-controlled regions in northern Transjordan, there were similar developments in Gadara, at least during the last third of the first century BC and partly earlier under Alexander Jannaeus²⁵.

20 Kokkinos 2016, 271–273. The term Peraea comes from the Greek *pera chōra*, naming a land beyond or situated opposite a related region. Probably, not even the name Peraea was known before the second century BC and was first used by Pliny the Elder, see also Ben-David 2009, 65; Kokkinos 2016, 271–273.

21 The year of the siege and the destruction is known from an inscription on one of Gadara's fortification walls: "in the year 228 Philotas and the Polis of the Seleucians". The Seleucid count beginning with the year 312 BC leads to 85/84 BC, see Piotrkowski 2011, 267. Josephus' mention of the destruction of Gadara in the year 102/101 BC (Ant. Iud. 13, 13, 3) probably referred to the Gadara of the Peraea (also Gadora or Gedor), near Amathus, see Piotrkowski 2011, 269–270, 274–275.

22 Piotrkowski 2011, 276.

23 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 154; Weber 1993, 1.

24 One of those examples of a change in political influence is the Jewish site of Gamla. During the Hasmonean period, it became more important than the Decapolis city Hippos-Susita. The same happened to the Decapolis city of Scythopolis, which lost its political influence to Iotapata. Similar patterns can be seen in Samaria, and Judaea, where only Jerusalem was left as a political and religious centre, see Kasher 1990, 151–165; Regev 2013, 84; Tal 2009, 59–61; Weber 2007, 457.

25 Kasher 1990, 108; Kokkinos 2016, 277–278; Porter 1999, 112; Thiel 2007, 250.

5.2. Archaeological Research from 2003–2011 and 2018–2019

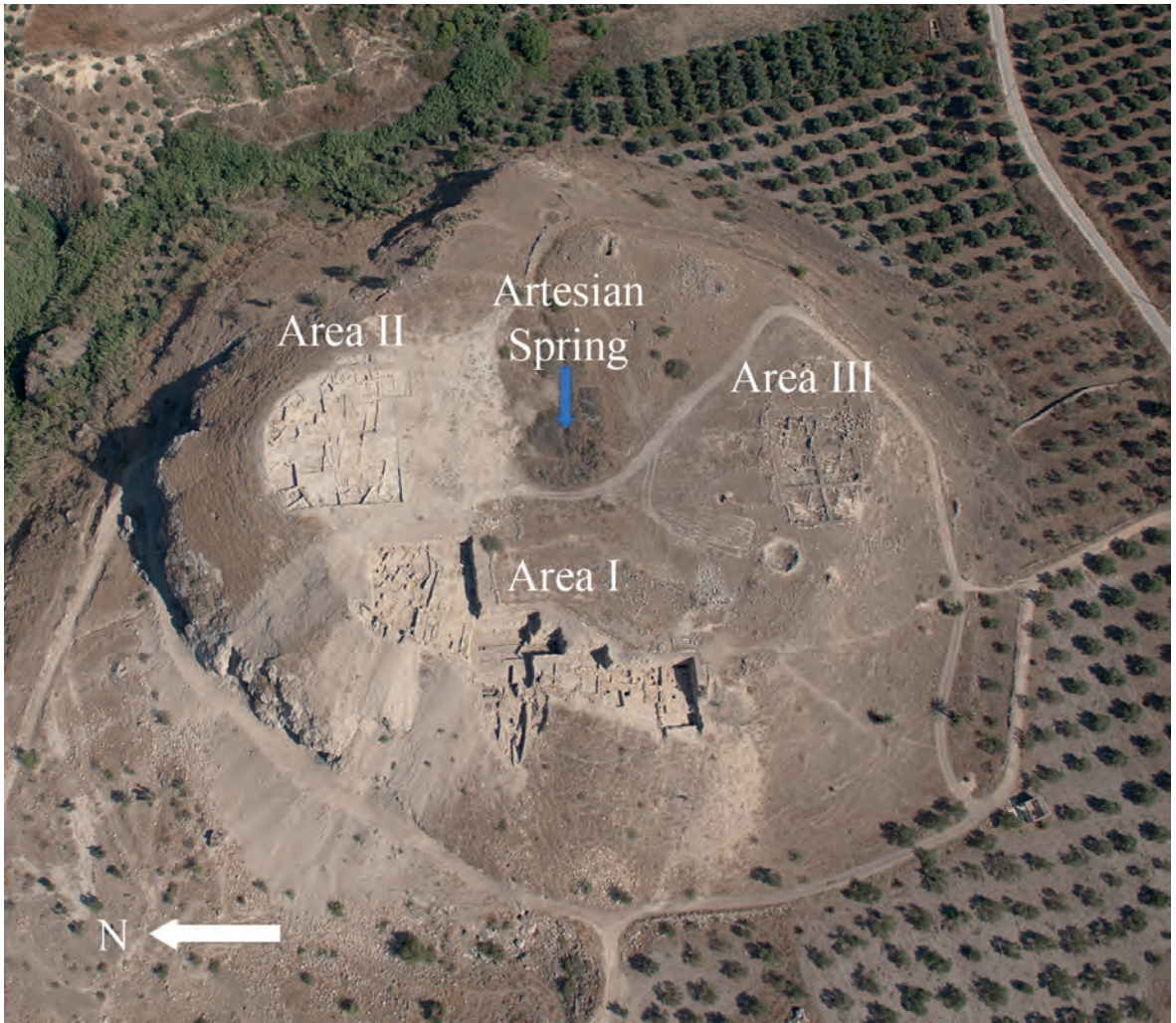


Fig. 5.2 Overview of the excavated Areas I–III (Source: BAI/GPIA).

The following pages present a short overview of the archaeological work conducted from 2003 to 2011 under the guidance of Dr. Dr. Dr. hc. D. Vieweger and Dr. J. Häser in the Areas I, II, and III, and from

2018 to 2019 under Dr. K. Schmidt in Area II. The two stages follow different stratigraphic systems, and these are discussed separately.

Stratum 0	modern	Colloviium
Stratum 1	Ottoman	Hamlets/tombs
Stratum 2	Abbasid–Mamluk	Open settlement
Stratum 3	Umayyad	Monastery
Stratum 4	Byzantine	Monastery
Stratum 5	Late Roman–Early Byzantine	Small settlement
Stratum 6	Roman	Roman “villa”
Stratum 7	Early Roman	Roman “villa”
Stratum 8	Hellenistic	Fortified structure
Stratum 9	Persian	Fortified structure?
Stratum 10	Iron Age II C	Open settlement
Stratum 11	Iron Age II A/B (younger)	Walled settlement
Stratum 12	Iron Age II A/B (older)	Walled settlement
Stratum 13	Iron Age I	Open settlement
Stratum 14	Late Bronze Age II	Walled settlement
Stratum 15	Late Bronze Age/Repair Layer	Constructional stratum
Stratum 16	Middle Bronze Age II C/Late Bronze Age I	Settlement
Stratum 17	Middle Bronze Age II B	Settlement
Stratum 18	Middle Bronze Age II A (younger)	Settlement
Stratum 19	Middle Bronze Age II A (older)	Settlement
Stratum 20	Early Bronze Age IV/Middle Bronze Age I (younger)	(permanent?) Settlement
Stratum 21	Early Bronze Age IV/Middle Bronze Age I (older)	(permanent?) Settlement
Stratum 22	Early Bronze Age III	Settlement (walled?)
Stratum 23	Early Bronze Age II/III	Settlement (walled?)
Stratum 24	Early Bronze Age II	Settlement (walled?)
Stratum 25	Early Bronze Age	Walled settlement

Tab. 5.1 Overview of the strata 2003–2011 (Source: BAI/GPIA).

5.2.1. Area I

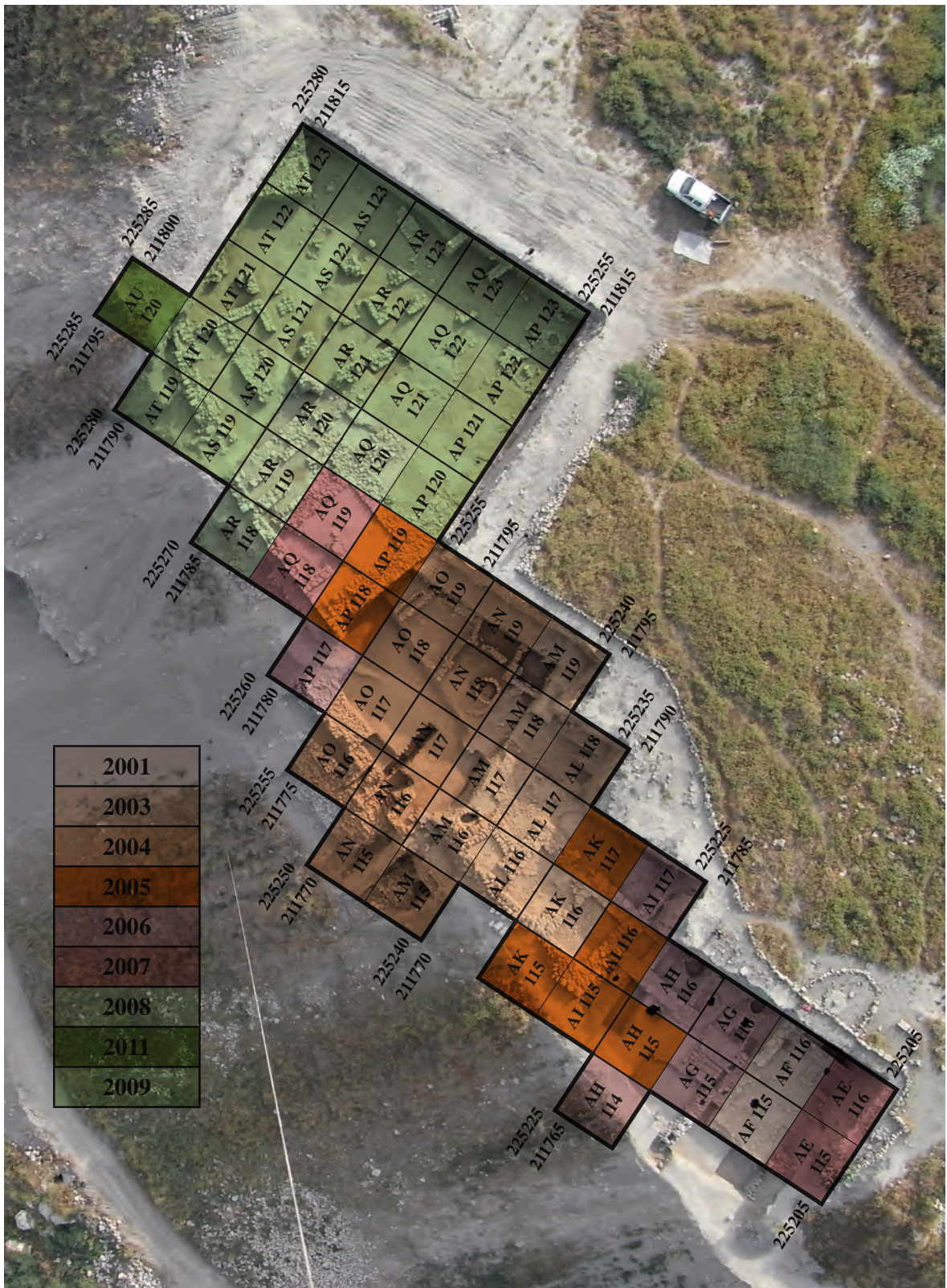


Fig. 5.3 Aerial view of Area I, taken in 2011 (Source: BAI/GPIA).

Area I lies on the northwestern slope and features strata dating from the early Bronze Age to the Byzantine period. The excavated area measures 1025.00 m² and its location on the tall rendered it an ideal environment for craftsmen. During the daytime, the winds from the Mediterranean made for good living conditions and facilitated the operation of furnaces. The area's finds included early Bronze Age structures, residential and monumental buildings, and a city wall. The settlement of Tall Zirā'a was already a city as early as in the middle Bronze Age (Stratum 16). A major landslide in the northern section in Stratum 15 destroyed rooms and in some places completely pushed entire architectural structures off the tall. The architectural and small finds in Stratum 14 indicate a highly successful settlement during the late Bronze Age. The casemate wall from that period showed inbuilt sanctuaries and yielded a large number of valuable finds²⁶. There was no evidence of fortification in the Iron Age I settlement, most of the late Bronze Age structures were reused, and new architectural contexts were built. The population seemed to increase during Iron Age II, and the settlement changed to an urban site; at least one fully uncovered 'house unit' was partly covered by

Byzantine structures. The housing unit showed several installations, for example, tabuns and a cultic stone, a 'mazzebah'. In general, Iron Age I with its cultic installations and architecture was better preserved than Iron Age II. The fortifying wall followed the line of the late Bronze Age. Hellenistic and early Roman remains could be identified in 10 of 31 excavated squares. The tall was probably not fully settled during these periods, but only partly in use. During the Hellenistic period (fourth–second century BC) it served more for waste disposal than for housing²⁷. The Roman and Byzantine layers mark domestic reuse, which is mainly represented by three large houses orientated southeast/west, each of which includes four to six rooms. The walls were built of undressed stone, with some inbuilt dressed stone. The Byzantine structures with houses were found in 18 of 31 squares. In general, the residential traces of the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods are in the northeastern part, towards Area II. In the northern section, the Hellenistic and Roman buildings and installations partially disturbed the late Iron Age IIA/B strata.

26 The excavators are suggesting that the landslide was caused by heavy rains or an earthquake. The limestone structure underneath Tall Zirā'a with its underground caves could have even exacerbated the effect. Vieweger – Häser 2017, 44.

27 Vieweger – Häser 2008, 390.

5.2.2. Area II

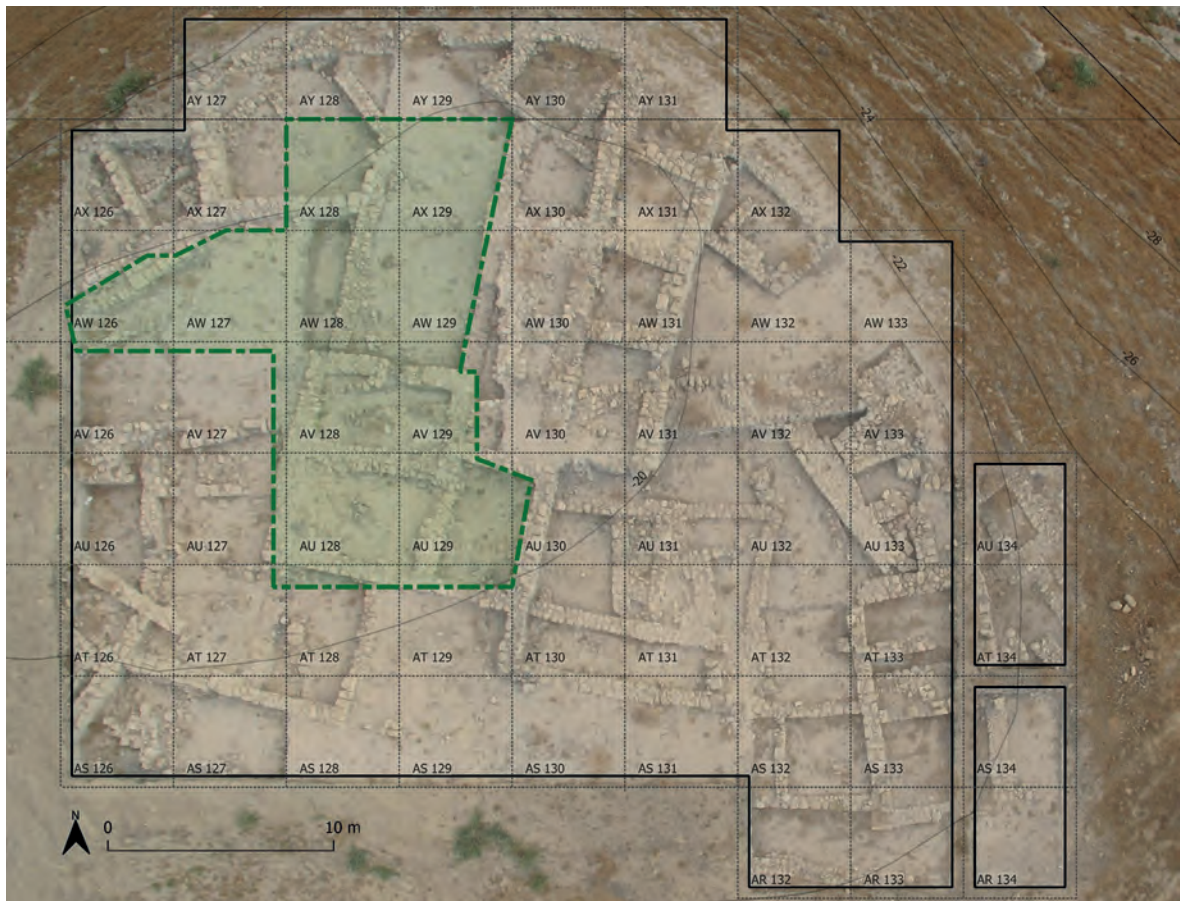


Fig. 5.4 Aerial view of Area II, taken in 2012 (Source: BAI/GPIA).

Area II on the northern edge, one of the highest terrains on the tall, was opened during the 2006 season. It immediately showed many building structures within a small excavation radius. One building complex featured an 8.00×4.00 m courtyard in its centre. Mostly Byzantine pottery showed up in the building complex. When the excavation area was expanded to a full 825.00 m^2 it yielded building structures dating from the Roman-Byzantine to the Umayyad period, with signs of reuse during the Mamluk period. Overall, three rooms with two courtyards have been identified from the Byzantine period, with later attached walls and inbuilt structures from Umayyad times. The structures included such household installations as tabuns and cooking stoves. Roman wall remains, built above an east-west orientated wall were found underneath the Byzantine structures. Owing to the

length and thickness of the wall, it was identified as a fortifying installation (W11186).

The Hellenistic and Roman remains in the area are hard to identify as they were heavily covered over and disturbed by the Byzantine building activity. Four strata were identified as Hellenistic to Roman (Strata 8–5), which could also be distinguished by a change in the architectural style. Several houses with northwest- and southeast-orientated axes followed the curve of the area. Stratum 8 consists of three buildings, and Stratum 7 yielded three large buildings, all having different numbers of rooms and courtyards. In the northeast, Stratum 6 is represented by unconnected walls whose structure is different from the earlier Hellenistic ones and were mainly dated through pottery identification²⁸.

28 Häser – Vieweger 2014, 264–265.

During the excavation undertaken in 2018 and 2019, the northern part of Area II (AW 128/129, AV 128/129) showed a high concentration of pits from different levels, which served as garbage dumps from the third century BC to the third century AD. Most finds, included chalkstone vessel which, can be dated to the second and first century BC²⁹. The western part of the area was probably the continuation of the ‘area with pits’ in the north and is characterized by pits containing late Iron Age to early Roman finds³⁰. Moreover, two rooms in which there was a large quantity of secondary deposit painted wall plaster were found in a trench in AU 128 in the southern part of the area. The small finds point to a late Hellenistic and early Roman date. The rooms are located above the massive wall W11186 and the bonding stone massif 11576. The wall and the stone massif date to the Bronze Age and, as coins *in situ* indicate, were reused under Alexander Jannaeus³¹. The extensive painted wall plaster, dated and described in detail by B. Jansen, was the earliest find of this kind in Transjordan (late third to early sec-

ond century BC). B. Jansen concludes that at least in Area II, there were upper-class residential buildings during the Hellenistic period, which likely belonged to a Greek-Macedonian elite³².

The Iron Age is attested by two buildings (Building A and B) in AY 129 and AX 129. Three phases were identified in Building A, Phase 1 probably dates to Iron Age IIC, whereas Phases 2 and 3 date Iron Age IIB. The structure is characterized by a central courtyard with adjustable rooms. During Phase 2, Building A had a domestic character, with baking and cooking facilities and looms for weaving. Phase 3, which dates slightly earlier, yielded finds comparable to those from Phase 2. Installations for food preparation and small craft activities point to domestic use as well. Building B is only partially preserved and was probably in use at the same time as Building A in Phase 2³³. In AU 131, two round stone installations (Inst11755 and Inst11762), which served as storage silos for grain, can be dated to the Iron Ages and were probably in use until the Hellenistic period³⁴.

5.2.3. Area III

Area III was opened in 2007 with the expectation of finding mostly Byzantine structures, as a Byzantine cistern was discovered there in 2001. An area of 600.00 m² was opened on the south side of the tall, the highest point on the plateau. A series of buildings were uncovered from the late Byzantine, Umayyad, Mamluk, and Ottoman periods. The Byzantine building has a large courtyard (12.00 × 12.00 m), with a gateway of dressed stone on the western side. The northern, southern, and eastern sides feature rooms that measure 5.00 × 5.00 m. There was a multi-coloured mosaic in the centre of the courtyard. Later reuse of the structures can be dated to the Umayyad and/or Abbasid periods. The exact dimensions and extent of the building is unclear. An oil press was found on the eastern side of the excavation area³⁵.



Fig. 5.5 Roman substructure in Area III at some time used as cistern (Source: BAI/GPIA).

29 Schmidt 2022a, 15, 18, Fig. 1.1.

30 Schmidt 2022a, 41.

31 Schmidt 2022a, 43–54, Fig. 3.1., 3.6. The final date of the wall W11186 was concluded during the excavation season 2021, and information was given by K. Schmidt in a personal conversation.

32 Jansen 2022, 82–83.

33 Häser – Vieweger 2014, 264–265; Schmidt 2022a, 21, 23, 33–38.

34 Schmidt 2022a, 54–57.

35 Rothe – Zerbini – Kenkel 2017, 259–261.

5.2.4. The Classical Periods at Tall Zirā‘a



Fig. 5.6 Hasmonean coin of Alexander Jannaeus from Tall Zirā‘a (Source: BAI/GPIA).

The pottery finds suggest that during the early Hellenistic period Tall Zirā‘a was a small, fortified checkpoint. The roads in the region changed during the late Hellenistic period, which resulted in an increase in the imported as well as in the local pottery trade. The site, which housed a half-military and half-civilian population, expanded and likely served as a checkpoint on the access road towards Gadara. Compared to the development of the nearby Zeraqōn region, a general pattern hints at an increase in population and settlement after the Hellenistic period, which would have been related to the systematic building of roads in the area during the Roman period³⁶. Nevertheless, Tall Zirā‘a must have held an important position or function during the Hellenistic periods. The oldest Hellenistic masonry style wall paintings date to the third and second century BC and represent the earliest known finds of such wall paintings in Transjordan. The paintings probably belonged to a person of high rank who was familiar with Greek-Macedonian culture. Finds of Hellenistic imported pottery ware, such as relief bowls, and black slipped ceramic ware together with many amphora fragments underscore the link to Mediterranean luxury goods. Much of the pottery was probably traded from Gadara³⁷. Tall Zirā‘a was not only an agricultural settlement in the hinterland of Gadara during the Hellenistic period but it also clearly had an important position in the region as it was the site of upper-class residential buildings. This further makes it probable that Alexander Jannaeus chose Tall Zirā‘a as a residential

and military settlement during his siege of Gadara, and even later. He virtually destroyed Gadara and there were very few findings from the Hasmonean period there³⁸. In contrast, Hasmonean coins account for one of the principal coin groups at Tall Zirā‘a. In the excavation seasons between 2003 and 2011, a total of 18 Hasmonean coins were found, out of a total of 104 identified coins³⁹. Seven coins minted under Alexander Jannaeus and four Hasmonean coins without reference to a particular ruler were found in 2018 and 2019 (Fig. 5.6), as were one that might be Hasmonean or Herodian and one Herodian coin. All of those coins were minted in Jerusalem⁴⁰. Compared to the evidence from Gadara, where eight Alexander Jannaeus coins were identified out of a corpus of 1408, the difference is striking. Moreover, some of the coins found at Tall Zirā‘a are associated with the second phase of the Hasmonean presence, after the siege of Gadara. One coin can be dated to 78 BC, a time close to the first appearance of polished chalkstone vessels under Salome Alexandra⁴¹.

Most of the material, including the chalkstone vessels, found in the settlement after the Hasmonean siege at the end of the first century BC probably belonged to the Roman ‘Villa’ in Area II. The pottery assemblage from the early Roman period (63 BC–second century AD) reflects a strong connection with objects from the Jewish regions of the Galilee and Judaea, including Kefar Hananya ware and knife-pared lamps⁴². Most of the cooking ware found on Tall Zirā‘a was from Kefar Hananya and came from the Galilee or the Golan. Different types of cooking ware date to between the first century BC and the second and third centuries AD⁴³. The ware was typical of the Jewish sites, especially in the Galilee and parts of the Golan Heights.

The 200 lamps excavated from Areas I and II in 2004–2011 clearly show the change in the pottery assemblages between the Hellenistic and early Roman periods. Whereas the Hellenistic period lamps were mainly Greek-influenced types, the early Roman lamp assemblage, which dates from the first century BC to the second century AD, consists mainly of knife-pared lamps, which account for half of all

36 Kamlah 2000, 197.

37 Kenkel 2012, 150, 311; Kenkel 2013, 301–308, 305.

38 Jansen 2022, 82–83.

39 Schmidt 2022a, 435.

40 Lichtenberger 2022, 393–394.

41 Schmidt 2022a, 436.

42 Kenkel 2013, 301; Kenkel – Hoss 2020, 114–115.

43 Kenkel 2012, 161.

Roman period lamps. The lamps have either undecorated nozzles or the typical circles and incised lines between the body and the wick hole⁴⁴. Moreover, one early Roman lamp is a northern collar-neck lamp typical of Sepphoris. Local northern Transjordanian types account for the majority of the lamp types from the first century AD⁴⁵.

Despite the increasing availability of locally produced pottery from the Galilean and Judean regions, imported pottery remained part of the early Roman assemblage. The largest group of pottery imports in Tall Zirā'a was made up of Eastern Terra Sigillata A ware (ESA) and included tableware, such as bowls and dishes. Most of the ESA finds can be dated to the early Roman period, that is, up to the first century AD. Local imitations of the ware can only be dated from the first century AD on and represent 1,5 % of the finds. Owing to the high number of bowls and dishes in different sizes, it is reasonable to assume that the inhabitants of Tall Zirā'a adopted a Roman dining culture early, so the demand for ESA ware was high as early as during the early Roman period⁴⁶. This adoption was probably strongly influenced by Gadara, which has one of the highest percentages of ESA ware in its pottery assemblage compared to other sites and was among the earliest buyers and users of this pottery during the second century BC⁴⁷.

Another indicator of Roman-influenced dining and cooking habits is the appearance of casseroles, which were part of the assemblage from the second century BC. Casseroles allowed for preparing larger dishes with more meat and vegetables than the earlier cooking pots, which were used mainly for soups or beans, which had to cook for a long time. Casseroles account for 11 % of the cooking ware assemblage of the tall, which suggests that the inhabitants welcomed the new cooking and dining habits⁴⁸.

Other indicators of gentile influence are the small terracotta figurines, which were probably used for private domestic rituals. The figurines depict popular themes, such as the mourning of Isis, a dolphin, likely the one associated with Aphrodite, and a horned altar⁴⁹. Anthropomorphic terracotta figurines found during the 2018 and 2019 excavations have been dated to the third and second centuries BC (*Fig. 5.7*), based on comparable finds, for example, from Tel Dor and Beth Shean (Scythopolis)⁵⁰.

Tall Zirā'a seems to mirror the eventful times of the Hellenistic and Roman periods by having changed from a strategic place with a Greek-Macedonian influenced elite during pre-Seleucid times to a Hasmonean stronghold during Alexander Jannaeus's siege of Gadara, and finally to a settlement characterized by a mixed material culture during the early Roman period.

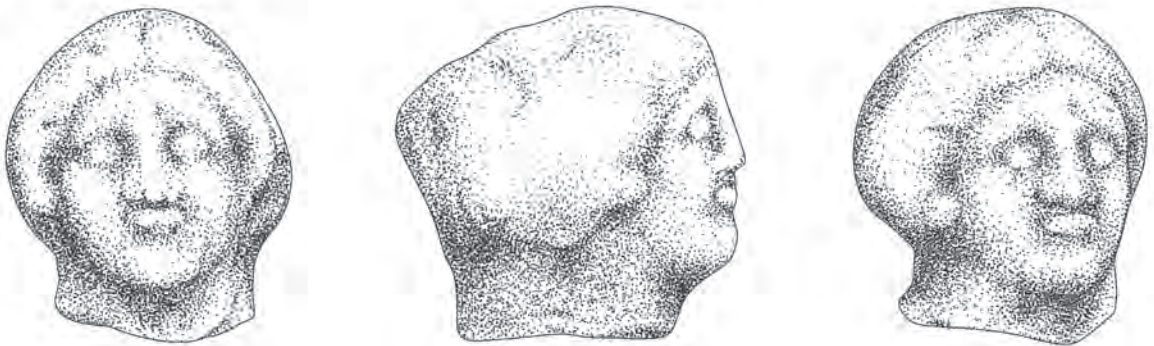


Fig. 5.7 Head of a terracotta figurine (Source: B. Springer-Ferazin, BAI/GPIA).

44 In the analysis of the lamps in Kenkel's dissertation, it is obvious that the majority of the objects came from Area I with 61,4 %, whereas 38,6 % of the lamps were found in Area II, Kenkel 2012, 277–278; Kenkel – Hoss 2020, Plate 1.42–43. During the excavation seasons of 2018 and 2019 in Area II, four more knife-pared lamps with either decorated or undecorated nozzles were found, see Strothenke-Koch 2022a, 233–234.

45 Kenkel 2016, 767–771.

46 Kenkel 2012, 29, 72–73, 81–82; Kenkel – Hoss 2020, 114.

47 Kenkel 2012, 82, 161; Konrad 2013, 115.

48 Based on her examination of the cooking ware, Kenkel assumes that the inhabitants were mainly gentile and open-minded towards the new dining and cooking influences, see Kenkel 2012, 114.

49 Kenkel – Hoss 2020, 112, 114.

50 Another zoomorphic terracotta fragment showing a lion's or dog's head from the same excavation season can also be compared with late Roman finds, see Schmidt 2022b, 379–380.

5.3. The Chalkstone Vessels

The finds discussed in the following pages all come from the excavations conducted on Tall Zirā'a between 2003 and 2011 under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Dr. Dr. h.c. D. Vieweger and Dr. J. Häser and 2018/2019 under Dr. K. Schmidt⁵¹.

The 100 fragments representing 82 objects were discovered in Areas I and II, with only one fragment from Area III. The finds are divided into different vessel forms, establishing an autonomous typology

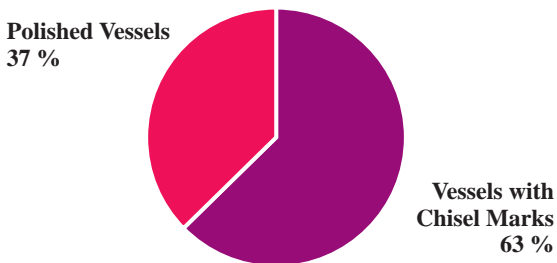
for the chalkstone vessels of Tall Zirā'a. The typology generally follows the standards established by Y. Magen and J. Cahill⁵². Additionally, the finds are compared to several other known assemblages, especially those coming from excavations in Transjordan. The exact origins of the finds from Tall Zirā'a are still unknown. The comparisons could help to either align these finds with those from other excavations or suggest locally produced types.

5.3.1. The Typology

In general, chalkstone vessels can be divided into small hand-carved and lathe-turned vessels⁵³. One crucial aspect considered in the presented typology is the distinction between polished and intentionally chisel-marked outer walls of hand-carved vessels⁵⁴. The identification of chisel marks as intended decoration rather than marks of the working process

is based on the regular appearance and standardization of those marks. The possibility of polishing and erasing the actual working marks is clear from the hand-carved polished examples. It is thus reasonable to assume that the various treatments of the outer walls can allow us to relate the objects to a particular production site or region⁵⁵.

5.3.1.1. Hand-carved Vessels



Graph. 5.1 Diagram of the percentage of polished and chisel marked vessels (Source: F. Schöpf).

The hand-carved objects account for 71 % of the assemblage. In general, there are more hand-carved chalkstone vessels with intentional chisel marks than polished objects, owing to the large number of chisel-marked mugs and pitchers. All other types are represented with only one or two objects.

Hand-carved Vessels with Chisel Marks

These vessels have distinctive chisel marks on the outside and the handle. The interior walls are usually polished smooth⁵⁶.

51 Most of the chalkstone vessel finds from the 2003–2011 campaigns were published and described in Vieweger – Häser 2014. In this work, J. Cahill's typology was used to characterize the finds.

52 Cahill 1992, 190–274; Magen 2002.

53 Cahill 1992, 200.

54 However, one lathe-turned example also has hand-carved decoration on the outside.

55 Cahill 1992, 210; Gibson 2003, 292.

56 Cahill 1992, 210.



Fig. 5.8 Map of settlements mentioned in this chapter (Source: P. Leiverkus, BAI/GPIA).

Open Hand-carved Vessels with Chisel Marks: Type I. A.

The open hand-carved vessels are usually too fragmentary for them to be categorized as mugs, pitchers, or small bowls. Pitchers can be differentiated from mugs by a spout on their rims. Bowls are wider in shape, with a smaller ratio between height and width⁵⁷. Y. Magen differentiates types of mugs and bowls by their size and the kinds of chisel marks,

which can be helpful in identifying fragments. The category of pitchers is distinguished in his typology but rather is included in the forms of mugs (Type II.A. Form 2)⁵⁸.

The following defines mugs/pitchers as one category and bowls as another. All of the fragments have clearly visible chisel marks.

Mugs and Pitchers: Type I. A. Form 1. OV (Plates 5.2–5.12)

The Form 1. OV (Open Vessels) represents either mugs or pitchers as none of the listed fragments can be distinguished. There are thirty-seven fragments representing 34 objects of this type. Type I.A. Form 1. OV dominates with about a 59 % share in the hand-carved chalkstone vessel assemblage. The fragments of those mugs and pitchers are almost evenly distributed in Areas I and II. This type represents the most common chalkstone vessel form in Tall Zirā'a. From the 37 fragments, three are handles, which can be identified as the typical lug handles belonging to mugs or pitchers with chisel marks, since they bear chisel marks themselves or are still attached to a bodysherd with such marks.

The type follows the general definition of Y. Magen's Type II.A. Form 1, which incorporates both vessel types. Y. Magen defines pitchers simply as spouted mugs⁵⁹. In the first publication on the chalkstone vessels from Tall Zirā'a, the fragments were compared with J. Cahill's Type 2. a.i. and 2. a.i.A.1 ("Becher")⁶⁰. This type of small hand-carved vessel with handles was formerly referred to as a measuring cup. The base is usually flat, the walls are straight, and the vessel has one or two lug handles. This basic form was hewn out of a block of raw chalkstone material, as was the attachment of one or two handles. Externally, the walls and the handles were worked down with a wide chisel in a horizontal fashion. To smooth the material ahead of the working process, it was soaked in water. The in-

terior had to be worked with a chisel and a hammer to eliminate the excess material.

Apart from the chisel marks from the working process, there is evidence of decorative marks on the outside made with a broad chisel, which form horizontal lines that run from the rim to the base. Those were sometimes complemented by vertical small chisel marks on top of the horizontal ones. The interior of the vessel was smoothed and polished⁶¹. To describe mugs and pitchers, J. Cahill uses the terms barrel-shaped, chisel-cut containers. Those vessels have a cylindrical shape, with the height exceeding the width, large rectangular handles, flat bases, and slightly incurving sides⁶². The fragments under discussion reflect those characteristics. In general, the thickness of the walls ranges between 0.30–1.40 cm. The diameter of the rim varies between 9.80–15.40 cm and the base measures 7.00–10.40 cm. The material is usually soft and white, with some red, brown, or grey discolorations and veins.

TZ 000497-001 (*Pl. 5.2 a*) was found during the survey that was carried out before the first excavation. Twenty fragments came from Area I and 13 from Area II. In Area I, 10 fragments were found in early Roman contexts, whereas the other fragments in that area were found in pits, later installations, or fills from Iron Age II to the modern period. In Area II, TZ 112492-001 (*Pl. 5.9 c*) came from a Hellenistic to early Roman floor context, and TZ 113096-001 (*Pl. 5.11 b*) was found in a late Hellenistic to

57 Cahill 1992, 210–213.

58 Magen 2002, 40–50.

59 On literary evidence of pitchers and that they poured water in a natural way can be found in the translation of Philo's *De Posteritate Caini* (*On the Prosperity of Cain*): 137: "[...] All she (Rebecca) needs is just a pitcher, which is a figure of a vessel containing the ruling faculty as it pours forth like

water its copious streams. [...]" see Colson – Whitaker 1979, 409.

60 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 148–149. Thus, no distinction was made between chisel-marked and polished hand-carved objects.

61 Magen 2002, 40.

62 Cahill 1992, 210.

early Roman earth layer. The other fragments were found in early to late Islamic fills.

Comparable finds came from Jerusalem, Judaea, and Gamla in the Golan and represent the type generally found most often⁶³. There were sev-

eral finds in Machaerus, Callirhoë, Ḥisbān/Esbous, Tall al-Kharrār, Umm ad-Danānīr located in Peraea. Several finds in Transjordan outside Peraea came from Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat, and one fragment was found in the Decapolis city of Gerasa (Ĝaraš)⁶⁴.

Bowls: Type I. A. Form 2. OV

Bowls with the typical horizontal and vertical chisel marks are rare in this assemblage. The comparable examples from the established typologies were produced using the same technique as for the mugs and pitchers, with wide horizontal chisel marks on the outside, sometimes supplemented with smaller vertical marks. The round form is usually wider in shape than the mugs and pitchers. In some cases, two massive rectangular lug handles are attached⁶⁵.

Three subtypes can be discerned in the chalkstone vessel assemblage of Tall Zirā'a (Type I. Form 2.OVa,b, and c). Type I. Form 2. OV a and b can be compared to the subtypes 2.a.ii.A1 and A2 in J. Cahill's typology. They can be distinguished by the different characteristics of their handles⁶⁶. Type I. Form 2. OVc is a unique specimen without a parallel in other chalkstone vessel typologies.

Hand-carved Bowls with Lug Handles: Type I. A. Form 2. OVa (Plate 5.13)

The two fragments belonging to this subtype can be compared to J. Cahill's Type 2.a.ii.A2 and Y. Magen's Type II. B.i. Form 1, hand-carved bowls with massive rectangular lug handles. The bowls are round, with a flat base, and handles attached at the centre of the body⁶⁷.

Fragments TZ 111727-001 (Pl. 5.13 a) and TZ 112485-001 (Pl. 5.13 b) represent broken body sherds, the whole lug handle or parts thereof still attached. The chisel marks are decorative and run horizontally on the outer walls, with smaller ver-

tical chisel marks above them. The walls are ca. 0.90–1.80 cm thick. Owing to their fragmentary state, no measures for the base or rim diameter can be given. TZ 111727-001 is made of a harder yellowish chalkstone. Both fragments came from Area II, TZ 111727-001 from an Islamic fill, and TZ 112485-001 was found in an early Islamic wall. The combination of a bowl with lug handles and horizontal chisel marks is known from Gamla, Machaerus, and the excavations near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem⁶⁸.

“Teacups”: Type I. A. Form 2. OVb (Plate 5.14)

TZ 111443-001 (Pl. 5.14) has the form of a “teacup.” J. Cahill labels those bowls with loop handles and a round shape as Type 2.a.ii.A1. Only one example of a bowl with loop handles could be identi-

fied in J. Cahill's assemblage⁶⁹, and Y. Magen does not have any examples of a similar bowl⁷⁰. D. Vieweger and J. Häser published the chisel-marked and polished objects of this type as Type 2.a.vii. Tassen⁷¹.

63 Cahill 1992, 210–211, Fig. 20:4, 6; Magen 2002, 97–100, Fig. 3.60: 1–4, 3.61–3.62, Pl. 16; Gibson 2016, 49–55, Fig. 9.1.

64 Abu Shmeis – Waheeb 2002, 565, Fig. 4:1–2, 7–9; Kotter-Ray, Jr. 1995, Fig. 9.10:4–5, 9.11:1, 3, 9–10, 9.12:3; Lichtenberger et al. 2017, Fig. 137; McGovern 1989, Fig. 2:1–4; Strobel 2003, 45, Tafel 13: G2; Vörös 2015, 310–311. The fragments from Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat: Find Nr. HS 251.100, IK233.129, 14.017, 16.014, 16.054, 17.050, 17.067, 17.100.

65 Cahill 1992, 212, Type 2.a.ii.A.; Magen 2002, 46, Type II.B.i. Form 1.

66 Cahill 1992, 212.

67 Y. Magen's examples all have their lug handles attached directly to the rim, see Magen 2002, Fig. 2.40.

68 Gibson 2016, 55; Type 2B. Magen 2002, Fig. 3.60:8; Vörös 2015, 306: 10–11.

69 Cahill 1992, 212, Fig. 20:7.

70 Magen 2002, 46–50.

71 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 150, Abb. 20–21.

The chisel marks on TZ 111443-001 run horizontally and vertically and are barely visible as they were smoothed out. There is an incised line in the transition from the body to the base. Above this line, there are additional slim horizontal chisel marks, ca. 0.80 cm long. The loop handle is attached directly to the rim, so that it resembles the rectangular form with a round opening typical of the mugs and pitchers. One burnt spot is visible on one of the upper edges. The opening measures 11.00 cm in diameter. The walls are fairly thick, with a maximum of 2.50 cm. The walls flatten towards the incised line and transition to the base, giving the vessel an almost hemispherical shape. The material is grey chalk. The fragment came from Area II and was found in the late Roman to Byzantine filling layer.

The form was found in the City of David, as well as in the Jewish Quarter Excavations in Area J⁷², both in Jerusalem. One of the two examples found in Area J has a spout at the rim. The two vessels are

polished on the inside and have a chisel-marked decoration on the outside. They came from Stratum 3, were dated to the second half of the first century BC, and represent a rather early type of chalkstone vessel. Thus, they differ from the mug and pitcher type (Type I.A. Form 1. OV) typical of the first century AD⁷³. The chronological distinction is supported by finds in Jericho, which are comparable in form and date⁷⁴.

This subtype is a chronological early type that probably originated in the Jerusalem area. However, the assemblage of Gamla has comparable mugs with round slightly incurving walls and smaller handles with a drilled hole. S. Gibson categorized those as “mugs” Type E: Medium mug with drilled hole in handle⁷⁵. However, mugs with straighter walls are also included in the Type E forms. Therefore, the mugs at Gamla with rounder walls are just a slight variation of the ‘classical’ type with straight walls and are not part of the distinctive described group.

Hemispherical Hand-carved Bowls: Type I. A. Form 2. OVc (Plate 5.15)

One object, TZ 114475-001 (Pl. 5.15), in the assemblage is unique since it combines the technique of a hand-carved bowl with the typical shape of a hemispherical lathe-turned bowl. The form follows J. Cahill’s lathe-turned Type 1.a.i.I, as well as the polished hand-carved bowl Type 2.a.ii.B and Y. Magen’s lathe-turned Type I.1.A. The typical hemispherical bowls have well-polished and slightly inverted walls. Incised lines appear just under the rim. Vessel TZ 114475-001 is well-worked and nearly intact. The opening measures 10.00 cm in diameter, and the base is 7.70 cm. Unlike the typical horizontal and vertical pattern discussed above the chisel marks run in a slantwise manner. The pattern of the marks ends in a half-circle. The first row of chisel marks, which is ca. 2.00 cm long, begins just below the rim. The second row follows underneath max. 4.50 cm long, and is barely visible. The bowl has a ring base, the transition between body and base is marked by a 1.00 cm-wide depression. Above the depression is an incised line, ca. 0.50 cm, which extends over half of the surface. It is possible that it was not incised intentionally. The out-

side has yellow liquid-like splashes all over the vessel, possibly a decoration or a yellow wash. The infolded rim is marked by an incision on the inside, 1.50 cm underneath the rim. The walls are 1.50 cm thick. The material used is a hard, reddish chalkstone. An incised decoration or inscription on the bottom of the base may be the Hebrew letter ק (*quf*) in a circle. The Aramaic/Hebrew word קרבן (*qorbān*), starting with a ק stands for offering or gifting. One core of a chalkstone vessel found in the Temple Mount excavation near Robinson’s Arch bears this inscription together with two incised birds, the typical animal offering of a man with an unusual seminal flow or a woman who had just given birth (Lev. 12:8; 15:14)⁷⁶. The *qorbān* inscription was applied after the two birds were already incised. The appearance of the stone object with its hand-done small incisions suggests that the intent of the maker was to dedicate it to the sanctuary⁷⁷. Similar inscriptions are documented on ossuaries from Jerusalem. The ossuaries with *qorbān* inscriptions date from the first century BC to the first century AD⁷⁸.

72 Geva 2014, Pl. 10.1:13, 14.

73 Geva 2014, 275.

74 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 410, Pl. 9.1:3.

75 Gibson 2016, 53, Fig.9.1:28, 32, Type 1E.

76 Magen 2002, 79.

77 Ben-Dov 1986, 14–15.

78 Magen 2002, 78–79; On three of the ossuaries, the *qorbān* inscription appears together with the Aramaic term אָנָשׁ, and on one is together with the Hebrew term אָדָם, both meaning man/human. Zissu – Amir Ganor 2007, 9–11, 7.

