

## EXCAVATIONS ON ŞALLAḤ ED-DIN STREET, JERUSALEM, AND THE NORTHERN CEMETERY OF AELIA CAPITOLINA

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### INTRODUCTION

One of Jerusalem's largest ancient burial grounds is located 400–500 m to the north of the present-day walls of the Old City (Fig. 1). The main concentration of tombs in this area includes several monumental burial caves from the Iron Age (eighth–seventh centuries BCE), and a large number of cist tombs and small burial caves from the Late Roman and

Byzantine periods. Most of these tombs were discovered in the wake of modern construction work conducted in this area since the middle of the nineteenth century.

The first documentation of this dense burial ground appeared in short and laconic reports from the second half of the nineteenth century (e.g., Chaplin 1876; Schick 1886; 1890; 1895; 1897a; 1897b; Dickie 1896; Vincent 1900; 1901; 1909). During the twentieth century, scores

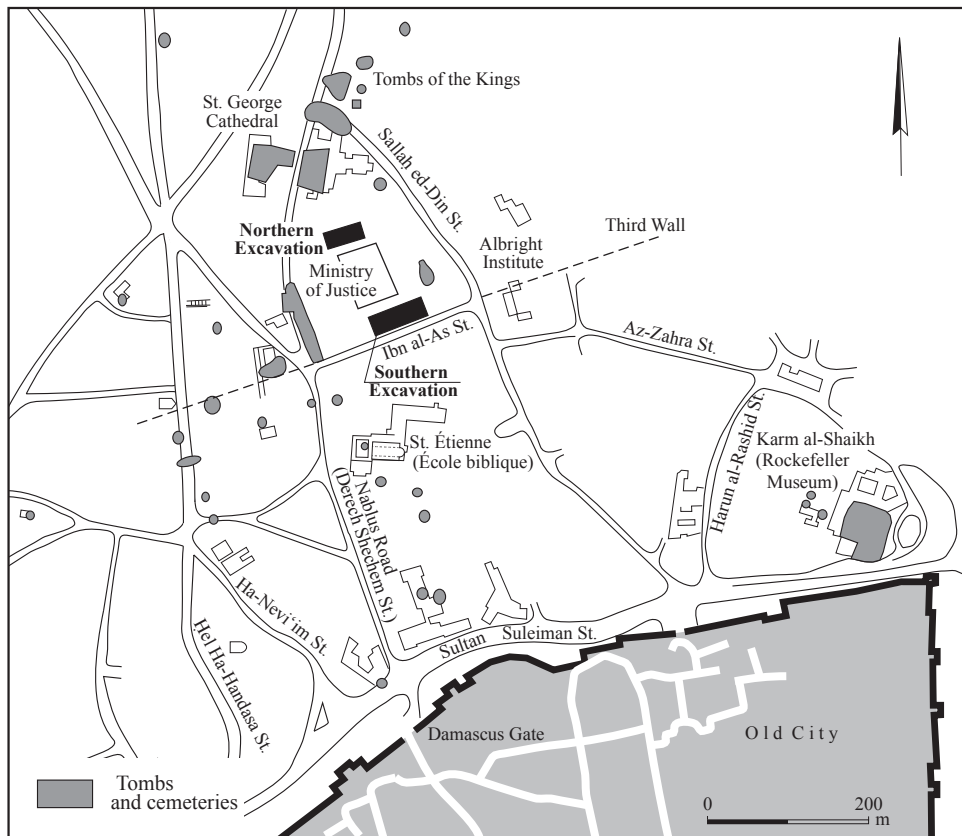


Fig. 1. Location map.

of tombs and burial caves were discovered in salvage excavations to the north of the Damascus Gate. Especially noteworthy are the excavations along Nablus Road (Derekh Shekhem) and Şallah ed-Din Street, conducted in the 1930s by the British Mandate Department of Antiquities (Hamilton and Hussein 1935), and the salvage excavations carried out in the same area by the British School of Archaeology in the 1960s (Marshall and Prag 1995; Prag 1995) and by the Israel Department of Antiquities in the 1970s (Vitto 1971; 1972a; 1972b).

This report describes additional salvage excavations conducted during 1998–1999 by the IAA in the grounds of the Ministry of Justice building, west of Şallah ed-Din Street, as part of a plan to enlarge the existing building. Two areas were excavated to the north and south of the building (Fig. 1; Plans 1, 3).<sup>1</sup>