Vessel TZ 114475-001 was found in Area II, inside the sediment of Building A, Phase I together with several Hellenistic finds, which included Hellenistic coins and a Rhodian amphora⁷⁹.

The down-sloping chisel marks also appear on hand-carved bowls found in Gamla⁸⁰ and on one bowl fragment from Ḥirbat al-Mukhayaṭ⁸¹. The orange or yellow paint near the base on lathe-turned vessels was also seen on vessels from Gamla⁸². There was one find comparable to the special form of the bowl in the material from Capernaum, but that object has a flat base, incised lines around the rim and on the body, and its outer surface is polished⁸³.

The unique chisel mark decoration on the body can also be seen on glass bowls from the early Roman pe-

riod found on Tall Zirā'a. Three fragments of ribbed monochromatic mould-made bowls, identified by S. Hoss, bear the same decoration. The wide parallel depressions form a half-circle and start below the end of an incised line near the rim⁸⁴.

Moreover, the form is quite similar to the early Hasmonean chalkstone vessels from Jerusalem which date to the late 120s BC. Those have a disc base, a transition mark between base and body, and a round deep form⁸⁵. However, the bowl from Tall Zirā'a is only half the size of the vessels unearthed in Jerusalem. Thus, the Tall Zirā'a bowl might combine forms and decorations typical of vessels from the Galilee and the Golan, as well as early chalkstone vessel from Hasmonean Judaea.

Tubs: Type I. A. Form 3. OV (Plate 5.16)

TZ 015400-001 (*Pl. 5.16*) is categorized as a tub⁸⁶. Tubs are large rectangular containers with flat bases that feature chisel marks and usually have handles attached to the rim. J. Cahill identifies the vessel as Type 2.a.iv, which could be either decorated with vertical chisel marks or polished. The outward sloping sides end in a rounded rim⁸⁷. In Y. Magen's typology of the material found at Ḥizma, those tubs are delineated as hand-carved chalk bowls II.B.i. Form 3. Only unfinished vessels of this type were found at Ḥizma⁸⁸. TZ 015400-001 measures 30.00 cm in rim diameter and has visible chisel marks from the working process both outside and inside. On the outside, the marks are horizontal and oblique, forming an almost rectangular

pattern, with deeper chisel marks between the sections of the rectangular pattern. The chisel marks on the inside are oblique. The walls are 2.40 cm thick. The hard grey chalk material shows a few pale brown discolorations, and slight scorch marks or ashes are visible on the rim. The object was found in Area I inside a Roman filling layer with a high concentration of Hellenistic and Roman pottery.

This type is documented in other excavations from Jerusalem, including those in the Jewish Quarter, the Citadel, and inside a tomb on Giv'at Ram⁸⁹. Similar finds have come from Jericho and Machaerus⁹⁰. One fragment made of soft white chalk was found at Ḥirbat al-Mukhayaṭ in Transjordan⁹¹.

Polished Open Hand-carved Vessels: Type I. B.

Hand-carved bowls that were polished on the outside and the inside, and show no visible chisel marks, deliberate or otherwise, are especially common in the chalkstone vessel assemblage of Tall Zirā'a. In the typology of J. Cahill, hand-carved and polished bowls represent pieces with ring-bases (Type 2.a.ii.B) that re-

semble lathe-turned pieces. They have slightly pointed rims, a flat and broad base, and traces of chisel marks on the outside, which, unlike on the vessels discussed above, are apparently not decorative⁹². Y. Magen's assemblage does not include any hand-carved and polished vessels⁹³.

79 Schmidt 2022a, 16.

80 Gibson 2016, Type 2A, 55, Fig. 9.2:55.

81 Find Nr. 14.116, Personal analysis with the permission of D. Foran.

82 Gibson 2016, 60.

83 Deines 1993, 151, Abb. 33.

84 Kenkel – Hoss 2020, 277–278, Plate 2.4:5–7.

85 Zilberstein 2022, 275, Fig. 1: 1–5.

86 Interpreted as “vermutlich Becher” in Vieweger – Häser 2014, 148.

87 Cahill 1992, 213, Fig. 21:15–16.

88 Magen 2002, 48, Fig. 2.44: 1–3.

89 Magen 2002, 213.

90 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, Pl. 9.2: 29–30; Vörös 2015, 306:9.

91 Find Nr. 14.018, personal analysis with the permission of D. Foran.

92 Cahill 1992, 212–213, Fig. 20:10–11.

93 Magen 2002, 40–50.

Mugs and Pitchers: Type I. B. Form 1. OV (Plates 5.17–5.19)

Seven fragments of seven objects in total belong to this group of polished mugs and pitchers and probably one fragment of one polished lug handle. These account for 12 % of the assemblage and were found in almost equal numbers in Areas I and II. Intentionally smoothed and polished mugs and pitchers are rare in the known assemblage of Eretz-Israel, and neither J. Cahill nor Y. Magen has any examples⁹⁴. The polished mugs and pitchers are similar in their form and size to Type I. A. Form 1 OV with intentional horizontal and vertical chisel marks, but were probably rarer.

The walls are 0.80–2.80 cm thick and thus thicker than the comparable mugs and pitchers with chisel marks. The only known diameter for the opening measures 10.60 cm. Similar to the examples of Type I.A. 1. OV, base diameters range between 7.50 and 11.50 cm. The material of the vessels is the usual soft chalkstone, but TZ 112753-001 (*Pl. 5.18 b*) is made of soft grey chalk.

Bowls with Rectangular Handles: Type I. B. Form 2. OVa (Plate 5.20)

The two fragments TZ 113077-001 (*Pl. 5.20 a*) and TZ 310701-001 (*Pl. 5.20 b*) of this subtype can be compared to the form with chisel marks Type I. A. Form 2. OVa with its references to J. Cahill's Type 2.a.ii.A2 and Y. Magen's Type II. B.i. Form 1. The bowls are round with a flat base, with handles attached either at the centre of the body or directly below the rim⁹⁸. One object, which is partially preserved, has its 4.20 cm-long handle set on the rim. The fragment is a body sherd with an intact handle, measuring 2.00 × 2.00 cm. The walls are 0.90–1.50 cm thick. The opening is 10.00 cm in diameter and its base is 8.80 cm. The fragments are well polished and have either only slightly visible or no visible chisel marks. TZ 113077-001 is made of very soft chalk material, with several holes on the inside and the bottom, which are probably due to corrosion.

94 The typology in D. Vieweger and J. Häser follows J. Cahill's chisel-marked Type 2.a.i., and makes no distinction between chisel-marked and polished hand-carved mugs and pitchers, see Vieweger – Häser 2014, 148.

95 Gibson 2003, 292.

96 Find Nr. KMAP 17.025 and 19.018. Thanks to D. Foran for the insight into the material.

97 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 406, 410, Pl. 9.1:1.

Publications of most other chalkstone assemblages do not include citations of hand-carved mugs and pitchers with polished-out walls. Comparable finds probably came from Jerusalem. S. Gibson notes that polished mugs are to be found in M. Broshi's assemblage from the 1970s excavations on Mount Zion⁹⁵. However, those vessels were not published. Two sherds in the Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat assemblage were identified as polished mugs or pitchers⁹⁶.

A published object from Jericho is interesting because of its early dating: a complete polished hand-carved mug from the reign of Salome Alexandra (76–67 BC) that was found in the Hasmonean Twin Palaces⁹⁷. The stoneware from Jericho was originally from Jerusalem. The polished mugs might represent an early type from Jerusalem.

In addition to the examples with chisel marks matching J. Cahill's and Y. Magen's typology found in Jerusalem, there are comparable examples from Gamla, although those are bigger, with a 16.00–18.00 cm rim diameter. Like the bowls described above, the objects from Gamla are polished⁹⁹. Bowls with a larger than 20.00 cm rim diameter and handles attached to the rim are known from Sepphoris¹⁰⁰. Fragments of comparable bowls are also known from Callirhoë, but those have handles attached to the rim or to the body¹⁰¹. However, the description does not specify whether those bowls are polished or not. One rim sherd with a lug handle attached under it was found at Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat¹⁰².

98 Y. Magen's examples all have their lug handles attached directly to the rim, see Magen 2002, Fig. 2.40.

99 Gibson 2016, Type 2C, 55, Fig. 9.2: 58–59.

100 Sherman et al. 2020, Fig. 1:15.

101 Deines 1993, Tafel 4a–d.

102 Find Nr. KMAP 17.021, was examined with the permission of D. Foran.

“Teacup”: Type I. B. Form 2. OVb (Plate 5.21)

Two matching fragments of one object, TZ 112490-001 (*Pl. 5.21*), can be subsumed in this type, which resembles a “teacup” with chisel marks, Type I. A. Form 2. OVb. The form again follows J. Cahill’s bowls with loop handles and a round shape (Type 2.a.ii.A1)¹⁰³. D. Vieweger and J. Häser published the chisel-marked and polished objects of this type as Type 2.a.vii. Tassen¹⁰⁴. The opening measures 10.60 cm in diameter. The thickness of the wall varies

between 0.90 and 1.20 cm. The handle is attached to the rim and the body. The walls are well polished on both the outside and inside. The fragments were found in Area II, in an Umayyad wall.

The finds from Jerusalem and Jericho cited above have chisel-marked walls but are comparable in shape. Bowls of this type with polished outer walls are not found in any other assemblage.

Bowls with Solid Ring-Base: Type I. B. Form 2. OVc (Plate 5.22)

The fragment TZ 012676-001 (*Pl. 5.22*) is a solid base of a hand-carved and polished bowl. The form cannot be compared to any known typology. The thick walls at the base measure 1.30–2.50 cm, and the base has a 7.60 cm diameter. The vessel, which was made of greyish chalk material with light-brown veins, came from Area I and was found in a late Roman to Byzantine wall.

One comparison can be found in the chalkstone material from the Tyropoeon Valley in Jerusalem. In Stratum VII (first century BC–first century AD), one of the base fragments of the handmade small bowls has a similar solid ring base and a round form¹⁰⁵.

Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Bases: Type I. B. Form 2. OVd (Plates 5.23–5.25)

Eight fragments from five objects came from polished bowls with round walls, slightly incurved rims, and flat bases. The walls are polished inside and out, which makes this the most common hand-carved bowl type in the assemblage, accounting for 9 % of the total. Equally distributed in Areas I and II, the form is not included in the any known typology¹⁰⁶. The vessels vary in size, from midsize to large bowls, with openings measuring 11.90–23.40 cm in diameter. The base diameter varies between 5.60 and 10.00 cm. The walls are 0.60–2.00 cm thick. TZ 014421-001 (*Pl. 5.23 c*) is made of harder chalk material than the usual soft chalk. Three objects were found in Area I (TZ 003579-001, TZ

014420-001, and TZ 014221-001; *Pl. 5.23 a, b, and c*), in late Bronze I to Umayyad soil or fills. The two fragments from Area II (TZ 112484-001 and TZ 112497-001; *Pl. 5.24 and 5.25*) came from Hellenistic debris and fill.

The form can be compared to big hand-carved bowls found in Gamla, which S. Gibson calls tubs and basins¹⁰⁷. Another quite similar bowl belongs to the chalkstone vessel assemblage from Ĥirbat al-Mukhayyat. The polished bowl from Mukhayyat has an incision at the transition to the bottom¹⁰⁸. These bowls might represent a type used exclusively in Transjordan.

103 Cahill 1992, 212, Fig. 20:7.

104 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 150, Abb. 20–21.

105 Zilberstein – Ben Efraim 2013, 214, Fig. 9.1: 2.

106 D. Vieweger and J. Häser compared TZ 112497-001 of this type with J. Cahill’s Type 2.a.ii.A. (“Schalen mit zylindrischer oder konischer Form und flachem Boden”), and

TZ 003579-001 with J. Cahill’s Type 2.a.ii.B (“Kugelförmige Schalen”), Vieweger – Häser 2014, 149–150, Abb. 18 a, b.

107 Gibson 2016, Type 2F, 55, Fig. 9.2: 64–65.

108 Personal analysis of the bowl with the permission of D. Foran.

Small Spouted Bowl: Type I. B. Form 2. OVe (Plate 5.26)

One fully preserved object, TZ 011565-001 (*Pl. 5.26*), is a bowl measuring max. 4.20 cm in diameter with a small spout. The walls are thick (0.50–2.00 cm), and the working marks are clearly visible on both the outside and the inside. The spout is attached to the rim, opposite a small lug handle. The material and the working manner are comparable to the other Type I.B. bowl, even though it remains uncertain if the miniature vessel belongs to the Iron Age. It came from an Iron Age IIC earth context in

Area I, square AQ 120, which yielded various kinds of pottery dating from the Bronze Age to the Roman/Byzantine periods.

The small-spouted bowl has no direct comparison in the known chalkstone vessel assemblages. The form of the bowl can be compared to Y. Magen's Type II.B. Form 1, hand-carved bowls with lug handles¹⁰⁹. The spout is comparable to Y. Magen's spouted mug (Type II.A.) and J. Cahill's pitchers (Type 2.a.i.B)¹¹⁰.

“Inkwells”: Type I. B. Form 3. OV (Plate 5.27)

Two polished vessel fragments (*TZ 013431-001 and TZ 111309-001; Pl. 5.27 a and b*) with straight cylindrical walls can be compared to inkwells. However, as inkwells were usually made of pottery, wood, or metal, chalkstone inkwells are rare. The undecorated and simple type found at Tall Zirā'a can be compared to Y. Magen's Type I.1.D. Form 1 from the excavations near the Temple Mount. Y. Magen suggested that those were made of cores extracted from large lathe-turned vessels during the working process. Y. Magen's cited inkwell type has sloping walls and flat bases¹¹¹. J. Cahill's assemblage does not include inkwells.

TZ 013431-001 with a preserved rim measures max. 7.00 cm in diameter. The fragment breaks at the transition from the wall to the bottom. The inside and outside are polished, but slight traces of chisel marks remain visible. TZ 111309-001 has no decoration or chisel marks. The material is very soft white chalk and the inside is polished. The preserved flat bottom measures max. 7.00 cm in diameter. The TZ 013431-001 fragment was found in Area I in a modern soil level and TZ 111309-001 in Area II in a Roman fill. Chalkstone inkwells are known mainly from Jerusalem and Machaerus¹¹².

Trays: Type I. B. Form 4. OV (Plate 5.28)

TZ 007739-001 (*Pl. 5.28*) is preserved rim to base and resembles a rectangular shallow vessel known as a tray¹¹³. These are flat based, with short and tapering walls and polished floors and rims. They usually have handles on each short side. The inside bottom of the rectangular hand-carved vessel TZ 007739-001 is decorated with incised fine lines which form a half-circle. The walls slope slightly towards the outside. The walls are 1.00 cm thick and the outside surface is polished and treated with water. The chalkstone material is grey and soft. The object came from Area I and was found inside an Iron Age IIA/B fireplace or oven.

The comparable find in J. Cahill's list (Type 2.b.iv), which came from the excavations in the City of David, has incised decorative lines on the rim and handles. The floor has an x incised on the inside. A larger tray was found in the Burnt House in the Jewish Quarter excavations¹¹⁴. One fragment from Hīrbat al-Mukhayyat, which is made of the soft yellow chalkstone typical for the Jerusalem region, resembles the rectangular form, with rectangular chisel marks still visible¹¹⁵. Neither Y. Magen's assemblages nor S. Gibson's study on the chalkstone vessels of Gamla reflect any comparable vessels.

109 Magen 2002, 101, Fig. 3.63.

110 Cahill 1992, 210–211; Magen 2002, 97–100, Fig. 3.60.

111 Magen 2002, 73, Fig. 3.19.

112 Magen 2002, 72–73.

113 Appears as Type 2.a.iv (“Becken”) in Vieweger – Häser 2014, 150.

114 Cahill 1992, 214–215, Fig. 21:4, Photo 208.

115 Find Nr. 14.028, personal analysis with permission from D. Foran.

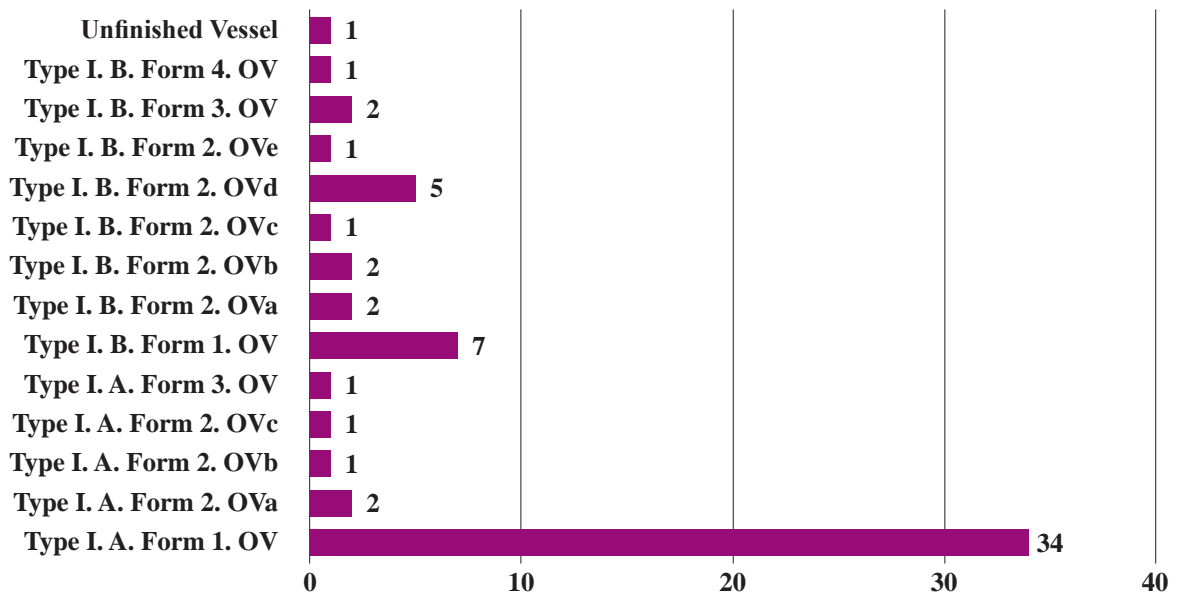
Unfinished Vessel (Plate 5.29)

TZ 112489-001 (*Pl. 5.29*) with a very thick and round base could be an unfinished vessel¹¹⁶. The inside of the base is well polished, but marks of hand-carving are still visible. The preserved walls run in an out-sloping fashion. The diameter measures max. 6.20 cm, and the base was probably part of a bowl or a mug. The walls are 2.00–4.40 cm thick. The frag-

ment came from Area II and was found in an early Roman to Roman fill or floor layer that yielded a great deal of Hellenistic and Roman pottery.

Comparable finds of hand-carved unfinished vessels were found in the City of David¹¹⁷, and another unfinished vessel similar to the one from Tall Zirā'a came from Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ in Transjordan¹¹⁸.

Hand-carved Vessel Types



Graph. 5.2 Overview of the Hand-carved Vessel Types (Source: F. Schöpf).

5.3.1.2. Lathe-turned Vessels

In general, lathe-turned vessels are divided roughly into two groups: those made on a small lathe and others made on a large one¹¹⁹. Since the Tall Zirā'a assemblage does not have any examples turned on a large lathe, only vessels made on a

small lathe are discussed here¹²⁰. Unlike the hand-carved vessels, the lathe-turned bowls have a variety of decorations and forms. Lathe-turned objects account for 29 % in the assemblage. In general, the lathe-turned types were mainly found in Area I.

116 Interpreted as “vermutlich Becher” in Vieweger – Häser 2014, 148.

117 Cahill 1992, Photo 159.

118 Find Nr. 14.176, personal analysis with permission from D. Foran.

119 Cahill 1992, 201.

120 Regarding the absence of large lathe-turned vessels, it is further interesting to mention that, for instance, the Galilean workshop at ‘Einot Amitai lacks any signs of production of these vessels. The production could have been centred in and around Jerusalem, and the transportation to the north was difficult, see also Adler 2019, 10.

Lathe-turned Bowls: Type II. A.

The lathe-turned vessels from Tall Zirā'a are open bowls, varying in size, decoration, and form. The principal forms can be distinguished by their shallow or deep bowls. The deep bowls are further characterized as hemispherical with straight walls and bowls with carinated walls.

low or deep bowls. The deep bowls are further characterized as hemispherical with straight walls and bowls with carinated walls.

Shallow Bowls: Type II. A. Form 1. OV (Plates 5.30–5.33)

Seven objects of this type are part of the assemblage. The dominant type accounts for 29 % of the lathe-turned chalkstone vessel assemblage. All the relevant fragments were found in Area I. There was one object that could be fully restored (*Pl. 5.32 b*) and there were 12 other fragments from three different contexts in square AP 123: TZ 015374-001 in 5187 (*Pl. 5.31 a*), TZ 015383-001 in 4906, and TZ 015385-001 in 5116 (*Pl. 5.32 b*). Those bowls had straight walls, incised decorations, and either a low disc or a flat base. The form is comparable to Y. Magen's Type I.1.A.iii.Form 1 in his typology on the chalkstone vessels found near the Temple Mount and Type I.A.i. Form 1 from Hizma. The vessels were probably modelled on ETS-I pottery¹²¹. J. Cahill defines this kind of vessel as Form I.a.i.F, shallow bowls with low disc bases, with either sloping or straight walls¹²². The objects from Tall Zirā'a fit well into this characterization, which D. Vieweger and J. Häser partly published as Type F¹²³. Three of the objects have a low disc base. TZ 010833-001 (*Pl. 5.30 b*) has a broken base, but the broken edge, which forms a circle, is probably from an original disc base. The fragments including rims have open-

ing diameters that measure 14.80–17.00 cm and the bases of 7.20–15.40 cm. The walls are 0.30–1.40 cm thick. The vessels were all well worked, with decorative incised lines near either the base or the rim. Only TZ 014422-001 (*Pl. 5.30 c*) lacks the incised decoration. Most of the bowls were made of white chalkstone with no or only a few veins visible. TZ 015376-001 (*Pl. 5.31 a*) is of hard grey chalk and TZ 007738-001 (*Pl. 5.30 a*) of softer chalkstone material.

All the fragments of this type came from Area I. Four came out of debris or pits of the early Roman period (TZ 010833-001, TZ 015374-001, TZ 015375-001, and TZ 015376-001); TZ 015383-001 was found inside a wall (W4906) with an opening in AP123. The two remaining objects (TZ 015385-001 and TZ 017232-001) were found in early Roman tabuns.

In addition to the analysed examples from Jerusalem that match Y. Magen's and J. Cahill's typologies, there were comparable finds from Gamla¹²⁴ and Jericho¹²⁵. Two fragments with several incised lines are known from Ḥisbān/Esbous in Transjordan, one of which has a low disc base¹²⁶.

Deep Bowls: Type II. A. Form 2. OV

There is a wider variety of deep bowls compared to the shallow type and the former are finds that are not among the known typologies.

121 Magen 2002, 66.

122 Cahill 1992, 201–202.

123 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 146, Abb. 3: TZ 007738-001, 010833-001, 015374-001, 015383-001, 015385-00, 017231-001. TZ 017231-001 could be now characterized as Type II.A. Form 2. OVd, see below.

124 Type 10 by S. Gibson, see Gibson 2016, 71, Fig. 9.12: 153–156.

125 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 406, 410, Pl. 9.4:51.

126 Kotter – Ray, Jr. 1995, Fig. 9.11:12; 9.12:2.

Hemispherical Bowls: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa (Plates 5.34–5.39)

Fifteen fragments of nine objects resemble those hemispherical small bowls. The bowls have incurved walls, a flat ring base, and incised lines either below the rim or in the middle of the body. With a 38 % share (nine objects) in the lathe-turned vessel assemblage, they represent the main type of lathe-turned vessels at Tall Zirā‘a. Most of the fragments came from Area I, with only two from Area II. The bowls resemble J. Cahill’s Form I.a.i.¹²⁷ and Y. Magen’s Type I.1.A.vi for the objects found near the Temple Mount, and Type I.1.A.iii. for the vessel from Hizma. The shape can be compared to the pottery of the EST-I¹²⁸. D. Vieweger and J. Häser characterized those vessels as Type I and were able to identify eight fragments of this form¹²⁹.

The size of the bowls varies only slightly. The openings measure 11.00–14.00 cm in diameter, and the bases 5.50–8.10 cm. The walls are between 0.40–1.40 cm thick. All bear horizontal incised lines. The chalkstone material is either completely white or is white with a few slight brown veins and discolorations. TZ 015379-001 (*Pl. 5.34 b*) is made

of a soft chalkstone material. Thirteen fragments were found in Area I (including TZ 010284-001, TZ 015379-001, TZ 015386-001, TZ 015409-001, TZ 015948-001, TZ 017226-001, TZ 017230-001, 017234-001, and TZ 017239-001), mainly from late Bronze to modern soil and pits; only TZ 015379-001, TZ 015386-001, TZ 015948-001, and 017239-001 came from early Roman contexts. TZ 112487-001 and TZ 112498-001 from Area II came from Roman to early Islamic fills and debris.

Apart from the comparable finds in Jerusalem and Judaea, the type was found in the Galilee and the Golan Heights. S. Gibson defines them as Type 6 in the Gamla assemblage¹³⁰. Similar bowls described as Bowl Type 4 were found in Jaffa on the Mediterranean Coast¹³¹. In Transjordan, those bowls were found in the Herodian building at Umm ad-Danānīr¹³², Tall al-Kharrār¹³³, Tall Nimrīn¹³⁴, and in Ḥisbān/Esbous in a late Roman context (Stratum 11)¹³⁵. Bowls made of wood with the same form and incised decoration are known from Ein Gedi¹³⁶ and Cave 1 in Wādī Murabba’at¹³⁷.

Deep Bowls with Straight Walls: Type II. A. Form 2. OVb (Plate 5.40)

Only one rim sherd in the assemblage, TZ 019513-001 (*Pl. 5.40*), can be compared to the cups identified by Y. Magen as the Type I.1.B in Hizma and from the excavation at the Temple Mount. In Hizma, it was mainly wasters of this type that were found. Y. Magen assumes that the production of these thin-walled fine vessels was rather difficult and that there was frequent breakage¹³⁸. J. Cahill identifies these vessels as Bowl Type I.a.i.J, represented by ten objects in the City of David assemblage. The ‘cups’ or bowls have thin walls and flat or low disc bases, with the outside decorated with incised lines or ribbing¹³⁹. The vessel fragment from

Tall Zirā‘a bears the typical decoration pattern of an incised line on top of the flat rim and directly below it. Another decorative band with a lathe-incised line is to be seen 1.30 cm below the rim. The high-quality bowl was well polished, and the signs of the lathe are still visible on the inside. The opening measures 14.00 cm in diameter. The walls are 0.80–1.00 cm thick. The chalkstone has no veins or other discolorations. The sherd came from Area I, from early Roman soil or fill with ashes and tabun fragments.

The form of the bowls or cups is comparable to the first century AD ceramic vessels found at Qumran and to a wood vessel from Wādī Murab-

127 Cahill 1992, 201–202.

128 Magen 2002, 69–70.

129 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 146, Abb. 4 and 5: TZ 007748-001, 010284-001, 015948-001, 017266-001, 017230-00, 017234-001, TZ 017239-001, 112487-001.

130 Gibson 2016, 66, Fig. 9.10: 98–114.

131 Adler – Amit 2018, 543, Fig. 14.3:45–46.

132 McGovern 1989, Fig. 2:8–9.

133 Abu Shmeis – Waheeb 2002, 565, Fig. 4:3–4.

134 Dornemann 1990, 153, Fig. 1:22–25.

135 Kotter – Ray, Jr. 1995, Fig. 9.10:7.

136 Hachlili 2005, Fig. X. 10:2–3.

137 Benoit – Milik – Vaux 1961, Pl. X:13.

138 Magen 2002, 24, Fig. 2.14.

139 Cahill 1992, 203, Fig. 16:7–16; Magen 2002, 71, Fig. 3.13: 4–6.

ba'at dated to the first or second century AD¹⁴⁰. Chalkstone vessels of this type were found mainly in Jerusalem and Judaea, but they are also known from Gamla, listed by S. Gibson as Vessel Type 9B, shallow bowl with everted rim¹⁴¹. Like the exam-

ple from Tall Zirā'a, the walls are highly polished, with incised decoration. The openings of the vessels measure between 10.00–14.00 cm¹⁴². The chalkstone vessel assemblage from Jaffa also includes the same vessel type, listed as Bowl Type 5¹⁴³.

Deep Bowls with Straight Walls and Folded Rims: Type II. A. Form 2. OVc (Plate 5.41)

Rim sherds TZ 015405-001 (*Pl. 5.41 a*) and TZ 015410-001 (*Pl. 5.41 b*) belong to the group of deep bowls with straight walls and folded rims. The type can be compared to J. Cahill's Type 1.a.i.K., deep bowls with slight carination and profiled rims¹⁴⁴. Y. Magen's assemblages from Hizma and the Temple Mount do not list similar finds.

Fine-worked TZ 015405-001 has a triangular rim, profiled, and lathe-incised lines on the transition from the rim to the body. The sherd breaks at the carination towards the body, marked with a horizontal line incised ca. 2.20 cm below the rim. The diameter of the opening measures 16.00 cm. The walls are 0.60 cm thick and highly polished. The outside is shiny and the inside smooth, and the signs of the lathe are still visible. The material has a yellow-grey colour on the outside and no veins. The fragment came from Area I, in an early Roman fill.

TZ 015410-001 has a thickened rim with two parallel horizontal lathe-incised lines and several

such lines on the outside of the body, beginning 2.00 cm beneath the rim, followed by a slight carination. The walls are 1.30 cm thick. The opening of the rim measures 14.00 cm in diameter. The vessel is made of hard brownish chalk, with grey veins and greyish sedimentations. It was found in Area I, in an Umayyad fill.

Comparable finds have come from the City of David and Jewish Quarter excavations¹⁴⁵, and similar finds are known from the Herodian building at Umm ad-Danānīr¹⁴⁶. In the chalkstone vessel assemblage from Jaffa, a comparable object appears as Bowl Type 6¹⁴⁷, and a similarly shaped bowl made of wood was found in Qumran¹⁴⁸. The fragment with a thickened rim can be especially compared to a bowl from Gamla, identified as a shallow bowl, similar in size. Like the piece found at Tall Zirā'a, the Gamla vessels with everted walls have incised lines on the outside and an angled rim¹⁴⁹.

Deep Bowls with Carinated Walls: Type II. A. Form 2. OVd (Plate 5.42)

Rim sherd with part of the body TZ 017231-001 (*Pl. 5.42*) was part of a lathe-turned carinated bowl with a triangular rim. A lathe-incised line runs 0.90 cm beneath the rim. The walls are 0.40–1.10 cm thick and slope outwards. The rim diameter measures 15.00 cm. Generally, the object reflects high-quality work. The chalkstone material has no visible veins. The sherd was found in Area I, in an early Roman soil context, with ashes and tabun fragments.

This sherd is roughly comparable to J. Cahill's Type 1.a.i.H. which is represented by one fragment each from the City of David excavation, the Temple Mount excavation, and probably at Dominus Flevit on the Mount of Olives¹⁵⁰. A small chalkstone bowl comparable to the unusual type from Tall Zirā'a came from Hizbān/Esbous with the same out-sloping walls and one incised line. It was found during the clean-up¹⁵¹. The type has a parallel in a popular pottery bowl shape

140 Benoit et al. 1961, Pl. X: 14; Cahill 1992, 203, Fig. 16:7–16; de Vaux 1973, Pl. LXII.

141 Cahill 1992, 203; Magen 2002, 71.

142 Labelled as "Lathe-Turned Cups", see Gibson 2016, 71, Fig. 9.12: 141.

143 Adler – Amit 2018, 543, Fig. 14.3:51–52.

144 Cahill 1992, 203, Fig. 16:17–19.

145 Cahill 1992, 203, Fig. 16:17–19.

146 McGovern 1989, Fig. 2:12.

147 Adler – Amit 2018, 543, Fig. 14.3:56.

148 Sitry 2006, Pl. 25:104.

149 Gibson 2016, 71, Fig. 9.12:149.

150 Cahill 1992, 202, Fig. 16:1; Bagatti et al. 1958, Fig. 38.1.

151 Kotter – Ray, Jr. 1995, 123, Fig. 9.11:7

from Jerusalem with an incurved rim and a flat base. Such bowls, which date from the late second century to the end of the first century BC, were found at var-

ious sites in Jerusalem. One from Masada has been dated to 6 AD¹⁵².

Bowls with Decorative Strip/Handle: Type II. A. Form 2. OVe (Plate 5.43)

Three fragments of large deep bowls with either a decorative strip or a lug handle have been found¹⁵³. There are no comparable vessels or types in Y. Magen's or J. Cahill's assemblages. Owing to the han-

dle or the decorative patterns, they are subdivided into two forms: the one with a decorative strip is listed as Type II. Form 2.i. OVe and the one with a lug handle as Type II. Form 2.ii. OVe.

Type II. A. Form 2.i. OVe: Bowls with Decorative Strip

The two rim fragments TZ 015397-001 (*Pl. 5.43 a*) and TZ 017233-001 (*Pl. 5.43 b*) belong to this type¹⁵⁴. The walls are straight or slightly hemispherical. The decorative strip which sits 1.70–1.90 cm below the rim is 1.20 cm wide and ca. 0.10 cm thick. The lightly polished walls are 1.20–1.30 cm thick. On one fragment, the decorative strip is either broken or was intentionally chiselled away. The rim diameters measure 18.50 to 21.00 cm. TZ 015397-001 is made of hard grey chalk with grey patina, and the other fragment of the usual white chalk. Neither fragment shows veins in the chalk material. The sherds came from Roman soil and filling contexts in Area I.

This particular type seems to be a bowl form typical of the northern region. Comparable vessels have come from Gamla in the Golan Heights and Sephphoris in the Galilee. S. Gibson described the ones found in Gamla as Type 4 Small Jars/Chalices, which are delineated as smaller counterparts to the *qalal*, jars and krater types produced on a large lathe. The presented type with a simple decorative strip can be compared to S. Gibson's Type 4B Chalice with Chiselled Band¹⁵⁵. The comparable find in Sephphoris is a big vessel with a slightly in-sloping rim and a strip ca. 1.00 cm below the rim¹⁵⁶.

Type II.A. Form 2.ii.OVe: Bowl with Handle

Rim sherd TZ 015394-001 (*Pl. 5.43 c*) belongs to the bowl type with lug handles¹⁵⁷. The hemispherical lathe-turned bowl has two parallel lathe-incised lines 0.30 cm beneath the straight rim and another incised line on top of the rim. A hand-chiselled lug handle ca. 1.50 cm thick is attached 1.50 cm below the rim. The edges of the handle are stepped. The bowl measures max. 20.00 cm in diameter and the walls, which are 0.80–1.00 cm thick, are polished

inside and out. The material has a slight grey patina, and the chalk itself is a pale-yellow colour. Like the two fragments above, the sherd came from a Roman soil context in Area I. The incised line on top of the rim is typical of the comparable Type 4 in Gamla. The lug handle suggests a comparison to S. Gibson's Type 4C: Small Jar with Chiselled Lug or Decorated Band¹⁵⁸.

152 Tchekhanovets 2013, Figs. 5.1:1, 5.5:1–3, 5.10:1–3, 5.15:1–2.

153 D. Vieweger and J. Häser compare some of these vessels with J. Cahill's Type K, see Vieweger – Häser 2014, 147.

154 D. Vieweger and J. Häser interpreted this fragment as part of a large vessel, since the type has references to the large-vessel types, see Vieweger – Häser 2014, 147.

155 Gibson 2016, 62, Fig. 9.8:76.

156 Sherman et al. 2020, Fig. 1:14.

157 As TZ 017233-001, this fragment was described as part of a large vessel, see Vieweger – Häser 2014, 147.

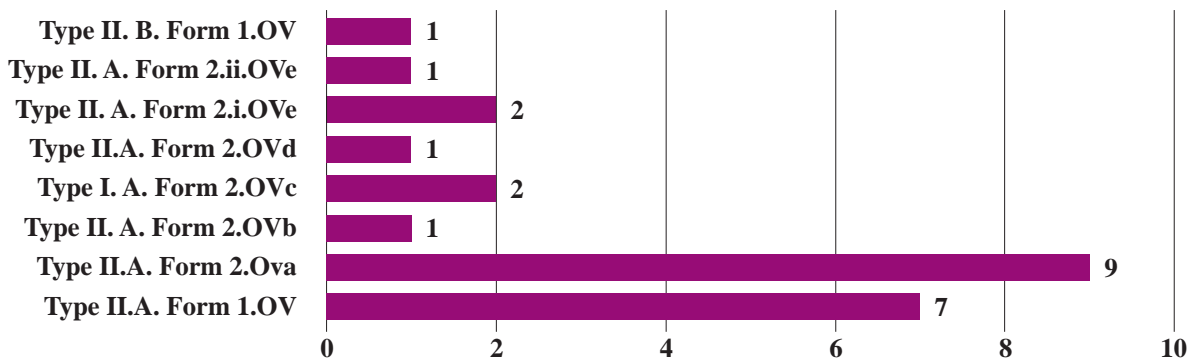
158 Gibson 2016, 62, Fig. 9.8: 78–79.

Lathe-turned Bowls with Hand-carved Decoration: Type II.B. Form 1. OV (Plate 5.44)

TZ 015406-001 (*Pl. 5.44*) is a lathe-turned bowl decorated with horizontal incised lines and hand-carved vertical lines. The rim is slightly thinner than the wall and incurved. The vessel is the largest in the assemblage, with a 24.00 cm-diameter opening. One horizontal lathe-turned line sits ca. 0.70 cm beneath the rim. The vertical hand-carved lines run under the incised line. The walls are 1.40 cm thick and polished. The material has a yellow colour on

the outside with grey and brown veins. It was found in an early Roman wall installation (W4816) in AP123, Area I. The form can be roughly compared to S. Gibson's Type 5B Large Cup/Bowl, but vessels of this type are smaller than the example from Tall Zirā'a¹⁵⁹. In general, the appearance of a hand-carved chisel decoration on a lathe-turned vessel is not cited in the known publications of chalkstone vessel assemblages.

Lathe-turned Vessel Types



Graph. 5.3 Diagram showing the number of lathe-turned vessel types (Source: F. Schöpf).

5.3.1.3. Fragments (Plates 5.45–5.47)

Eight of the chalkstone vessel sherds are too fragmentary to identify the vessel type. In some cases, it is even uncertain as to whether they belong to the group

of early Roman chalkstone vessels or are of earlier types, for example, Iron Age chalkstone vessels.

Fragments of Hand-carved Vessels

Five fragments of hand-carved vessels or objects were identified. Three base fragments, TZ 004152-001 (*Pl. 5.45 a*), TZ 015398-001 (*Pl. 5.45 b*), and TZ 112496-001 (*Pl. 5.45 c*) are from bases of hand-carved mugs, pitchers, or bowls. The base diameter of TZ 004152-001 measures 14.00 cm. The fragments have traces of chisel marks on the outside. TZ 004152-001 is burnt on the inside and was found in an Iron Age IIA/B stone structure in Area I. TZ 015398-001, which has yellow discolorations and grey veins, came from an early Roman wall installation (W4343) in AR 123, Area I. Another fragment of a base, TZ 112496-001,

was found in an early Roman to Roman fill or floor in Area II. The walls are 1.00–1.70 cm thick and the chalkstone material has brownish-red veins.

The two fragments from Area II, TZ 113047-001 (*Pl. 5.46 a*) and TZ 113363-001 (*Pl. 5.46 b*) are roughly worked objects. TZ 113047-001 was found in a late Iron Age to Hellenistic pit and TZ 113363-001 in a late Bronze Age ash layer, close to pit 11915. The TZ 113363-001 is hard and shows traces of red and other stone material. It has red-brown veins and black spots. The two last fragments are probably not part of the early Roman assemblage.

¹⁵⁹ Gibson 2016, 66, Fig. 9.8:97.

Fragments of Lathe-turned Vessels

TZ 015381-001 (*Pl. 5.47*) was part of a fine-worked lathe-turned vessel. The outside is smoothly polished. The walls are 0.50 cm thick. The chalkstone material is hard, with no visible veins or patina

and just a few yellow and pale brown spots. The fragment came from an early Roman soil context with tabun fragments in Area I.

5.4. Contextualization of the Finds

The contextualization of the chalkstone vessels includes an analysis of their distribution on the tall and their chronological classification. Comparisons to other

chalkstone vessel assemblages in Israel and Transjordan are crucial for the dating of the finds.

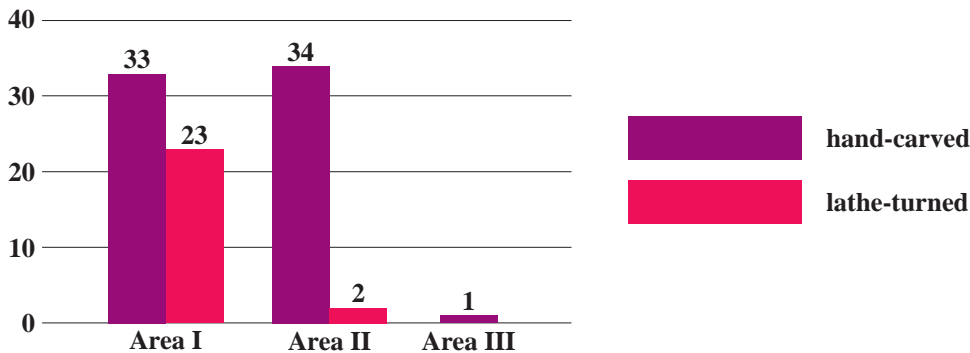
5.4.1. Distribution in the Areas

The distribution of the different types of finds differs from one area to the next. Some 58 % of the chalkstone vessel fragments found in Area I are hand-carved, whereas in Area II, hand-carved vessels account for ca. 94 %. The only fragment from Area III is also hand-carved. Lathe-turned vessels account for ca. 42 % in Area I and 5.5 % in Area II.

In total numbers, only two fragments out of 36 were lathe-turned in Area II.

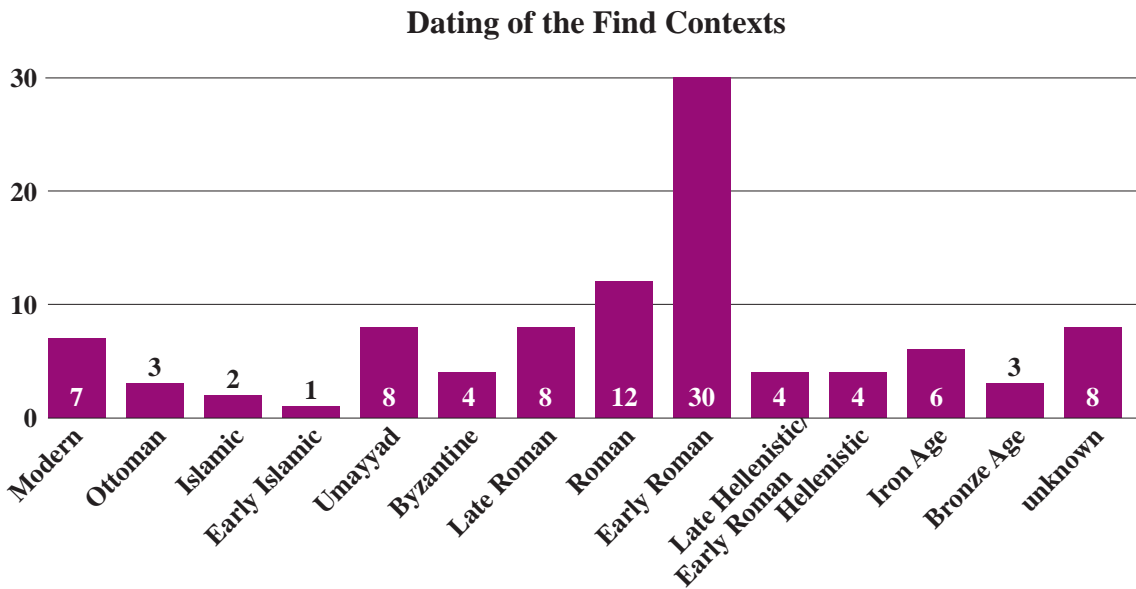
The fragments and objects came mainly from disturbed contexts, so exact dating is impossible. Moreover, a question remains regarding the domestic contexts in which those vessels were originally stored.

Hand-carved and Lathe-turned Vessels in the Area I-III



Graph. 5.4 Diagram of vessel distribution in Area I-III (Source: F. Schöpf).

5.4.2. The Find Contexts of Areas I, II, and III



Graph. 5.5 Diagram showing the dating of find context (Source: F. Schöpf).

Nearly half of the fragments were found in early Roman or Roman contexts (ca. 46 %), mainly fills, floors, or the remains of tabuns. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the fragments came into those contexts in a secondary state. Inside the Hellenistic to Roman contexts, the finds were concentrated in certain quadrants of Areas I and II. In Area I, the original location of the chalkstone vessels was on the east side of the space, within the architectural remains¹⁶⁰. The early Roman Stratum 7 bore most of the chalkstone vessel finds from Area I, which totalled 27 fragments¹⁶¹. Apart from one exception in AL 118 (TZ 010833-001), all the finds came from in AP 123, AQ 123, AQ 122, and AP 121 on the east side of Area I, near architectural structures. The finds from AP 123 were in earth contexts, with a lot of ashes, tabun fragments, and pottery.

The same can be said of the finds from AQ 122 and 123. TZ 015383-001 in AP 123 came from a wall context (4906) with a possible door hinge.

The relevant finds related to the early Roman Stratum 6 of Area I were at the southern part of AP 123 in earth contexts in between walls, probably building pits¹⁶². The fragments were found together with a lot of pottery, so they might have originally been part of the households that had been in the area and were later dumped into the building pits for new houses¹⁶³.

The unusual distribution of nine finds in earlier strata, dating from the late Bronze Age to Iron Age II, was probably the result of later building activity¹⁶⁴. The wide distribution might also suggest that the earth was moved during that activity, which also caused the disturbance of the earlier strata.

¹⁶⁰ Vieweger – Häser 2014, 151.

¹⁶¹ TZ 010833-001, TZ 015374-001, TZ 015375-001, TZ 015376-001, TZ 015378-001, TZ 015379-001, TZ 015380-001, TZ 015381-001, TZ 015383-001, TZ 015385-001, TZ 015386-001, TZ 015387-001, TZ 015391-001, TZ 015398-001, TZ 015404-001, TZ 015405-001, TZ 015498-001, TZ 017225, TZ 017231-001, TZ 017232-001, TZ 017234-001, TZ 017234-001, TZ 017235-001, TZ 017236-001,

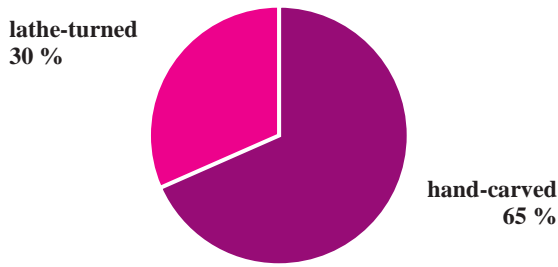
TZ 017237-001, TZ 017239-001, TZ 017240-001 and TZ 019513-001.

¹⁶² TZ 015377-001, TZ 015394-001, TZ 015397-001, TZ 015400-001, TZ 015401-001, TZ 015403-001, TZ 015406-001, TZ 017230-001, TZ 017233-001 and TZ 019512-001.

¹⁶³ Vieweger – Häser 2014, 151.

¹⁶⁴ TZ 003579-001, TZ 004152-001, TZ 007738-001, TZ 007739-001, TZ 009896-001, TZ 011565-001, TZ 014421-001, TZ 015388-001 and TZ 017226-001

Percentage of Fragments



Graph. 5.6 Diagram showing percentage of fragments (Source: F. Schöpf).

Finds in strata postdating the Roman era are in pits and filling layers together with pottery from different periods¹⁶⁵. Most of the finds were in AQ 120, AP/AQ 118, and AM/AN 119. Three finds from the Umayyad dated stratum came from AS 123, context 4008, a filling layer¹⁶⁶.

In Area II (2003–2011), the concentration was in the centre of the area, also in between architectural remains and inside pits. The three finds of the Hellenistic Stratum 8 were in AV 127 (TZ 112497-001), AV 131 (TZ 112484-001), and AW 128 (TZ 112492-001). In all three quadrants, the chalkstone vessel fragment was found together with Hellenistic and Roman pottery inside the remains of housing structures. TZ 011492-001 was on top of a floor level (context 10014). In the Roman Strata 7 and 6, the finds were in filling layers. In Stratum 7, the three finds were inside filling layers of AW 129 (TZ 112489-001 and TZ 112496-001) and AU 130 (TZ 112500-001), together with a lot of pottery and other Roman small finds. In Stratum 6, the three finds were in AW 127 (TZ 111309-001), AV 128 (TZ 112498-001), and AX 130 (TZ 110391-001). The chalkstone vessels were found together with a lot of Hellenistic and Roman pottery. In AV 128, the find context 11086 of TZ 112498-001 is probably the debris of the older houses, which might have been the original context of the chalkstone vessels.

165 TZ 007647-001, TZ 010284-001, TZ 010597-001, and TZ 012676-001.

166 TZ 012439-001, TZ 014420-001, and TZ 015410-001.

167 TZ 111443-001, TZ 111729-001, TZ 112753-001, TZ 112486-001, TZ 112487-001, TZ 112488-001, and TZ 112490-001.

The finds from the late Roman to the Umayyad strata were in filling layers, debris, and walls together with a lot of pottery in AW 126/128, AU 132/133, and AT 132/134¹⁶⁷. In context 10927, quadrant AT 132, where TZ 111729-001 was found, there was also one intact knife-pared lamp (TZ 101204-33). In context 10942 in AT 134 (Stratum 3), the two chalkstone vessel fragments, TZ 112486-001, and TZ 112488-001, were found together with a lot of Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine pottery.

A wide distribution of the finds characterized the Islamic Strata 2–1¹⁶⁸. The fragments were scattered in AY 127/128, AX 127/128, AV 130, and AS 134 in earth and surface contexts. In Stratum 1, they were found together with a lot of Hellenistic and Roman pottery.

The 2018 and 2019 excavations revealed similar distribution patterns in the Hellenistic and early Roman strata. The only find in an earlier context dating from the late Iron Age to the Hellenistic period (-21.80, TZ 113363-001) was inside the ash layer 11656 of AX 129, near pit 11915. The context belongs to Building A, Phase 1, which included mixed material from Iron Age IIB and IIC, as well as Hellenistic finds¹⁶⁹.

Inside the Hellenistic and early Roman stratigraphy (-21.80–21.00) TZ 112809-001, TZ 112832-001, TZ 113096-001, and TZ 114475-001 came from an area characterized by pits, which served as a dump in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. TZ 112809-001 was found in AV 128, context 11500. The earth layer contained several Hellenistic and early Roman finds, including a Hellenistic coin (TZ 112851-001) and second- and first-century BC lamps (TZ 112827-001 and TZ 112826-001). TZ 112832-001 in AX 129 was in the earth layer 11502 surrounding the pits. TZ 113096-001 was in context 11550 in AX 128, which also yielded two second- to first-century BC lamp fragments. TZ 114475-001 in context 12011, a pit in AX 129, was found with a large number of Hellenistic objects¹⁷⁰.

TZ 113047-001 was found inside context 11605, sandy soil in AW 127, probably from Hellenistic period. The layer in which the context lies contained

168 TZ 111726-001, TZ 111727-001, TZ 112501-001, TZ 112491-001, TZ 112494-001, and TZ 112499-001.

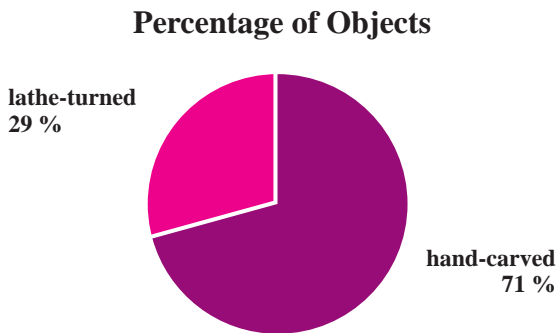
169 Schmidt 2022a, 22–23.

170 Schmidt 2022a, 13, 15–16.

a second- to first-century BC lamp fragment (TZ 113267-001, L11581)¹⁷¹. TZ 113077-001 came from AX 128, context 11590, a pit from the Hellenistic and early Roman period related to two rooms in this square which were probably built during the time of Alexander Jannaeus¹⁷². Another find at this

height (–21.44) is TZ 113375-001 was inside wall 11629 in AW 128. Only one chalkstone vessel, TZ 310701-001, was found in Area III, in the floor level context 30389 in Z 125 together with a few pottery remains.

5.4.3. Dating and Origin of the Types



Graph. 5.7 Diagram showing percentage of objects (Source: F. Schöpf).

Dating of the objects relies mainly on comparable finds from other sites since the chalkstone vessels of Tall Zirā'a came primarily from disturbed contexts. Only a few fragments were found in actual early Roman contexts. Moreover, by comparison with finds from other sites, one can identify the vessels' probable origins.

5.4.3.1. Dating

The earliest vessel types in the assemblage are the polished hand-carved mugs and pitchers (Type I. B. Form 1. OV) and the so-called teacups, either chisel-marked or polished (Type I. A. Form 2. OVb, Type I. B. Form 2. OVb). The only comparable find for Type I. B. Form 1. OV, polished mugs or pitchers, came from Jericho. One complete polished hand-carved mug dated to the reign of Salome Alexandra (76–67 BC), which was probably originally from Jerusalem, was found in the Hasmonean Twin Palaces¹⁷³. S. Gibson notes that there are polished mugs in Broshi's assemblage from his 1970s excavations on Mount Zion, but they are not dated¹⁷⁴. There is no evidence (or description) of polished mugs and pitchers in other archaeological chalkstone vessel assemblages. A personal overview of the Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ chalkstone assemblage

revealed two polished mug or pitcher fragments¹⁷⁵. The polished examples are probably early types of chalkstone vessels that only acquired the typical vertical and horizontal chisel marks later. Thus, the find from Tall Zirā'a might have been part of an early chalkstone vessel production dated to the first half of the first century BC.

The teacups belong to the early development of vessels as well. The form was found in the City of David and the Jewish Quarter Excavations Area J¹⁷⁶. The examples from Jerusalem have chisel-marked decorations on the outside and date to the second half of the first century BC, slightly later than the polished mugs and pitchers¹⁷⁷. The chronological distinction is supported by finds in Jericho, which are comparable in form and date¹⁷⁸.

171 Schmidt 2022a, 41.

172 Schmidt 2022a, 46, Fig. 3.4.

173 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 406, 410, Pl. 9.1:1.

174 Gibson 2003, 292.

175 Find Nr. KMAP 17.025 and 19.018, with the permission of D. Foran.

176 Geva 2014, Pl. 10.1:13, 14.

177 Geva 2014, 275.

178 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 410, Pl. 9.1:3.

At Tall Zirā‘a, at least 10 objects belong to the early type of hand-carved chalkstone vessels from the first century BC and to date have only also been found in Jerusalem, Jericho, and Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat.

However, the main part of the assemblage belongs to hand-carved and lathe-turned vessel types, typical of the first century AD. The hand-carved and chisel-marked mugs and pitchers account for ca. 41 % of the whole chalkstone vessel assemblage from Tall Zirā‘a and can be dated to the first century AD and later¹⁷⁹. Lathe-turned vessels, which make

5.4.3.2. Origin of Types

The specification of the origin of the objects relies – as does the dating – on comparable finds from other sites.

Hand-carved Vessels

The types of hand-carved vessels found at Tall Zirā‘a reflect forms which were typical for the Jerusalem region, the Galilee, and the Golan Heights, especially Gamla. Some of the vessels have no close parallels and others combine different regional styles.

The specific types which can be regionally categorized allow for some assumptions regarding the origins of the hand-carved vessels.

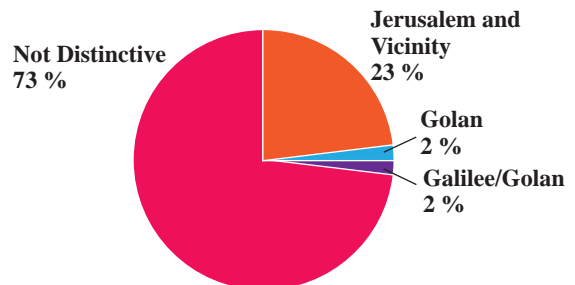
The most popular vessel type, that is, mugs and pitchers with chisel marks (Type I. A. Form 1. OV), was widely distributed in Israel and Transjordan, and this popularity is reflected in Tall Zirā‘a with 59 % of the total share in that assemblage. However, since those mugs and pitchers were produced in Judaea, the Galilee, and probably in workshops elsewhere as well, it remains unknown where the greater part of the assemblage comes from. The same is true of the hand-carved bowls with lug handles (Type I. A./B. Form 2. OVa) which were found in Judaea, in Herodian outposts in Transjordan, and in Gamla.

Unlike the vessels with chisel marks, the polished specimens belonging to Type I. B. Form 1.

up 29 % of the assemblage, were only produced from the late first century BC at the earliest and date mainly to the first century AD as well¹⁸⁰.

The comparable finds for the objects from Tall Zirā‘a came primarily from sites that were destroyed during the First Jewish Revolt, such as Jerusalem and Gamla (see descriptions of types above). Thus, Tall Zirā‘a has no distinctive vessel types which date later than 70 AD. It is reasonable to assume that the Jewish presence or influence declined or vanished after the violent expulsion of the Jews from Gadara in 68 AD¹⁸¹.

Origin of Hand-carved Vessels



Graph. 5.8 Diagram showing the origins of hand-carved vessels (Source: F. Schöpf).

OV and the teacup Type I. B Form 2. OVb/Type I. A. Form 2. OVb probably originated in or near Jerusalem. Those vessel types date earlier than the objects with chisel marks and were only found in Jerusalem, Jericho, and Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat, which is close to Jericho.

Another type typical of the Jerusalem region is the tub (Type I. A. Form 3. OV), examples of

179 Geva 2014, 222.

180 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 408; Magen 2002, 162.

181 Thus, it cannot be assumed that there was no Jewish population at the tall after 68 AD. Ultimately, the Jewish presence in the area of Ḥammad Gader in the third and fourth centuries

AD was linked to the migration from Tall Zirā‘a towards the valley. The synagogue of Ḥammad Gader dates to the third century AD but was built on top of earlier structures. Textual evidence indicates a Jewish presence in the area during the early and middle Imperial period, see Weber 2002, 72, 124–125.

which have been unearthed in Jerusalem, Jericho, and Machaerus. Since Jericho and Machaerus were Herodian possessions during the early Roman period, the tubs were probably produced in or around Jerusalem. Comparably, inkwells (Type I. B. Form 3. OV) were found in Jerusalem and in Herodian outposts in Transjordan. Trays (Type I. B. Form 4. OV) were found only in Jerusalem, and they appear in J. Cahill's typology. The bowl type with solid ring-bases (Type I. B. Form 2. OVc) was also found only in Jerusalem. Thus, at least seven types can be associated with the Jerusalem region or the politically close Hasmonean and Herodian outposts. Bowls with round walls and flat bases (Type I. B.

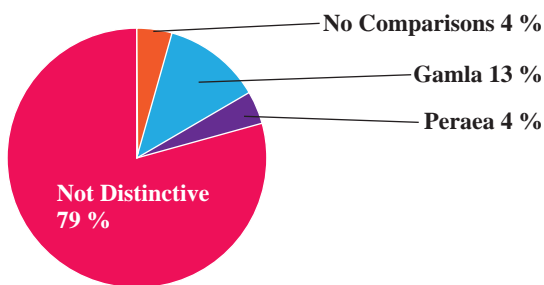
Form 2. OVd) represented in the material are also typical of Gamla.

The unique vessel listed as Type I. A. Form 2. OVc combines forms and decorations typical for the northern regions of the Galilee and the Golan. It is reasonable to assume that it either had its origins in the Galilee and the Golan or was produced locally under those influences.

Based on the described parallels, probably 23 % of the hand-carved vessels came directly from Jerusalem or its environs, but most of the objects cannot be further distinguished as to whether they came from Judaeian or northern workshops.

Lathe-turned Vessels

Origin of Hand-carved Vessels



Graph. 5.9 Diagram showing the origins of lathe-turned vessels (Source: F. Schöpf).

For the lathe-turned vessels, the comparisons are even more numerous, and they were widely distributed. Most of the types found at Tall Zirā'a have

parallels in all the known assemblages from Judaea, the Golan (especially Gamla), Peraea, and the Mediterranean Coast, so it is barely possible to trace the origins of the vessels. For instance, the bowl types Type II. A. Form 1. OV (Shallow Bowls) and Type II. A. Form 2. OVa-c (Deep Bowls) have both been found in Judaea, the Galilee, the Golan, Peraea, and Jaffa. Exceptions are the Deep Bowls with Carinated Walls (Type II. A. Form 2. OVd), which were only uncovered at another site in Peraea at Ḥisbān.

Type II. A. Form 2. OVe (Bowls with Decorative Strip or Handle) is comparable to a typical type found only in Gamla in place of the larger vessels. The lathe-turned bowl with hand-carved decoration (Type II. B. Form 1. OV) has no parallel in the known assemblages, and probably reflects a local tradition.

Imports and Local Production according to the Chalkstone Material

The unfinished vessel and vessel types without comparisons suggest local production at or near Tall Zirā'a. Since no isotope analyses were done on the discussed assemblage, except for one piece, it is only possible to make assumptions based on type, colour, and the quality of the material¹⁸².

Most of the vessels are made of the typical white soft chalkstone, but there are some examples that are red or grey and of a harder quality. Espe-

cially the harder grey chalk material could hint at production sites in the Nebi Musa region near the Dead Sea, which is known for this kind of greyish bituminous material¹⁸³. Nine fragments are made of the harder grey chalkstone: five of them belonging to the Type I. A. Form 1. OV, one each to Type I. B. Form 2. OVc, Type I. B. Form 4. OV, and Type II. A. Form 1. OV. That could indicate that at least some of those mugs and pitchers (Type I. A. Form

182 Adler et al. 2020, 3, 11. (Sample 17)

183 Magen 2002, 1, 116.

1. OV) were produced in the Nebi Musa region and imported to Tall Zirā'a. The Type I. B. Form 2. OVc and Type I. B. Form 4. OV have only been found in Jerusalem. The lathe-turned Type II. A. Form 1. OV also came from Peraea. If the grey chalkstone objects are typical Jerusalem vessel types, it is reasonable to assume that they were imported from Judaea.

Yellow chalkstone is typical of the Jerusalem region and is represented by one example in the assemblage by a fragment of Type I. A. Form 2. OVa. The type was unearthed at sites in Judaea, the Galilee, and Transjordan, but the material suggests likely production in Jerusalem.

The unusual hemispherical hand-carved bowl with an inscription (Type I. A. Form 2. OVc) is made of hard reddish chalkstone (*kakula*), which is usually found under the soft chalk layers. The lower *kakula* rock was used in the Jerusalem region for building materials and ossuaries¹⁸⁴. The chalkstone formation throughout the region of Gadara, layers of soft and hard chalk, is quite similar. That the chalkstone of the area was quarried and used for building can be seen in the Hellenistic architecture of Gadara. It was only during the Roman periods that the more durable basalt was favoured for construction¹⁸⁵.

The unusual type of stone and the combination of various forms of the Type I. A. Form 2. OVc bowl indicate local production, where the craftsmen were not familiar with the typical chalkstone vessel production methods. Moreover, the fragments of local chalkstone products from the Tall Zirā'a region, like Iron Age loom weights, were usually made of hard reddish chalkstone with reddish-brown veins. It is possible that this earlier tradition of chalkstone production might have also influenced techniques in later periods.

Type I. B. Form 2. OVe is another unusual vessel, a small bowl with a spout that is a combination of a pitcher and a spouted mug with a small bowl with

handles. Moreover, the Type I. B. Form 2. OVd was only found in Tall Zirā'a and Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat and might hint at a typical form only used and produced in Transjordan.

The unfinished vessel TZ 112489-001 discussed above is the most reliable indicator of local production, as cores, wasters, and unfinished materials were never imported. There was one comparable find at Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat (Plate 5.48), where the chalkstone has red traces, typical of the locally available material. The hemispherical walls of the unfinished pieces are similar to the hand-carved bowls from Tall Zirā'a¹⁸⁶.

The available data support the suggestion of local production, but it was probably small scale and not organized or specialized at the different sites. There were no specific finds of tools or further wasters on Tall Zirā'a, which might be an indication of organized craftsmanship¹⁸⁷. Owing to the resources available in the region of Tall Zirā'a, local small-scale production is a feasible assumption. The typical chalkstone was found in soil samples taken at the Wādī al-'Arab in the vicinity of Tall Zirā'a. Whereas the northern slopes of the wādī are steep and consist of calcareous sediments, the southern slope is gentle, with deeper soils that are suitable for cultivation. The southern slope has soft white ridges, including chalk, with red soils in the depressions. Soft limestone was traced in the probe of the bedrock in the bottom of the wādī in front of Tall Zirā'a. Another probe on the southern slope revealed soft limestone more than 120.00 m in depth, together with three Roman sherds¹⁸⁸.

The very few fragments that can be identified as local products based on the way they were produced, and their typological features are outnumbered by the finds that have their parallels in Judaea, the Galilee, the Golan, and Peraea. Most of the objects were probably imported, mainly from Jerusalem and the northern region of the Galilee/Golan, especially from the Gamla area.

184 Magen 2002, 1, 116.

185 Geologically, the area of the northern highlands where Gadara is situated is characterized by limestone formations in contrast to the Jordan Valley. Outcrops of basalt can be found towards the northeast of Irbid and on the plateau of Umm Qēs/Gadara, which can be seen from the tall. The soil types in the area of the limestone formations consist mainly of clay; the major soils are Xerochets and Chromoxererts, better known as a kind of *Terrae Rosae* or red Mediterranean soil, see El-Khoury 2009, 16; Hanbury-Tension 1984, 386; Hoffmann 1999, 230.

186 Personal observation on Find Nr. 14.176 with the permission of D. Foran.

187 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 145.

188 Moreover, at Wādī Ziqḷāb, parallel to the Wādī al-'Arab, the slopes consist of chalk and limestone. Wādī Ziqḷāb itself is part of the limestone plateau (belqa-group). The quality of the stone differs, with alternating layers of soft chalkstone and harder limestone, see Lucke 2008, 29–30.

The exceptional bowl Type I. A. Form 2. OVC with its mix of vessel forms and decoration from the Galilee and the Golan Heights indicates the strong ties between these regions and Tall Zirā'a. The im-

ports from Jerusalem underscore the bond that existed between the inhabitants of Tall Zirā'a and the religious centre in Jerusalem.

5.5. The Historical Context, or where did the Jews come from?

It remains unclear as to when and how Jews settled on Tall Zirā'a. The early chalkstone vessel types in that assemblage are especially interesting. Their appearance at the other Transjordan site of Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat can be explained by its location and direct connection to Jericho, whereas Tall Zirā'a has no such connection. The recently excavated evidence of coins dated to the reign of Alexander Jannaeus suggests that he chose Tall Zirā'a as a military outpost¹⁸⁹. The nearby Decapolis city of Gadara and its environs probably had a Jewish population, at least prior to the First Jewish Revolt. Like Jews in other Decapolis cities, they were attacked during those battles¹⁹⁰.

According to the typology of the chalkstone vessels found on Tall Zirā'a, the earliest vessels date to the first half of the first century BC. The polished mugs and pitchers, which were only found in the early chalkstone vessel assemblages of Jericho and of Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat at the edge of Peraea, represent the earliest forms of such vessels. The date to the reign of Salome Alexandra (76–67 BC) relies on the finds in Jericho and predates Herod's settlement activity in the Gadara region by around 30 years. Together with the Judaeian and Galilean pottery, the influence of Hasmonean and Herodian dominated regions on Tall Zirā'a, which was strong as early as in the first half of the first century BC, was associated with the territorial expansion under Alexander Jannaeus. From accounts concerning Gadara, it is known that the Jewish presence in the region declined during the First Jewish Revolt. As early as during the first battles, after a massacre of the Jewish population in Caesarea by gentiles, Jew-

ish rebels attacked Gadara and Hippos. Not only the big cities were affected but probably also the smaller settlements in the Gadara area. After the people of Gadara took revenge by attacking the city of Gischala, most of the Jews of Gadara were arrested or killed and Vespasian leased their territories. It is reasonable to assume that the new rental laws also affected the Jewish areas in Transjordan. Jewish communities disappeared from the city and its environs (Bell. Iud. 2, 18, 5) after 70 AD¹⁹¹.

Although, the historical data suggest a Jewish presence in the region at least from the reign and conquests of Alexander Jannaeus, F. Kenkel contends that Tall Zirā'a that the pottery evidence points to it being a pagan/Graeco-Roman site. Imported Graeco-Roman wares together with the casseroles and the terracotta, especially the terracotta figurines with pagan motifs, seem alien to the 'Jewish' material culture. However, the exact dating of these Graeco-Roman finds is unclear because of the later overbuilding and destruction. The archaeological evidence from the 2018 and 2019 campaigns dates the terracotta figurines to the third and second centuries BC, that is, prior to Alexander Jannaeus' settlement activities, which were at the beginning of the first century BC. Further, most of the imported ESA ware date to the second century BC. Another probable sign of the change in the pottery at Tall Zirā'a could be the decline in Rhodian amphora at the end of the second century BC¹⁹². The same decline can be seen in the Galilee and Judaea countryside at the end of the second century BC. Rhodian amphorae disappear from the pottery record in Jerusalem in 145 BC¹⁹³.

189 Schmidt 2022a, 435.

190 Rather than assuming that those were Jews of Peraea, Judaea, or the Galilee who immigrated, A. Porter suggests that those Jewish inhabitants were converts or descendants of converts who followed Jewish practices, see Porter 1999, 178–179.

191 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 155; Weber 2002, 71–72.

192 Strothenke-Koch 2022b, 264.

193 Berlin 2006, 133, 143.

5.5.1. Rural Jewish Settlements in the Chora of the Decapolis

The archaeological as well as textual evidence of urban communities is far better studied and known than that of rural areas. Rural sites in the Galilee and beyond are only better known later, especially during the late Roman and Byzantine periods. Moreover, even with the ever-increasing archaeological data, it is hard to determine the actual population patterns and the chronological development of rural sites. Despite continuity in settlement activity, villages could change the ethnicity of their population. Archaeological data from the Galilee suggests ethnic changes in villages over short periods of time. Former gentile sites such as Iotapata and Gamla were populated by Jews only from the Hasmonean period on¹⁹⁴. The significant differences in pottery use in gentile and Jewish sites in the Galilee and the Golan have been determined through surveys undertaken in the Hula Valley¹⁹⁵. These studies suggest that those towns did not have mixed populations but were entirely Jewish until the Bar Kokhva revolt. Exceptions can be assumed for the periphery or towns outside the boundaries of Eretz-Israel. Similar evidence has been found for the Byzantine era and is reflected, for instance, in the archaeological research in the city of Yavneh and its environs. Villages and smaller rural sites generally had only Samaritan, Jewish, or Christian inhabitants, whereas Yavneh's population was diverse. Large cities, such as Scythopolis, show similar evidence. Those had a mixed population during the Byzantine period, while its hinterland consisted of rural settlements, each inhabited solely by a particular religious group¹⁹⁶. A comparable settlement pattern can be assumed for Tall Zirā'a, but while villages and small rural sites with mixed populations appear unlikely they would not have been impossible¹⁹⁷.

The archaeological evidence of late Hellenistic and Roman small settlements in the north of Jordan is meagre. The Synoptic Gospels make it likely that villages in the environs of Gadara were inhabited by Jews, as they note that Jesus visited the Hellenistic cities of Hippos and Gadara. In the case of Gadara, the report implies that Jesus did not visit the city

itself, but the territory north of the Yarmouk River, quite far from the city¹⁹⁸.

In some cases, the population patterns of rural sites can be traced through the textual and archaeological evidence of the nearby urban centres. The gentile urban centres in particular stood in contrast to the smaller villages, and their relationships were often twofold. While enmity and tension were ever present, trade and exchange generally continued normally, even in times of conflict. In Hippos-Susita, there were hostilities long after the bloody conflicts of the early Roman era, which are reflected in the rabbinic texts of late antiquity¹⁹⁹. A similar phenomenon can be seen in Gadara, where despite revolts and political tension, trade between the Jewish Galilee and the Decapolis flourished²⁰⁰. Nevertheless, the Jews were expelled from the city and the surroundings during the revolt, and Gadara was hostile towards the Hasmonean and Herodian politics²⁰¹.

Archaeological evidence regarding the Hellenistic and early Roman periods in Tall Zirā'a's discloses a diverse picture. The finds on the tall imply the existence of a prosperous place, including residential buildings and imported pottery together with local goods and Jewish material culture. Can the site be compared to a 'normal' village or a farmstead of its time? Or do we have to establish a new category of settlements for Tall Zirā'a?

The small rural settlements in northern Transjordan could have been settled by one or more families working as farmers on their own lands. Surveys such as in the Zeraqōn region reveal a settlement pattern of mainly small villages and farming communities during the Hellenistic and early Roman periods²⁰². The Wādī al-ʿArab survey undertaken by K. Soennecken and P. Leiverkus for the region around Tall Zirā'a reveals that the largest increase in farmsteads or single complexes took place during the late Roman period, while Y. Hirschfeld's research on Jewish rural settlements in Judaea indicates an increase of farmstead sites in Judaea as early as during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods²⁰³. Those farmsteads were generally owned

194 Leibner 2009, 325; Leibner 2019, 269–270.

195 Shaked – Avshalom-Gorni 2004, 28, 31, 34, Fig. 3.1.

196 Fischer et al. 2008, 30–31.

197 Ben-David 2011, 309–310, 314, 322.

198 Alt 1953, 452–453.

199 Thiel 2007, 250–251.

200 Weber 2007, 460.

201 Lichtenberger 2003, 11.

202 Kamlah 2000.

203 Hirschfeld 1997, 79; Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021, 86.

by wealthy individuals, who usually lived in the city while slaves and workers under the supervision of a foreman ran the farmstead. The agricultural activity on those farmsteads aimed to be self-sufficient and autarkic and to provide a profit for the owner as well²⁰⁴. The rural settlements of northern Transjordan were administered by the larger Decapolis cities as their *chora*. The boundaries of those city areas would have been drawn along natural landmarks, for Gadara the Yarmouk River in the north and the Jordan River in the west. With its abundant water and fertile land, Gadara produced agricultural products as well as cattle²⁰⁵.

Farmsteads in the territories of Transjordan newly integrated into Herod's Kingdom, especially Peraea, were characterized by a Jewish population that came from the Herodian heartland to settle and develop agriculture in the area. Findings of a ritual stepped pool and chalkstone vessels marked those farmsteads as 'Jewish', in both Eretz-Israel and Transjordan²⁰⁶.

Tall Zirā'a was one of the rural Roman settlements in northwest Jordan that were normally built on level fertile plains or atop flat hills. In regard to other agricultural sites in Transjordan and the Galilee, Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ is an important point of reference, as it is the only place in Transjordan with the same early date of chalkstone vessel types as Tall Zirā'a. The site provided some 22 fragments and objects, including a ritual stepped pool. The place served as an important site for the Hasmonean Kingdom but was only used seasonally for agricultural purposes, which explains the small number of finds of chalkstone vessels. The Hasmonean use of the site, max. to the first century AD, was probably limited to two or three generations of workers from the Hasmonean Kingdom, who used chalkstone vessels and the ritual stepped pool²⁰⁷. The area around Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ was known for its wine production during the Classical periods, so it has been assumed that the Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ produced wine for the Hasmonean rulers. That the production would have mandated strict purity rules,

which might account for chalkstone vessels and the ritual stepped pool that were found²⁰⁸.

Tall al-ʿUmēri serves as another example of an isolated farmstead in Peraea during the early Roman period. A ritual stepped pool and one chalkstone vessel fragment were found at the site. The excavators suggested that the farmstead or villa was inhabited by Jews, probably one Jewish family²⁰⁹.

The above cases differ from Tall Zirā'a in size, dating, and seasonal use. The only archaeologically comparable farmstead sites in terms of size and the early date are were in Judaea. In Pisgat Ze'ev, northeast of Jerusalem, for example, evidence of a Jewish farmhouse was found together with chalkstone vessels and coins dated to Alexander Jannaeus' reign. Moreover, the site included a ritual stepped pool and wine presses²¹⁰. Another example of a farmstead settlement similar to Tall Zirā'a was Tel Rekesh in the lower eastern Galilee, dated to the first to the second century AD. The site was settled from the Bronze Age through Iron Age II and Persian period to the Roman periods, and like Tall Zirā'a, it always had enough water. The main expansion during the Roman period occurred during the second century AD. One major building dated to this period that was identified as a farmstead featured stucco decoration and Roman wall paintings (frescoes) in several of the rooms. The settlement had a small synagogue. The pottery found in the main building was typical Kefar Hananya ware, and the knife-pared lamps were from Jerusalem. Chalkstone vessels were found as well²¹¹. Still, all of these models of farmsteads are hardly comparable to those on Tall Zirā'a, which, according to the material found, was settled before the time of Herod by people who used chalkstone vessels. There is also evidence of gentile/pagan material culture in the corpus of finds.

Another aspect of Tall Zirā'a is the use of the site as a Hasmonean military stronghold. The Hasmoneans often used established sites for military and strategic purposes. The best-known example in Transjordan is the monumental structure in

204 Ben-David 2011, 314, 322; Applebaum 1977, 366.

205 Kamlah 2000, 145; El-Khoury 2009, 37–39.

206 Dolan – Foran 2016, 286; Hirschfeld 1997, 74.

207 Foran et al. 2016, 307–308.

208 Dolan – Foran 2016, 285, 295.

209 Clark et al. 2015, 40; Herr et al. 1997, 95–96, Fig. 4.37;

Herr et al. 2017, 32; Lawrence 2006, 170.

210 Other farmstead sites of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods were Ḥirbat Ka'kul, Ḥirbat er-Ras, Hurvat Hamotza, or Giv'at Hamatos. Later examples, from the Herod's reign until the second revolt were found in the Hebron Hills, see Hirschfeld 1997, 75–78.

211 Aviam 2018, 1–6.

Machaerus but several other sites served the same purpose, especially those near the Nabatean-controlled territories. Ed-Dēr, located west of Rakīn, was probably in use during the Iron Age and the Hellenistic and Nabatean periods. The hilltop settlement was encircled by a perimeter wall with towers and bulwarks. The Hasmonean influence is evident from in the ritual stepped pool on the eastern side of the perimeter wall²¹².

Hirbat al-Mudayna as-Saliya, 25 km southeast of Dhiban, has a similar history. It was a fortified Iron Age town that experienced a Hasmonean interim period before being resettled by Nabateans during the Roman period²¹³. The site was fortified by an enclosure wall running around the settlement. Apart from the fortifications, researchers identified a stepped pool installation with seven steps leading into the rectangular installation, which had plastered walls. Unlike in Tall Zirā‘a, the Hasmonean

5.5.2. The Households in Tall Zirā‘a

In the late Hellenistic to early Roman periods, Tall Zirā‘a was probably a settlement with at least one main building. The large number of chalkstone vessels dated to those periods suggests that more than one household used these items. According to A. M. Berlin’s investigation of chalkstone vessels in Gamla, seven to ten stone vessels per household had been in use through two generations. Thus, she assumed that everyday use was rather unlikely and that the vessels might have had a role in particular rituals or communal meals²¹⁵. The archaeological record of 82 objects at Tall Zirā‘a from the beginning of the first century BC to 68 AD could indicate that the vessels were used over three to four generations in four different households. Owing to the high concentration in Strata 6 and 7 in squares AP and AQ 123, D. Vieweger and J. Häser suggested that there was at least one Jewish household in this area²¹⁶. Further, the early Roman dated Strata 7 and 6 are associated with the existence of a Roman ‘Villa’ on the tall, with a large quantity of imported pottery and Graeco-Ro-

man presence was short term. It started at the beginning of Alexander Jannaeus’ campaigns in Transjordan at the beginning of the first century BC and ended when the Nabateans took over the site during the second half of the first century BC²¹⁴.

The similarities between Tall Zirā‘a and the Hasmonean strongholds include their chronologies and the overtaking of a site with an Iron Age fortification system. But unlike the latter, Tall Zirā‘a remained under Jewish influence and served civilian purposes after the Hasmonean military abandoned the site.

What kind of settlement was Tall Zirā‘a during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods? Owing to the demonstrated limited possibility of answering that question through comparisons with contemporary sites, the next step is to approach the question by analysing the remains of the households in Tall Zirā‘a.

man decor²¹⁷. Might that settlement be a rare case of a rural site with a mixed population?

In this regard, the chronology of finds is crucial. As suggested above, the Graeco-Roman finds and wall paintings are dated prior to the settlement activities under Alexander Jannaeus. The wall paintings of the first century BC resemble the paintings in the Hasmonean palaces. The dating for the Graeco-Roman small finds remains speculative as the Hellenistic and Roman strata on the tall were disturbed. However, it is possible that the terracotta figurines date either just before or just after the use of chalkstone vessels, as indicated by the finds from the 2018 and 2019 excavations. Reliable evidence is provided by the Rhodian amphora, as the use of those declined at the end of the second century BC, right before the emergence of Jewish material culture.

Based on the chronological differences among the material finds, there was a certain change in material culture during the first century BC. However, as a continuing use of Graeco-Roman pottery

212 Worschech 1985, 8, 55–57, 59, Fig. 20.

213 Ji 2009, 625; Ji 2020, 207, Figure 1.

214 The dating also relies on the appearance of Nabatean-painted pottery Phase II, dating from the second half of the first century BC to the first century AD, see Ji 2020, 211–212, 220–224.

215 Berlin 2006, 150.

216 Vieweger – Häser 2014, 151, 155.

217 Kenkel – Hoss 2020, 15.

cannot be completely ruled out, it appears that the settlement structure of Tall Zirāʿa differed from typical rural sites. Unlike the sites in Peraea, the Galilee, and Judaea, Tall Zirāʿa was strongly influenced by the gentile Decapolis city of Gadara, and probably had an important status itself. The adoption of some of the Graeco-Roman eating habits and the purchase of pagan figurines and imported pottery render the settlement somewhat comparable to a Jewish urban community during the Graeco-Roman periods. In particular, Jewish communities in large cities were well-integrated and Jews were hardly distinguishable from non-Jews²¹⁸. Thus, it would seem that the Jewish presence, which started under Alexander Jannaeus, took over a Greco-Macedonian-influenced settlement. The region was at the very edge of the territory and separated from the Hasmonean Kingdom. Even if Tall Zirāʿa was later integrated into the territories settled by Herod, the tension between the settlement and the Decapolis city and the mostly non-Jewish surroundings remained. Owing to its geographical location and political associations, Tall Zirāʿa had a special place in the complex system of the Hasmonean and later Herodian kingdoms and the status of the Decapolis. Under these circumstances, the difference between Jewish and gentile products was not necessarily strict and boundaries might have been blurred²¹⁹.

S. Miller speaks of Judaism as a type of “complex adaptive system” during the Graeco-Roman

period. The ‘common Judaism’ offered enough room for individuality, innovation, and adaption in the diasporic environment²²⁰. It is well known that in the bigger cities of antiquity, many Jews participated in civic life while still keeping their religious traditions²²¹. Moreover, rather than strict separation, ethnic groups needed contact with others in order to define their differences, but such contact was not always based on mutual respect²²². Tall Zirāʿa was in a region in which there was constant tension between Gadara and the Hasmonean and Herodian kingdoms. In a hostile non-Jewish environment like the Decapolis, the expression of Jewish identity through material culture might have marked the cultural boundaries and ensured the protection and solidarity of other Jews or Judaeans²²³. Ethnological studies have recognized that local communities stress material culture differences in border regions. While different communities come into contact regularly and material culture boundaries can be blurred, border areas (especially those with the same economic background) emphasize the need for material culture dichotomy. In this context, the artefacts are used to symbolize belonging to one specific group. This is not only evident from small archaeological finds, but is also clear in the case of religion²²⁴. Transjordan, and especially northern Transjordan, with its closeness to the Galilee surely had a society which was aware of this special kind of stone vessel and was able to associate it with a certain religious and ethnic group.

218 Cohen 1993, 10

219 A. Lichtenberger pointed out that in the case of the late antique terracotta workshop at Beth Nattif, it was possible that members of both a gentile and a Jewish community could have been bought figurines from the same workshops. Lichtenberger’s study focuses on the late Roman period, and the figurines of Beth Nattif are Judaeian in style, rather than Graeco-Roman, so the case is not directly comparable, see Lichtenberger 2017, 203–207. Another late Roman case dated to the second or the third century AD was described by S. Stern in connection with archaeological finds at Sepphoris. Bronze figurines of Greek gods or mythological figures, a bronze incense altar, and other indicators of pagan worship were discovered inside the Jewish-dominated upper city, inside households that included ritual stepped pools. Although it cannot be fully excluded that the houses were owned by gentiles, it is not impossible that Jews owned utensils of pagan worship. The strong exposure of even rabbinic households during the late Roman period towards pagan worship could be reflected in the passage bAZ 16a, which only appears in

the Babylonian Talmud. The Baraita states: “Come and hear, for Rav Yehudah said, Shemuel said: the house of Rabbi used to offer a fattened ox on their [pagan] festival day.” Stern, together with the evidence of Sepphoris, has shown that other material findings in the Galilee of the late Roman period indicate that the Baraita relies on living reality, rather than polemics, see Stern 2014, 210–213, 218.

220 Miller 2015, 212.

221 Sanders 1990, 282; Stern 2014, 222–223.

222 Van Maaren 2018, 425, 433.

223 Barth 1969, 36–37; Berlin 2005, 433; Bernbeck 1997, 239; Wobst 1977, 328–329. However, all of these interpretations remain hypothetical, since we lack solid evidence of social interaction and boundaries between Jews and gentiles, see also Van Maaren 2018, 433.

224 I. Hodder cites the example of a number of temples on the borderline between the tribes of Roman Gaul and Britain, which appear in the context of border markets, see Hodder 1979, 447, 450.

The Jews living at Tall Zirā‘a, in the hinterland of Gadara, were able to profit from the trading and civic centre of the Decapolis, while still keeping their

connection with Eretz-Israel. The chalkstone vessels provided the chance to keep ritual purity and distinguish themselves from the others.

5.5.3. Where is the Ritual Stepped Pool?

Based on the presented finds, the assumption of Jewish presence on Tall Zirā‘a is a legitimate one, but the tall is missing one essential item – the ritual stepped pool. Several settlements inside and at the boundary of Peraea yielded chalkstone vessels together with ritual stepped pools. The fortress of Machaerus, for instance, had six ritual stepped pools inside and around the area of the Herodian palace²²⁵. Small-scale settlements such as Ḥirbat ‘Atarūz, al-Maghtas, Tall al-‘Umēri, and Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat had at least one ritual stepped pool²²⁶. Thus, the absence of a comparable installation at Tall Zirā‘a is puzzling. Despite the simple assumption that the installation has not yet been unearthed, another explanation might be even more conclusive. As a natural water source, the artisan spring on top of the tall could have served for ritual bathing. The Levitical ruling of using מיים חיים (living water, see, e.g., Lev. 15:13) for washing oneself ritually describes water flowing from a natural source. The Mishna rules in mMik 1:7:

”מַעְקֵלָה מֵהוֹ, מִקְנָה שֵׁשׁ בּוֹ אַרְבַּעִים סָאָה, שָׁבוּ טוֹבְלִין וּמְטַבְּלִין.
לְמַעְקֵלָה מֵהוֹ, מַעְזֵן שְׁמִימִין מְעֻטָּין וְרַבּוֹ עָלְיוֹ מֵיִם שְׂאוּבִין, שָׁנָה
לְמִקְנָה לְטַהֵר בְּאִשְׁבָּרָן, וְלִמְעֵן לְהִטְבִּיל בּוֹ בְּכָל שָׁהוּא“

5.6. Summary

The unique case of Tall Zirā‘a offers some insight into a rural settlement during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods in the hinterland of the Decapolis.

The chalkstone assemblage with its various types of hand-carved and lathe-turned vessels reflects an ongoing connection between the tall and the Jewish areas of Judaea, the Galilee, and the Golan, and especially with Jerusalem and Gamla and the area around it. However, the excavated material

“Superior to such [water] is [the water of] the *miqwē*. containing forty seahs, for in it people may immerse themselves and immerse other [things]. Superior to such [water] is [the water of] a spring whose own water is little but has been increased by a greater quantity of drawn water. It is equivalent to the mikveh in as much as it may render clean by standing water, and to an [ordinary] spring in as much as one may immerse in it whatever the quantity of its contents.”

According to the Mishna, the natural spring could offer an even better option for immersion than an artificial *miqwē*. Thus, the natural conditions on top of the tall probably obviated the need to build a ritual stepped pool.

The fragment of unpainted plaster in the form of a round structure with an inflow might hint at an artificial ritual bath. Since it was found in together with Hasmonean coins, the plaster could have come from a Jewish ritual stepped pool but that is not the only possible explanation. The inflow could also indicate a channel relating to any water installation, such as a tub in a private bathroom. In connection with the large amount of painted plaster, the presence of a private bath in Hellenistic tradition is not unlikely²²⁷.

indicates that there were chalkstone vessel types typical of Transjordan which might have been produced locally on a small scale, but further analyses of those chalkstone vessels are needed to prove this assumption.

The chalkstone vessels together with the Hasmonean coins and the Hasmonean-style wall paintings indicate that there was a Jewish presence at Tall Zirā‘a as early as at the beginning of the first half of the first century BC. The distribution of

225 Vörös 2018, 438–447, Fig. 12–20, 23–24.

226 Foran et al. 2017, 464–465, Fig. 8–9; Herr et al. 1997, 95–96, Fig. 4.37; Ji 2011, 574–575; Lawrence 2006, 171.

227 Jansen 2022, 125–126, Pl. 6.1, a–b.

finds in the excavations' various areas and squares suggests that most of the domestic structures associated with the use of the material were on the east side of Area I and the centre of Area II. That nearly half of the finds came from early Roman or Roman strata implies their use during those periods. The absence of a ritual stepped pool can be explained by the natural conditions on the tall, which provided a constant flow of fresh (living) water.

The itemization of the various kinds of pottery and small finds reflects a village community that had strong ties with Jewish areas but one that also embraced new developments and Graeco-Roman styles. The chalkstone vessels imply a Jewish identity and a population that lived a ritually pure life in a region with a diverse population. In this regard, the small settlement on the tall is somewhat comparable to the larger cities of the Diaspora than to its nearby village and farmstead counterparts in Transjordan.

5.7. Catalogue and Plates

5.7.1. Hand-carved Vessels with Chisel Marks: Type I. A.

5.7.1.1. Mugs and Pitchers: Type I. A. Form 1. OV

Plate 5.2

TZ 000497-001 (5.2 a)

Find context: survey

Size: 7.50 x 4.50 x 3.50 cm

Base diameter: 8.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.30 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Hand-carved with visible vertical chisel marks. Inside well polished. Flat base. Grey veins and brown sedimentations.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house

TZ 001005-001 (5.2 b)

Find context: Area I, AM 119, Context 16 loose soil; mixed pottery

Stratum: 00

Size: 6.00 x 5.30 x 2.70 cm

Base diameter: 8.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60–1.17 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Visible vertical and horizontal chisel marks, both for a decorative purpose. High quality work. Inside well polished. Flat base. Grey veins.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Areal I Stone Box 1

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 009896-001 (5.2 c)

Find context: Area I, AQ 118, Context 2726 Iron Age II A/B, soil context; mixed pottery

Stratum: 12/11

Size: 9.40 x 5.00 x 1.90 cm

Base diameter: 8.40 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60–1.80 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Vertical chisel marks on the outside. Bottom has irregularities (bumps) on the inside. Many brown veins and thick sedimentation on the outside.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Areal I Stone Box 164

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.3

TZ 012677-001 (5.3 a)

Find context: Area I, AR 118, Context 3513 Byzantine pit; mixed pottery

Stratum: 04 b

Size: 5.70 x 6.50 x 2.00 cm

Base diameter: 8.80 cm

Wall thickness: 0.50–1.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 7/2

Description: Mug or pitcher with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for a decorative purpose. Well polished. Grey on the outside (sedimentation?), white chalk inside. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Areal I Stone Box 278

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 015377-001 (5.3 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4816 Roman installation: wall of fieldstones; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 06 a.b.c

Size: 3.00 x 4.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/1

Description: Typical rectangular handle. Well polished. Body sherd chisel with marks visible? Cuts on the outside of the handle. Made of grey hard chalk. Yellowish/brownish spots on the outside. No veins visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1.

TZ 015378-001 (5.3 c)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5201 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mixed pottery and TZ 015380-001, TZ 015381-001, and TZ 015387-001

Stratum: 07 c

Size: 12.20 x 7.00 cm

Base diameter: 8.50 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.50 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Two matching fragments of a mug or pitcher with rectangular handle. A depression in

the wall behind the handle. Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Strongly polished, shiny on the outside. High quality work. The inside could be lathe-turned. The base on the inside shows bumps in the material, contact with liquids? The material has a slightly yellow brownish patina. Some light brown veins, almost invisible. The original height of the object was 12.20 cm.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149, Abb. 14 Type 2.a.i.A.1

Plate 5.4

TZ 015380-001 (5.4 a)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5201 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments

Stratum: 07 c

Size: 4.10 x 4.40 cm

Rim diameter: 15.40 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.00 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Wall is reducing towards the rim. Horizontal and vertical chisel marks, almost rectangular patterns. Inside with two parallel lines - lathe turned on the inside? Yellowish brown sedimentations and spots. Greyish hard chalk. No veins visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1.

TZ 015387-001 (5.4 b)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5201 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mixed pottery and TZ 015378-001, TZ 015380-001, and TZ 015381-001

Stratum: 07 c

Size: 2.20 cm

Base diameter: 8.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.20 cm

Description: Mug or pitcher with vertical and horizontal chisel marks on the outside for decorative purpose. Flat base. No veins visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis (not found in storage)

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 015388-001 (5.4 c)

Find context: Area I, AQ 122, Context 4737 Iron Age II C soil with tabun fragments; mixed pottery

Stratum: 10

Size: 9.80 x 6.70 cm

Rim diameter: 13.20 cm

Wall thickness: 0.30–0.70 cm

Handle: 6.40 x 3.00 x 4.00 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Mug or pitcher with vertical and horizontal chisel marks on the outside for decorative purpose. Inside asymmetrical chisel marks, strongly polished. Thin walls, high quality work. Typical rectangular handle with round hole (2.20 cm diameter), applied in an oblique manner. Depression behind the handle. Hard chalk. Yellow discolourations, almost invisible pale brown veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149, Abb. 14 Type 2.a.i.A.1

Plate 5.5

TZ 015390-001 (5.5 a)

Find context: Area I, AE 1141, Context 4778 modern overburden

Stratum: 00

Size: 4.60 x 5.20 x 4.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Soft chalk fragment of a rectangular lug handle with a hole, part of the body preserved. Body part with horizontal and vertical chisel marks for decorative purpose on the outside. Chisel marks on the inside due to working process. Strong brown sedimentations on the outside, inside with pale brown patina. Many brown veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1

TZ 015391-001 (5.5 b)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5205 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 c

Size: 9.90 x 6.00 x 2.60 cm

Base diameter: 8.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.40 cm

Colour: 2.5YR 8/1

Description: Flat base with part of the body. Vertical and horizontal chisel marks on the outside for decorative purpose. Well polished on the outside. Inside shows ribbings, probably of a lathe. Hard grey-blue chalk. Bottom of the base has a pale brown patina on the outside, the material has a yellow patina. No veins visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 015401-001 (5.5 c)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4770 Roman floor; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 06 b

Size: 6.40 x 5.40 cm

Rim diameter: 13.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.30–1.10 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/1

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Polished inside and out. On the inside the chisel marks are almost not visible through polishing. Hard grey chalk. Some yellow-brownish discolourations and grey sedimentations. Pale brown spots and few veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 015403-001 (5.5 d)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5205 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 06 b.c

Size: 3.30 x 4.20 cm

Rim diameter: 9.80 cm

Wall thickness: 0.50–0.90 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Vertical horizontal chisel marks on the outside for decorative purpose. Hand-carved on the inside. Soft chalk. Many grey and brown veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.6**TZ 015404-001** (5.6 a)

Find context: Area I, AP 122, Context 4769 Early Roman soil/tabun; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 a

Size: 4.90 x 6.10 x 2.90 cm

Base diameter: 8.80 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.40 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/1

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for a decorative purpose. Hand-carved inside and outside. Inside and outside polished, inside is completely smooth. Hard grey chalk. Yellow-brown colour on the outside. Pale brown veins, barely visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 015408-001 (5.6 b)

Find context: Area I, AM 119, Context 16 modern soil; mixed pottery

Stratum: 00

Size: 6.60 cm

Base diameter: 7.10 cm

Wall thickness: 1.20–1.50 cm

Description: Hand-carved with vertical chisel marks. Many red brown sedimentations. Grey veins.

Current location: BAI permanent

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 017225-001 (5.6 c)

Find context: Area I, AP 122, Context 4714 Early Roman soil; mixed pottery

Stratum: 07 c

Size: 2.70 x 1.90 x 1.70 cm

Base diameter: 7.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.40–0.80 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Visible vertical and horizontal chisel marks, both for a decorative purpose. Inside and outside well polished. Flat base. Very thin and fine. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 017235-001 (5.6 d)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5024 Early Roman floor (loam); mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery, and TZ 017234-001, and TZ 017236-001

Stratum: 07 a

Size: 9.50 x 4.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60–1.20 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Two matching fragments with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Surfaces well polished. High quality work. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1

TZ 017236-001 (5.6 e)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123 Context 5024 Early Roman floor (loam); mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery, and TZ 017234-001, and TZ 017235-001

Stratum: 07 a

Size: 4.70 x 3.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60–0.80 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Two matching fragments with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for a decorative purpose. Surfaces well polished. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 403

Publication: Vieweger–Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1.

TZ 017237-001 (5.6f)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5024 Early Roman floor (loam); mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery, two more finds of early Roman chalkstone vessels

Stratum: 07 a

Size: 3.30 x 1.50 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Hand-carved with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Inside and outside well polished. No veins visible. Match to TZ 017236-001?

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1.

Plate 5.7

TZ 017240-001 (5.7 a)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5075 Early Roman fill; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 b.c

Size: 5.00 x 5.90 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.20 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Inside and outside well polished. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 019512-001 (5.7 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4816 Roman installation: wall of fieldstones; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 06 a.b.c

Size: 3.80 x 6.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Hand-carved with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Inside and outside polished. A lot of grey veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 452

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 111726-001 (5.7 c)

Find context: Area II, AY 127, Context 10926 Islamic/modern fill or collovium; mainly Byzantine and Roman pottery

Stratum: 02/01

Size: 10.50 cm

Base diameter: 8.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.20 cm

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Two marks where the handle used to be, one in the middle (?) of the body and the other directly over the base. Brown veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149, Abb. 16 Type 2.a.i.A.1

Plate 5.8

TZ 111729-001 (5.8 a)

Find context: Area II, AT 123, Context 10927 Late Roman to early Byzantine debris and fill; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 05

Size: 9.30 x 4.30 x 2.50 cm

Base diameter: 8.20 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.30 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for a decorative purpose. Outside polished, base on the inside rough. Strong abrasion. Very few pale brown veins und grey discolouration.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II Stone Box 58

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 112486-001 (5.8 b)

Find context: Area II, AT 134, Context 10924 Umayyad fill; mainly Hellenistic to Byzantine pottery and TZ 112488

Stratum: 03 a.b

Size: 11.80 x 9.90 x 3.70 cm

Rim diameter: 11.80 cm

Base diameter: 9.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.30 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Mug with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Polished inside and outside. Cylindrical form. Two marks of a former handle, directly underneath the rim. Strong grey sedimentations, especially on the inside. Many grey and light brown veins.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1.

Plate 5.9

TZ 112488-001 (5.9 a)

Find context: Area II, AT 134, Context 10942 Umayyad fill; mainly Hellenistic to Byzantine pottery and TZ 112486

Stratum: 03 a.b

Size: 6.80 x 5.80 x 4.80 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.40 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Grey and reddish brown veins and strong grey sedimentations, comparable to TZ 112486.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 112491-001 (5.9 b)

Find context: Area II, AY 128, Context 11338 Ottoman grave; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 01

Size: 10.90 x 6.40 x 4.10 cm

Base diameter: 9.20 cm

Wall thickness: 1.10–2.20 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Inside and out well polished. Slight chisel signs on the outside. No veins visible, just a few grey discolourations.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 112492-001 (5.9 c)

Find context: Area II, AW 128, Context 10014 Hellenistic/Early Roman floor; Hellenistic to Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 08/07 a.b.c./06 a.b.c

Size: 7.20 x 9.80 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60–1.10 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Vertical and horizontal working marks for decorative purpose. Inside and outside well polished. Strong grey and yellow-brownish sedimentations. Few grey veins. Only a rest of the rim is preserved.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.10

TZ 112494-001 (5.10 a)

Find context: Area II, AX 127, Context 11396 Ottoman fill over grave 10998; Roman and Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 01

Size: 6.10 x 5.90 cm

Rim diameter: 12.50 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.30 cm

Handle: 5.50 x 3.30 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Mug with vertical and horizontal working marks for decorative purpose. Rectangular handle, begins 0.60 cm underneath the rim. Connection between rim and handle was smoothed out, hole of the handle left two visible marks on the body. Inside and outside polished. Grey and yellow-brownish sedimentation. Many grey veins.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149, Abb. 14 Type 2.a.i.A.1

TZ 112499-001 (5.10 b)

Find context: Area II, AX 128, Context 11135 Ottoman fill in grave; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 01

Size: 9.40 x 5.50 x 4.00 cm

Base diameter: 8.60 cm

Wall thickness: 1.40–1.80 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 7/2

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Polished inside and out. Flat bottom. Many grey and light brown veins, sedimentations and grey discolourations.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 112500-001 (5.10 c)

Find context: Area II, AU 130, Context 11449 Early Roman to Early Byzantine fill/ash layer underneath floor Context 11448; mixed pottery and glass finds

Stratum: 07 a.b.c./06 a.b.c./05

Size: 8.10 x 3.20 x 4.20 cm

Base diameter: 10.40 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.50 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Polished inside and outside. Only a few light brown and grey veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Abb. 14 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 112501-001 (5.10 d)

Find context: Area II, AV 130, Context 11424 Islamic fill; Hellenistic to Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 02/01

Size: 3.50 x 2.60 cm

Wall thickness: 1.20 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Polished inside and out. Slight vertical chisel marks on the outside. Many grey veins on the inside.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.11**TZ 112832-001** (5.11 a)

Find context: Area II, AX 129, Context 11502 fill; few finds

Stratum: -21.00

Size: 9.60 x 9.70 x 3.00 cm

Base diameter: 9.40 cm

Wall thickness: 1.70–2.60 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Base; chisel marks on the outside, without decorative purpose. Base inside and outside un-

ven, not well worked. Outside walls polished. On the inside the marks of erasing the core are still visible. The inside surface probably got in contact with liquids. Yellow-brown veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house

TZ 113096-001 (5.11 b)

Find context: Area II, AX 128, Context 11550 Late Hellenistic/early Roman earth layer; with two lamp fragments dating to second and first century BC

Stratum: -21.30–21.50

Size: 9.0 x 6.10 cm

Rim diameter: 12.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.20 cm

Lug Handle: 7.20 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/1

Description: Mug of very soft chalk, handmade inside and outside. Only slight chisel marks, everything well polished. Especially the inside was well and smoothly polished, only vertical chisel marks are slightly visible. Lug handle is broken, attachment on the rim. The polished outside unusual for this type. Yellow brown veins and some black spots.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house

Plate 5.12**TZ 113375-001**

Find context: Area II, AW 128, Context 11629 wall

Stratum: -21.44

Size: 7.10 x 4.20 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.10 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Lug handle with round hole (2.00 cm). One side with regular horizontal chisel marks, the other one with irregular sloping marks. The rest of the body sherd was well polished on the inside, the outside with horizontal chisel marks. Well worked handle. Reddish brown veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house

5.7.1.2. Bowls: Type I. A. Form 2. OV

Hand-carved Bowls with Lug Handles: Type I. A. Form 2. OVa

Plate 5.13**TZ 111727-001** (5.13 a)

Find context: Area II, AS 134, Context 10950 Islamic fill; mainly Hellenistic to Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 02/01

Size: 8.60 x 5.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.20–1.80 cm

Handle: 2.00 x 2.00 x 1.30 cm

Colour: 2.5YR 8/2

Description: Body sherd with horizontal and vertical chisel marks for decorative purpose, and a rectangular lug handle. Hard yellow chalk. Brown and grey veins. Light brownish patina on the inside and out.

Current location: BAI permanent

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.A.1 (“Becher“)

TZ 112485-001 (5.13 b)

Find context: Area II, AW 128, Context 10009 Byzantine/Umayyad installation: wall of fieldstones; mainly Hellenistic to Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 04 a.b.c/03 a.b

Size: 10.10 x 6.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl with vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose. Walls well polished inside and outside. Fragmentary lug handle. Few grey veins and sedimentations.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1 (“Becher“)

“Teacups”: Type I. A. Form 2. OVb

Plate 5.14**TZ 111443-001**

Find context: Area II, AW 126, Context 10752 Late Roman to Byzantine fill; mainly Roman to Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 05/04 c.

Rim diameter: 11.00 cm

Base diameter: 9.80 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–2.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: “Teacup“ with slight vertical and horizontal chisel marks for decorative purpose and an incised line in the transition from body to base. Horizontal chisel marks were applied over this incised line, ca. 0.80 cm long. Polished inside and outside. Rectangular handle with round opening directly attached to the rim. Brown and grey veins and sedimentations, and one burnt spot. Unusual design and material.

Current location: BAI permanent

Publication: Vieweger – Häser 2014, 150, Abb. 20–21 Type 2.a.vii. (“Tassen“)

Hemispherical Hand-carved Bowls: Type I. A. Form 2. OVc

Plate 5.15**TZ 114475-001**

Find context: Area II, AX 129, Context 12011 Late Hellenistic/Early Roman earth layer; finds of Hellenistic coins; Rhodian amphora

Stratum: -21.80–21.90

Rim diameter: 10.00 cm

Base diameter: 7.70 cm

Wall thickness: 1.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Well worked vessel. Sloping chisel marks. The first row of chisel marks are underneath

the rim and measures 2.00 cm in height. The second row follows underneath, max. 4.50 cm long, less visible than the first row. Ring base; the transition between body and base is marked by a 1.00 cm wide depression. Above the depression runs an incised line over half of the object, ca. 0.50 cm. The outside shows yellow liquid like splashes all over the vessel - intentional? The infolded rim is marked by an incision on the inside, 1.50 cm underneath the rim. Inside with grey sedimentation. Incised decoration on the base, maybe letter quf in a circle. No veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house

Tubs: Type I. A. Form 3. OV

Plate 5.16

TZ 015400-001

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4817 Roman fill, tabun fragments; high concentration of mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 015394-001

Stratum: 06 b.c.

Rim diameter: 30.00 cm

Wall thickness: 2.40 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Tub, visible chisel marks outside and inside from working process. On the outside, the chisel marks were applied in a horizontal and oblique fashion, forming an almost rectangular pattern with deeper chisel marks within. Chisel marks on the inside oblique. Grey hard chalk. Few pale brown discolourations and veins. Slight scorch marks/ash on the rim.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i. (“vermutlich Becher“)

5.7.2. Polished Open Hand-carved Vessels: Type I. B.

5.7.2.1. Mugs and Pitchers: Type I. B. Form 1. OV

Plate 5.17

TZ 007647-001 (5.17 a)

Find context: Area I, AM/AN 119, Context 1486 late Roman/Early Byzantine fill; few undated finds

Stratum: 05

Size: 3.80 x 3.40 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.80 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Handle of a mug or pitcher. Typical rectangular form. A few brown veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 66

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149 Type 2.a.i.A.1

TZ 010597-001 (5.17 b)

Find context: Area I, AQ 118, Context 2877 late Roman/Byzantine pit; few undated finds

Stratum: 05/04 c.

Size: 7.40 x 4.00 x 5.80 cm

Base diameter: 11,50 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.40 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Chisel marks smoothed out. Sedimentation and mortar fragments on the sherd. Partly light brown to yellow discolouration. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 190

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 010610-001 (5.17 c)

Find context: Area I, AP/AQ 118, Context 2732 Byzantine pit; mixed pottery

Stratum: 04 b.

Size: 6.80 x 8.00 cm

Rim diameter: 10.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.90 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Inside smoothed out. Chisel marks on the outside, no intended decoration. Brown veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 192

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 013439-001 (5.17 d)

Find context: Area I, AS 123, Context 4008 Umayyad fill; mainly Roman and Byzantine pottery, and TZ 14420-001, and TZ 15410-001

Stratum: 03 a.b.

Size: 4.70 x 6.40 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.70 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Inside and outside polished. A few light brown veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Areal I Stone Box 296

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Abb. 13 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.18**TZ 110391-001** (5.18 a)

Find context: Area II, AX 130, Context 10348 Early Roman to early Byzantine ash layer; mainly Roman and Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 06 a.b.c/05

Size: 11.10 x 8.40 x 4.60 cm

Base diameter: 10.40 cm

Wall thickness: 2.00–3.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Thick walls, body and stand. No decoration, just smoothed on the inside and outside. Grey, red, and brown veins. Signs of abrasion.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Areal I Stone Box 10

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 112753-001 (5.18 b)

Find context: Area II, AU 132, Context 10921 Late Roman to Byzantine floor; mixed pottery

Stratum: 05/04 c.

Size: 8.80 x 9.40 cm

Wall thickness: 1.40–2.30 cm

Colour: 5YR 7/1

Description: Body sherd with a broken lug handle. Grey soft material, polished inside and out. No decoration. Light brown veins. Rough working manner.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Areal I Stone Box 98

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.19**TZ 112809-001**

Find context: Area II, AV 128, Context 11500 Hellenistic to Roman earth layer with a Hellenistic coin, and lamps dating to the second and first century BC

Stratum: -21.00

Size: 10.10 x 8.00 x 3.80 cm

Base diameter: 7.50 cm

Wall thickness: 1.20–2.80 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Base with chisel marks on the outside without visible decorative purpose. Base inside uneven. Outer walls polished. No veins visible, just yellow/pink discolouration (7.5YR 8/4, pink).

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house

5.7.2.2. Bowls: Type I. B. Form 2. OV

Bowls with Rectangular Handles: Type I. B. Form 2. OVa

Plate 5.20**TZ 113077-001** (5.20 a)

Find context: Area II, AX 128, Context 11590 Late Hellenistic/Early Roman pit; few finds

Stratum: -21.30-21.50

Size: 7.30 x 11.00 x 7.80 cm

Rim diameter: 10.00 cm

Base diameter: 8.80 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Preserved from rim to bottom, including part of a broken handle. The handle was attached to the rim, 4.20 cm long. Some chisel marks still visible, mainly around the rim and towards the bottom. The rim was smoothen out and the walls were polished inside and outside. Straight walls. Many small holes on the inside and bottom, eventually from water/liquid

inside the vessel. Soft material, some yellow brown to red spots visible. The form of the handle as well as the polished outside is unusual for this type. No veins.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house

TZ 310701-001 (5.20 b)

Find context: Area III, Z 125, Context 30389 Umayyad floor with rammed earth and stones; Roman to Umayyad pottery

Stratum: 03 b.

Size: 6.60 x 4.40 cm

Wall thickness: 1.40 cm

Lug handle: 2.00 x 2.00 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl with a lug handle. No visible chisel marks. Light brown veins and discolouration. Scorch marks.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house

“Teacup”: Type I. B. Form 2. OVb

Plate 5.21**TZ 112490-001**

Find context: Area II, AU 133, Context 10670

Umayyad installation: wall; no further finds

Stratum: 03 a.b.

Size: 6.70 x 11.30 cm

Rim diameter: 10.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–1.20 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Two matching sherds of a ‘teacup’ with rectangular handle, directly set on the rim. No visible chisel marks; inside and outside well polished. Grey and light brown veins and some red discolourations.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 150, Abb. 21 Type 2.a.vii. (“Tassen“)

Bowls with Solid Ring-Base: Type I. B. Form 2. OVc

Plate 5.22**TZ 012676-001**

Find context: Area II, AQ 120, Context 3247 Late Roman to Byzantine installation: wall, eventually Roman; Iron Age and Roman pottery

Stratum: 05/04 a.b.c.; 03 a.b.

Size: 7.30 x 5.60 x 3.10 cm

Base diameter: 7.60 cm

Wall thickness: 1.30–2.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 7/2

Description: Solid ring base. Greyish material with light-brown veins. No visible working marks.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I Stone Box 278

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Abb. 14 Type 2.a.i.

Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base: Type I. B. Form 2. OVd

Plate 5.23**TZ 003579-001 (5.23 a)**

Find context: Area I, AN/AO 118/119, Context 2046 Iron Age II A/B soil; Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery

Stratum: 11

Size: 4.10 cm

Rim diameter: 11.90 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60–1.30 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Bowl, no intended chisel marks. Visible scratches inside and out through working process. Polished inside and out. No veins visible, but grey and yellow on the outside (sedimentations). Few brownish grits in the chalk.

Current location: BAI permanent

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Abb. 18 a–b Type 2.a.i.i.B

Size: 6.00 x 5.80 cm

Rim diameter: 14.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.50 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl without any chisel marks. Polished inside and out. Thin slightly incurved rim. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 337

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

TZ 014421-001 (5.23 c)

Find context: Area I, AE 121, Context 3649 Late Bronze I soil/floor level (?); no other finds

Stratum: 14 a.

Size: 4.10 x 6.30 x 5.10 cm

Base diameter: 5.60 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.50 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Bowl of hard chalk, only slight chisel marks inside and out. High quality work. Strongly polished. Flat base. Few grey veins and patina.

TZ 014420-001 (5.23 b)

Find context: Area I, AS 123, Context 4008 Umayyad fill; mainly Roman and Byzantine pottery, and TZ 013439-001, and TZ 015410-001

Stratum: 03 a.b.

Plate 5.24**TZ 112484-001**

Find context: Area II, AV 131, Context 11240 Hellenistic debris

Stratum: 08

Size: 12.80 x 12.10 cm

Rim diameter: 23.40 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–2.00 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl with thick body, polished inside and out. Straight rim, conic body. Few grey and light-brown veins and grey discolourations. Strong abrasion.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Small Spouted Bowl: Type I.B. Form 2. OVe

Plate 5.26**TZ 011565-001**

Find context: Area I, AN/AO 118/119, Context 2046 Iron Age II A/B soil; Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery

Stratum: 10

Size: 2.30 cm

“Inkwells”: Type I. B. Form 3. OV

Plate 5.27**TZ 013431-001** (5.27 a)

Find context: Area I, AT 122, Context 4047 Colloviium; mixed pottery

Stratum: 00

Size: 8.10 x 8.60 cm

Rim diameter: 7.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.70 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Cyndrical body and thin rim. Completely polished. On the outside slight traces of chisel marks. Vessel almost fully preserved, but broken towards the base. Very few brown veins.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area I stone box 295

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Plate 5.25**TZ 112497-001**

Find context: Area II, AV 127, Context 11084 Hellenistic fill underneath wall 10835

Stratum: 08

Size: 11.90 x 5.50 x 12.20 cm

Rim diameter: 13.20 cm

Base diameter: 10.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.90–3.00 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Three matching fragments, hand-carved, polished on the inside and out, no decoration, only a few chisel marks without a decorative purpose. Thick base; the wall reduces towards the rim. Grey veins.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II Stone Box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 149, Abb. 17 Type 2.a.ii.A.

Rim diameter: 3.00 cm

Base diameter: 2.50 cm

Wall thickness: 0.50–2.00 cm

Description: Fully preserved object of small bowl with a spout and a small rectangular handle. Thick walls. No intended decoration, only working marks visible. Late Hellenistic/Roman dating uncertain.

Current location: DoA Nuweijjs

TZ 111309-001 (5.27 b)

Find context: Area II, AW 127, Context 10757 Roman fill; Roman and Byzantine pottery

Stratum: 06 a.b.c.

Size: 10.50 x 3.20 x 6.40 cm

Base diameter: 7.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.40–1.80 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Handcarved bowl with no decoration or chisel marks. Straight cyndrical walls. Polished on the inside. Very soft white chalk. Many grey veins and grey sedimentation on the inside.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area II stone box 39

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i.

Trays: Type I. B. Form 4. OV

Plate 5.28

TZ 007739-001

Find context: Area I, AM 117, Context 168 Iron Age II A/B (older) fire place/oven; mainly Bronze Age pottery
Stratum: 12
Size: 6.10 x 5.70 x 2.30 cm
Wall thickness: 1.00 cm
Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Rectangular vessel. The floor on the inside is decorated with fine lines. The outside seems to be polished and treated with water. Grey chalk, soft. No veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 75

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 150, Abb. 19 Type 2.a.iv

Unfinished Vessel?

Plate 5.29

TZ 112489-001

Find context: Area II, AW 129, Context 11162 Early Roman/Roman fill layer, eventually floor; large amounts of mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 112496-001
Stratum: 07 a.b.c.; 06 a.b.c.
Size: 8.80 x 9.50 x 5.50 cm

Rim diameter: 6.20 cm

Wall thickness: 2.00–4.00 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Marks of handcarved production. Very thick and round base, the inside of the base is well polished. An unfinished vessel?

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II stone box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 (“vermutlich Becher“)

5.7.3. Lathe-turned Vessels

5.7.3.1. Lathe-turned Bowls Type II. A.

Shallow Bowls: Type II. A. Form 1. OV

Plate 5.30

TZ 007738-001 (5.30 a)

Find context: Area I, AH 115, Context 1244 Iron Age II A/B (older) loam/debris; mixed pottery
Stratum: 12
Size: 2.70 cm (height)
Rim diameter: 15.40 cm
Wall thickness: 0.50–0.70 cm
Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl with a lathe-incised line directly above the base; 2.70 cm above the base another horizontal bearded rim, 0.50 cm wide, followed by two additional lathe-incised lines. Many grey veins and greyish brown patina. Very soft chalk. High quality work.

Current location: BAI permanent

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type F

TZ 010833-001 (5.30 b)

Find context: Area I, AL 118, Context 1503 Early Roman remains of pit 1502; mixed pottery

Stratum: 07 a.

Size: 11.30 x 7.10 x 1.40 cm

Base diameter: 9.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.50–1.40 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl on a disc base, body almost fully broken away, despite one side that shows two lathe-incised lines right above the bottom. Grey veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 199

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146, Abb. 3 Type F

TZ 014422-001 (5.30 c)

Find context: Area I, AH 115, Context 1230 modern debris?; mixed pottery

Stratum: 00

Size: 7.20 x 1.50 cm

Base diameter: 7.20 cm

Wall thickness: 0.40–1.40 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Base and the rest of a very thin body. Grey and light brown veins. Slightly burnt at one edge.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 337

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 145 Type 1.a.i

Plate 5.31**TZ 015374-001** (5.31 a)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5187 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mixed pottery, and TZ 015375-001, and TZ 015376-001

Stratum: 07 b.c.

Size: 3.90 cm

Base diameter: 15.60 cm

Wall thickness: 0.40–1.00 cm

Description: Two matching fragments with thickened rim, which is decorated with two lathe-incised lines. Belongs to reconstructed vessel TZ 015383-001/015385-001 (see below). Brown sedimentations.

Current location: DoA

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type F

TZ 015375-001 (5.31 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5187 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mixed pottery, and TZ 015374-001, and TZ 015376-001

Stratum: 07 b.c.

Size: 1.40 cm

Base diameter: 13.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.10 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Flat base/stand, very fragmentary, especially the inside, eventually through contact with liquids. Carination between the round stand and the wall. An incised line is slightly visible on the outside above the base. Very few slight yellow and brownish sedimentations and veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 145 Type J

Plate 5.32**TZ 015376-001** (5.32 a)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5187 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mixed pottery, and TZ 015374-001, and TZ 015375-001

Stratum: 07 b.c.

Size: 2.70 cm

Rim diameter: 14.80 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70–1.10 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Very fragmentary straight and thickened rim, upraised 1.20 cm underneath the opening. Two lathe-incised lines, 0.30 cm wide, upon the thickened rim area underneath the opening. Strong brown and grey sedimentations (mortar?). No veins visible. Made of hard grey chalk.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 145 Type J

TZ 015374-001 (see above), **015383-001**, and **015385-001** (5.32 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4906 Early Roman installation: wall; Hellenistic and Roman pottery /Area I, AQ 123, Context 5116 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments, mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 015386-001

Stratum: 07 a.b.c.

Size: 3.50 cm (height)

Rim diameter: 15.00 cm

Base diameter: 7.50 cm

Wall thickness: 0.30–1.00 cm

Description: Reconstructed bowl of 12 single fragments from three find contexts. Two lathe-incised lines on the rim; the rim is separated through a carination from the rest of the body. Base is marked with a horizontal lathe-incised line at the carination. Few brown veins and yellow discolourations.

Current location: DoA

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type F

Plate 5.33**TZ 017232-001**

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4999 Early Roman soil with ashes and tabun remains; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 017231-001

Stratum: 07 a

Size: 5.00 cm (height)

Rim diameter: 17.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.10 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Three matching fragments of a lathe-turned bowl with two lathe-incised lines on the outside of the rim and several underneath. Folded rim. No

veins visible, just brownish red sedimentations, and strongly eroded on the inside.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house, Area I stone box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147 Type K

Deep Bowls: Type II. A. Form 2. OV

Hemispherical Bowls: Type II.A. Form 2. OVa (Plates 5.34–5.39)

Plate 5.34

TZ 010284-001 (5.34 a)

Find context: Area I, AQ 118, Context 2846 Late Roman/Byzantine pit; mixed pottery

Stratum: 05/04 c

Size: 6.40 cm (height)

Description: Body sherd of a spherical bowl with two lathe-incised lines. High quality work. Light brown veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis (not found in storage)

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Abb. 4 Type I

Size: 7.70 x 7.90 cm

Wall thickness: 0.70 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Spherical body sherd of a high quality bowl with one horizontal lathe-incised line on one side. Outside strongly polished, shiny. Very few pale

brown veins and spots. No sedimentations visible, only slight yellow-brown patina on the material.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 145.

TZ 015379-001 (5.34 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5155 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 a.b.c.

Size: 5.50 x 4.30; 5.00 x 4.00; 6.60 x 5.50; 4.00 x 3.40 cm

Base diameter: 8.10 cm

Wall thickness: 0.50–0.90 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Four fragments of a bowl with disc base. On the outside the signs of the lathe-turning are still visible. Carination between the disc base and the wall. Very soft material, which caused strong abrasion. The inside shows signs of contact with liquids. Yellow and brown sedimentation. No veins visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147 Type K

Plate 5.36

TZ 015409-001

Find context: Area I, AI 115, Context 1098 modern soil; mixed pottery

Stratum: 00

Size: 1.90 cm (height)

Base diameter: 5.50 cm

Wall thickness: 0.40–0.90 cm

Description: Bowl, only the ring-base and part of the body still preserved. Very thin body. Well worked, little incised line between ring-base and body. Greyish patina. Some brownish veins.

Current location: BAI permanent, Seminarraum, Vitrine 30

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 145.

Plate 5.35

TZ 015386-001

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5116 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 015385-001

Stratum: 07 a.b.

Plate 5.37

TZ 015948-001 (5.37 a)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5206 Early Roman soil layer; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 c.

Size: 4.20 cm (height)

Base diameter: 8.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.80 cm

Description: Bowl with disc base, base 1.00 cm high. High quality work. No veins visible.
Current location: BAI permanent
Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type I

TZ 017226-001 (5.37 b)

Find context: Area I, AM 116, Context 4785 Late Bronze layer of field stones; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery
Stratum: 15
Size: 5.80 x 5.30 cm
Rim diameter: 14.40 cm
Wall thickness: 0.80–1.10 cm
Colour: 5YR 8/2
Description: Bowl, decorated with a lathe -incised line, ca. 0.50 cm underneath the slightly ingoing rim. Very smooth surfaces. No veins visible. Matches TZ 017324-001.
Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 403
Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type I

TZ 017230-001 (5.37 c)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4991 Roman soil with ash layer; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery
Stratum: 06 c.
Size: 3.90 x 3.60 cm
Rim diameter: 18.00 cm
Wall thickness: 1.40 cm
Colour: 5YR 8/2
Description: Bowl with two lathe-incised lines on the top of the rim and 0.50 cm underneath. Slightly incurved rim. No veins visible.
Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 403
Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type I

Plate 5.38

TZ 017234-001 (5.38 a)

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, Context 5024 Early Roman floor (loam); mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery, metal and glass finds and TZ 017235-001, TZ 017236-001, and TZ 017237-001
Stratum: 07 a.
Size: 4.50 x 5.50 cm
Rim diameter: 14.40 cm
Wall thickness: 0.60–1.10 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl, decorated with a lathe -incised line, ca. 0.50 cm underneath the slightly ingoing rim. Very smooth surfaces. No veins visible. Matches TZ 017226-001.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type I

TZ 017239-001 (5.38 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5154 Early Roman field stones, debris; few finds
Stratum: 07 a
Size: 5.20 x 4.10 cm
Rim diameter: 14.20 cm
Wall thickness: 0.70–1.00 cm
Colour: 7.5YR 8/2
Description: Bowl, decorated with a lathe-incised line, ca. 0.80 cm underneath the slightly ingoing rim. Very smooth surface. The body reduces towards the rim. No veins visible.
Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 403
Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type I

Plate 5.39

TZ 112487-001 (5.39 a)

Find context: Area II, AS 133, Context 10821 Umayyad fill and floor (loam)
Stratum: 03 a.b.
Size: 6.80 x 7.20 cm
Rim diameter: 11.00 cm
Wall thickness: 1.00 cm
Colour: 7.5YR 8/2
Description: Bowl with incurved thin rim. Two lathe-incised lines 0.80 cm underneath the rim. Thick grey sedimentations on the inside and outside. No veins visible.
Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II stone box 93
Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type I

TZ 112498-001 (5.39 b)

Find context: Area II, AV 128, Context 11086 Roman/ Early Byzantine fill/debris
Stratum: 06 a.b.c./05
Size: 5.70 x 4.60 cm
Rim diameter: 17.00 cm
Wall thickness: 1.00–1.30 cm
Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl, slightly inverted rim. 0.90 cm underneath the rim runs a lathe incised line (ca. 0.30 cm), followed by a 0.50 cm wide bearded rim and another 0.50 cm line underneath. Many grey veins and light brown discolourations.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area II stone box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146, Abb. 6 Type J

Deep Bowls with Straight Walls: Type II.A. Form 2. OVb (Plate 5.40)

Plate 5.40

TZ 019513-001

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5095 Early Roman soil/fill with ashes and tabun fragments; mixed pottery

Stratum: 07 b.c.

Size: 4.40 x 3.90 cm

Rim diameter: 14.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.00 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Bowl of high quality. One lathe-incised line on top of the flat rim and directly underneath. Another 1.30 cm bearded rim underneath the main rim with a lathe-incised line. Well polished. Signs of the lathe are still visible on the inside. No veins.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 452

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147 Type K

Deep Bowls with Straight Walls and Folded Rims: Type II.A. Form 2. OVc (Plate 5.41)

Plate 5.41

TZ 015405-001 (5.41 a)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 5075 Early Roman fill; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 17240

Stratum: 07 b.c.

Size: 2.30 x 5.40 cm

Rim diameter: 16.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.60 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2–8/3

Description: Bowl with triangular rim, profiled and lathe-incised lines on the transition from rim to body. Sherd breaks at a carination towards the body, marked with a horizontal incised line, ca. 2.20 cm underneath the rim. Strongly polished, outside shiny, inside smooth, the signs of the lathe still visible. Fine work. Material has a yellow-grey colour on the outside. No veins visible.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147 Type K

TZ 015410-001 (5.41 b)

Find context: Area I, AS 123, Context 4008 Umayyad fill; mainly Roman and Byzantine pottery and TZ 013439-001, and TZ 014420-001

Stratum: 03 a.b.

Size: 4.30 cm (height)

Rim diameter: 14.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.30 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Bowl with thickened rim. Rim with two horizontal lathe incised lines, running parallel. Several lathe-incised lines on the body, beginning 2.00 cm underneath the rim, followed by a slight carination. Grey veins and greyish sedimentation. Hard brownish chalk.

Current location: BAI permanent Seminarraum, Vitrine 30

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147 Type K

Deep Bowls with Carinated Walls: Type II.A. Form 2. OVD (Plate 5.42)

Plate 5.42**TZ 017231-001**

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4999 Early Roman soil with ashes and tabun remains; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery, and TZ 017232-001
Stratum: 07 a.
Size: 4.10 x 6.60 cm
Rim diameter: 15.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.40–1.10 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Carinated bowl with triangular rim. One lathe-incised line runs 0.90 cm underneath the rim. High quality work. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 146 Type F

5.7.3.2. Bowls with Decorative Strip/Handle: Type II. A. Form 2. OVe (Plate 5.43)

Plate 5.43

Type II. A. Form 2.i. OVe:
Bowls with Decorative Strip

TZ 015397-001 (5.43 a)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4858 Roman fill/building pit; Hellenistic and Roman pottery
Stratum: 06 b.c.
Size: 8.30 x 5.20 cm
Rim diameter: 21.00 cm
Wall thickness: 1.30 cm
Colour: 10YR 8/1
Description: Bowl with straight walls. 1.70 cm underneath the rim runs a 1.20 cm wide and 0.10 cm elevated decorative strip. Slightly polished. The inside still shows the horizontal lines from the lathe turning. Grey chalk with grey patina, few pale brown spots. No veins visible.
Current location: DoA Nuweijis
Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147 Type K

Description: Bowl with slightly hemispherical walls. 1.90 cm underneath the rim runs a 1.20 cm wide elevated decorated strip. No veins visible.

Current location: Umm Qēs dig house, Area I stone box 403

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147, Abb. 10 Type 1.b.i. (“large lathe vessels”)

Type II.A. Form 2.ii.OVe: Bowl with Handle

TZ 015394-001 (5.43 c)**TZ 017233-001** (5.43 b)

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4997 Roman soil with ashes; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery
Stratum: 06 c.
Size: 5.00 x 4.50 cm
Rim diameter: 18.50 cm
Wall thickness: 1.20 cm
Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4817 Roman soil; many pottery sherds, mainly Hellenistic and Roman

Stratum: 06 b.c.

Size: 6.50 x 4.90 cm

Rim diameter: 20.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.00 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Hemispherical bowl with two parallel lathe-incised lines 0.30 cm underneath the straight rim and another incised line on top of the rim. Hand chiseled lug handle, 1.50 cm underneath the rim, ca. 1.50 cm thick. Polished inside and outside. Material has a slight grey patina, the chalk itself has a pale yellow colour. High quality work. Very few grey veins.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 147, Abb. 9 Type 1.b.i. (“large lathe vessels”)

5.7.4. Lathe-turned Vessels with Hand-carved Decoration: Type II. B. Form 1. OV

Plate 5.44

TZ 015406-001

Find context: Area I, AP 123, Context 4816 Early Roman installation: wall; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery and TZ 015377-001 and TZ 019512-001

Stratum: 06 a.b.c.

Size: 3.80 x 3.80 cm

Rim diameter: 24.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.40 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/1

Description: Rim is slightly thinner than the wall. One horizontal lathe-turned line ca. 0.70 cm underneath the rim. Few vertical lines underneath, hand-carved. Polished. Yellow colour on the outside. Grey and brown veins. Strong abrasions.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148 Type 2.a.i (“vermutlich Becher“)

5.7.5. Fragments

5.7.5.1. Fragments of Hand-carved Vessels

Plate 5.45

TZ 004152-001 (5.45 a)

Find context: Area I, AG/AH 116, 2528 Iron Age II A/B, stone formation

Stratum: 12

Size: 2.30 x 5.10 x 5.10 cm

Base diameter: 14.00 cm

Wall thickness: 0.80–1.00 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Fragmentary part of a handmade vessel with a flat base. Inside burnt. Very soft chalk without visible veins. Slight chisel marks (?) on the outside.

Current location: BAI permanent

TZ 112496-001 (5.45 c)

Find context: Area II, AW 129, 11162 Early Roman sediment, floor?; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 a.b.c/06 a.b.c

Size: 4.10 x 3.70 x 2.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.70 cm

Colour: 5YR 8/2

Description: Fragment of a hand-carved mug? Many grey and brownish red veins.

Current location: Umm Qē's dig house, Area I stone box 93

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Type 2.a.i (“vermutlich Becher“)

TZ 015398-001 (5.45 b)

Find context: Area I, AR 123, 4343 Early Roman installation: wall made of fieldstones; mainly Hellenistic and Roman pottery

Stratum: 07 a.b.c/06 a.b.c.

Size: 8.70 x 7.50 x 3.40 cm

Wall thickness: 1.30–2.20 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Flat base of a hand-carved mug/bowl? Part of the wall preserved. Oblique chisel marks, but strongly polished. Hand-carved inside and outside. Yellow discolourations. Many grey veins. Hard chalk.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Type 2.a.i (“vermutlich Becher“)

Plate 5.46

TZ 113047-001 (5.46 a)

Find context: Area II, AW 127, 11605 sandy soil, probably Hellenistic

Stratum: -21.00

Size: 7.00 x 7.10 cm

Base diameter: 12.00 cm

Wall thickness: 2.10–2.70 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Probably not part of the discussed chalk-stone vessel assemblage. Very hard material, shows many enclosures and traces of different stone material/qualities. Could be the base for a bowl. Handmade. Strong grey and brown sedimentations and grey veins.

TZ 113363-001 (5.46 b)

Find context: Area II, AX 129, 11656 ash layer, near-by pit 11915; Bronze Age and Iron Age II sherds

Stratum: -21.80

Size: 4.50 x 3.00 x 1.80 cm

Base diameter: 8.00 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.30 cm

Colour: 7.5YR 8/2

Description: Handmade handle, uncertain if it is part of the discussed chalkstone vessel assemblage. The material is hard and shows traces of red stone material. Not pure chalk. Crude way of working. Red-brown veins and black spots.

Current location: Umm Qēš dig house

5.7.5.2. Fragments of Lathe-turned Vessels

Plate 5.47**TZ 015381-001**

Find context: Area I, AQ 123, 5201 Early Roman soil with tabun fragments

Stratum: 07 c.

Size: 3.90 x 3.10 cm

Wall thickness: 1.00–1.30 cm

Colour: 10YR 8/2

Description: Body sherd of a fine vessel. Outside is smoothly polished. No veins or patina, just a few yellow/pale brown spots.

Current location: DoA Nuweijis

Publication: Vieweger – Häser: 2014, 148, Type 2.a.i (“vermutlich Becher“)

5.7.6. Unfinished Vessel from Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat

Plate 5.48

Find Nr: KMAP 14.176

Find context: Field C, Square 47, Locus 12

Size: 12.00 x 10.00 x 14.00 cm

Base diameter: 8.60 cm

Wall thickness: 1.60 cm

Colour: 10YR 9.5/1

Description: Unfinished vessel or core? Chisel marks are visible on the outside, mostly in a sloping to vertical manner and in different sizes. Partly broken at the rim. The upper part has red traces, iron oxide(?), eventually rust (7.5YR 7/8). Inside, the chisel marks run vertical and regular to a depth of 4.00 cm. Probably a locally produced object (red traces in chalkstone are typical for Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat). Very soft white chalk material. A few red and brown spots and sedimentations, no veins visible.

Current location: DoA Madeba

Plate 5.2: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 000497-001					chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	10YR 8/1	5.2 a
TZ 001005-001	16	AM 119	I	00	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/2	5.2 b
TZ 009896-001	2726	AQ 118	I	12 and 11	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.2 c

Plate 5.2: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 000497-001

b.



TZ 001005-001

c.



TZ 009896-001



1:2

Plate 5.3: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 012677-001	3513	AR 118	I	04 b	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 7/2	5.3 a
TZ 015377-001	4816	AP 123	I	06 a.b.c	grey chalk, hard	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/1	5.3 b
TZ 015378-001	5201	AQ 123	I	07 c	chalk	half of the object	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	10YR 8/1	5.3 c

Plate 5.3: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 012677-001

b.



TZ 015377-001

c.



TZ 015378-001



1:2

Plate 5.4: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015380-001	5201	AQ 123	I	07 c	grey-blue chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	10YR 8/1	5.4 a
TZ 015387-001	5201	AQ 123	I	07 c	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher		5.4 b
TZ 015388-001	4737	AQ 122	I	10	hard chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	10YR 8/1	5.4 c

Plate 5.4: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers



TZ 015380-001



TZ 015387-001



TZ 015387-001



1:2

Plate 5.5: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015390-001	4778	AE 114	I	00	soft chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	10YR 8/2	5.5 a
TZ 015391-001	5205	AQ 123	I	07 c	grey-blue chalk, hard	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	2.5YR 8/1	5.5 b
TZ 015401-001	4770	AP 123	I	06 b	grey chalk, hard	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/1	5.5 c
TZ 015403-001	4875	AP 123	I	06 b.c.	soft chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	10YR 8/2	5.5 d

Plate 5.5: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 015390-001

b.



TZ 015391-001

c.



TZ 015401-001

d.



TZ 015403-001



1:2

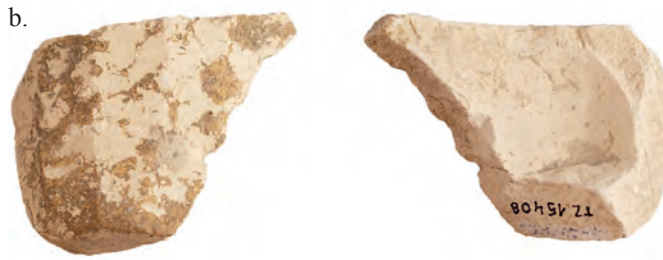
Plate 5.6: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015404-001	4769	AP 122	I	07 a.	grey chalk, hard	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/1	5.6 a
TZ 015408-001	16	AM 119	I	00	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher		5.6 b
TZ 017225-001	4714	AP 122	I	07 c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.6 c
TZ 017235-001	5024	AQ 123	I	07 a.b.c., 06 a.b.c. and 05	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/2	5.6 d
TZ 017236-001	5024	AQ 123	I	07 a.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.6 e
TZ 017237-001	5024	AQ 123	I	07 a.b.c., 06 a.b.c. and 05	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.6 f

Plate 5.6: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers



TZ 015404-001



TZ 015408-001



TZ 017225-001



TZ 017235-001, TZ 017236-001, TZ 017237-001



1:2

Plate 5.7: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 017240-001	5075	AP 123	I	07 b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/2	5.7 a
TZ 019512-001	4816	AP 123	I	06 a.b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/2	5.7 b
TZ 111726-001	10926	AY 127	II	02 and 01	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher		5.7 c

Plate 5.7: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



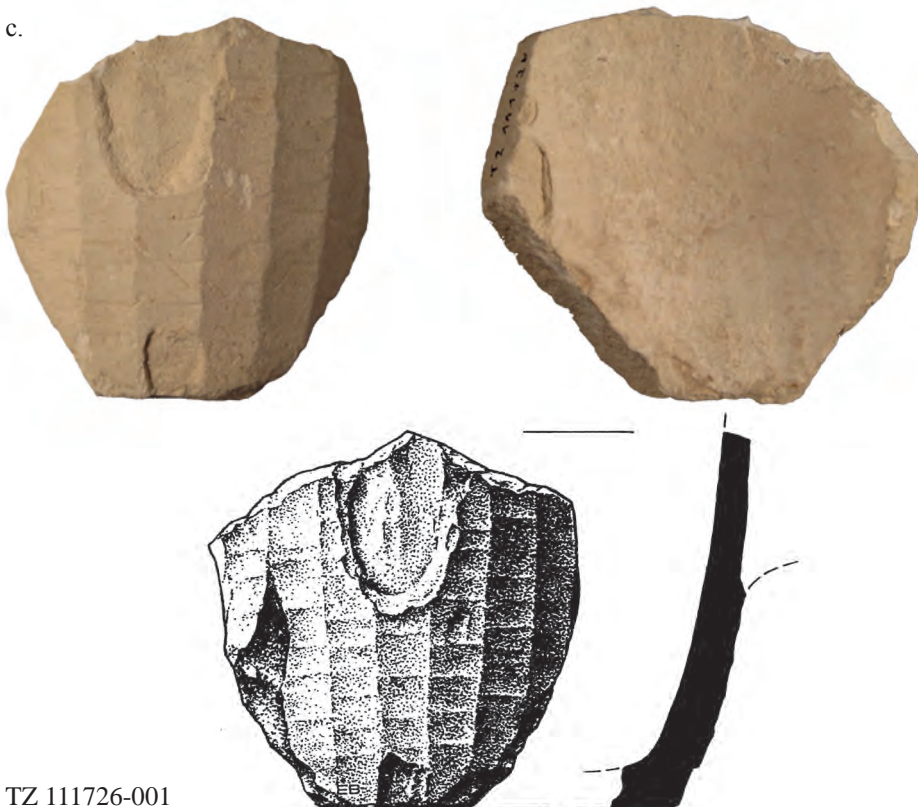
TZ 017240-001

b.



TZ 019512-001

c.



TZ 111726-001



1:2

Plate 5.8: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 111729-001	10927	AT 132	II	05	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.8 a
TZ 112486-001	10942	AT 134	II	03 a.b	chalk	ca. half of the object	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.8 b

Plate 5.8: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 111729-001

b.



TZ 112486-001



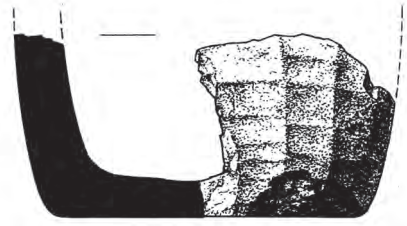
1:2

Plate 5.9: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112488-001	10942	AT 134	II	03 a.b	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/2	5.9 a
TZ 112491-001	11338	AY 128	II	01	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.9 b
TZ 112492-001	10014	AW 128	II	08, 07 a.b.c., and 06 a.b.c	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.9 c

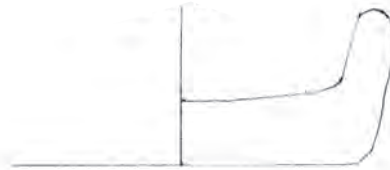
Plate 5.9: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



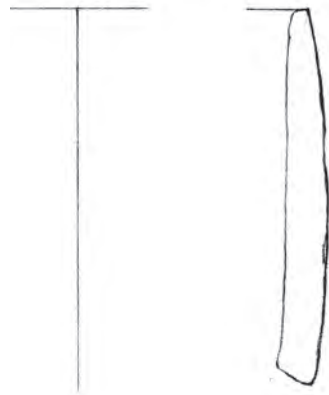
TZ 112488-001

b.



TZ 112491-001

c.



TZ 112492-001



1:2

Plate 5.10: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112494-001	11396	AX 127	II	01	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug	5YR 8/2	5.10 a
TZ 112499-001	11135	AX 128	II	01	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 7/2	5.10 b
TZ 112500-001	11449	AU 130	II	07 a.b.c., 06 a.b.c. and 05	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.10 c
TZ 112501-001	11424	AV 130	II	02 and 01	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/2	5.10 d

Plate 5.10: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers



TZ 112494-001



TZ 112499-001



TZ 112500-001



TZ 112501-001



1:2

Plate 5.11: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112832-001	11502	AX 129	II	-21.00	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	7.5YR 8/2	5.11 a
TZ 113096-001	11550	AX 128	II	-21.50-21.30	chalk, very soft	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pitcher	5YR 8/1	5.11 b

Plate 5.11: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 112832-001

b.



TZ 113096-001



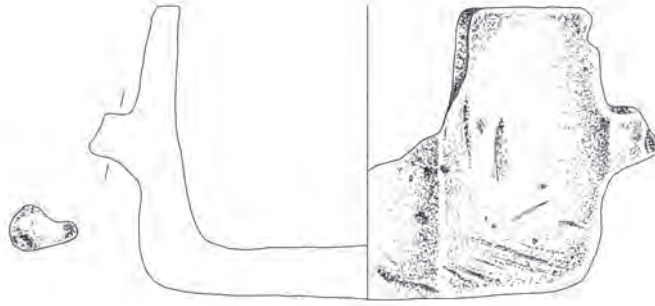
1:2

Plate 5.12: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 113375-001	11629	AW 128	II	-21.44	chalk, hard and reddish	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 1.OV	mug/pichter	5YR 8/2	5.12 a

Plate 5.12: Type I. A. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 113375-001



1:2

Plate 5.13: Type I. A. Form 2. OVa: Hand-carved Bowls with Lug Handles:

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 111727-001	10950	AS 134	II	02 and 01	hard yellow chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	2.5YR 8/2	5.13 a
TZ 112485-001	10009	AW 128	II	04 a.b.c. and 03 a.b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	7.5YR 8/2	5.13 b

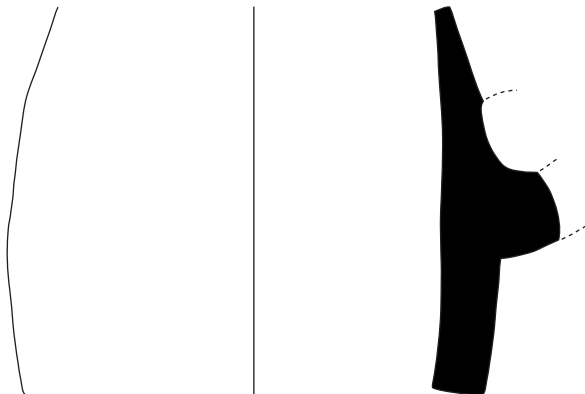
Plate 5.13: Type I.A. Form 1. OVa: Hand-carved Bowls with Lug Handles

a.



TZ 111727-001

b.



TZ 112485-001

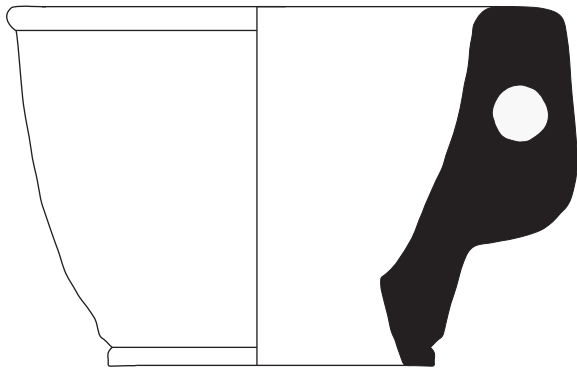


1:2

Plate 5.14: Type I. A. Form 2. OV'b: "Teacups"

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 111443-001	10572	AW 126	II	5 and 04 c.	grey chalk	half of the object	Type I. A. Form 2. OV'b	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.14

Plate 5.14: Type I.A. Form 1.OVa: "Teacups"



TZ 111443-001

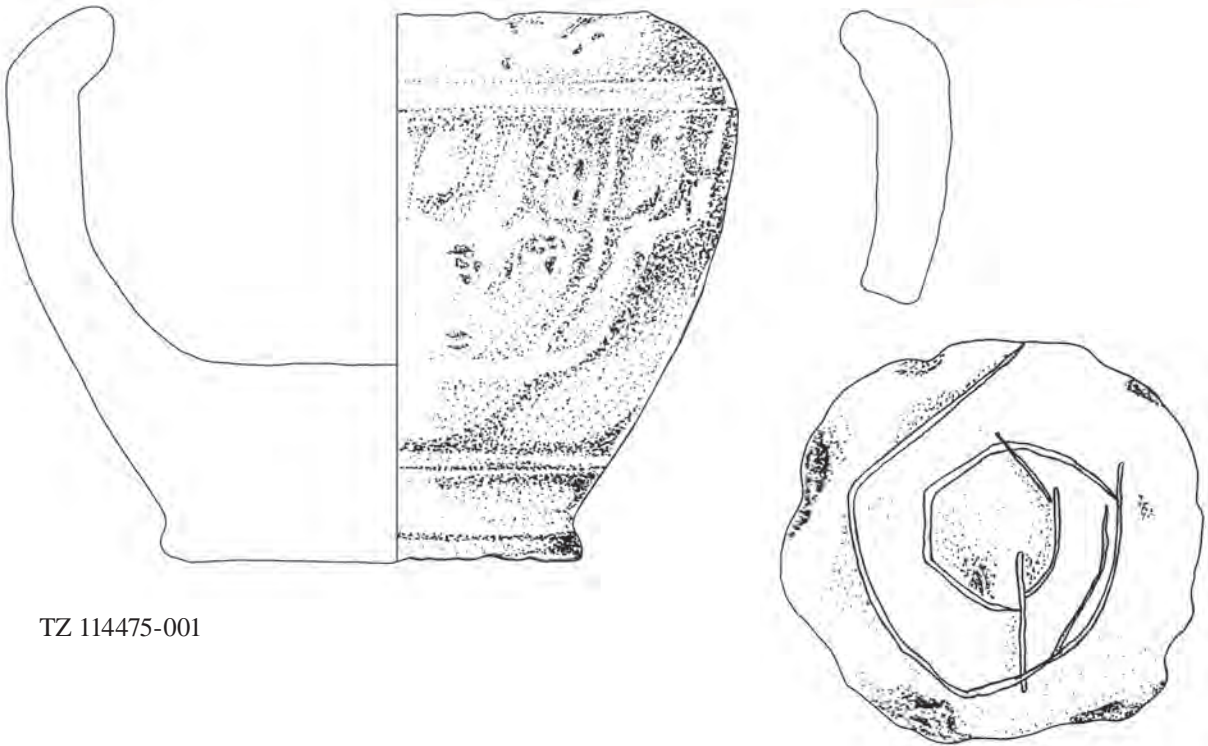


1:2

Plate 5.15: Type I. A. Form 2. OVc: Hemispherical Hand-carved Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 114475-001	12011	AX 129	II	21.80-21.90	chalk	nearly complete	Type I. A. Form 2. OVc	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.15

Plate 5.15: Type I.A. Form 1. OVc: Hemispherical Hand-carved Bowls



TZ 114475-001

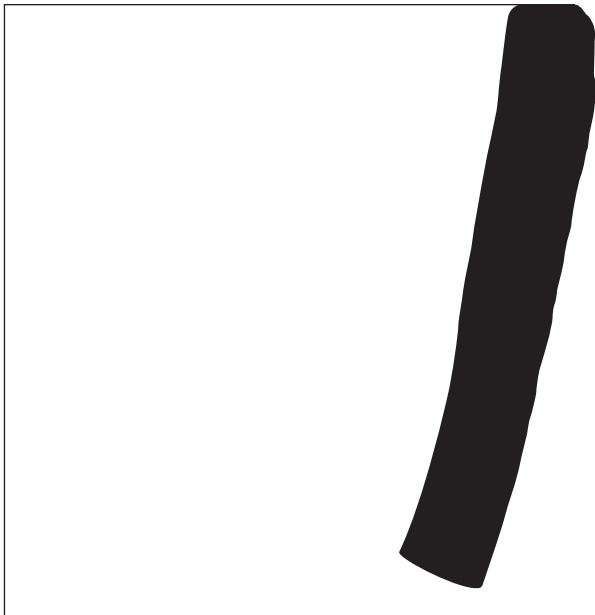


1:2

Plate 5.16: Type I. A. Form 3. OV: Tubs

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015400-001	4817	AP 123	I	06 b.c.	hard grey chalk	fragmentary	Type I. A. Form 3. OV	tub	10 YR 8/1	5.16

Plate 5.16: Type I. A. Form 3. OV: Tubs



TZ 015400-001



1:2

Plate 5.17: Type I. B. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 007647-001	1486	AM/AN 119	I	5	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	5 YR 8/2	5.17 a
TZ 010597-001	2877	AQ 118	I	05/04 c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	5 YR 8/2	5.17 b
TZ 010610-001	2732	AP/AQ 118	I	04 b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	5 YR 8/2	5.17 c
TZ 013439-001	4008	AS 123	I	03 a.b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	7.5 YR 8/2	5.17 d

Plate 5.17: Type I. B. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers



TZ 007647-001



TZ 010597-001



TZ 010610-001



TZ 013439-001



1:2

Plate 5.18: Type I. B. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 110391-001	10348	AX 130	II	06 a.b.c./05	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	7.5 YR 8/2	5.18 a
TZ 112753-001	10921	AU 132	II	05/04 c.	soft grey chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	5 YR 7/1	5.18 b

Plate 5.18: Type I. B. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

a.



TZ 110391-001

b.



TZ 112753-001

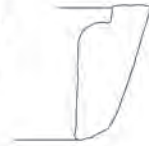


1:2

Plate 5.19: Type I.B. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112809-001	11500	AV 128	II	-21.00	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 1. OV	mug/pitcher	7.5 YR 8/2	5.19

Plate 5.19: Type I. B. Form 1. OV: Mugs and Pitchers



TZ 112809-001



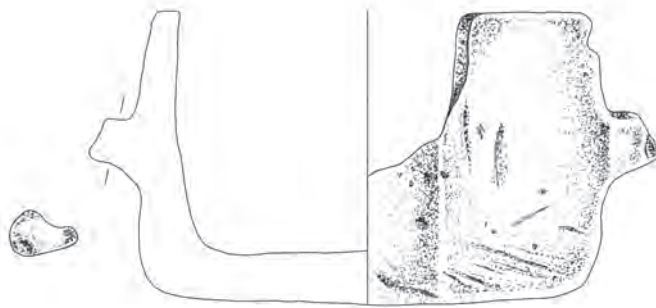
1:2

Plate 5.20: Type I. B. Form 2. OVa: Bowls with Rectangular Handles

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 113077-001	11590	AX 128	II	21.30-21.50	very soft chalk	half of the object	Type I. B. Form 2. OVa	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.20 a
TZ 310701-001	30389	Z 125	III	03 b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OVa	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.20 b

Plate 5.20: Type I. B. Form 2. OVa: Bowls with Rectangular Handles

a.



TZ 113077-001

b.



TZ 310701-001



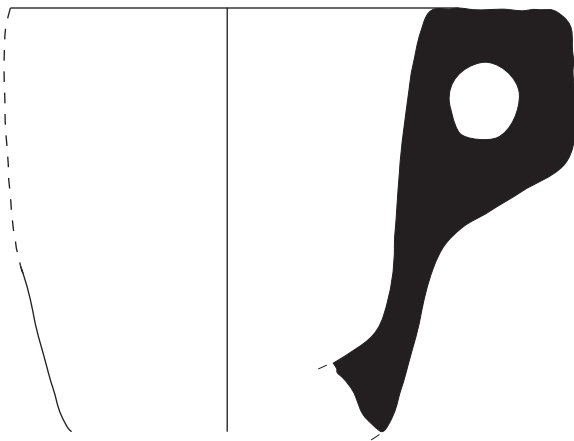
1:2

Plate 5.21: Type I. B. Form 2. OV'b: "Teacup"

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112490-001	10670	AU 133	II	03 a.b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OV'b	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.21

Plate 5.21: Type I. B. Form 2. OVb: "Teacup"

a.



TZ 112490-001



1:2

Plate 5.22: Type I. B. Form 2. OVc: Bowls with Solid Ring-Base

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 012676-001	3247	AQ 120	II	05/04 a.b.c. and 03 a.b.	grey chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OVc	bowl	7.5 YR 7/2	5.22

Plate 5.22: Type I. B. Form 2. OVc: Bowls with Solid Ring-Base



TZ 012676-001



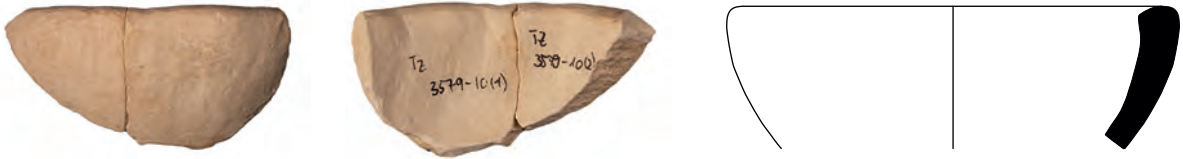
1:2

Plate 5.23: Type I. B. Form 2. OVd: Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 003579-001	2046	AN/AO 118/119	I	11	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OVd	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.23 a
TZ 014420-001	4008	AS 123	I	03 a.b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OVd	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.23 b
TZ 014421-001	3649	AE 121	I	14 a.	hard chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OVd	bowl	10 YR 8/2	5.23 c

Plate 5.23: Type I. B. Form 2. Ovd: Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base

a.



TZ 003579-001

b.



TZ 014420-001

c.



TZ 014421-001

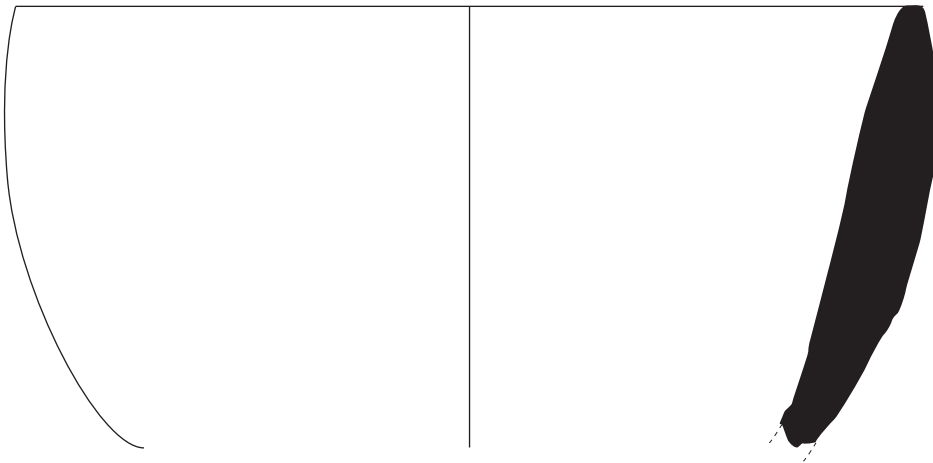


1:2

Plate 5.24: Type I. B. Form 2. OVd: Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112484-001	11240	AV 131	II	08	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 2. OVd	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.24

Plate 5.24: Type I. B. Form 2. Ovd: Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base



TZ 112484-001

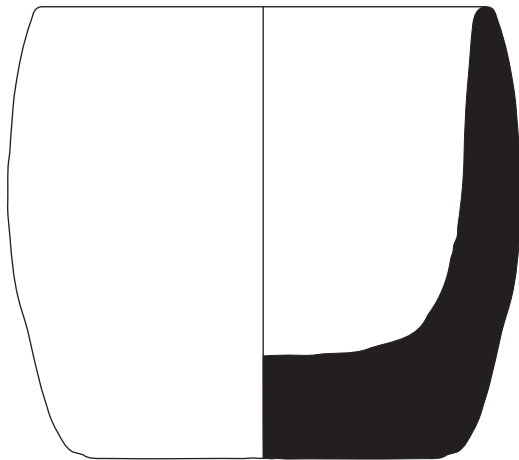


1:2

Plate 5.25: Type I.B. Form 2. OVd: Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112497-001	11084	AV 127	II	08	chalk	half of the object	Type I. B. Form 2. OVd	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.25

Plate 5.25: Type I. B. Form 2. Ovd: Bowls with Round Walls and Flat Base



TZ 112497-001

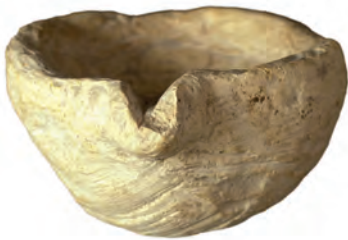
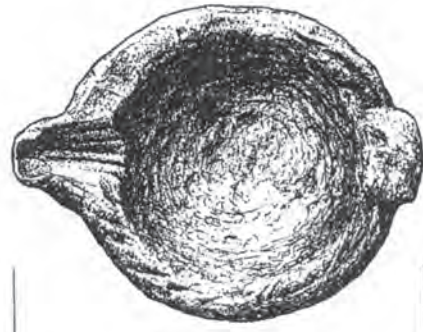
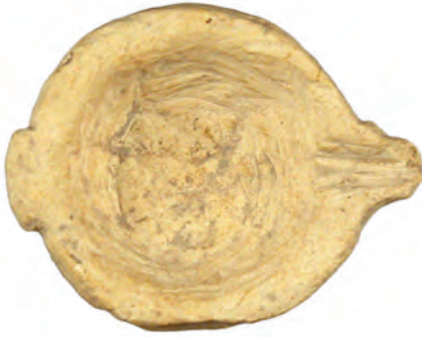


1:2

Plate 5.26: Type I. B. Form 2. OVe: Small Spouted Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 011565-001	2046	AN/AO 118/119	I	10	chalk	fully preserved	Type I. B. Form 2. OVe	spouted bowl		5.26

Plate 5.26: Type I. B. Form 2. OVe: Small Spouted Bowls



TZ 011565-001



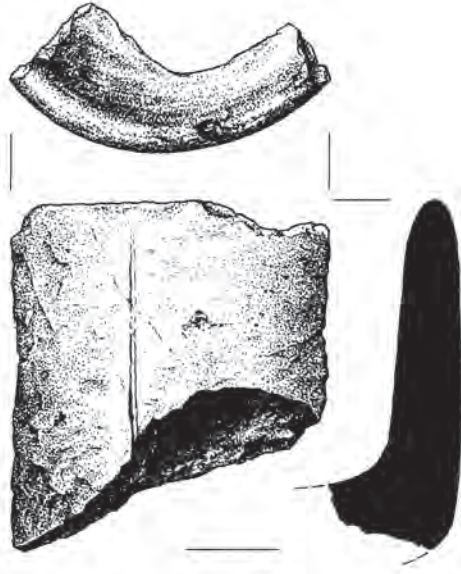
1:1

Plate 5.27: Type I.B. Form 3. OV: “Inkwells”

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 013431-001	4047	AT 122	I	00	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 3. OV	“inkwell”	10 YR 8/2	5.27 a
TZ 111309-001	10757	AW 127	II	06 a.b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 3. OV	“inkwell”	5 YR 8/2	5.27 b

Plate 5.27: Type I. B. Form 3. OV: "Inkwells"

a.



TZ 013431-001

b.



TZ 111309-001



1:2

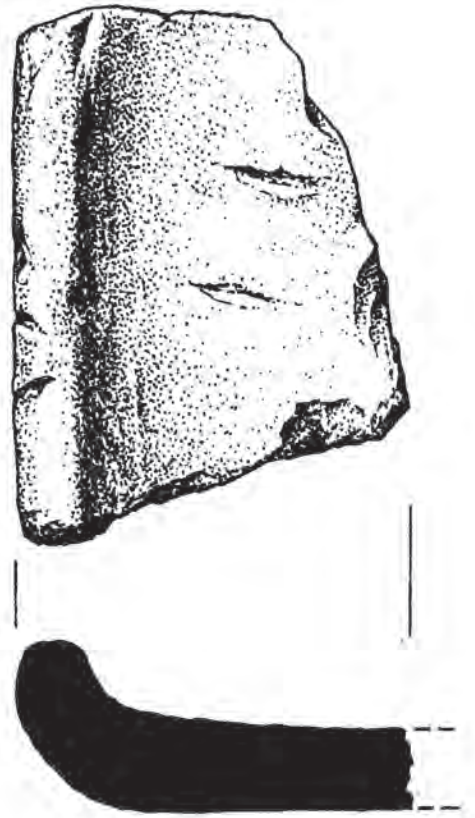
Plate 5.28: Type I. B. Form 4. OV: Trays

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 007739-001	168	AM 117	I	12	soft grey chalk	fragmentary	Type I. B. Form 4. OV	trays	7.5 YR 8/2	5.28

Plate 5.28: Type I. B. Form 4. OV: Trays



TZ 007739-001

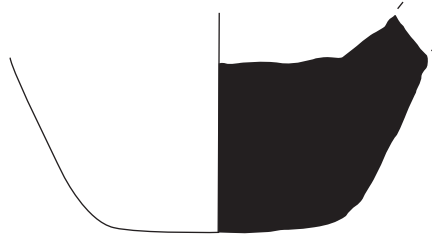


1:1

Plate 5.29: Unfinished Vessel

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112489-001	11162	AW 129	II	07 a.b.c. and 06 a.b.c.	chalk	fragmentary		unfinished vessel?	7.5 YR 8/2	5.29

Plate 5.29: Unfinished Vessel



TZ 112489-001

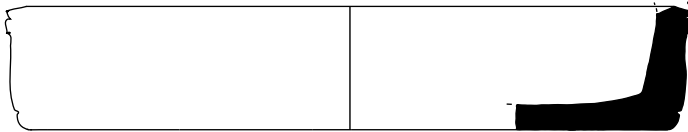
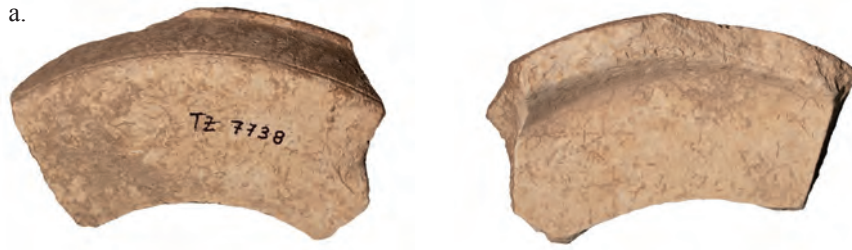


1:2

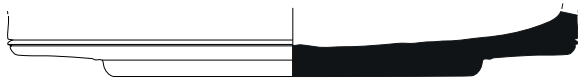
Plate 5.30: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 007738-001	1244	AH 115	I	12	soft chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.30 a
TZ 010833-001	1503	AL 118	I	07 a.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.30 b
TZ 014422-001	1230	AH 115	I	00	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.30 c

Plate 5.30: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls



TZ 007738-001



TZ 010833-001



TZ 014422-001



1:2

Plate 5.31: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015374-001	5187	AP 123	I	07 b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl		5.31 a
TZ 015375-001	5187	AP 123	I	07 b.c.	soft chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.31 b

Plate 5.31: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls

a.



TZ 015374-001

b.



TZ 015375-001



1:1

Plate 5.32: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015376-001	5187	AP 123	I	07 b.c.	hard grey chalk	very fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.32 a
TZ 015374-001, 015383-001, 015385-001	4906	AP 123	I	07 a.b.c.	chalk	reconstructed	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl		5.32 b

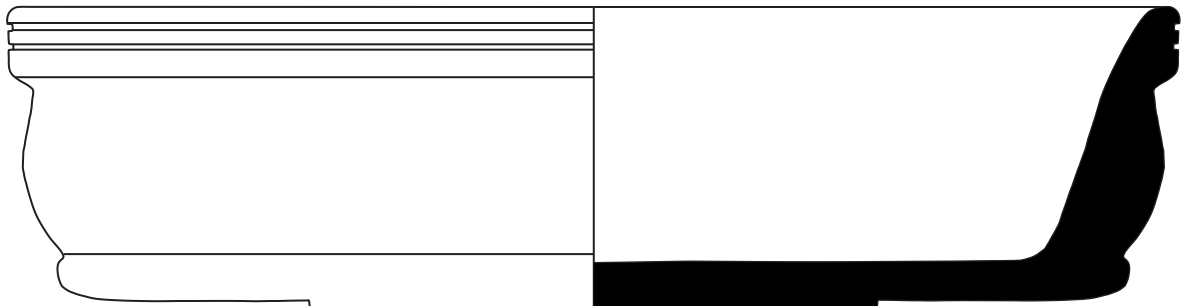
Plate 5.32: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls

a.



TZ 015376-001

b.



TZ 015374-001, 015383-001, 015385-001

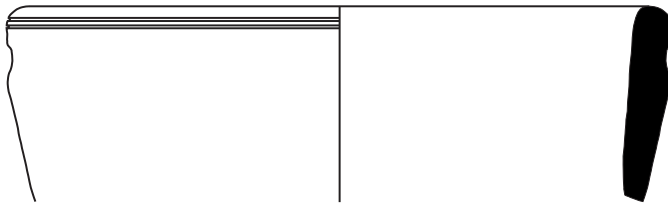


1:1

Plate 5.33: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 017232-001	4999	AP 123	I	07 a.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 1. OV	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.33

Plate 5.33: Type II. A. Form 1. OV: Shallow Bowls



TZ 017232-001



1:2

Plate 5.34: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 010284-001	2846	AQ 118	I	05 and 04 c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl		5.34 a
TZ 015379-001	5155	AP 123	I	07 a.b.c.	soft chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.34 b

Plate 5.34: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls



TZ 010284-001



TZ 015379-001

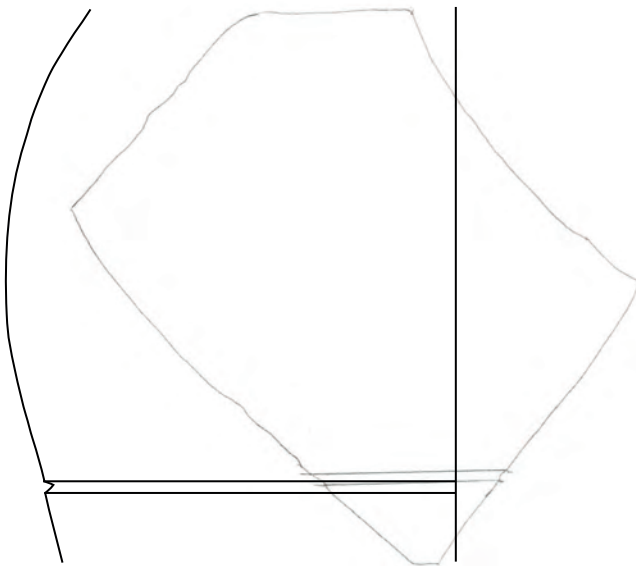


1:2

Plate 5.35: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015386-001	5116	AQ 123	I	07 a.b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	10 YR 8/2	5.35

Plate 5.35: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls



TZ 015386-001

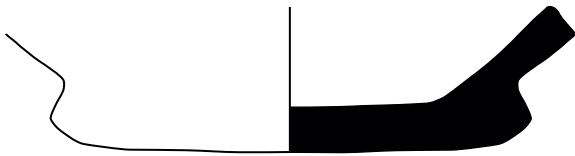
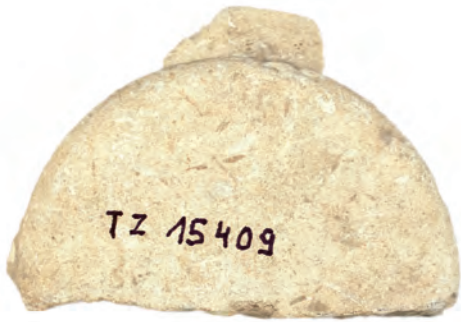


1:1

Plate 5.36: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015409-001	1098	AI 115	I	00	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl		5.36

Plate 5.36: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls



TZ 015409-001



1:1

Plate 5.37: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015948-001	5206	AQ 123	I	07 c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl		5.37 a
TZ 017226-001	4785	AM 116	I	15	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.37 b
TZ 017230-001	4991	AP 123	I	06 c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.37 c

Plate 5.37: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

a.



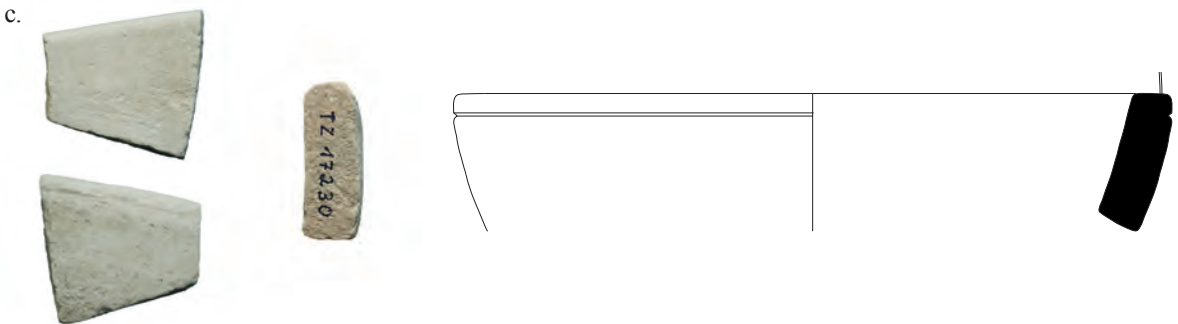
TZ 015948-001

b.



TZ 017226-001

c.



TZ 017230-001



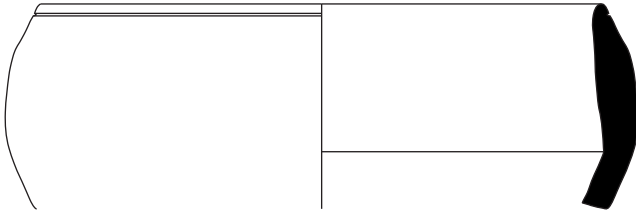
1:2

Plate 5.38: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 017234-001	5024	AQ 123	I	07 a.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.38 a
TZ 017239-001	5154	AP 123	I	07 a.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.38 b

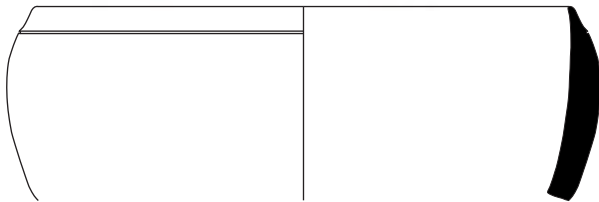
Plate 5.38: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

a.



TZ 017234-001

b.



TZ 017239-001



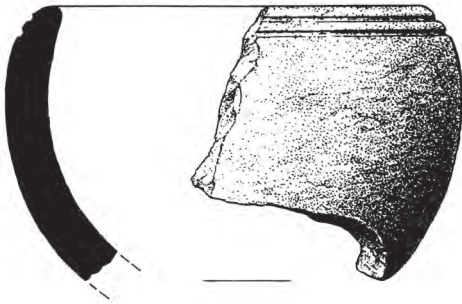
1:2

Plate 5.39: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 112487-001	10821	AS 133	II	03 a. b.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.39 a
TZ 112498-001	11086	AV 128	II	06 a.b.c. and 05	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVa	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.39 b

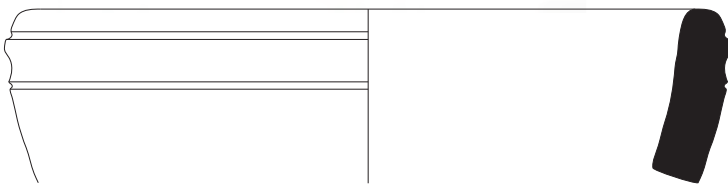
Plate 5.39: Type II. A. Form 2. OVa: Hemispherical Bowls

a.



TZ 112487-001

b.



TZ 112498-001

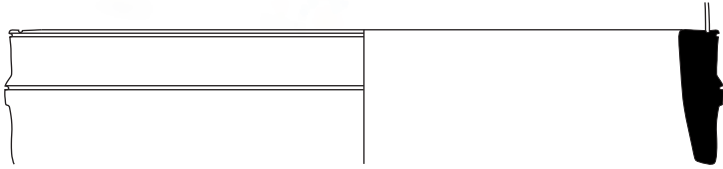


1:2

Plate 5.40: Type II. A. Form 2. OV/b: Deep Bowls with Straight Walls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 019513-001	5095	AP 123	I	07 b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. Ov/b	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.40

Plate 5.40: Type II. A. Form 2. OVb: Deep Bowls with Straight Walls



TZ 019513-001

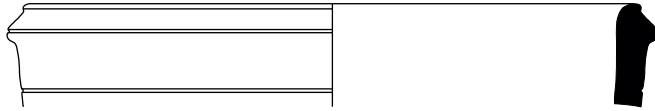


1:2

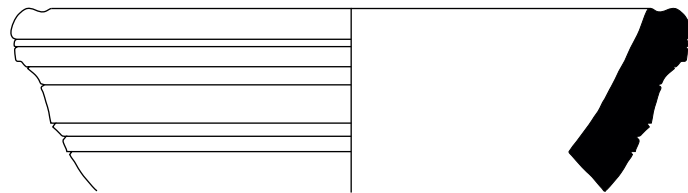
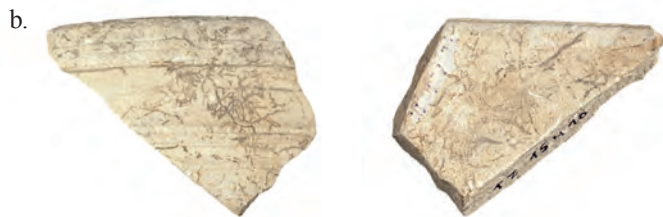
Plate 5.41: Type II. A. Form 2. OVc: Deep Bowls with Straight Walls and Folded Rims

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015405-001	5075	AP 123	I	07 b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVc	bowl	10 YR 8/2-8/3	5.41 a
TZ 015410-001	4008	AS 123	I	03 a.b.	hard chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVc	bowl	10 YR 8/2	5.41 b

Plate 5.41: Type II. A. Form 2. OVC: Deep Bowls with Straight Walls and Folded Rims



TZ 015405-001



TZ 015410-001



1:2

Plate 5.42: Type II. A. Form 2. OVd: Deep Bowls with Carinated Walls

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 017231-001	4999	AP 123	I	07 a.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2. OVd	bowl	5 YR 8/2	5.42

Plate 5.42: Type II. A. Form 2. Ovd: Deep Bowls with Carinated Walls



TZ 017231-001



1:2

Plate 5.43: Bowls with Decorative Strip/Handle: Type II. A. Form 2. OVe

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015397-001	4858	AP 123	I	06 a.b.	grey hard chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2.i.OVe (decorative strip)	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.43 a
TZ 017233-001	4997	AP 123	I	06 c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2.i.OVe (decorative strip)	bowl	7.5 YR 8/2	5.43 b
TZ 015394-001	4817	AP 123	I	06 b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. A. Form 2.ii.OVe (handle)	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.43 c

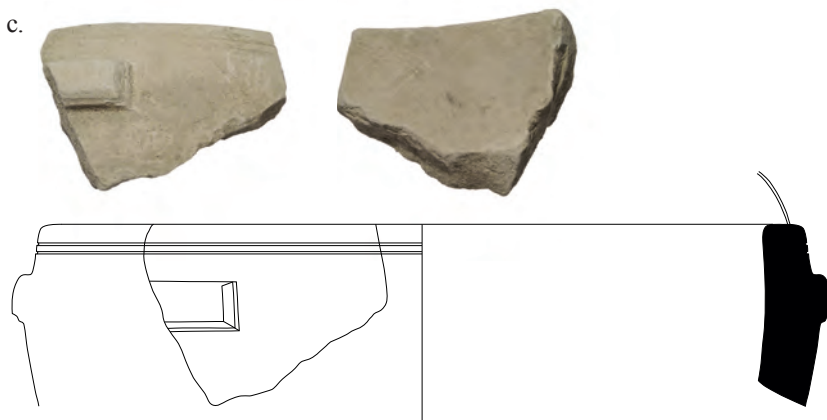
Plate 5.43: Bowls with Decorative Strip/Handle: Type II. A. Form 2. OVe



TZ 015397-001



TZ 017233-001



TZ 015394-001

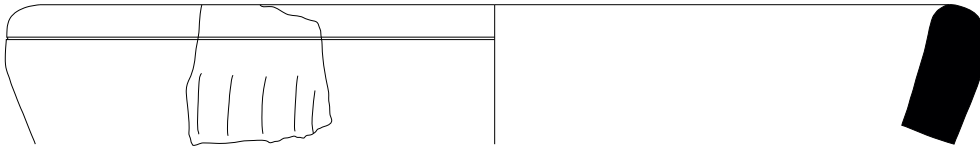


1:2

Plate 5.44: Lathe-turned Bowls with Hand-carved Decoration: Type II. B. Form 1. OV

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015406-001	4816	AP 123	I	06 a.b.c.	chalk	fragmentary	Type II. B. Form 1. OV	bowl	10 YR 8/1	5.44

Plate 5.44: Lathe-turned Bowls with Hand-carved Decoration: Type II. B. Form 1. OV



TZ 015406-001



1:2

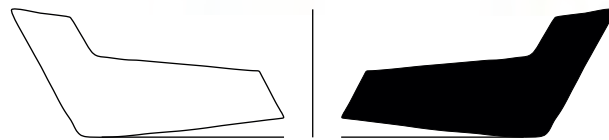
Plate 5.45: Fragments of Hand-carved Vessels

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 004152-001	2528	AG/AH 116	I	12	soft chalk	fragmentary		mug/pitcher/ bowl	10 YR 8/2	5.45 a
TZ 015398-001	4343	AR 123	I	07 a.b.c/ 06 a.b.c.	hard chalk	fragmentary		mug/bowl?	10 YR 8/2	5.45 b
TZ 112496-001	11162	AW 129	II	07 a.b.c/ 06 a.b.c.	chalk	fragmentary		mug?	5 YR 8/2	5.45 c

Plate 5.45: Fragments of Hand-carved Vessels



TZ 004152-001



TZ 015398-001



TZ 112496-001



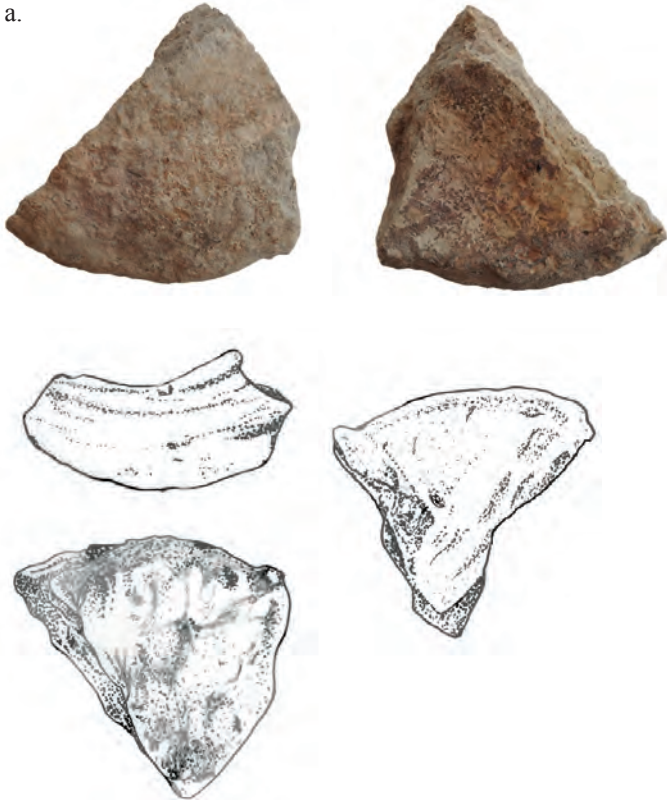
1:2

Plate 5.46: Fragments of Hand-carved Vessels

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 113047-001	11605	AW 127	II	-21.00	limestone	fragmentary			7.5 YR 8/2	5.46 a
TZ 113363-001	11656	AX 129	II	-21.80	hard, reddish chalk	fragmentary			7.5 YR 8/2	5.46 b

Plate 5.46: Fragments of Hand-carved Vessels

a.



TZ 113047-001

b.



TZ 113363-001

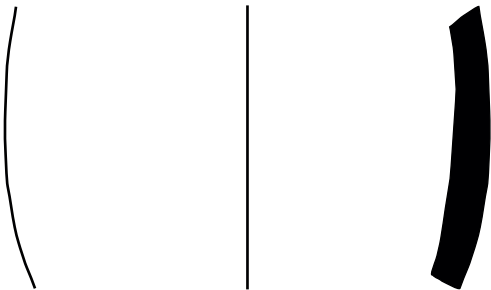


1:2

Plate 5.47: Fragments of Lathe-turned Vessels

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
TZ 015381-001	5201	AQ 123	I	07 c.	hard chalk	fragmentary			10 YR 8/2	5.47

Plate 5.47: Fragments of Lathe-turned Vessels



TZ 015381-001

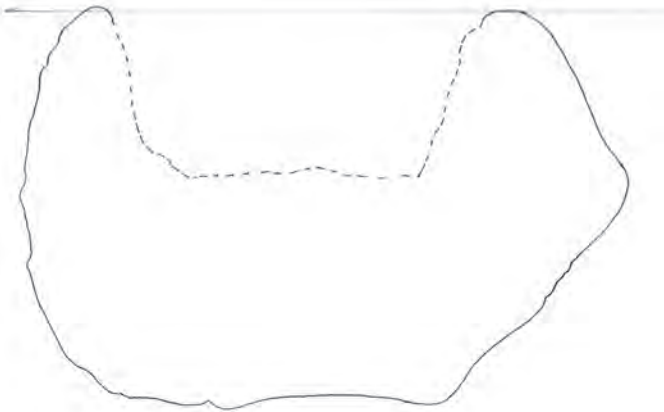


1:1

Plate 5.48: Unfinished Vessel from Ĥirbat al-Mukhayyat

Find Number	Context	Square	Area	Stratum	Material	State of Preservation	Typology	Type	Colour	Plate
KMAP 14.176	Locus 12	47	Field C	07 c.	hard chalk	fragmentary			10 YR 9.5/1	5.48

Plate 5.48: Unfinished Vessel from Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat



KMAP 14.176



1:2

6. FINDS OF JEWISH MATERIAL CULTURE IN TRANSJORDAN

The finding of chalkstone vessels in Tall Zirā'a was not an isolated occurrence in Transjordan. However, there has never been an in-depth study regarding the particular material culture associated with a Jewish presence and its religious implications during the Hellenistic and Roman periods there. The Peraea region with its Jewish sites has been the subject of detailed studies but material associated with Jews has not been researched anywhere else in Transjordan. Moreover, chalkstone vessels, certain types of pottery, and ritual stepped pools were often not identified by the excavators in Transjordan, as they had no knowledge of those objects and installations. The distribution of certain finds elucidates the political borders between Jewish, Nabatean, and Graeco-Roman dominated parts of Transjordan. Those borders shifted during the Classical periods, and study of material culture helps to understand the political and social dynamics involved in the changing of boundaries.

During the Classical periods, Transjordan can be thought of as being separated into several different areas, each of which was mainly under Hasmonean/Herodian, Nabatean, or Decapolis league control. Those borders changed throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but they can be reconstructed through textual and archaeological evidence. During the second and early first century BC, Hasmonean expansion politics dominated Peraea and territories beyond, whereas the first century BC to the Herodian period saw the Nabatean influence grow. The Hasmonean domination over the region began in the late 160s BC, after the siege of Madeba and the establishment of the fortification of Machaerus. Prior to that time, Peraea was not a Jewish territory, although a considerable number of Jews were living in the area. The Hasmonean Kingdom under Alexander Jannaeus extended its territory to the south as far as Sayl Hīdān. The eastern limit at that time was marked by the Madeba plain (Tall al-'Umēri, Ḥisbān, Madeba, and Libb). In the north, the Wādī as-Sir was the boundary. Towards the end

of Jannaeus's life, he succeeded in annexing the Greek-Syrian cities of Pella, Dion, Gadara, Hippos, Abila, and Gerasa. When the Hasmoneans captured Idumaea (Ant. Iud. 13, 9, 1) and the Galilee (ca. 115 and 103 BC), the regions had to be 'Judaized', something which is not reported for Peraea. 1 Macc. 5:23 and 5:45–54 provide information about Simon, who defeated the gentiles in the Galilee and brought Jews from the Galilee and Arbatta to Judaea. The same was true of Judah, who, after a successful battle, brought Jews from Gilead/Peraea to Judaea. Instead of Judaizing these regions, Simon and Judah took the Jews to the safe harbour of Judaea¹.

In contrast, the Nabatean influence in the west included 'Ammān and Mudayna ath-Thamad. The Nabateans achieved new dominance during the conflict between Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II and added Madeba and Libb to their territory, and probably Machaerus and Ḥirbat 'Atarūz as well. The hilly region of the Madeba Plain remained under Hasmonean influence. Herod regained control over Machaerus and after a victory over Malichus I in 32/31 BC in the 'Ammān region, the Nabateans gave up settlements and fortresses around Wādī as-Sir. Ḥisbān- Tall al-'Umēri area and Wādī as-Sir were probably the main regions with Jewish settlements². At the beginning of Herod's reign in 40 BC, brigands fled over the Jordan River to escape Herod's control in the Galilee. Josephus reported that Herod did not chase after those who left (Bell. Iud. 1, 16, 3; Ant. Iud. 14, 15, 4) and that they settled beyond the Jordan. Herod's political control over Peraea was established in 31 BC and later extended to embrace other newly founded Jewish settlements in other parts in Transjordan, including Gaulanitis and Batanea east of the Sea of Galilee³. Herod populated military colonies such as Ḥisbān/Esebous with "select horsemen" (Ant. Iud. 15, 8, 5), which were probably elite units, and built a complex of fortresses, strongholds, fortified villages, and towns all along the borders of Peraea⁴.

1 Kokkinos 2016, 276; Schürer 1973, 142.

2 Ji 2009, 626–629, Fig. 2–4. A. Porter 1999, 88–89, 97. Porter emphasizes that 1 Macc. (5) has to be read more carefully. The passage tells of Judah rescuing the Jews in the Galilee and Gilead from their gentile neighbours. However, Gilead

should be read as Galaaditis in the north, and particularly northern Transjordan, and does not include Peraea, see Porter 1999, 88, 94–95; further Smallwood 1976, 14–15.

3 Kokkinos 2016, 277–278; Porter 1999, 112.

4 Kasher 1988, 152–154; Kasher 1990, 108; Thiel 2007, 250.

Herod put the region under the command of his youngest brother Pheroras, who was named Tetrarch of Peraea in 20 BC. After Herod's death in 4 BC, the Galilee and Peraea were ruled by his son Antipas, and both regions remained Jewish during his reign. This tradition continued under Agrippa I until he died in 43 AD, at which time Judaea, the Galilee, and Peraea came under direct Roman rule⁵. It is likely that there were Jewish settlements in Peraea during the First Jewish Revolt. In 93 AD, after Agrippa II's death, his territories in Transjordan were integrated into the Province of Syria⁶. Around 100 AD, the region of Transjordan came under direct Roman rule. The Romans developed a *limes* (Roman boundary wall) around the eastern boundaries of the Decapolis. Former Nabatean structures were rebuilt as camps, forts, and watchtowers. New road networks connected the provincial capital of Bostra with the southern part of the province⁷. In terms of Jewish settlement history, the only documents relating to a Jewish presence at the southeastern end of the Dead Sea in Peraea during the time of the Bar Kokhva revolt come from the Babatha archive⁸. Archaeological and textual finds from the following Byzantine period relate to Jewish communities in Gerasa and/or Rabat Moab, which were outside Peraea. Cities in Peraea, such as Livias and Gador, and former Jewish towns such as Mount Nebo had a mainly Christian population in the Byzantine era⁹. Transjordan is mentioned in rabbinical sources as the land "beyond the Jordan". One of the main (and only) historical sources for the geography of Eretz-Israel in rabbinic thought is the Baraita תחומי ארץ ישראל, which gives the outlines of the borders of the land in connection with the obligation to keep the Sabbatical year and send offerings to Jerusalem¹⁰. The description includes parts of Transjordan, such as Tall Nimrān, Ḥisbān, and Petra.

The Baraita should be read as a reflection on territory that was settled by Jews after the Babylonian exile or in the case of the noted gentile territories as a reminder of the connection of Jews to their land¹¹.

The following discussion of Jewish material culture in Transjordan is based on archaeological publications and personal investigation. The evidence is incomplete, but it can deliver valid information on the distribution of relevant objects and installations. The following finds and installations were considered for the present study:

- Chalkstone vessels
- Ritual stepped pools
- Kefar Hananya Ware
- Knife-pared lamps
- Ossuaries¹²

Other finds such as tombs and stone quarries are mentioned if they indicate evidence of a Jewish presence.

5 Kokkinos 2016, 278–279; Porter 1999, 141, 160–161, 167, 188.

6 Porter 1999, 201.

7 El-Khoury 2009, 24.

8 The sources in the Babatha archive suggest that the Jews used Roman courts and that their legal practice sometimes differed from the halakha, see Porter 1999, 194–195, 205.

9 The term Peraea was later on used by Eusebius to describe the territory of the Decapolis cities Pella, Gadara, and Hippos-Susita. The term disappeared in the sources in the fifth century AD, see Ben-David 2009, 66–68.

10 The Baraita can be found in SifrDeut 51, tShevi 4:5, and yShevi 16, for further discussion, see Sussmann 1976, 213.

11 The boundary described encloses the largest Jewish settlement/conquest during the Second Temple period, including the lands of the Hasmonean conquest and the Herodian expansion. The northeastern part was inhabited by the returnees of Babylon. The districts Paneas, Batanea, and Trachon were only settled by Jews during the Herodian rule, see Ben-David 2011, 234–237; Ben-Eliyahu 2019, 100; Magness 2017, 47–48, 54.

12 Not all the finds and relevant sites are depicted in detail in the figures. A selection illustrates crucial finds and settlement structures.

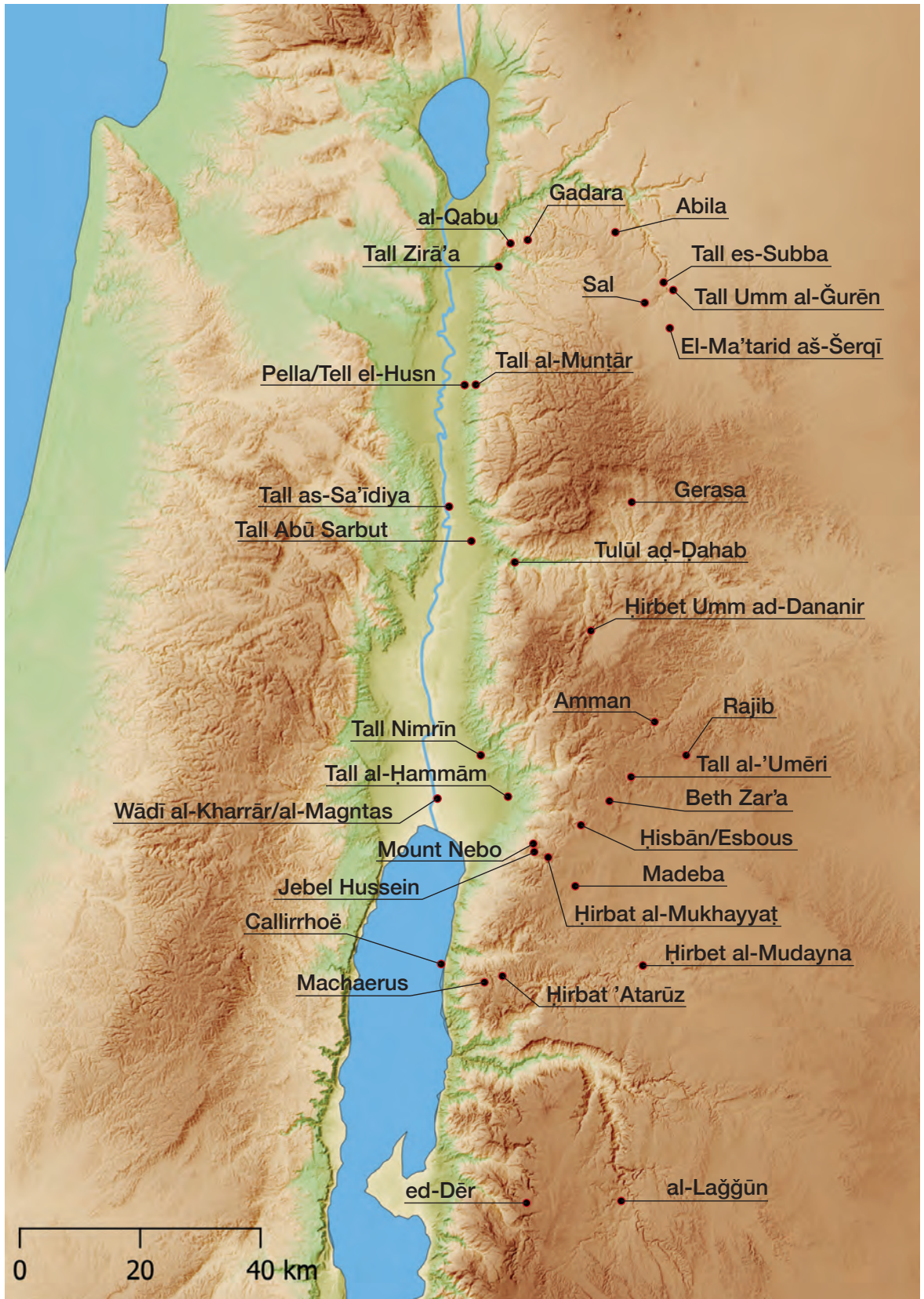


Fig. 6.1 Sites in Transjordan cited in the following discussion (Source: P. Leiverkus, GPIA/BAI).

6.1. Peraea

Peraea, which was under influence of the Hasmonean and later Herodian rulers from 160 BC on was the principal area of Jewish settlement, and it yielded more archaeological evidence of material culture related to religious and purity concerns than anywhere else in Transjordan¹³. The Hasmonean and Herodian kingdoms established several military strongholds there in the Jordan Valley. The fortification in Transjordan formed an eastern military network with Masada, Herodeion, Hyrcania, Cypros, Doq, and Alexandreion on the western side¹⁴. The archaeological data indicate an increased number of rural sites during the Hasmonean period, in contrast to the preceding Hellenistic era¹⁵.

Material associated with Jews was identified in a total of 13 sites. Only ossuaries and Kefar Hananya ware are absent from the relevant find assemblages. Knife-pared lamps were found at four sites: Tall Abū Sarbut, Tall al-Ḥammām, Wādī al-Kharrār, and Ḥisbān. Both ritual stepped pools and chalkstone vessels were excavated at Machaerus, Tall al-‘Umēri, and Wādī al-Kharrār. However, at least at Machaerus, the chalkstone vessels were brought to the stronghold after their use by the Hasmonean and Herodian rulers, who built the ritual stepped pools, so the use of such pools predates the occurrence of chalkstone vessels at the site.

Sites	Chalkstone vessels	Ritual stepped pools	Kefar Hananya ware	Knife-pared lamps	Ossuaries
Machaerus	22	6			
Callirhoë	68				
Tulūl aḍ-Ḍahab		1			
Ḥirbat ‘Atarūz		1			
Tall Nimrīn	4				
Tall Abū Sarbut	167			1	
al-Laḡḡūn	1				
Tall al-Ḥammām				1	
Wādī al-Kharrār	12	1		8	
Ḥisbān	36			22	
Tall al-‘Umēri	1	1			
Ḥirbet Umm ad-Dananir	25				
Beth Zar’a				1	

Tab. 6.1 Distribution of finds in the Peraea (Source: F. Schöpf).

13 Kokkinos 2016, 271–273.

14 Vörös 2013, 154–155.

15 Tal 2009, 61; Thiel 2007, 379.

6.1.1. Machaerus

Machaerus, probably called the ‘Herodium Towards Arabia’, had military importance during the Hasmonean and Herodian periods and was a key point in the eastern defensive network of the Jerusalem Kingdom¹⁶. The unique geographical position of Machaerus offered a clear view of the hilltop of Jericho and Jerusalem, as well as the Temple Mount. Before Herod’s building activity at Machaerus, the strategic stronghold, which was founded by Alexander Jannaeus (90–57 BC), had three towers and a surrounding wall to ensure his control over the Wādī Zarqā’. The Herodian Machaerus Royal Palace (ca. 30 BC–36 AD) with a lower city and aqueduct was similar to structures in Masada and the Alexandreion. The destruction of the Herodian palace is marked by an excavated black ash layer. A Roman garrison dated to ca. 44–71 AD was subsequently built over it, which was probably the site of a battle between the Zealots and the Legion X Fretensis, commanded by Lucilius Bassus in 71 AD. After the Roman conquest, the site was abandoned for some time¹⁷.

Six ritual stepped pools, dating to the Hasmonean and Herodian occupations, were identified during several excavations. During the first one in 1968, a ritual stepped pool was found right outside the early Roman bathhouse of the Herodian palace. The pool had a vaulted roof and could be closed off with a wooden door. Five steps lead down to the basin, with the last step being the steepest one. In 1981, a domestic ritual stepped pool was excavated inside a house in the lower city of Machaerus. Four narrow steps lead to the pool, which was hewn out of the bedrock. In 2016 and 2017, a double installation of two ritual stepped pools side by side was discovered outside the bathhouse of the Northern Wing of the Herodian Palace. Another monumental ritual stepped pool with 12 steps, which was part of a rainwater system was set next to six other plastered basins in a row, where water flowed from one into the other. This large ritual stepped pool, which is comparable to structures known from Jericho and Qumran, was probably covered by a vault. All of the above installations feature the same sort of plaster and can be dated to the Herodian period¹⁸. A Hasmonean ritual stepped pool found under the southeastern Doric portico corridor during the 1980s excavation had been filled in when the Herodian palace was being built¹⁹.



Fig. 6.2 Archaeological remains on top of Machaerus with a covered up ritual stepped pool in the front right corner (Source: F. Schöpf).

The chalkstone vessels at Machaerus are of a later date than the ritual stepped pools and belong to the Zealot occupation (ca. 36–71 AD). They were not included in the corpus of the “1968 List of Finds from Machaerus” by J. Vardaman, although the excavator, R. Dajani, mentioned “numerous...parts of stone cups” which were discovered in Area CV, in connection with the Vault (ritual stepped pool). The archaeological work under G. Vörös revealed 22 stone vessels in the Cobb Institute, 19 of which came from Area CV and three that were unearthed close to the Vault (nos. 5 and 22 – both of them from Area B, Trench 1; North End). The third one was found outside the citadel in the channel of the aqueduct. The chalkstone vessels were found together with a concentration of ostraca around the Vault in Area CV, which was the royal ritual stepped pool of the Herodian Palace. Eleven coins and 16 ostraca found in the filling of the Herodian stepped pool date to the period that the Zealots occupied the citadel during the First Jewish Revolt. During the Roman conquest in 71 AD, the remaining material in the citadel was dumped in the stepped pool, which was then used as a dump. All of the material is datable before 71 AD, and is probably the material heritage of the Zealots²⁰.

16 Vörös 2013, 154–155.

17 Ji 2009, 620; Strobel et al. 2003, 16; Vörös 2018, 437.

18 Vörös 2018, 438–447, Fig. 12–20, 23–24.

19 Vörös 2018, 448–449.

20 Vörös 2015, 473–474.

6.1.2. Callirrhoë (‘Ain az-Zāra)

Callirrhoë was probably the port for the fortress of Machaerus. The Herodian expansion of that Hasmonean fortress was connected to the water-rich oasis around Callirrhoë. The Dead Sea settlement was a link between Jericho and Machaerus, the two royal-state domains, and the fertile area was an important supply base. During the Hasmonean period, the place was easily accessible from Jericho over the Dead Sea. According to Josephus, Machaerus and Callirrhoë were located at the far southern border of Peraea (Bell. Iud. 3, 3, 3) and formed the southern border between the Jewish and the Nabatean regions²¹.

The Herodian residence faced northwest towards the Dead Sea, with a clear view of the sea and the Judaeian hills as well as Jerusalem. The early Roman settlement dates from about the late first century BC to 70 AD (Stratum IIIB). The large building in Stratum IIIB has been identified as a Herodian villa with a peristyle courtyard and domestic structures, most of which were destroyed during the second half of the first century AD,

probably parallel to the events of 70 AD. The villa complex embraced several buildings in the oasis of Callirrhoë, including farmsteads, bathhouses, a renewed port, thermal baths, aqueducts, and fortified walls. A military supply road was built between Machaerus and Callirrhoë, as was a highway into the Jordan Valley with a further connection to the Via Traiana and Arnon²².

The excavated chalkstone vessels came from Strata II–III of the Herodian villa complex. Most of them were found near the water basin inside the peristyle courtyard in Locus 1328 and 1403. It is likely that parts of the remaining structures were reused and that the water basin served as a garbage dump. The material excavated from the dump consisted of early Roman pottery and several coins dating to the First Jewish Revolt, that is, to the last quarter of the first century AD²³. R. Deines was able to distinguish a total of 45 chalkstone vessels in the assemblage. A. Strobel suggests that the Jewish rebels reused the Herodian structures and brought the chalkstone vessels with them²⁴.

6.1.3. Tulūl ad-Dahab

Tulūl ad-Dahab consists of two parallel fortified hilltops 35 km northwest of Amman, on the edges of the River Zarqā'. The settlement structures of the Iron Age and Classical periods are on the western hilltop, which is divided into four terraces. The two hills had a strategic significance since they blocked the way from the west to the east through the valley of the river, and was on the crossroads of the north-south connection in the Jordan Valley, but it became less important after the construction of the Roman roads²⁵.

For the relevant Hellenistic period (second–first century BC), the excavators were able to reconstruct two Doric peristyle courtyards. The columns had collapsed and/or were subsequently reused²⁶.

The Doric capitals and the heart-shaped corner pillars are comparable to features of the Hasmone-

an residences on Masada, Machaerus, and Jericho. Moreover, finds such as painted plaster, mosaics, and fine wares suggest that the buildings on top of the fortified hill were luxurious. The identification of the place as a Hasmonean outpost, however, must remain speculative. The place was reused sporadically after it was destroyed in the middle of the first century BC²⁷. The surveys undertaken between 1980 and 1982 found a few early Roman pottery sherds²⁸.

One stepped pool was uncovered in Square 110 (installation I.14 and I.16), that cut the earlier structures of the Hasmonean peristyle courtyards. The plastered pool was built of ashlars and fieldstones²⁹. The installation, dated after the period of that saw peristyle courtyards and probably Hasmonean residence, has the features of a typical ritual stepped pool.

21 Strobel et al. 2003, 15, 71.

22 Strobel et al. 2003, 72.

23 Strobel et al. 2003, 40–41.

24 Strobel et al. 2003, 46–47.

25 Pola et al. 2016, 77–79.

26 Pola et al. 2016, 95–96.

27 Pola et al. 2016, 105, 112–113.

28 Gordon – Villiers 1983, 284.

29 Pola et al. 2016, 86–87, Abb. 8, 10–11, 51.

The seven steps leading to the pool end in a higher step, as was typical for the entry into the basin. Another block was set on the floor of the pool on the northwest edge, which probably served as an easy entry into the pool. The rectangular pool measures $2.80 \times 2.25 \times 2.40$ m. The walls have a thick plaster coating, ca. 0.17 m. The pottery material found in the filling of the pool dates to the Iron Age and Hellenistic periods. The dating after the destruction in the middle of the first century BC corresponds with the appearance of ritual stepped pools in Eretz-Israel³⁰.

The excavators doubt the identification as a ritual stepped pool since the plaster is unlike that on the pools at Machaerus and the installation does not have a connected cistern³¹. However, it is well known from the numerous ritual stepped pools excavated in Eretz-Israel that they vary a great deal in terms of building techniques, size, and water supply. In particular, ritual stepped pools found at rural

sites in Judaea do not feature any adjacent structure, such as a cistern³². The pool at Tulūl aḏ-Ḍahab is rather a type typical of rural settlements which is unlike those of the second and first century BC, such as the one in Machaerus.

As no other domestic remains at the site were dated later than the mid-first century BC, it is not possible to determine the kind of resettlement structure to which ritual stepped pool belonged. The published pottery includes early Roman finds, but those pieces were identified as earlier Hellenistic pottery³³. It includes, for example, two cooking pot fragments that can be compared to pieces from Jerusalem and Judaea dating from the late first century BC to 70 AD. There are similar in the assemblage of the Zealot occupation of Masada³⁴. Another fragment, identified as a jug, can be compared to cooking pots typical of Jerusalem, Masada, and Jericho from the late first century BC to 70 AD³⁵.

6.1.4. Ḥirbat ‘Atarūz

The archaeological site of Hirbat ‘Atarūz (hereafter: Ataruz) is near the modern town Ḡabal Ḥamidah and just 3 km east of Machaerus. Since 2000, the five excavated fields have yielded finds primarily from Iron Age IIA (ca. 920–800 BC) to Iron Age IIB (ca. 800–700 BC). The site was probably abandoned during Iron Age IIB and only resettled during the late Hellenistic period (Strata 5–4). That period is evident in Fields A and C, where the Iron Age temple structures were partly reused. The contemporary rich agricultural hinterland was ideal for the cultivation of cereals, oil, and wine. A plastered bath in Field C on the southwestern slope was dated late Hellenistic and identified as ritual stepped pool³⁶.

Labelled as Installation C01, it was cut directly into the limestone and was reached by five steps leading down into a rectangular bedrock court, which was separated from the pool by a doorway. From the doorway, five more steps lead down to the actual bath. The bath was plastered, and pottery sherds in the plaster hint at a construction date during the late Hellenistic or early Roman period³⁷.

The dating of the ritual stepped pool at Ataruz matches the Hasmonean and Herodian occupation of nearby Machaerus. The abandonment of the site during the first century AD accords with the decline of Machaerus after the First Jewish Revolt.

6.1.5. Tall Nimrīn

Tall Nimrīn is 12 km north of the Dead Sea, and another 16 km east of Jericho. The region of Tall Nimrīn was noted as the border in regard to certain

halakhic rules concerning the Sabbatical year as בית נמרה in the Jerusalem Talmud (yShevi 25b:3). In Josephus Bell. Iud., the area is described as a place

30 Pola et al. 2016, 87, 113, Abb. 11.

31 Pola et al. 2016, 110.

32 33 Zissu – Amit 2008, 51–52.

33 Pola et al. 2016, 110.

34 Pola et al. 2016, Abb. 69–70, for the comparisons cooking pots with triangular rim, see Tchekhanovets 2013, 113–114.

35 Pola et al. 2016, Abb. 75; Tchekhanovets 2013, Fig. 5.6:4–5.

36 Ji 2011, 561–564, 570–574, 578.

37 Ji 2011, 574–575.

where the Romans attacked the Jewish refugees during the revolt and destroyed the similarly named town (Bethennabris, Bell. Iud. 4, 7, 4–5)³⁸.

Archaeological excavations revealed a continuous occupation of the site dating from the early Bronze Age to the Ottoman and modern periods. The settlement had water resources and was connected to trading routes down to the Jordan Valley to the west and by the Wādī Shu'aib to the eastern plateau. Hellenistic or early Roman strata were not identified but were suggested through small finds³⁹.

6.1.6. Tall Abū Sarbut

The site, which is in the Jordan Valley, was settled from the late Hellenistic to the Roman period. After a hiatus, it was resettled during the Abbasid period⁴². In 2015, installations of one or two buildings dating from the first or second to the second or third century AD were excavated. The building remains included cooking installations, small rooms, and courtyards

6.1.7. al-Lağğūn

al-Lağğūn is near the source of the 'Ain Lağğūn spring and overlooks the only practical east-west route via the deep Wādī ed-Dabba, a route that is still in use today via the modern highway from Karak to Quatrana. In Roman times it connected the Via Nova Traiana with the eastern desert route. During the Roman period, al-Lağğūn served as a fortified legionary fortress⁴⁷. The actual use of the barracks in the fortress can be dated to the late Roman period. The best evidence of active life in the barracks during that time was found in Area B, where sev-

The Hellenistic and Roman pottery assemblage, which is dated from the second to the first century AD, includes four early Roman lathe-turned chalkstone vessel fragments, which were mistakenly identified in the subsequent publication as late Islamic limestone bowls⁴⁰. Three of the chalkstone vessel fragments are bases of hemispherical bowls. The fourth one was a half preserved fragment of a hemispherical bowl with a flat base and four incised lines on the sloping rim⁴¹.

with bread ovens, which led to the structures being identified as domestic households⁴³. During the 2015 excavation some 150 complete chalkstone vessels or fragments were found inside the remains of the buildings⁴⁴. Seventeen more fragments of chalkstone vessels were registered in Area H⁴⁵, as was one spout of a Herodian knife-pared lamp⁴⁶.

eral storage holes and pits were found inside the architectural remains. Facilities such as a cooking area and stoves, and animal bones suggest domestic use during the late Roman period. It is likely that food was prepared for an individual *contubernium* (army unit) in the small cooking area. The barracks were inhabited for a long time⁴⁸. One fragment of a hand-carved chalkstone vessel was found inside the barracks. The inside of the vessel is polished, and the outside is decorated with chisel marks. Part of the handle is preserved⁴⁹.

6.1.8. Tall al-Hammām

Tall al-Hammām is in the Jordan Valley, ca. 12 km northeast of the Dead Sea and ca. 12 km east of Riv-

er Jordan. Excavations since 2006 have revealed finds from the Chalcolithic to the Islamic periods⁵⁰.

38 Deines 1993, 156.

39 Flanagan – McCreery 1990.

40 Dornemann 1990, 153, 155.

41 Dornemann 1990, 154, Fig. 1:22–25.

42 Dornemann 1990, 154, Fig. 1:22–25.

43 Steiner et al. 2016, 641–642.

44 Steiner et al. 2016, 642.

45 Steiner et al. 2013, 42, Fig. 7.

46 Steiner et al. 2013, 43.

47 Parker 1987, 187, 193.

48 Groot 1987, 270, 274.

49 Parker 1987, 514–516, Plate 91:88.

50 Collins – Hamdan 2009.

From the Classical period, only a few pottery sherds were found on the upper tall, and even fewer on the lower tall, except in the area close to the monumental Roman/Byzantine structure in Field LR⁵¹. One

6.1.9. Wādī al-Kharrār

Several archaeological sites were excavated along the Wādī al-Kharrār, the modern name for the ancient Sapsaphas. The area is associated with the place where John the Baptist preached, so it is also called Bethany beyond the Jordan. The several archaeological sites are distributed over small hills and terraces of marl chalkstone formation and limestone. Several of the investigated sites had early Roman and Roman architectural remains, including early Roman pottery and small finds⁵³.

Chalkstone vessels and knife-pared lamps were found in excavations at Tall al-Kharrār, site no.7, together with several building remains dated to the late Roman period⁵⁴. The assemblage of chalkstone vessels consists of seven mugs or pitchers, represented by wall, handle, and spout fragments. The walls are all chisel-marked and there is one hand-carved bowl with chisel-marks. Three lathe-turned

knife-pared lamp is reported from the building in excavation Field UA, together with Hellenistic and Roman pottery⁵².

fragments were identified as parts of deep bowls, and one shallow base fragment might have belonged to a shallow bowl type⁵⁵. Eight knife-pared lamp sherds found at the same site were dated to the end of the first century BC. Some had incised lines decorating the nozzles⁵⁶.

Al-Maghtas has monastic cells carved into cliffs, Byzantine churches and buildings with mosaics, and several pools. One pool was a large, stepped structure with wide steps built into the northern side and walls made of stone with a plaster coating. The pool was connected to the Byzantine period buildings and there was some Roman pottery in its vicinity. It remains uncertain as to whether the stepped pool was already in use during the early Roman period or represents a later (Christian) building phase associated with the Byzantine buildings⁵⁷.

6.1.10. Ḥisbān/Hešbon/Esbous

Ḥisbān, which is 9 km north of Madeba and lies on a limestone plateau, 895 m above sea level, served as a lookout point towards the west of Wādī el-Majjar, which leads to the Jordan Valley. South-east and south, the Madeba Plain with Mount Nebo are visible. The site was identified as the biblical Heshbon. During Classical times, the settlement was mentioned in the sources as Esbous. Several excavations have indicated that the site was occupied from ca. 1200 BC, Iron Age I, up until the nineteenth century, with a hiatus between the sixth century to 198 BC and another from 969 to 1200 AD. The Hellenistic and Roman periods are attested in Strata 15–11⁵⁸.



Fig. 6.3 View over the 'acropolis' at Ḥisbān, mainly late Roman and Byzantine remains (Source: F. Schöpf).

51 Collins – Hamdan 2009, 409–410.

52 Collins – Hamdan 2009, 410.

53 Abu Shmeis – Waheeb 2002, 561.

54 Abu Shmeis – Waheeb 2002, 562.

55 Abu Shmeis – Waheeb 2002, 565, Fig. 4.

56 Abu Shmeis – Waheeb 2002, 568, Fig. 7:1–8.

57 Lawrence 2006, 171.

58 Mitchel 1992, 3, 7.

The reoccupation of Ḥisbān in 198 AD probably began as a Hellenistic border fort. The objects from Strata 15–14 are mostly of a military character. A perimeter wall with four towers is dated to the late Hellenistic period⁵⁹. It remains questionable as to when Ḥisbān/Esbous came under Hasmonean rule after the time of Seleucid control. The site would have had a strategic advantage in protecting the north end of the Madeba Plain. It is most likely that the Hasmonians took control over Esbous in 129 BC and ruled the site until the war between Hyrcanus II (63–40 BC) and Aristobulus II (67–63 BC)⁶⁰. From the literary sources, it is reasonable to associate the following early Roman Esbous with the Herodian Peraea. Josephus noted that Herod settled mounted troops from his army in Gaba in the Galilee and the “Hesebonitis, in Perea” (Ant. Iud. 15, 8, 5) to protect it from the Nabateans. The area around Ḥisbān was probably part of the Hasmonean territory (Ant. Iud. 13, 15, 4) and does not appear on the list of settlements Hyrcanus II handed over to Aretas III (Ant. Iud. 14, 1, 4). Twenty years after his accession to the throne (ca. 20 BC), Herod gave Peraea to his brother Pheroras (Ant. Iud. 15, 10, 3; Bell. Iud. 1, 24, 5). In his last will, Herod placed Antipas in charge of Peraea and the Galilee (Ant. Iud. 17, 8, 1; 17, 11, 4)⁶¹.

The absence of Nabatean artefacts reinforces the literary sources that claim Esbous as a Hasmonean and Herodian site, but it actually held a relatively minor position. It was isolated from the main trade routes used by the Nabateans, and was probably not of strategic importance to the Romans⁶². The site is in the northern hilly region of the Madeba Plain, which was traditionally an agricultural area, with villages and farmsteads. In contrast, the southern plateau was as a pastoral zone that was used by nomadic tribes⁶³.

6.1.11. Tall al-‘Umēri

Tall al-‘Umēri has a long settlement history. The site was first occupied in the Early Bronze Age I, and it saw its greatest expansion during the early

Surveys have indicated that during the early Roman period the region around Ḥisbān had a flourishing population, which further increased after the Hellenistic period, till it was comparable in size to that of the Iron II/Persian period. The absence of Nabatean pottery suggests that the area was under Roman and/or Herodian control⁶⁴.

The early Roman pottery in Ḥisbān was strongly influenced by Jewish settlements, especially Jerusalem, Qumran, Machaerus, and Masada⁶⁵. Imported fine wares, such as ETS, are rare. From the mid-second century AD on, that influence changed, and the Ḥisbān pottery corpus became similar to the surrounding wares of the local Madeba Plain⁶⁶.

The early Roman and Roman chalkstone vessel finds were unearthed during the 1968, 1971, 1973, 1974, and 1976 excavations and were published in 1995⁶⁷. Thirteen fragments of hand-carved mugs and pitchers and three fragments of shallow bowls with incised lines were registered. Two other fragments of chalkstone vessels were not further identified⁶⁸.

The types date mainly to the first century AD and beyond. Hand-carved mugs and pitchers dominate the assemblage, with a smaller number of lathe-turned bowls. The presence of the chalkstone vessels fits well into the identification of Ḥisbān/Esbous as a Herodian outpost or small-scale settlement with mainly Jewish inhabitants.

Moreover, several Herodian lamps are included in the early Roman pottery assemblage of the excavation at the top of Ḥisbān/Esbous. At least six undecorated nozzles from the Classical period ceramic corpus have been published⁶⁹. Sixteen Herodian lamps are listed as coming from inside the early Roman tombs of Fields F and G outside the acropolis (Tomb F.1, F.6, F.14, F.31, and G.10), some of which were found intact⁷⁰.

Bronze Age III. The settlement probably had both agricultural and pastoral subsistence systems. Tall al-‘Umēri continued to be settled during the Iron

59 LaBianca 2015, 12; Mitchel 1992, 38–39.

60 Mitchel 1992, 33.

61 Ji 2009, 619; Mitchel 1992, 66.

62 Mitchel 1992, 62–67, 71.

63 Ji 2009, 619.

64 Ibach, Jr. 1987, 170, 174, 199; LaBianca 2015, 13.

65 Ji 2009, 622.

66 Gerber 2012, 490–491.

67 Kotter and Ray, Jr. 1995, 113–148, Fig. 9.10–12.

68 Kotter and Ray, Jr. 1995, 122.

69 Gerber 2012, 485–486, Fig. 3.97:3–6.

70 Waterhouse 1998, 181–187.

Age and Persian period but then experienced a decline in such activity and was abandoned in the late fifth century BC. The following Classical periods and the resettlement of the site during the late Hellenistic phase saw small farming populations⁷¹. Like Ḥisbān, Tall al-‘Umēri is in the northern hilly region of the Madeba Plain, and was characterized by agricultural villages and farmsteads⁷².

The Hellenistic period is represented primarily in Field L in the western part of the tall with a late Hellenistic farmstead in Stratum 4. The structure in Field L measures 12.00 × 2.75 m and was built on older walls of Stratum 6 (Persian period). Domestic walls and surfaces, tools, and pottery were found. It is reasonable to assume that the area was a farmstead during the Hellenistic period. During the early Roman period, another isolated farmstead or villa was eventually built at the western edge where Fields A and B meet (Stratum 3). No walls were found and there was only a stepped pool installation from the early Roman period⁷³. The plastered pool was found in the northern part of Field A and

southern part of Field B. It appeared in four separate squares, two in each of the fields. The pool belongs to Strata 6–7 and was built below ground level. The interior of the pool is more than 2 m². The entire structure, including buttressing walls preserved to 1.45 m maximum measured almost 5 m², with broad steps leading down to the pool. The pottery found inside the installation consisted of Iron Age II and Persian fragments, and two early Roman potsherds found on the foundation stones. Thus, it is reasonable to date the construction of the installation to the early Roman period⁷⁴.

One fragment of a limestone object from the same square (Field A) has a lug handle with a drilled round hole, typical of the hand-carved mugs and pitchers. That find is listed as a miscellaneous stone object or burnishing tool⁷⁵. However, it is most likely a fragment of a hand-carved mug or pitcher. The excavators suggest that the house with the ritual stepped pool was a Roman style villa or farmstead that was inhabited by Jews⁷⁶.

6.1.12. Ḥirbet Umm ad-Danānīr

Ḥirbet Umm ad-Danānīr is ca. 20 km northwest of Amman, halfway between the Decapolis city of Philadelphia and Gerasa. The nearby northwestern pass of Wādī Umm ad-Danānīr runs into the Baq‘a Valley, and the settlement was directly above a large, perennial spring. The tall with its terraces was strategically important and fortified. The settlement was in use during Iron Age IIC and the Persian and early Roman periods. During the Hasmonean rule, the area belonged to the Hasmonean state⁷⁷. A Jewish presence remained in the area at least until the First Jewish Revolt⁷⁸.

The excavation focused on the upper terrace. A well-preserved Herodian building (Early Roman III, 4 BC–73 AD) was exposed on the western side, just below the surface. Seven squared-off orthostats divided one room of the Herodian structure, two of which had holes opposite one another. Finds such as

basalt grinding stones and a complete iron sickle in the orthostat room point to domestic and/or industrial use⁷⁹. The building yielded 25 chalkstone vessels. The assemblage consists of small vessels and other small finds. The chalkstone vessel fragments, which were hand-carved or lathe-turned, were mainly of mugs and pitchers with intentional chisel marks, hand-carved bowls, or broken handles with a hole. The lathe-turned bowls were either hemispherical with one incised line or bowls with folded rims. The typology is comparable to the finds from Jerusalem⁸⁰. One piece, which was described as a base fragment, could also be a core, since R. Deines describes it as having inner, stepped sculptures from the manual removal. The signs are typical of cores that were taken out of the vessels during the working process. According to R. Deines, the find could hint at local production⁸¹.

71 Herr et al. 1997, 12–17.

72 Ji 2009, 619.

73 Herr et al. 2017, 21, 24, 32.

74 Clark et al. 2015, 40; Herr et al. 1997, Fig. 4.37; Herr et al. 2017, 32; Lawrence 2006, 170.

75 Herr – Platt 2002, 374, Fig. 16.17: 2005 (A7K42:16).

76 Clark et al. 2015, 40; Herr et al. 1997, 95–96, Fig. 4.37; Herr et al. 2017, 32; Lawrence 2006, 170.

77 Deines 1993, 154–155; McGovern 1989, 123–136.

78 Deines 1993, 154–155.

79 McGovern 1989, 123–125.

80 McGovern 1989, Fig. 2; Cahill 1992.

81 Deines 1993, 154–155.

6.1.13. Beth Zar'a

The site of Beth Zar'a is in the Amman district, 1 km west of Umm al-Birak and Umm al-Basatin. The area is characterized by rocks, terraces, and agricultural fields. The area has many tomb openings, which were still visible during the 1974 investigation. Many of the tombs, which date from the early Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic periods, had already been robbed. They are cut into soft limestone and contain several loculi of different shapes⁸².

Two tombs were investigated during the excavation. Tomb 1 had already been opened by robbers. Inside, some of the loculi were blocked with stones. In Loculus 22 on the eastern side of Tomb 1, an undecorated knife-pared lamp was found, together with a broken bowl and the lower part of a globular juglet. The two tombs were used during the early Roman period, between the first century BC and the second century AD. The excavators dated the lamp to 30 BC–70 AD⁸³.

6.2. On the Edge of Peraea

The Hasmonean and Herodian Peraea and the Nabatean-influenced regions shared a common border, which, as noted above, was constantly shifting. Thus, the edge of Peraea was at times under either Nabatean or Judaeian influence. The Nabatean presence is best attested by a change in the pottery assemblage.

Unlike the 'heartland' of Peraea, its outskirts have few Jewish-related objects, and those belong

to a particular period of occupation. Four sites were identified as containing relevant material. The area of Mount Nebo and Ĥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ yielded a particularly large number of ossuary fragments, chalkstone vessels, and knife-pared lamps, as well as a ritual stepped pool. Only Kefar Hananya ware is missing in the assemblage, as in Peraea itself.

Sites	Chalkstone vessels	Ritual stepped pools	Kefar Hananya ware	Knife-pared lamps	Ossuaries
Madeba		6		2	
Ĥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ	24	1		17	101
Mount Nebo Region	4	1		12+	
Tall as-Sa'ṭdiya		1			

Tab. 6.2 Distribution of finds at the edge of the Peraea (Source: F. Schöpf).

6.2.1. Madeba

Excavations at Madeba were conducted by the Tall Mādabā Archaeological Project. Material from five squares in Field B, at the western slope of the site, is relevant. The excavated strata date from late Ottoman (late nineteenth to early twentieth century), early Roman/

Nabatean (first century BC–early second century AD), and Iron Age II (ninth–seventh century BC)⁸⁴. The late Hellenistic/Hasmonean layers are classified in Field Phase Five and Four (FP4–5). The periods are represented by architectural remains and several household

82 Khadija 1974, 157. Khadija 1974, 157.

83 Khadija 1974, 158–160, 162, Fig. 2:15.

84 Harrison et al. 2003, 129.

installations, mainly for cooking. The associated ceramics from FP 5 and 4 date ca. to the second–early first century BC. The material indicates that during the late second and early first century BC, Madeba was under Hasmonean influence⁸⁵. According to literary sources, John Hyrcanus I captured the city after a six-month siege in 129/128 BC (Ant. Iud. 13, 9, 1) to get access to the important Kings Highway. The site remained under Hasmonean rule under Alexander Jannaeus (Ant. Iud. 13, 15, 4). Hyrcanus II then offered the town with eleven other Hasmonean-held Transjordan towns to Nabatean King Aretas III for his help in the civil war with Aristobulus II (ca. 64 BC; Ant. Iud. 14, 1, 4)⁸⁶.

6.2.2. Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat (Town of Nebo)

Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat (hereafter: Mukhayyat) is 9 km northwest of Madeba and is also known as the Town of Nebo. The site, which is on a steep limestone plateau, overlooks the Dead Sea towards Jericho. The settlement revealed finds dating to the Iron Age and the Hellenistic and Byzantine periods. Mukhayyat is probably referred to on the Mesha Inscription, which dates to the mid-ninth century BC, as Nebo⁸⁹.

During the 2012 excavation season, three fields were opened. Field A along the southern slope of the acropolis, Field B, and Field C. The Hellenistic period is represented in Field B on top of a ridge on the southern side of the acropolis by a fortification system, including a bastion-like structure with a tower. Small finds consisted of several fully preserved cooking pots, bowls, coins, and fragments of figurines. That part of the acropolis was probably abandoned during the early Roman period. In Field C, a small, stepped installation (C100), identified as a storeroom, was dated to the late Hellenistic period owing to the pottery found within it. Another rock-cut installation (C200) was a reservoir cut into the bedrock. A thickly plastered installation with ten steps (C300) uncovered in Field C West, was probably a ritual stepped pool dating to the late Hellenistic period⁹⁰. The large rectangular plaster-lined

The change in political influence is also reflected in the material culture. Archaeologically, the early Roman period is represented by a well-preserved complex which includes a courtyard and floors. The building was partly destroyed by later building activity. The pottery consists of Nabatean painted fine ware from the Petra region and ETS, as well as other wares⁸⁷.

Two undecorated wheel-made Herodian-style lamps are included in the early Roman pottery material from Field B⁸⁸. During the period that those lamps were produced, Madeba was already under Nabatean influence. However, the lamps hint at an ongoing connection to the Judaeian region owing to the earlier Hasmonean rule.

installation, which was framed at the surface by walls, was reached by ten steps and an additional landing at the bottom, all covered with thick plaster. Two of the steps are set on top of the northeastern side of the installation, oriented west. A small flat area opens up to an even smaller step towards the south. The fourth step is restricted on both sides by plastered ledges, but those that follow span the full width of the installation. The pool is fully plastered, and all of the corners are rounded as are the steps. The fifth step is a transitional one, measuring 1.48 m in width, while the sixth, seventh, and eighth steps are ca. 2.05 m wide. Only the eighth step is slightly larger and steeper. The ninth step is approximately 0.78 m wide and is near the centre of the staircase. The final step measures 2.13 m in width and leads to the bottom landing of the pool. The total distance between the top of the installation and the landing is nearly 3.50 m. The depth of the pool installation would have allowed for full-body immersion. The maximum amount of water that can fit into the installation is more than 12.000 l. A cistern nearby could have served as a reservoir, in which case the pool would have been filled with rainwater. The small finds within the pool suggest a dating to the late Hellenistic period⁹¹. There was no drainage

85 Harrison et al. 2003, 135–136, Pl. 8:1–4; Ji 2009, 621.

86 Harrison et al. 2003, 137; Ji 2009, 618.

87 Harrison et al. 2003, 137–138.

88 Harrison et al. 2003, Pl. 8:5–6.

89 Foran et al. 2017, 457–559. Foran et al. 2017, 457–559.

90 Foran et al. 2017, 459–465; Foran et al. 2016, 305–306, Fig. 7.

91 Dolan – Foran 2016, 288–292; Foran et al. 2017, 464–465, Fig. 8–9.

inside the pool; only a channel that was excavated south of the stepped pool (C400). The channel runs 9.45 m northwest and then disappears at the side of the mound. It was plastered with mud. However, there seemed to be no direct connection between the pool and the channel as it circumvents the pool installation and was built somewhat later⁹². Additionally, Field C revealed two shallow plastered basins (C500–600), bedrock cupmarks, and a plastered channel that was constructed after the ritual stepped pool C300. The area around the basins was plastered as well. It is reasonable to assume that the area was used for grape pressing and wine production⁹³. As the production of wine and oil required special purity, ritual stepped pools were found near many wine and oil production sites⁹⁴. Based on the installations, the excavators suggest that during the late Hellenistic and probably the early Roman period, the site was used seasonally for agriculture⁹⁵.

The early dating to the first half of the first century BC of some of the chalkstone vessel finds fits into the late Hellenistic use of the ritual stepped pool. The chalkstone vessel assemblage from Mukhayyat from the 2014, 2016–2017, and 2019 excavations consists of 18 fragments and one complete object. It includes mostly hand-carved vessels, one lathe-turned bowl, and one bowl that could have been either lathe-turned or hand-carved. The vessels were made of soft white chalk or hard bituminous grey chalk material, the latter indicating that the vessel was made of Nabi Musa chalk. The soft white chalk with very few veins or grit could have come from the Jerusalem region⁹⁶. The polished mugs or pitchers could hint at the early types of these vessels that came from Jericho⁹⁷. Mukhayyat had a direct connection with Jericho and Jerusalem via a road that led through the wādī (Fig. 6.4)⁹⁸.



Fig. 6.4 View from Mukhayyat to Jericho with covered ritual stepped pools in front (Source: F. Schöpf).

The chalkstone vessels were found in the excavations in Field B, near the ritual stepped pool (C300) in Field C, and during surveys undertaken around the site. Ten of the hand-carved fragments were from mugs or pitchers or their handles; some have the typical chisel marks and others are well-polished. One basin, one tub, and an unfinished vessel (*Pl. 5.48*) can be distinguished⁹⁹. The lathe-turned hemispherical bowl is probably the latest example and makes use of the vessels until the first century AD reasonable¹⁰⁰.

During the 1960s, surveys and excavations under J. Ripamonti revealed four chalkstone fragments, which were published by S. J. Saller in 1967. The actual find context of the vessels is uncertain in the report. The description of the “stone measures,” as Saller labels them, suggests that the fragments appear to be parts of hand-carved mugs or pitchers with intentional chisel marks¹⁰¹. One fragment of a knife-pared lamp with an incised horizontal line on the nozzle is also listed with those finds, which can be dated to the first century AD¹⁰².

92 Foran et al. 2016, 305.

93 Foran et al. 2016, 305–306, Fig. 8, 9, 10, Plan 2.

94 For a lengthy discussion, see Adler 2007.

95 Dolan – Foran 2016, 285; Foran et al. 2016, 307–308. For a detailed discussion on the rabbinic sources, see also Manns 1998, 67–69.

96 Magen 2002, 1, 116. However, the grindstones found at the site were also made of the hard greyish chalkstone (personal observation).

97 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 406.

98 The pottery assemblage resembles vessels characteristic of Jerusalem and Jericho, instead of the wares typical for nearby Madeba. Personal conversation with D. Foran.

99 Personal observation of the vessels. I wish to thank D. Foran for giving me access to the finds.

100 Bar-Nathan – Gärtner 2013, 408; Magen 2002, 162.

101 Saller 1967, 41–42, Find. Nr. M. 2501, M. 2502, M. 2503, M. 2503a.

102 Saller 1967, 44, Find. Nr. M. 2506.

6.2.3. Mount Nebo Region

Surveys in the Mount Nebo region were also conducted by J. Ripamonti in the 1960s. During that time, he was able to identify more than 100 sites, mainly of tombs, mounds, water installations, quarries, and a monastery. Most of the findings relevant for this study were at a site that J. Ripamonti labelled Ġabal Hussein, a hill east of the road that runs down towards the Town of Nebo (Mukhayyat). The finds were partly published and described by S. J. Saller in 1967¹⁰³.

Some 101 fragments of ossuaries were found in Tomb 101, located west of the road coming from Mount Nebo towards Mukhayyat. The fragments feature the typical decorations known from the Jerusalem area, including zigzag, latticework, and rosette carvings combined with a red wash on the surface. As S. J. Saller noted in his 1967 study, the ossuaries have a special significance as none of

those bone-boxes were found east of the Jordan River during his time. Thus, the fragments imply a link between the Mount Nebo region and Jerusalem¹⁰⁴. The large number of fragments supports this suggestion.

Several undecorated knife-pared lamps came from tombs excavated on Ġabal Hussein. In Tomb 8, two lamp fragments were found in 1963, and in Tomb 83, nine of eleven lamp nozzles were identified as knife-pared and several other body fragments of this lamp type were found as well. Outside of Tomb 83, another fragment of a knife-pared lamp was discovered. In the already mentioned Tomb 101, eight complete lamps, five nozzles, and four body fragments were registered. Some of them had incised lines on the nozzle. Two lamp fragments were found inside a dump on Ġabal Hussein (Dump 8B)¹⁰⁵.

6.2.4. Tall as-Sa'īdiya

The site is in the central Jordan Valley, on the south side of the Wādī Kufrinjeh. The mound rises ca. 40 m in the valley so is easily recognizable¹⁰⁶. The main occupation took place during the Iron Age II, when the settlement was characterized by an elaborate staircase that connected the mound to a water source in the valley. One public building dates to the Hellenistic period (Stratum II, 395–170 BC). The Roman Stratum I has neither domestic nor public buildings. The settlement was probably populated sporadically and served as an agricultural site during the Roman periods. The pottery inside the architectural remains of Stratum I is disturbed but dates mostly to the Hellenistic period, but traces of a rectangular building unit and two plastered water installations were identified and dated as early Roman¹⁰⁷. One of the installations was likely a ritual stepped pool. The architectural remains associated

with Roman Stratum I are at the highest point of the mound (31-B/F-6/8): one stone foundation for a rectangular building (31-B/D-6/8, 9.25 × 10.40 m) and two plastered water installations (31-E/F-6/8). The stone foundation and the installations are aligned in parallel. The northern water installation, which measures 2.50 × 2.50 m, had nine steps leading to the floor. The stairway follows an L-shape, leading straight down from the entrance with five steps, before turning 90° with the last four steps, which were probably already under the water. The lowest point is 2.80 m from the highest point of the still existing walls, which allowed for full-body immersion. The walls, steps, and the floor were lime plastered. The southern water installation, or reservoir, was similar in size and shape but had no steps. The two installations were not connected¹⁰⁸.

103 Saller 1967, 5–64.

104 Saller 1967, 16–17, 21, Fig. 1.

105 Saller 1967, 9, 13–14, 16, 22–23, 41, Fig. 1.

106 Pritchard 1985, 1–2.

107 Lawrence 2006, 169; Pritchard 1985, 59, 74–75, 77–80.

108 Lawrence 2006, 169; Pritchard 1985, 59, 74–75, Fig. 156–158.

6.3. Nabatean (Influenced) Regions

The Nabatean regions in Transjordan were mainly in desert regions in the south. Alexander Jannaeus conquered parts of the western region Nabatean-controlled area in 83–80 BC¹⁰⁹. Several cities remained under Hasmonean control until the death of Alexandra Salome, when friction arose between her two rival sons Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II. Antipater, father of the later King Herod, arranged for an agreement between the Nabatean King Aretas and Hyrcanus, wherein Hyrcanus promised to give the conquered Nabatean cities back if Aretas supported him against his brother Aristobulus, but

the Roman conquest of the Levant in 63 BC ended the rivalry between the two brothers¹¹⁰. Another war between the Nabateans and a Judaeian king was waged by Herod in 32 BC. Herod took advantage of the northern area of the Nabatean region after his victory, probably to strengthen his control over the Decapolis cities and important trading routes¹¹¹. Thus, the borders between the Jewish Peraea and the Nabatean south were constantly shifting.

Finds of Jewish material culture, including knife-pared lamps and ritual stepped pools were unearthed at only two sites.

Sites	Chalkstone vessels	Ritual stepped pools	Kefar Hananya ware	Knife-pared lamps	Ossuaries
Hirbat al-Mukhayyat				1	
ed-Dēr		1			

Tab. 6.3 Distribution of finds in the Nabatean (influenced) regions (Source: F. Schöpf).

6.3.1. Hirbet al-Mudayna

Hirbet al-Mudayna in the Wādī ath-Thamad region was a fortified Iron Age town that was resettled during the Roman period as a Nabatean site. The Nabatean remains of the early Roman period reflect two stages of settlement. The area of Mudayna had been a rich grain-growing region of Moab, so the Nabatean settlement might have supplied the area of Petra¹¹².

In Field N, a Nabatean housing complex consisting of two units flanking a central courtyard and having several rooms was unearthed. The early Roman

pottery found there included a wide variety of jugs, casseroles, cooking pots, bowls, jars, and other objects together with typical Nabatean fine ware, ETS ware, and a Herodian-style oil lamp, but the finds were never fully published¹¹³. Another Herodian-style lamp found in earlier excavations of Nabatean structures was a later mould-made type with decoration, but that is not typical of the Jewish sites before 70 AD¹¹⁴.

6.3.2. Ed-Dēr

Ed-Dēr is west of Rakīn, on the flat plateau on top of a mountain. The original access to the settlement was probably on the southeastern side, where parts of a terrace-supported road were found. The settlement was encircled by a perimeter wall with towers and bulwarks, which was probably in use during the Iron Age and the Hellenistic, and Nabatean periods. Pottery dating to the Iron Age and late Hellenistic and

early Roman periods was found at the site. A stepped pool was identified on the eastern side of the perimeter wall. The installation on the eastern side of the wall measures 2.90 × 3.90 m. Its walls were plastered, and four to five steps led down to the bottom but the short report on the site did not note the total depth. The survey suggested a Hasmonean presence at the site¹¹⁵.

109 Kasher 1988, 99–100, Map 9.

110 Meant are here the cities that Alexander Jannaeus conquered during his reign that had remained of the Hasmonean Kingdom. Schäfer 2010, 95–96; Kasher 1990, 172–181.

111 Kasher 1988, 138, 144–145, 163–174.

112 Ji 2009, 625.

113 Michèle Daviau et al. 2012, 269, 291, 294–297.

114 Daviau – Mulder-Hymans – Foley 2000, 273.

6.4. The Cities of the Decapolis

The Decapolis cities numbered ten by the time of Pompey and they were all connected via main roads¹¹⁶. The region of the Decapolis cities linked the Mediterranean shores in the west with the eastern landscape, as well as the Arabian Peninsula in the south and Syria and Phoenicia in the north. During the first century AD, the number of the Decapolis cities sometimes included up to 18 settlements¹¹⁷. Together with the coastal plain of the Mediterranean shore of the Levant from Ptolemais (Acre) in the north to Gaza in the south, the Decapolis formed a Greek-dominated area¹¹⁸.

Jewish presence in the cities is mainly associated with Alexander Jannaeus' conquests in the northeastern territories. The Hasmonean conquest and rule have a negative import in the collective memory of the Graeco-Roman cities. The foreign rule would have meant the end of the sovereignty of their polis, the essence of their political-Hellenistic life. The descriptions of the Hasmonean conquest are tied to descriptions of overall devastation,

which underscored the negative reception of the rulers from Judaea. Those cities were 'liberated' from Hasmonean/Jewish rule when the Romans started to take control over Near Eastern provinces. Pompey, the leader of the Roman campaign, took his chance in 63 BC and went through Pella to Jericho and finally captured Jerusalem (Ant. Iud. 14, 4, 1–4). Pompey is listed in Graeco-Roman historiography as the true "liberator" that gave the cities back to their "own inhabitants" (Bell. Iud. 1, 7, 7). The restoration of the status of the remaining Hellenistic citizens was a signal to return from exile for those who had fled to Syria and Phoenicia¹¹⁹. Some of the Jews were then expelled and if not deported, were deprived of their property. Nevertheless, the population stayed mixed. The ongoing Jewish presence in the cities is also reflected in the Jewish sources, where the cities of the Decapolis play a main role in the First Jewish Revolt 66–70 AD, which affected those cities as well as the gentile cities on the coastal plain¹²⁰.

Sites	Chalkstone vessels	Ritual stepped pools	Kefar Hananya ware	Knife-pared lamps	Ossuaries
Abila			20	1	
Gadara			?	3	
Pella	1			?	1+
Gerasa	2				
Philadelphia				9+	
Rajjb (near Amman)				2	

Tab. 6.4 Distribution of finds in the cities of the Decapolis (Source: F. Schöpf).

115 Worschech 1985, 8, 55–57, 59, Fig. 20, Pl. XXII.2.

116 For detailed information on the road network and the roads connecting the Decapolis cities, see El-Khoury 2009, 47–53.

117 The cities that belonged to the Decapolis were probably not even fixed during the first century AD. Plinius listed 10 cities, whereas Claudius Ptolemaeus counted 18. The criteria for a city to belong to the Decapolis were either vague or seem to differ. Probably the cities did not form a political unity, but neither did they forgo association. The title of a Decapolis

might have reflected the honour and status of a city, see Bietenhard 1977, 221–222; El-Khoury 2009, 20–21.

118 Other Greek centres within the area of Judaea were Samaria in the north and Marissa in Idumaea, see Avi-Yonah 1974, 96–97; Mendels 1987, 145–146.

119 Gabinus was the Roman governor who forced the restoration and resettlement of Hellenistic cities that had been destroyed by the conquest of Alexander Jannaeus. He also separated the position of the priesthood and the political ruler, see Schäfer 2010, 97–98.

The relevant finds are mainly pottery which is not necessarily connected with Jewish presence or use. Kefar Hananya ware was found in the northern cities of Gadara and Abila, and knife-pared lamps

were unearthed in all the cities except Gerasa. Pella stands out with one ossuary and chalkstone finds, and Gerasa has chalkstone vessels in its assemblage.

6.4.1. Abila

Abila came under Hasmonean control during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus, who captured Abila together with Gerasa, Pella, and Dium, and the city remained in the Hasmonean Kingdom for 30 years. After Pompey established Roman rule in the area, Abila belonged to the Province of Syria and was part of the Decapolis¹²¹. The only dateable early Roman remains in Abila came from tombs, and the results of the tomb excavations suggest that the city had a relatively small early Roman population. The exact size of the settlement and its population during the early Roman period remains unclear¹²².

Some 2.17 % of the excavated pottery represents Roman and pre-Roman types (726 sherds).

The 1980 survey found twenty rims of the Galilean bowl type, which varied in colour and thickness¹²³.

One knife-pared lamp (No. 556) was found inside the late Hellenistic to early Roman Tomb L3¹²⁴. Several lamps uncovered in tombs H28 and 31, in the Area H cemetery on the east slope of Wādī Qweilbeh, northeast of Tall Abila, are of the later mould-made type. Those lamps, which date to the second century AD, are not connected to the typical Jewish pottery assemblages. The cited tombs were used mainly by the middle and upper-middle class of Abila during the early Roman period¹²⁵.

6.4.2. Gadara (Umm Qēs)

Owing to its location, Gadara was an important strategic settlement that linked important trading routes from the Mediterranean Coast to the northern and eastern regions. The military advantage is also reflected in the control of the main routes connecting western and eastern Eretz-Israel from Scythopolis to the bend of the Yarmouk River and northward from the Sea of Galilee to north and south Transjordan¹²⁶.

Gadara, which was probably built as a fortification around 200 BC, was part of the Ptolemy region during the third century BC. The Ptolemaic rule ended, when Seleucid king Antiochos III took Gadara after a lengthy siege in 198 BC. During that time, Gadara had the status of a Greek polis¹²⁷.

Gadara lost its sovereignty and status as a polis and its control of its city chora during the Hasmonean occupation, which began with Alexander Jan-

naeus' siege in 85/84 BC¹²⁸. After Pompey's victory, the city was re-established as Gadara Pompeiana¹²⁹. During all those political upheavals, Gadara's material culture hardly changed and remained pagan and/or Graeco-Roman. The textual evidence indicates a deeply rooted hostility towards the Hasmonean and Herodian rule on the part of the local Gadarene population. The city's strong ties to the Graeco-Roman tradition is reflected in the pottery assemblage. It has one of the region's highest percentages of ETS pottery and was one of the earliest users and buyers of these wares in the area, which could explain the appearance of such wares at Tall Zirā'a during the early Roman period¹³⁰.

A considerable quantity of Kefar Hananya ware was also excavated at the site. Three Kefar Hananya cooking pot types were found in the excavation Areas I and III on the large terrace and the decumanus

120 Kasher 1990, 271; Schäfer 2010, 95–96; Smallwood 1976, 17.

121 Wineland 2001, 105.

122 Davis 1983, 247.

123 Mare et al. 1987, 47–48.

124 Mare et al. 1987, 211–213.

125 Find Nr. H28004, and H31007, see Mare 1994, 369, 374, Fig. 9:4–5.

126 Noeske 2013, 146.

127 Bührig 2011, 286; Kenkel 2013, 303; Schäfer 2010, 33–35.

128 Piotrkowski 2011, 267, 274–275.

129 Hoffmann 2013, 17–18; El-Khoury 2009, 22.

maximus in Areas IV and V of Gadara. In terms of the other pottery wares, the mentioned cooking pots make up more than a third of all the cooking potsherds found in those areas. The various cooking pot types date from the mid-first century BC to as late as the fifth century AD¹³¹. The strong trading ties between the mainly Jewish region of the central Galilee, where the pottery was manufactured, and the Hellenistic city of Gadara can be accounted for by the considerable Jewish population in Gadara. According to historical accounts, the Jewish inhabitants were probably murdered, expelled, or left the city after the First Jewish Revolt in 66–70 AD. The later phases of the use of Kefar Hananya ware after the revolt are explained by K. J. H. Vriezen as a trade coalition between Gadara and Kefar Semah, a marketplace with a large Jewish population situated downhill west of Gadara, right on the Roman

6.4.3. Pella

Pella, which is identified with the modern Ṭabqāt (Ḥirbet) Faḥl in the Jordan Valley, was an important bridge between Transjordan and Eretz-Israel. The settlement was on the eastern shore of the Jordan Valley, on top of the Jordanian chalkstone plateau, 200 m above the Jordan riverbed. Pella was connected to the west with Scythopolis and to the east with other cities on the Jordanian chalk plateau. The position of the settlement was crucial for trade and military success. The chalkstone plateau with its minerals and the water supply in the region supported agriculture. The Wādī Ġirm el-Mōz ran through the ancient city from the northeast to the south in the lower city. The settlement activity spread to the two terraces flanking the wādī (Ṭabqāt Faḥl and Tall el-Ḥiṣn), and many administrative and official buildings were located in the valley¹³⁵.

The excavations indicated the growth of the city in the late Hellenistic period as a result of Near Eastern trade and Seleucid empire-building. It is likely that it began to expand beyond the central mounds during the

road that connected Tiberias and Gadara. T. Weber contends that there was ongoing trade between the Gadarene Jews and the Galilee from after the revolt through the first century AD¹³².

This ongoing trade can also be seen in the number of knife-pared lamps. One such lamp was identified in one of the houses on the Theatre Slope in Area 44, southwest of the Ottoman village. The domestic structures were in use during the Roman periods¹³³. More knife-pared lamps were identified in the pottery assemblage of Area 1 on the Roman-Byzantine terrace. In Area UQ 1 (terrace), one of the main groups of oil lamps consists of late Hellenistic and Herodian/early Roman types (end second-century BC–first century AD). Two of them represent the typical knife-pared lamps¹³⁴.



Fig. 6.5 View from the excavation at Pella towards the mount of Tall al-Husn (Source: F. Schöpf).

second and first centuries BC. The economic growth is reflected in fine wares, including black-glazed ware, in the second century BC, which was similar to the West Slope ware from Athens. The largest Hellenistic house in plot XXIII A featured painted plaster, a paved courtyard, and several finds of imported pottery¹³⁶.

130 Konrad 2013, 103–134, 115; Kenkel 2012, 312–316.

131 Vriezen 2011, 72: cooking pot with a neck (5 % of total share) dating mid-first century BC–mid-fourth century AD. Open pots (7,9 % of total share) dating late first/early second century AD–mid-fourth century AD and Galilean bowls (8,1 % of total share) dating mid-third century AD–early fifth century AD.

132 Weber 2007, 460.

133 Find Nr. 44.5.179-150-1, see Kerner 1997, 287–288, 293, Fig. 14:8.

134 Kehrberg 2015, 169, 177, Fig. XIV.9:6, 7b.

135 Weber 1993, 5–11.

136 The painted panels depict egg-and-dart motifs typical of Hellenistic interior design and comparable to the late Hellenistic Stucco Building at Tēl Ānāfā, see Tidmarsh 2004, 460–461, 464.

Pella was captured in 83/82 BC by the Hasmonians under Alexander Jannaeus. According to Josephus, the citizens of Pella refused to adopt the customs of the Jews. The hostility against the Hasmonian Kingdom led to the destruction of the city (Ant. Iud. 13, 15, 4)¹³⁷. Based on numismatic evidence and the thick layer of destruction inside the Hellenistic buildings, excavators in the 1950s dated the end of the Hellenistic occupation to ca. 80 BC. In the following early Roman period, the city regained its sovereignty through Pompey's 63/64 BC conquest. The early Roman period is archaeologically attested in Area IX on Tall al-Husn. Baths and a large, paved courtyard probably belonged to domestic buildings. According to the early Roman pottery evidence, the Hasmonians did not destroy this part of the city¹³⁸.

During the first century AD, Tall al-Husn was enlarged, and new monumental and civic buildings were erected. In terms of the Jewish population, Pella was not far from the Jewishly populated Peraea (Bell. Iud. 3, 3, 3). During the Jewish revolt, Pella was attacked by Jewish rebels in revenge for the massacre of the Jews in Caesarea Maritima (Bell. Iud. 2, 18, 1–2)¹³⁹.

Eusebius (HE 3:2–3) and Epiphanius (panar. 29.7.7–8) reported that during the Jewish revolt, the early Christians and part of the Jewish community from Jerusalem fled to Pella, since it was a gentile city, which might offer some safety¹⁴⁰. It is thus reasonable to assume that Pella was not part of Jewish

Peraea during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods.

Although the site was strongly Hellenized and had a gentile majority, typical chalkstone vessel fragments and ossuaries were found. Soundings beneath the church (Roman temple) near the Odeon revealed remains of a major structure from the Roman period. In Sounding 9, 1.00 m below the floor of the sanctuary, next to the interior west wall, several sherds from the early Roman period and one chalkstone vessel fragment were found. It is likely that the earth underneath the floor was composed of fill that was brought in order to level the area in the first century when the parvis was built¹⁴¹. Most of the early Roman remains were destroyed by later Byzantine building activity.

The lathe-turned chalkstone vessel fragment has a footed base. The material is fine-grain marl (clayey limestone, colour: 10YR 7/1), with a few faintly incised lines on the exterior and interior and a small groove incised at the rim¹⁴². Several sarcophagi and ossuaries made from soft chalkstone are part of the find assemblage. One ossuary, dating to the first or second century AD, was probably made in Jerusalem and imported. Another chalkstone sarcophagus/ossuary was found in Tomb 54¹⁴³.

Several knife-pared oil lamps (the number is not reported) were found with the pottery assemblage (second–first century BC) in Areas XI, XII, and XIII on Tall al-Husn¹⁴⁴.

6.4.4. Gerasa/Ġaraš

Gerasa was founded in the Hellenistic period and prospered in the later Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic periods. The city featured the Classical architectural design, with the main plaza, a *cardo*

(main street) from north to south, and public buildings, including a nymphaeum, public baths, and theatres. The city was divided by the River Chrysorroas¹⁴⁵.

137 Smith 1973, 41–42.

138 Tidmarsh 2017, 122.

139 Tidmarsh 2017, 121.

140 Porter 1999, 177; Schürer 1973, 498.

141 McNicoll et al. 1992, 120–121; Smith – Day 1989, 35.

142 Smith – Day 1989, Find Nr. 45673, Pl. 44.9. Probably this fragment is not the only chalkstone vessel found during the excavations. More fragments were found but not identified (personal conversation with the excavators in charge). Since none of the fragments are published to date, it remains unknown if those fragments belong to the Bronze Age limestone

vessel corpus or the early Roman types. Many thanks to the excavation team of S. J. Bourke at Pella for allowing access to the site and sharing their knowledge of the found pottery and stone vessel corpus during their 2019 excavation season. Special thanks to M. O'Hea and the presentation of the Kefar Hananya ware pottery and to S. Gordon for the insight into the database.

143 Weber 1993, 77.

144 Hennessy et al. 1983, 348; McNicoll et al. 1984, 69–70; McNicoll et al. 1986, 175.

145 Lichtenberger – Raja 2015, 483–485; Tidmarsh 2004, 465.

Unlike the Decapolis cities, Gerasa's Jewish population is well attested. It is reasonable to assume that the beginning of the Jewish community in Gerasa can be dated to the Hasmonean conquest under Alexander Jannaeus, who took Gerasa after a siege¹⁴⁶. The conquest of Gerasa was primarily economically motivated, driven by the idea of the treasuries of Theodorus, son of Zenon Cotulas (the tyrant of Philadelphia) and the city's connection to the King's Highway. To save it from the destruction and the expulsion of its inhabitants, the city was handed over to Alexander Jannaeus without a struggle. According to textual sources, there a peaceful co-existence of Jews and gentiles ensued. In 68 AD Vespasian ordered an attack on the city and its Jewish residents, but the gentiles refused to act violently against their Jewish co-citizens. Instead of maltreating the Jews, the gentiles of Gerasa escorted them to the frontiers, so that they could leave the land freely (Bell. Iud. 2, 18, 5).

During excavations carried out in the 1930s, architectural remains in the fill of the Arch of Hadrian were identified as an early synagogue, dating prior to 130 AD, which was presumably destroyed during the First Jewish Revolt; the later one dates to the fourth century AD¹⁴⁷. However, the ongoing archaeological work in Gerasa indicates that the initial interpretation of the remains as an early synagogue is unlikely¹⁴⁸. Moreover, there is no information about a Jewish community in Gerasa after 70

AD, and it remains speculative as to whether some Jews remained in Gerasa. The first mention of Jews in Gerasa after the revolt is by R. Joshua haGarsi and dates to the second century AD¹⁴⁹. In view of the textual sources implying a Jewish presence from the Hasmonean time on, the meagre findings of Jewish material culture is puzzling. Porter suggests that at least part of the Jewish community of Gerasa was made up of converts who 'toned down' their Jewish identity. The peaceful coexistence of Jews and gentiles could be accounted for by a less strict Jewish community that did not adhere fully to the purity laws¹⁵⁰.

However, at least two chalkstone vessels were found in Gerasa. One came from Trench H in the northwestern quarter of the city. This fragment of a hand-carved mug or pitcher has chisel marks on the outside. The chisel marks run in the typical vertical manner, with horizontal cuts in between¹⁵¹. Only part of the base remained of another hand-carved mug or pitcher. Like the other fragment, it was found in the northwestern quarter, in Trench C. The material is described as whitish and buff limestone and the fragment was identified as part of a basin. It was polished but as the walls are missing, there is no telling as to whether the basin was decorated with chisel marks¹⁵². Both fragments came from disturbed contexts and cannot be associated with particular installations or places in the city.

6.4.5. Philadelphia (Amman)

Philadelphia is in the Wādī 'Ammān, connected to the Wādī Zarqā'. The wādī streams ran through the city and together with the main spring 1 km to the southwest at Rās al-'Ayn provided the water for settlement. The natural limestone plateaus surrounding Amman furnished building material in the environs. The ancient settlement was situated on top of the Citadel hill between the wādīs with its upper and lower terraces¹⁵³.

These favourable conditions led to an early settlement, probably dating to the Chalcolithic period. The Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Persian period settlements are identified primarily by small finds. The textual evidence cites the conquest of then Ammon as part of the Israelite King David's expansionist policy in the tenth century BC. In the Hellenistic period, 'Ammān was under Nabatean control. The city was located near lucrative trade routes, which made it an essential place for the Nabateans, who

146 Ben-David 2011, 315; Dvorjetski 2005, 143.

147 Applebaum 1977, 360; Lichtenberger – Raja 2015, 494–495; Fink 1933, 118–120.

148 Personal conversation with A. Lichtenberger.

149 Dvorjetski 2005, 143.

150 Fink 1933, 119; Porter 1999, 180, footnote 120.

151 Lichtenberger – Raja 2015, 494–495, Fig. 14–15. (Find. Nr. J13-Ha/a1-13-4).

152 Find. Nr. 164.J12-Cc-50-3, see Lichtenberger et al. 2017, 48, Nr. 164.

153 Northedge 1992, 19–22, 20–21.

withstood the Hasmonean attacks under Alexander Jannaeus, and held it from the second century BC until the early Roman period. Textual evidence suggests that the nearby as-Salt region was settled by Jews and that the boundary between the Nabatean region and the Jewish territory ran between ‘Amman and as-Salt. Excavations at the Amman Citadel revealed an extensive occupation on the lower and upper terraces during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods (Fig. 6.6). In 64/63 BC, Philadelphia became one of the Decapolis cities. Josephus cited it as one of the Syrian cities attacked by Jews after the massacre in Caesarea Maritima (Bell. Iud. 2, 18, 1). However, there is no other textual or archaeological evidence indicating that Philadelphia was involved in the First Jewish Revolt¹⁵⁴.

Remains of the material culture of interest at Amman are sparse. Only undecorated knife-pared wheel-made lamps have been found in the excavated material, mainly from tombs in and around Amman. One of those tombs lies at the foot of Ġabal Amman al Jedid, above Sharia al-‘Amīr Talal. The burial chamber is roughly cut into the poor-quality rock, measures 3 m², and has several loculi. It could be closed off with a limestone door with a bronze ring; eight steps lead into the chamber. Coins found nearby date it to the late second century AD. In Loculus B, Lamp 3 is listed as an undecorated knife-pared lamp¹⁵⁵. Two undecorated knife-pared lamps came from a tomb at Ġabal Amman, excavated in 1982¹⁵⁶. Another fragment of an undecorated knife-pared lamp was found near the Ruġm al-Malfouf tower, to the west of Amman, a short distance to the Fourth Circle on Ġabal Amman. The lamp was un-



Fig. 6.6 Temple of Hercules on top of the Amman citadel (Source: F. Schöpf).

earthed in a room near a destruction layer together with Roman ETS ware¹⁵⁷.

Knife-pared lamps were also found inside a rock-cut tomb at Ġabal al-Hussein. The tomb consists of a rectangular burial chamber with nine loculi. Owing to the find of the knife-pared lamps, it was dated to the second half of the first century AD¹⁵⁸. The report did not specify the actual number of lamps and whether or not they were decorated.

In 1984, nine chamber burials dated to the Roman and Byzantine periods were excavated in the Wādī as-Sir, west of Amman, and four undecorated knife-pared lamps were found in Loculus 2, Tomb 6¹⁵⁹. Three rock-cut tombs were found in Rajib, near Amman. The chambers, which were cut into the limestone, are on the slope of the hill. Three pottery lamps were recovered from Tomb 1, two of which were knife-pared. The tombs were dated to the second and third centuries AD¹⁶⁰.

6.5. The North

The peak times of settlement in northern Jordan occurred during the Bronze and Iron Ages and then again in the Byzantine period. There is no textual or archaeological evidence for the late Hellenistic or early Roman periods.

During the later Roman periods, the rural settlements were oriented towards the bigger city centres. The size of those settlements, which were administered by the Decapolis cities as their *chora*, varied and their populations ran to some 100 to

154 Ji 2009, 620, 623; MacAdam 1992, 30–35.

155 Registered Number: 1736-7, see Harding 1951, 30–33.

156 Al-Rashdan 1984, 21–22, Pl. 5. (Thanks to M. Mushasha for the help in reading the article and identifying the plates.)

157 Boraas 1971, 31, 41–44, Fig. 41.

158 Zayadine 1981, 341.

159 Sulaiman 1984, Pl. 2, 6. (Thanks to M. Mushasha for the help reading the article and identifying the plates.)

160 Tomb I, Nr. 1-2, Ghazi Bisheh 1973, 63–65, Pl. XXXVI, 1–2.

200 people. The boundaries of those city areas were drawn along natural landmarks: for Gadara the Yarmouk River in the north and the Jordan River on the west¹⁶¹. Most of the archaeological evidence from the bigger surveys is not helpful in this study of late Hellenistic and early Roman developments. However, archaeological work in recent years, including

surveys in particular regions, might provide more findings of the relevant periods, especially in the Wādī al-‘Arab. That wādī is distinctive in regard to the large quantity of Kefar Hananya ware and probably one chalkstone vessel find. Altogether, five sites were identified as having relevant material, mainly Kefar Hananya ware.

Sites	Chalkstone vessels	Ritual stepped pools	Kefar Hananya ware	Knife-pared lamps	Ossuaries
Tall es-Subba			1		
Tall Umm el-Ġurēn			1		
Sal	1		1		
El-Ma‘tarid eš-Šarqī			1		
Wādī el-‘Arab	1		11	1	

Tab. 6.5 Distribution of finds in the north (Source: F. Schöpf).

6.5.1. Zeraqōn-Valley

The finds from the Zeraqōn Valley came from a survey of an area in the middle of Wādī eš-Šellāle with the Ĥirbet ez-Zeraqōn site in its centre. The survey was undertaken between 1989 and 1994 and published by J. Kamlah¹⁶². The area was continuously settled from the Neolithic period on, but settlement declined during the Iron Age. The Hellenistic period is characterized by small farmsteads and hamlets, but there was an increase in the number and size of the settlements during the Roman periods (first–fourth century AD)¹⁶³.

The relevant finds for this study were mainly Kefar Hananya ware, which followed trading routes throughout the valley. The main type was the typi-

cal casserole for the Galilee with a thick rim and a ridge (Leitform 10a). Fragments of this type were found at Tall es-Subba, Tall Umm al-Ġurēn, Sal, and al-Ma‘tarid aš-Šarqī¹⁶⁴. The Kamlah published material includes a hand-made chalkstone vessel dated to the Chalcolithic period¹⁶⁵. The vessel has thick walls and a roughly worked appearance. It is quite large, max. 20.00 cm in diameter. The working style and appearance are comparable to the unfinished vessels from Tall Zirā‘a and Mukhayyat. However, as the material is not further described, the dating and typology remain uncertain.

161 Kamlah 2000, 145; El-Khourī 2007, 171, 174; El-Khourī 2008, 71; El-Khourī 2009, 32–34, 37–39.

162 Kamlah 2000, 1–5.

163 Kamlah 2000, 184, 197–199.

164 Kamlah 2000, 21–24, 65, 128–129, Tafel 13:7, 24:3, 59:3, 82:13.

165 Kamlah 2000, Tafel 65:1.

6.5.2. Wādī al-‘Arab

Most of the relevant material culture finds in the northern region were unearthed in Wādī al-‘Arab, where Tall Zirā‘a is situated. The wādī is marked by several trading routes that connect the Mediterranean Coast, Damascus, Syro-Mesopotamia, and Egypt. Those routes and favourable living conditions, including abundant water and fertile plateaus, made the wādī an attractive area for settlement.



Fig. 6.7 Chalkstone vessel from Ruġm Sa‘ab (Find Nr. WaA 990044-01, Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021, Plate 1.2 (Source: BAI/GPIA).

The surveys in the region indicated that settlement activity increased during the Roman periods¹⁶⁶.

One fragment of a chalkstone vessel was found during the 2009–2014 Wādī al-‘Arab survey conducted under the guidance of K. Soennecken and P. Leiverkus on the behalf of the GPIA (Fig. 6.7). The find was unearthed at site Nr. 219/221-1, Ruġm Sa‘ab, in Survey Zone B, which was not in the immediate vicinity of Tall Zirā‘a. The roughly hewn simple bowl, which was dated early Roman, has very thick walls, and a form comparable to the hand-carved polished bowls Type I.B. Form 2. OVD found at Tall Zirā‘a¹⁶⁷. The same survey revealed one fragment of an early Roman knife-pared lamp at site Nr. 211/225-16 (lower city of Tall Zirā‘a). The site was in so-called Zone A, an area situated 500 m from Tall Zirā‘a and was settled from the Bronze Age to the Umayyad period¹⁶⁸.

Altogether the Wādī al-‘Arab survey identified 24 sherds of Kefar Hananya ware at 12 sites, all of which were along the Wādī al-‘Arab and az-Zaḥar wādīs. Six sherds came from Tall al-Munṭār, four were found at the sanctuary of al-Qabū, and two in the lower city of Tall Zirā‘a. The other fragments were found in various settlement contexts or tombs¹⁶⁹. The exact dating remains unclear. Their distribution along the wādī lines and the absence of the ware in the hinterlands might have been possible owing to the trade route from the Galilee. Transport of the fragile wares was particularly difficult on the routes to the Golan and across the Jordan Rift¹⁷⁰.

6.6. Jewish Material Culture in Transjordan: Trade and Tradition

The collection of finds and the analyses of distribution patterns has shown that Peraea was the only region in Transjordan that commonly yielded finds related to ritual purity, such as chalkstone vessels and ritual stepped pools. Mukhayyat, a Hasmonean and later Herodian agricultural site on the outskirts of Peraea, probably marks the border with Naba-

tean-influenced regions. There were very few finds in the southeast towards the Nabatean regions. The Decapolis cities have some find groups in their assemblages, but only on a small scale, and those can be associated with Jews who moved into the prosperous cities and brought some of the items with them. However, they remained a minority in the cities.

¹⁶⁶ Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021, 2–3, 86.

¹⁶⁷ Find Nr. WaA 990044-01, Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021, 56, Plate 1.2.

¹⁶⁸ Find Nr. 900154-32, Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021, 45–46, Fig. 1.42, 1.43.

¹⁶⁹ Soennecken – Leiverkus 2021, 43.

¹⁷⁰ Adan-Bayewitz 1993, 213–218.

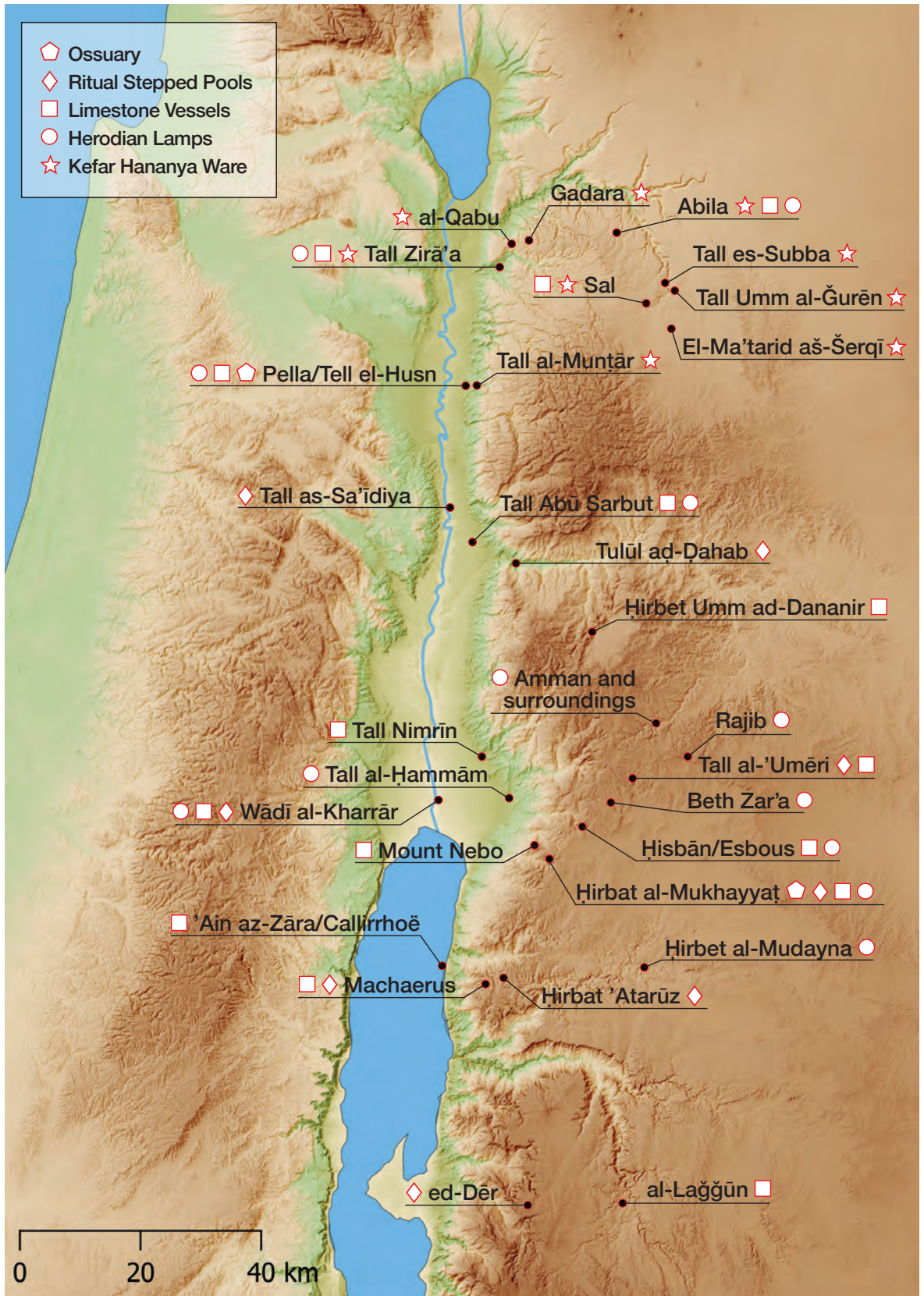


Fig. 6.8 Distribution of finds in Transjordan (Source: P. Leiverkus, P. Mientus, BAI/GPIA).

The wide distribution of knife-pared lamps in almost all the regions of interest can probably be accounted for by the popularity of the form. Kefar Hananya ware was found in small quantities in the north but was entirely absent in Peraea and the south. The quantity of Kefar Hananya ware found in the north and northeast was likely occasioned by the accessibility of suitable trade routes. The transport of the fragile pottery to these areas probably led to an increase in the price. According to D. Adan-Bayewitz, the limit of distribution to the east was marked by Pella and Gerasa but the northern limit remains unclear in his work¹⁷¹. In regard to the evidence noted, it seems that the eastern distribution continued at least as far as the Zeraqon Valley. The northern distribution followed the line of Wādī al-‘Arab and included Abila. Thus, the finds in the northern and eastern regions indicate that the distribution pattern of Kefar Hananya ware and knife-pared lamps spread over a larger than usually expected area. It is reasonable to assume that rather than being associated with the Jewish population, it must simply have followed safe trade routes.

Tall Zirā‘a was exceptional in the north in terms of sites in the area that yielded relevant find groups. Apart from Tall Abū Sarbut, it was the settlement in Transjordan that yielded the largest number of chalkstone vessels. Moreover, the chalkstone vessel finds in Peraea date to Herodian rule or later to the Zealot occupation after 70 AD. Tall Zirā‘a and Mukhayyat as Hasmonean outposts within gentile environments or border regions had the earliest chalkstone vessel finds together with Jerusalem and Jericho. As early as during the first phase of the Hasmonean occupation, certain aspects of the new concern with purity were brought into the settlements. Tulūl aḍ-Ḍahab and Ed-Dēr as probable Hasmonean military bases have ritual stepped pools.

Many of those strategic settlements were taken over by the Nabateans or, for one reason or another, had no further Jewish settlement activity, except for Tall Zirā‘a. From the early Roman period on, Jewish settlement was concentrated in Peraea. The only site with a ritual stepped pool and material associated with Jews predating the Herodian era was the Hasmonean military stronghold of Machaerus.

Apart from the regional pattern of distribution, there was a chronological discrepancy in the different areas of Transjordan. Whereas in Peraea, most of the described material came from the time of Herod’s rule, the Hasmonean fortresses and outposts included ritual stepped pools and chalkstone vessels from the early first century BC. This chronological pattern is also reflected in the material culture from Tall Zirā‘a.

171 Adan-Bayewitz 1993, 213–218.

7. FINDS OF JEWISH MATERIAL CULTURE IN OTHER DIASPORA COMMUNITIES



Fig. 7.1 Cities and settlements of the Jewish diaspora cited in the text (Source: P. Leiverkus, BAI/GPIA).

Jews and Judaism were widespread during the Graeco-Roman period, with Diaspora communities in Europe, Asia Minor, Africa, and throughout the Near East from the late Hellenistic period on. Living outside Eretz-Israel was no longer considered to be a negative choice and with that development, the idea of the Divine Presence changed. Whereas in biblical times, YHWH's presence was linked with the Temple, the Diaspora communities believed that YHWH follows His people and dwells among them wherever they reside. It was believed that the Torah and Mosaic law were the connecting agencies¹. This new idea gave way to a more personalized religious practice, one that shifted from the institutional sphere of the Temple to the private household². In the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, there was a wide range of Jewish rites and rituals in the different Di-

aspora communities, and likely there were also Jews who assimilated into their gentile environment.

With a few exceptions, the Diaspora communities were devoid of the Jewish material culture that was typical of Eretz-Israel and nearby territories. The absence of distinctive material culture further away from Judaea can be explained by an inability to 'read' the material by both Jews and non-Jews. In Transjordan, for example, owing to its closeness to the Galilee and Judaea, the residents were aware of the special nature of the material culture, for example, chalkstone vessels, and were able to associate it with a certain religious and ethnic group. However, these vessels were probably not easily recognized in Diaspora communities, so they would not suggest any particular affiliation and social belonging.

1 Baltrusch 2002, 48; Gafni 1997, 24; Hacham 2011, 401; Kiefer 2005, 279, 435–436, 690; Werman 2000, 168, 172–173.

2 Hacham 2011, 407–409.

Another reason for the absence of material culture might be the traditions of Diaspora communities that developed over the centuries. The beginning of the Jewish diaspora is already connected to the exile caused by the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests during the eighth to the sixth century BC³.

Early Diaspora communities, for example, those in Egypt, followed. The religious rites in those communities were identified with the private household and characterized by purity rituals, dietary laws, and laws governing sexual intercourse⁴. Nevertheless, Jerusalem remained a focal point and the pilgrimage to the Temple served as a shared religious experience. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem was required for adult male Israelites three times a year (Exod. 23:17; 34:23; Deut. 16:16): during Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Pentecost), and Sukkot (Tabernacles). It is reasonable to assume that only a minority was able to make the journey three times a year. It was probably more common to go once a year or even only once a lifetime – or never⁵. Although, the numbers of pilgrims remains unknown, the textual sources note that women participated as well, although only men were obligated to do so⁶. This enabled the Diaspora com-

munity to unite with the Jewish nation as a whole⁷. Inscriptions and literary sources testify to Jewish pilgrimages from Babylonia, Syria, Rome, Asia Minor, and North Africa including Egypt⁸.

During the Roman period, Jews were normally well integrated in their gentile surroundings. This was especially true in urban centres such as Alexandria, Rome, and Sardis. Jews were not necessarily distinguishable as they dressed in the common fashions and looked like their gentile neighbours⁹. Furthermore, Jews used the Greek language and had gentile names, and circumcision was not limited to Jews but was widespread in the ancient Near East¹⁰. It was only in the Western Roman Empire and in Rome itself that circumcision is mentioned as a feature of Jewishness in the first century AD¹¹. Jews participated in all kinds of social and political activities in the Hellenistic cities. It was not unusual for Jews to attend the theatre, participate in other leisure activities, and be involved in politics. Under Roman rule, the Jewish inhabitants of a Roman city were allowed to organize their own associations. As so-called corporate bodies, they were respected and sometimes even protected¹². Despite the described

3 Despite the accounts of the expulsions of Jews from Judaea and the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the sources of regarding their lives in Mesopotamia are meagre. Non-Jewish Graeco-Roman sources simultaneously do not deal with the lives of expelled people after military interventions. For the victorious party, those accounts were irrelevant, see Seibert 1979, 360.

4 Baltrusch 2002, 29; Harrington 2019, 75.

5 Goodman 2007, 50–51; Haber 2008a, 186; Safrai 1981, 93–97.

6 The obligation for women to sacrifice doves in case of successful childbirth was eased for those who did not have regular access to the Temple. R. Gamliel ruled, that women could sacrifice once for several childbirths when in Jerusalem (mKer 1:7). Furthermore, inscriptions of the Second Temple period, found in Jerusalem, were dedicated by female pilgrims, see Safrai 1981, 99–100, 104.

7 The collective experience of the pilgrimage developed on the way. Organized pilgrimage groups from the different parts of the Diaspora travelled together towards Jerusalem. The administration in Jerusalem was informed about pilgrim groups approaching the city and so could help the pilgrims on the way. Pilgrimage roads were under regular surveillance to ensure that water installations were intact. There was a ritual stepped pool for pilgrims, e.g., on the Jerusalem–Hebron road, see Safrai 1981, 127–128, 134–135, 139, Zissu – Amit 2008, 57.

8 Safrai 1981, 63–64, 71–93.

9 Since Roman authors frequently noted distinctive beards or hairstyles, and mocked people wearing traditional Greek clothing, the fact that there was no mention of a characteristic ‘Jewish’ style indicates that Jews looked ‘normal’ in the eyes of Roman society, see Cohen 1993, 3–5.

10 Some Jews in the Diaspora had both a Hebrew and a Greek name, see Cohen 1993, 9. It was not only Jews that often had two different names; individuals of various ethnicities in the Decapolis cities also had both a Semitic and a Greek/Roman name, see Fink 1933, 123.

11 Cohen 1993, 18–19. Herodotus, for instance, describes circumcision as a major marker for Egyptian identity, see Moore 2015, 109. Nevertheless, circumcision became a form of Jewish self-definition during the Hasmonean period. The account *On the Jews*, associated with Theodotus and dated to the second century BC, refers to the conflict between Jews and Samaritans. The Jews or ‘Hebrews’ are portrayed as circumcised, whilst the Samaritans are not, see Nickelsburg 1984, 121–123.

12 Still, not all cities in the empire acted in the same manner. In some cases, autonomy and freedom of assembly were restricted for Jews. In a political sense, the term *paroikia*, which defined a strange person that lived near or next to citizens, was applied to Jews. It was comparable to the Hebrew *ger*, somebody who lives among natives in a communal and protected situation but one without citizenship. Baltrusch 2002, 51; Delling 1987, 58; Noethlichs 1996, 76–90.

co-existence, which can be assumed at least for the bigger cities, violent clashes between Jews and gentiles were also a part of everyday life. The largest uprising of Jews was the revolt against the gentile authorities in Egypt and Cyrene in 115 and 116 AD. The revolts even spread to the Island of Cyprus. The gentile population is said to have reacted with exceeding violence, causing the death of some 220,000 Jews in Cyrene. That number is clearly exaggerated, but it gives an idea of the results of those battles¹³.

The geographical distance to Eretz-Israel, the various local traditions in the different Diaspora communities, and the Jews' successful integration into Graeco-Roman society make it hard to detect specific finds and other marks of Jewish religious practices in the Diaspora, but they are not invisible.

7.1. Prayer Houses and Their Meaning for Purity

The architectural remains of *proseuchae*, the synagogues in the Diaspora, are often the only archaeological signs of Jewish presence. The remnants of the buildings, which served several needs of Jews, reflect a great range of architectural styles. The *proseuchae* was the centre of Jewish communal activity, and the space for keeping the religious traditions. As in Eretz-Israel, the synagogues in the Diaspora and their functions developed differently from one place to another. The inscriptions in the *proseuchae* are primarily in Greek. Personal names are often in Latin or Greek, and the design of the buildings' interiors relied heavily on Graeco-Roman models. Thus, these institutions reflect a synthesis of the local Graeco-Roman surroundings and Jewish tradition. In general, the distinctive architecture of the prayer houses was developed during the third and fourth centuries AD. The Torah shrine near a Jerusalem-oriented wall was one of the central architectural features that distinguished the prayer house from gentile buildings¹⁵.

Although, the *proseuchae* were the religious centres of the Jewish communities, the Temple in Jerusalem remained a focal point. In *Legatio ad*

In general, indicators of Jewish Diaspora communities are better documented and published from late antiquity on¹⁴. The following pages present a selection of archaeological and architectural evidence of Jewish purity practices, so other Hellenistic and early Roman Jewish finds, for example, inscriptions, are not discussed. Archaeological remains include evidence of prayer houses which served religious and communal needs and often had water installations or water sources nearby, which can be associated with purity practices and rituals. Specific small finds connected to ritual purity were in evidence mainly in Egypt and are discussed as well.

Gaium, Philo wrote about the Jewish community in Rome. According to that account, the community collected the first fruits and Temple taxes in the 'houses of prayer' to send them to Jerusalem¹⁶.

The special connection between the *proseuchae* and purity practices is reflected in the presence water sources and water installations inside the buildings¹⁷. There is a *proseuche* in Ostia, the official port of Rome during the Early Roman Empire, where the earliest building phase can be dated to the first century BC; it was subsequently renovated in the second century AD¹⁸. The architecture is characterized by the main hall (Area D), with benches along the walls. The building was located outside the city centre, at the end of the *decamanus*, near the riverbank that ran parallel to the important coastal road known as Via Severiana. Apart from its proximity to a natural water source, the *proseuche* had a cistern next to the entrance in front of the main eastern door (Area A), which dates to the first century AD. Another basin at the eastern main door (Area B) can be dated to the renovation phase. According to photographs, the basin can be reconstructed as a rectangular installation, ca. 2.00 × 2.80 m, and 0.40 m

13 Schürer 1973, 529–532.

14 For an overview, see Rutgers 1998.

15 Interestingly, there was no separation of men and women in the synagogues as would be the norm in later times. It is not known whether the later separation was influenced by

Christian or Muslim surroundings, see Hachlili 1998, 25, 93–94; Levine 2000, 118–122, 477; Rutgers 1998, 103.

16 *Legatio ad Gaium*, 155–156, see Colson 1962, 78–79.

17 Haber 2008b, 69, 71; Sanders 1990, 258–259.

18 Hachlili 1998, 9.

in depth. Thus full-body immersion was unlikely. It was probably used for the washing of the hands and feet or for sprinkling water over one's body. In the building phase of the fourth century AD, both the cistern and the basin were covered up and were no longer used. At the same time, several baths were constructed near the *proseuche* on the Via Severina, which could have served for the washing rituals¹⁹.

The *proseuche* on the Aegean Island of Delos, dated between the second and mid-first century BC probably until the second century AD, was on the eastern side of the island, with a courtyard to the east towards the sea. Its southern section was characterized by small rooms, one of them connected to a cistern, which some scholars have identified as a ritual pool. The assembly hall had two walls with benches and a marble chair installed at the western wall. Two inscriptions found in the vicinity of the building document the existence of a Samaritan community in Delos during the third or second century AD²⁰.

The only documented *proseuchae* in Asia Minor were in Sardis and Priene. Sardis was near trade routes, especially the Royal Road, and was an important royal and political centre. Biblical sources mention a Jewish presence in Sardis as early as in the sixth century BC. A historical reference to the Jewish community of Sardis known through Josephus dates its arrival to the third century BC, but the architectural remains can only be dated to ca. 270 AD²¹. The Jewish prayer house was integrated into a Roman bathhouse in the northwestern part of the city dated to 17 AD²². Thus, it was in the centre of the city, near the gymnasium, with an entrance close to the main road and its shops. When entering from the street, one reached the forecourt, which included an interior courtyard with a krater fountain and three additional entrances. The krater fountain might have been used for hand washing before proceeding to the main hall. A stone table, the 'eagle table', in the centre of the main hall was

probably used for the Torah reading²³. The krater fountain in the entrance area of the late Roman *proseuche* indicates a tradition of washing hands before prayer, which was mentioned as early as in Hellenistic times, for example, in the *Letter of Aristeas* 305–306. However, the fountain was noted in city inscriptions as a public facility, so it was used by Jews and gentiles alike. In their inscriptions, the Jews in Sardis called themselves citizens of Sardis. The locally influenced style of the interior of the *proseuche* with its eagle table and its proximity to the Roman bathhouse in the centre of the city suggests that the Jewish community was an integral part of Sardis' society²⁴. Yet, they were able to hold onto their customs and religious practices.

In contrast, the *proseuche* of Priene was far less representative and was mistaken for a 'house church' during the first archaeological excavations between 1895 and 1898. The building is in West Gate Street and was originally a private house, which was changed into a public building. The entrance was reached from the main street by a small lane which led to the forecourt, with the main room behind it. The interior of the small *proseuche* was characterized by a single bench at the north wall, on the east side, and a square niche as the Torah shrine. The niche was the room's principal feature, and there were water basins next to it. Representations of the *m'norā*, *lūlāv*, and *ētrōg* on the building's walls make the identification as a synagogue plausible. The earliest building phase was dated to the third century AD, and the building was in continuous use as a prayer house throughout the fourth and fifth centuries AD. Unlike the building in Sardis, the prayer house of Priene was not near the main street so it was not easily identifiable or accessible. Like the water installation in Sardis, the basins inside the Priene building hint at some sort of washing ritual for purity near the Torah shrine²⁵.

19 Haber 2008b, 72; Runesson 2001, 125.

20 Hachlili 1998, 53, 89; Levine 2000, 97–107, 311; Runesson 2001, 124.

21 Josephus further reported on a special food supply for the Jewish residents of Sardis, stating "that those that take care of the provision for the city shall take care that such sorts of food as they esteem fit for their eating may be imported into the city", (Ant. Iud. 14, 10, 24); see Maier 1999, 474. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the Jewish community

of Sardis followed certain dietary laws; see also Trebilco 1991, 37–39.

22 Davidoff 2018, 15–16, 18–19, 79.

23 The table is decorated with Roman eagles on its sides, demonstrating the use of Graeco-Roman symbols inside the prayer house. The rabbinical sources, however, mention a wooden platform (*bimā*) in the centre of the main hall for reading Scripture. Davidoff 2018, 23–30; Levine 2000, 82–87.

24 Davidoff 2018, 81; Kraabel 1982, 458; Trebilco 1991, 43.

25 Trebilco 1991, 55–56.

The various water installations and the access to natural water sources imply different kinds of washing rituals. The rite of ‘bathing’ was not interpreted in the same way as in Eretz-Israel. Different types of ‘bathing’ or washing were practiced, such as sprinkling, dipping, and the pouring of water, which were also known from gentile traditions. The lustration of water and individuals washing before entering a temple was common practice in the Greek religion, as was participating in symbolic washing before every sacrifice. Thus, as the archaeological evidence suggests, washing one’s hands and/or sprinkling could well have been a common practice before entering the *proseuche*²⁶. A Genizah fragment notes that washing was a symbol of veneration for the holiness of the synagogue service, comparable to the practice before entering the Temple precincts. There is no mention of this custom in synagogues in Eretz-Israel, but it seems to be characteristic of Diaspora *proseuchae*²⁷. In some of them, the water installations could have served this need or, alternatively, Jews might have used the lo-

cal bathhouses for that purpose²⁸. Even though Jews were considered to be in a state of constant corpse impurity as they did not have access to the ritual of the Red Heifer in the Temple, they were obligated to keep a certain state of purity in their daily lives²⁹. This was comparable to the purity practices after the destruction of the Temple, since most Levitical purity regulations and rituals did not necessarily have to be performed in the Temple³⁰. After the Temple was destroyed, washing before prayer and/or other religious services was still in force. However, the architecture of the religious institutions and the washing practices were strongly influenced by the Graeco-Roman surroundings. For instance, the water installations inside the *proseuchae* were generally located in the entrance area and can be compared to the place where gentiles usually immersed vessels or performed sprinkling rites before entering their sanctuaries³¹. One exception is the synagogue at Priene, where the water basins were next to the Torah niche.

7.2. Material Culture and the Special Case of Egypt

Egypt was home to the longest lasting and the best-known Diaspora communities. Jews probably settled there as early as in the sixth century BC, and the country was unique in terms of its Jewish temple tradition. An Israelite temple in Elephantine dates from the sixth century BC to 410 BC. The community in Leontopolis, likely established by political emigrants during the Seleucid threat in Judaea, had its own temple from 160 BC to 73/74 AD³². The

founding of that temple was linked to Onias IV as High Priest³³. Josephus contended that Onias built the temple in Egypt with an altar similar to the one in Jerusalem, but smaller and less rich. Moreover, Onias is said to have found other priests and Levites who could engage in regular Temple style services (Ant. Iud. 13, 3, 3).

Interestingly, the temples do not play a significant role in Alexandrian Jewish literature. They are

26 Delling 1987, 47; Miller 2015, 232, 328; Sanders 1990, 261–263, 269; Parker 1991, 19–20.

27 Haber 2008b, 74. “It is for this reason that our ancestors installed in all synagogue courtyards offering basins of freshwater for sanctifying the hands and feet”, see Levine 2000, 309.

28 Hachlili 1998, 53, 89; Levine 2000, 97–107, 311.

29 Sanders 1990, 270–271.

30 Adler 2020a, 57. Keeping purity was thus generally a private everyday matter.

31 Runesson 2001, 124.

32 The archaeological identification of Tell el-Yahudiye, a site 20 miles north of Cairo, with Leontopolis is uncertain. Leontopolis was probably at the site of Tell Muqdam. There is not

yet any archaeological evidence regarding the temple. Nevertheless, the site of Tell el-Yahudiye is a Jewish/gentile burial site, see Piotrkowski 2019, 167, 171–172.

33 Josephus suggested Onias III (Bell. Iud. 1.; 7, 10, 2) and Onias IV (Ant. Iud. 12, 6, 2.; 12, 9, 7; 13, 3, 1–2; 20, 10, 1) as founders of the temple, see also Piotrkowski 2019, 166–167. According to A. Baumgarten’s assumption, Josephus drew from the textual evidence regarding the temple in Egypt; further, the earlier sanctuary in Jerusalem, was not equally important to all Jews in Eretz-Israel and the Diaspora, see Baumgarten 2004, 28.

not mentioned in the *Letter of Aristeas*, in the works of Philo, or in 3 Macc³⁴. Later rabbinic sources discuss the temple service and the possibility and legitimacy of performing sacrifices in the temple of Onias. However, the sources agreed that the kohanim there would not have been able to serve in the Temple in Jerusalem³⁵.

In general, Jewish communities were well integrated in Egypt from the Hellenistic period on, but the sources regarding religious practices there are meagre³⁶. Philo described worship and practices which differed from those in Eretz-Israel. He complained, for example, that Jews in Alexandria

cooked meat and milk together, while it was common practice to separate meat and dairy in Eretz-Israel. Based on Exod. 23:19, he suggested that at the least one should not cook meat in the milk of the same kind of animal³⁷. He also told of an Alexandrian Jewish festival celebrating the translation of the Torah into Greek (Septuagint). The festival is said to have been held annually on the Island of Pharos³⁸.

As Philo was a member of the elite, his works generally reflect the situation among the wealthy Jews in Alexandria.

7.2.1. Ostraca Find CG 125

One ostrakon find from Elephantine (CG 125) is of particular interest because it mentions ritual purity in connection to food. The ostrakon was discovered by C. Clermont-Ganneau at the beginning of the twentieth century but was only published in 1989. B. Porten and A. Yardeni discussed it further in an article a few years later³⁹. The ostrakon mentions the word אַמֵּט in Imperial Aramaic:

CONCAVE

l[Greetings (to) PN] from ²[PN].
No]w, I ³[sent (word)] to you, saying: ⁴”Do not dispatch to me ⁵bread without it being ^{CONVEX} ¹sealed. Lo, all ²the ljar²s are impure. Behold, ³the bread which [yo]u disp[atched] ⁴to me yesterday is im[pure]. do not [dispatch] ⁶to me [...] b[read].⁴⁰”

According to the handwriting, the ostrakon dates to ca. 475 BC, and probably belongs to the writings of the anonymous scribe of Syene⁴¹. The use of the word אַמֵּט places the words in the context of ritual purity. One explanation for calling bread impure

might have been that the household of the baker or deliverer was the scene of a recent death⁴². The customer presumably believed that the container holding bread was not sealed, and thus was defiled by the corpse in the house (Num. 19:15). It may have been that the reference was to the ingredients for the bread being stored in unsealed vessels, which would make the bread impure. The explanation of the impurity owing to a corpse in the house seems likely since the customer complained that yesterday’s the bread was also impure. The impurity of a corpse in the house rendered everything in the house impure for seven days. However, if the dating of 475 BC is right, the knowledge of the relevant passage in Num. 19 is remarkable, since the writing of the biblical texts only started in the fifth or fourth century BC. Moreover, the practice of private purity rituals is not recorded prior to the Hellenistic period. Obviously, the baker or deliverer was not aware of the purity regulations since he produced and sent the bread, whereas the writer meant that the bread was ritually impure. The use of term אַמֵּט marks the

34 Dellings 1987, 35; Hachlili 1998, 3; Kiefer 2005, 97. The silence on the temple of Leontopolis in the Alexandrian literary works can be probably explained by the geographical distance but also the religious affiliation of the authors, who were loyal to the Jerusalem Temple.

35 mMan 13:10; bMan 109b; bMeg 10a; bAZ 52b, see further Piotrkowski 2019, 168–169.

36 Gafni 1997, 39–40.

37 Barraclough 1984, 422–424; Belkin 1940, 22; Stern 1974, 123.

38 Leonhardt 2001, 48.

39 Porten – Yardeni 1993.

40 Porten – Yardeni 1993, 451, 453. The final translation according to B. Porten and A. Yardeni with the related transcription goes as follows:

l thwšrw ly lhm wl' hw htm “Do not dispatch to me unsealed bread.”

hw kl bqy' tm'n “Lo, all the jars are impure.”

h' lhmt[m] “Behold, the bread...is im[pure].”

l[thwšrw] ly l[hm....] “Do not [dispatch] to me [...] b[read].”

41 Porten – Yardeni 1993, 451.

42 Porten – Yardeni 1993, 454.

ritual context, so the complaint cannot be related to secular hygiene standards or taste. Thus, the ostrakon could be a sign of an early ritual purity concern

7.2.2. Ossuaries and Tombs

Several ossuaries were found in the necropolis at Chatby, Alexandria, most of which were excavated during the nineteenth century. Some of the ossuaries had Greek inscriptions⁴³. One dated prior to 70 AD, which is well described and published, was probably brought from Jerusalem⁴⁴. An illustration of the find in a short report from 1873 shows an ossuary with a gabled lid, with circle and rosette decoration⁴⁵. It was made of white chalkstone and reflects the decoration pattern characterized by Rachel Hachlili Type II, with a central motif is a circle consisting of three incised lines and two flanking rosettes⁴⁶. The lid is decorated with several overlapping half circles. Both the box and the lid have an incised rectangular frame⁴⁷.

7.3. Summary

The material discussed here reflects primarily Jewish Diaspora communities that adopted local styles, participated in civic life, and shared spaces with gentiles, while still abiding by some of the Jewish laws. We do not know the extent to which the keeping of Shabbat, the paying of the temple tax, or special dietary laws influenced their social interactions⁴⁹.

The archaeological remains of the Jewish communities in the Diaspora are generally sparse compared to the literary evidence. The material culture of Eretz-Israel and especially Jerusalem in the late

in some parts of Egyptian Jewish society, or more precisely the community in Elephantine.

The cemeteries at Leontopolis and Alexandria have some characteristics typical of tombs in Eretz-Israel, such as those in loculi tombs. The loculi tombs in the Jewish cemeteries in Leontopolis and Alexandria date from the second century BC to the first century AD. The burials in the eastern necropolis Chatby in Alexandria featured decorated oil lamps with Jewish symbols and decorated ossuaries. The inscriptions indicate that Jews and non-Jews were buried together at Chatby, so the described burial customs were practiced by gentiles as well as Jews⁴⁸.

Hellenistic and early Roman periods reached the established Diaspora communities in a very limited fashion or not at all. The non-appearance of any of the relevant material culture in areas strongly linked with Eretz-Israel, such as Syria, can be explained by the lack of archaeological fieldwork. Cities such as Damascus were frequently overbuilt, and the contents of Hellenistic and Roman strata remain generally unknown⁵⁰. In some cases, archaeologists were unaware of the specifically Jewish material and did not mention it in their reports⁵¹.

43 Néroutsos 1888, 82–84.

44 Rahmani 1994, 25.

45 Clermont-Ganneau 1873, 302–305.

46 Hachlili 2005, 115.

47 Clermont-Ganneau 1873, 304–305.

48 Hachlili 1998, 263–266, 306–310, 414–415.

49 Fine 2013, 20; Goodman 1998, 13; Kant 1987, 690–692.

Despite the positive assumptions and the obvious integration into non-Jewish society, the reality could have been different on a personal level. Integration into society by means of professions, education, or administrative positions did not automatically lead to a positive perception of the social environment.

As a study from 1977 was able to show, 80 % of the members of the Jewish elite in Germany did not feel fully integrated into German society, but they were nevertheless active members of it. 60 % reported they would not feel at home in Germany. Although the data derives from a modern study, it emphasizes that even people who take an active part in society and its institutions do not necessarily feel accepted or comfortable doing so. Jews in antiquity would probably recognize their ‘otherness’ in contrast to the Graeco-Roman gentile society, see Rutgers 1998, 21.

50 Kosmin 2018, 303–304.

51 Kraabel 1982, 448.

8. PUTTING THE EVIDENCE TOGETHER: A NEW APPROACH TO PURITY

The available relevant archaeological material and textual sources regarding Jewish religious practice demonstrate the existence of a wide range of thoughts and practices. Discussions of issues concerning the role of purity and its related material culture revealed certain communal patterns during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods. The impact of the Hasmonean reign, which fostered the idea of a ‘Jewish identity’ together with other political and cultural factors, led to a new understanding of Jewish self-definition¹.

The emergence of the new focus on purity as an identity marker can be traced to the end of the Persian period and is first seen in the texts of the Tanakh associated with the Babylonian exile. Ezra and Nehemia presented a new approach to the role of purity as a tool to separate Jews from the others. Important aspects of purity include table manners, dietary habits, sexual relations, and the priestly purity of the Temple. The terminology regarding this process also changed in time. The connotation of the term נדה (*nidā*) changed from an allusion to the ritual impurity of a menstruating woman to one of moral and general impurity (e.g., Ezra 9:11). By this change purity or better impurity (*nidā*) defined the immoral others and the abandoned land and marked the boundary between religious and ethnic groups². The idealized purity, which is hardly achievable, became the identity marker for the ones who returned from exile and reconnected with the Judeans who had stayed in the land.

Texts dating to the time of the Hasmonean period promote the personal aspect of purity, marking the shift in religious practice from the official Temple sphere to private life. Moreover, the Hasmone-

ans used purity as a way to distinguish themselves from the others and strengthen the sense of Jewish identity.

The emergence of material culture associated with purity began later than the development in the literature. Important changes in material culture started in the second century BC and became widespread in the early first century AD. A close look at the material culture of Transjordan during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods demonstrated that some cultural objects were more prolific and had a wider distribution than was formerly assumed.

A new typology was established for the various chalkstone vessels found at Tall Zirā’a, which indicated that some of the vessels were imported from Judaea, the Galilee, and the Golan, whereas others were very similar to vessel types in Peraea, and were probably produced locally. The earliest finds of chalkstone vessels at Tall Zirā’a date to the first half of the first century BC, that is, to the Hasmonean period. Thus, along with Jerusalem, Jericho, and Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyat, Tall Zirā’a was one of the few places where these early vessels were found.

A wider distribution was demonstrated in regard to Jewish material culture in Transjordan. Kefar Hananya Ware, for example, had a farther northeast distribution than might have been expected. Ritual stepped pools were found at the edge of Peraea and further towards the south. Moreover, there were a small number of finds of chalkstone vessels in Pella at the northern edge of Peraea and probably in Sal in the Zeraqōn Valley in the northeast³.

The Diaspora communities discussed here provided a vivid picture of different approaches towards religious and purity practices, for example,

1 By using the expression *ḥever ha-yehūdym* (association of all Jews) on their coins, they implied that all Jews, both in Judaea and the Diaspora, belonged to the Hasmonean state. Other textual evidence of this development is the prayer for the well-being of the king, associated with Alexander Jannaeus. Jews were defined as a nation, beyond the borders of the actual state. Moreover, their religious independence was reflected by the head of the Hasmonean Empire, who was automatically the High Priest. Julius Caesar accepted Hyrcanus II as the religious leader of all Jews, not only those in Judaea, see also Gruen 2002, 102–103; Regev 2013, 197–199, 222.

2 In D. Erbele-Küster’s analysis, נדה (*nidā*) became “a literary indication of what is outside the systems, suggesting that clear-cut boundaries could be set”, see Erbele-Küster 2017, 122. Moreover, she argues that the concept of impurity became a feminine one. The later interpretations of Lev. 15 were primarily concerned with the impurity of women, and their contaminating ability, see Erbele-Küster 2017, 123, 126, 153.

3 However, owing to the fact that some of the material was not recognized or properly documented, the analysis and collection of presented objects and installations must remain incomplete.

as regards synagogue architecture and inscriptions. However, there is no evidence of the material culture described for Eretz-Israel and part of Transjordan in the Diaspora communities of Syria, Egypt, Babylon, Cyrenaica, and Europe, and ossuaries were only found in Egypt. Purity rites and regulations were practiced primarily through water installations and *proseuchae* built near natural water sources. Moreover, purity practices in the different Diaspora communities were influenced by local traditions and available resources.

8.1. The Chronology of Purity

The earliest literary sources dealing with purity and separation from the others date from the early Hellenistic period on. However, those sources reflect the practices of the religious elite, and how far the texts influenced social life remains unknown. The texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls corpus are the first that actually describe such purity practices as full-body immersion in the first century BC.

The relevant material culture emerged later than the early texts on purity. The first ritual stepped pools appeared at the end of the second century BC, and chalkstone vessels and pottery ware followed shortly thereafter. Ossuaries, large chalkstone vessels, and stone furniture, which appeared during the Herodian dynasty, were first used by the Jerusalem elite and then later by the population at large. The cultural developments of the late first century BC and first century AD were linked with the new wealth of Judaea and Herod's ties to the Roman Empire⁴. Some scholars associate the contemporary expertise in stone masonry with Jewish slaves which were deported to Rome in 63 BC and later returned as craftsmen. It is also possible that Herod's widespread connections made it possible for him to import foreign craftsmen⁵.

However, the objects from the Herodian period postdate the earlier development of small chalkstone vessels, ritual stepped pools, and distinctive pottery. In particular, the dating of chalkstone vessels is subject to controversy. Chalkstone vessels

The presented evidence indicated that purity and its related objects and installations had their borders. Distribution patterns were linked to geography, sociological factors, and chronological processes. Was purity more symbolic than real in the far flung Diaspora communities?

Going back to the initial theory that purity was an identity marker and a tool of ethnic boundary-making, one finds that there was a symbolic value in purity from the very beginning.

are often associated with the Herodian period and the time of the Jewish revolt, which is reasonable in light of the known time of maximum distribution and use of these vessels. However, in regard to the evidence presented in the present study as well as in earlier research, the chronological development of chalkstone vessels can be compared to that of ossuaries. The first ossuaries appeared in the last third of the first century BC exclusively in Jerusalem and had a small radius of distribution, but their use spread to the Galilee in the late first to mid-second century AD⁶.

If we assume that the first chalkstone vessels were linked to the Hasmoneans, their first limited appearance in the first half of the first century BC in Jerusalem and Jericho makes sense. The chalkstone vessel finds in the Hasmonean outposts of Tall Zirā'a and Ḥirbat al-Mukhayyaṭ reflect this early development. A wider distribution started in the second half of the first century BC, but it was only during the first century AD that they appeared, for example, in Peraea.

The finds at Tall Zirā'a demonstrated that the early appearance of chalkstone vessels was not an isolated phenomenon in Jerusalem and Jericho but spread to Hasmonean outposts. The concentration of these finds in cities and settlements of Hasmonean political significance and agricultural and military use makes it likely that they were used by the Hasmoneans and their followers.

4 Altshul 2015, 2–4; Miller 2015, 174–177, 180–181.

5 Deines 1993, 43.

6 Rahmani 1994, 21–24; S. Gibson follows a comparable approach regarding the early distribution of the vessels, see Gibson 2022, 161, 180–182.

As the import and functions of material culture can change, the Hasmonean, Herodian, and rabbinic times saw different implications associated with chalkstone vessels even in the same regional context. Whereas the hand-carved vessels were preferred in the rural settlements of Judaea, elaborate lathe-turned vessels were favoured in Jerusalem. Further, the continued use of those vessels after the revolt in villages near Jerusalem might reflect the wish to preserve a Jewish identity in the face of the Roman occupation⁷.

Purity standards and practices varied from one community to another and even from one social group to another in the same community, but still enabled Judaeans and Jews in different contexts and regions to share a formative notion. Thus, material culture can function differently in different contexts. A chalkstone vessel in an average domestic household differed from the *qalal* in the priestly quarter in Jerusalem, yet they served the same idea and evoked the same associations. Another crucial factor for this interpretation is the wide range of find contexts. Chalkstone vessels appeared in domestic, religious, and elite settings. Thus, they were used by the elite and laypersons alike and were not associ-

ated with any particular ritual, which does not render the objects less significant or less important for further interpretation; on the contrary, the vessels can be interpreted as ethnic markers in general⁸.

The material culture, and especially the chalkstone vessels could have symbolized belonging to the community, regardless of geographical, social, or linguistic borders in a time of political unrest. Since Jews could not be distinguished by different clothing or outlook, the use of certain items was a way to communicate their affiliation to the community⁹. Moreover, that use reflected an individual's acceptance of the contemporary religious and cultural norms¹⁰. Especially in a hostile non-Jewish environment, expressing Jewish identity could serve to mark cultural boundaries and ensure the cohesiveness and protection and of resident Jews¹¹. This notion was particularly relevant to finds in the Galilee, the Golan, and Transjordan, where Jewish settlements were surrounded by gentile cities and pagan sanctuaries¹². In the Judaeian context, especially the big chalkstone vessels and other objects reflect the elevated status of an individual and the family and underscore the social hierarchy¹³.

7 Gibson 2022, 167, 172.

8 This is comparable to the study of G. Emberling on Hamrin Polychrome Ware in Mesopotamia. He identified similar features, which defined pottery as an ethnic marker in the early third millennium BC in the region of the Zagros mountains. Those features included the wide variety of find contexts and a meaningful style/decoration, see Emberling 1997, 323. On qualitative and quantitative differences in material culture, and the alternative uses of the same material cultural objects, see Jones 1997, 123–124, 126. J. Klawans points out that rituals and sacrifices are “multivalent entities, whose levels of meaning cannot be reduced to any single idea or purpose”. The same can be assumed for ritual objects, see Klawans 2006, 68.

9 On material culture as non-verbal communication, see Shanks – Tilley 1992, 133. In H. M. Wobst's theory on material culture and especially stylistic features as forms of communication, he argues that stylistic features, which are easily visible and repetitive are the most useful items for achieving successful communication. More complex stylistic features require higher costs but such objects only reach a small percentage in society. Simple style and lower costs suitable for distri-

bution to a larger audience are much more useful. The chalkstone vessels combine the idea of a simple repetitive style, which could be read by a majority of the Jewish society in Eretz-Israel and nearby territories, see Wobst 1977, 322–323, 326. Further work on this theory undertaken in archaeology could further indicate, e.g., in the Black Mesa territory in the United States, that this form of stylistic behaviour was used in religious contexts and could help to maintain social ties among more widespread societies, see Bernbeck 1997, 241.

10 H. M. Wobst speaks in this regard of “the message content of the material culture that individuals surround themselves which forms a sort of check list”, see Wobst 1977, 327.

11 Barth 1968, 36–37; Berlin 2005, 433; Bernbeck 1997, 239; Wobst 1977, 328–329. However, all of these interpretations remain hypothetical, since we lack solid evidence of social interaction and boundaries between Jews and gentiles, see also Van Maaren 2018, 433.

12 Berlin 2002, 65–66.

13 Magen 2002, 147.

8.2. A Question of Identity

Ethnic or communal identity could be defined by observable features through certain habits of dress, language, architecture, or way of life¹⁴. Shared moral standards enabled such a defined community to judge itself and its surroundings. Those standards, together with shared habits, set boundaries and defined social life. The representation of one's own ethnicity, in this case Jewishness, can change in different contexts, depending on political and economic interests¹⁵.

Purity and the related items such as chalkstone vessels and pottery reflect a sort of imagined Jewish community¹⁶. As the boundaries of private and public life and the separation from gentiles could be blurred, the ideal of purity of the community marked a shared identification¹⁷. In the literature cited herein, purity is defined as an ideal state which

served to separate Jews from gentiles and righteous Jews from non-observant Jews¹⁸.

The Jews of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods were probably aware of their differences. Still, they shared a religion and values and had a geographical centre in Jerusalem that marked their ethnic boundaries¹⁹. In the discussion on the use of the term nation, it became obvious that certain characteristics of a national sentiment are not an invention of the modern era but were known to ancient societies, and Jews subscribed to certain aspects of (modern) nationalism, such as common ancestry, religion, culture, and language – and all of which had a highly symbolic character. Thus, it is also legitimate to claim that the Jews thought that purity and its related objects served as unifying elements of an imagined community.

8.3. Summary and Conclusion

The finds at Tall Zirā'a are indicative of the appearance of chalkstone vessels during the Hasmonean period. This is important as the early development goes hand in hand with the changing attitudes towards purity and Diaspora in the literary sources, the newly emergent pottery, and the political trend towards Jewish self-definition under the Hasmoneans. The significance of chalkstone vessels does not lie solely in their religious function, but also in their ability to communicate identity. Jews projected different meanings onto the vessels, depending on the time and place in which they lived. This projection can account for the relatively long period of use, in some places until the third century AD.

The fact that the textual sources never mention chalkstone vessels explicitly can probably be explained by their very implicitness. That ordinary

household items and other objects associated with everyday life are neither explained nor described is not unusual.

The vessels being communicative tools and tangible items of otherwise symbolic marks of purity renders the items unique, but the Diaspora the Jewish communities were unaware of the vessels' communicative meaning. The development in material culture which took place in Eretz-Israel during the second century BC did not reach the Diaspora communities. The ones that were farther away from Eretz-Israel and especially from Jerusalem developed their own approach to purity. In the different Diaspora communities, purity was both symbolized and practiced in a range of ways, but all the variant customs relied on the same imagined ideal.

14 Barth 1969, 14–16.

15 Emberling 1997, 307; Jones 1997, 91, 97–98; Van Maaren 2018, 434.

16 See also *Chapter 1*.

17 Baker 2004, 116–117.

18 Based on the presented literature, the purity of Israel, the land, and its inhabitants, as well as Jews in the Diaspora could not really have been achieved. But even the laws of purity in Le-

viticus could reflect a priestly manual, which was not bound to an actual sanctuary but rather developed during the first exile as an instruction that was meant to be read and not put into practice. For an overview of scholars describing Leviticus as a symbolic narrative, see Liss 2008, 331–334.

19 Berlin 2005, 468.

Despite all the evidence that has been surveyed and discussed, there are several aspects of the subject that call for further study. The archaeological remains from Jordan are probably richer than the finds presented in this study. Moreover, the included discussion in regard to the diasporic regions indicates that the excavated material was often wrongly interpreted or not even recognized for what it was. The Hellenistic and Roman strata of the settlements, for example, in Syria, were often destroyed, disturbed, or overbuilt, so we are surely lacking some material related to the Jewish presence in diasporic contexts, and a precise review of old excavation results should be undertaken to fill the lacunae. The overviews herein are only a beginning. The early dating of the emergent purity material culture, especially the chalkstone vessels, could also be used for a further examination of the vessels themselves. For instance, a closer look at the polished hand-carved vessels and unusual vessel forms could enrich our typologies and chronological interpretations.

Owing to archaeological and philological work, evidence regarding chalkstone vessels, ritual stepped pools, pottery, and texts is constantly increasing owing to recent archaeological and philological work. This work might be the first step in bringing Jordan into the picture of the distribution of Jewish material culture and thus widening our view of purity practices in the Diaspora. Jewish material culture of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods had its borders and although the different Jewish societies developed various ways to engage in their religious and purity practices, an imagined purity without borders connected all of them.

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