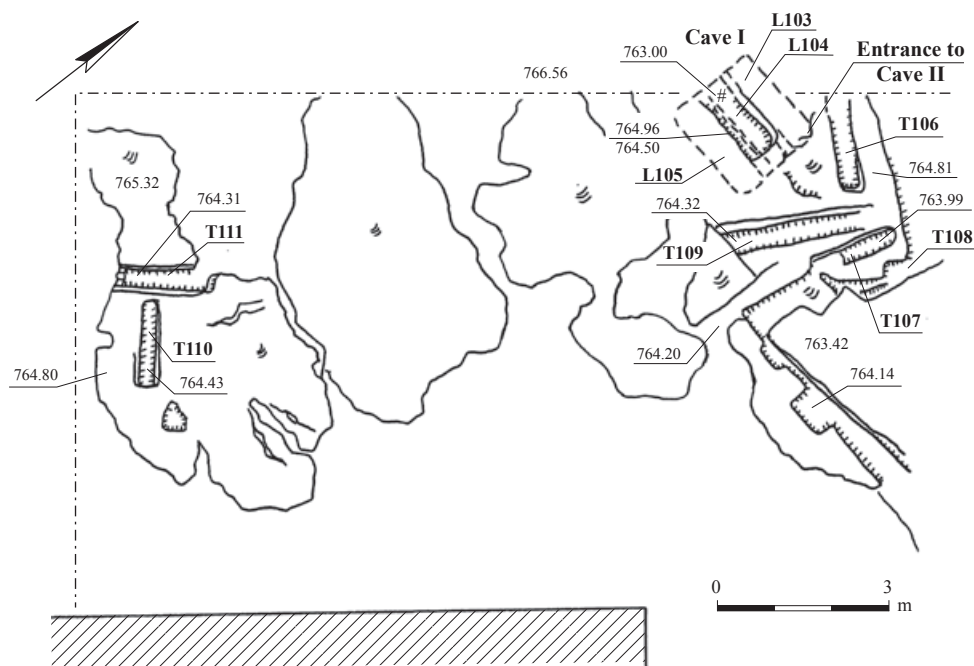
#### THE EXCAVATION

A large burial ground from the Late Roman period was exposed, including a total

of 57 cist tombs, as well as four rock-cut burial caves, each consisting of one chamber with burial troughs in its floor. These are in addition to 27 cist tombs and three burial caves excavated nearby in 1962, when the Ministry of Justice building was first erected (Prag 1995). The cist tombs and burial caves were hewn into the hard local limestone of the Bina Formation, dating from the Turonian epoch (Picard 1956; Sneh 2009). The area was used as an open quarry during the late Second Temple period (Kloner and Zissu 2007:467–470), and some of the Late Roman tombs were cut into the ancient quarry. Following abandonment of the cemetery in the early Byzantine period, quarrying activity was renewed, which resulted in the destruction of some of the ancient tombs (see below).

#### *The Northern Area*

Two burial caves (Caves I, II) and six cist tombs (T106–T111) were exposed c. 2 m below the surface (Plan 1).



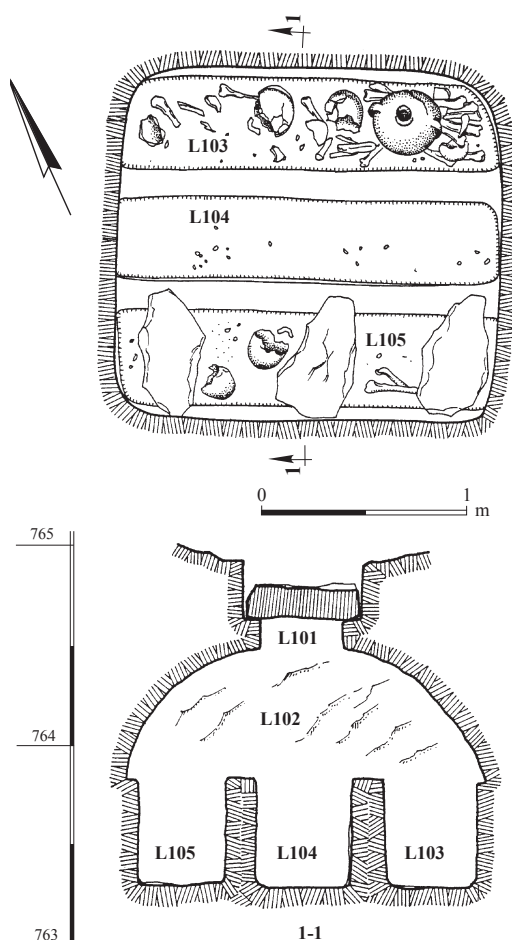
Plan 1. Northern area: general plan.

### Cave I (Plan 2)

This burial cave, located in the northern corner of the excavation area, consisted of a rock-cut burial chamber ( $L101$ ;  $1.7 \times 1.9$  m, 1.6 m high), which was entered through a rectangular shaft hewn into the bedrock ( $L101$ ;  $0.6 \times 1.3$  m, 0.3 m deep). Ledges were fashioned on the lower edges of the shaft for placement of the stone covering slabs, which were discovered *in situ*. Bone fragments were found on top of the sealing slabs, suggesting that the rectangular shaft was used as a cist tomb following the final phase of the cave's use.

The burial chamber contained three burial troughs (Locs 103–105; c.  $0.50 \times 1.85$  m, 0.5 m deep) hewn in its floor and covered with stone

slabs. In two of the troughs ( $L103$ ,  $L105$ ), the bones of a number of individuals were found (see Nagar, this volume), together with grave goods. The northern burial trough ( $L103$ ) contained the bones of nine individuals, among them four children. The grave goods included a complete jug (see Fig. 23:2) and glass vessels (see Winter, this volume: Table 2). The southern burial trough ( $L105$ ) contained the bones of eighteen individuals, among them five children. The grave goods included glass objects, gold earrings and other jewelry, and beads, all dating to the second–fourth centuries CE (Table 1; see Winter, this volume: Fig. 12, Table 3). A glass amulet with a Greek inscription engraved on one side and the image of an archer on the other, was also recovered (see Mazor, this volume). The central trough ( $L104$ ; Fig. 2) was found empty of bones, and therefore it probably served as a passage between the troughs to facilitate the interment.



Plan 2. Cave I: plan and section.

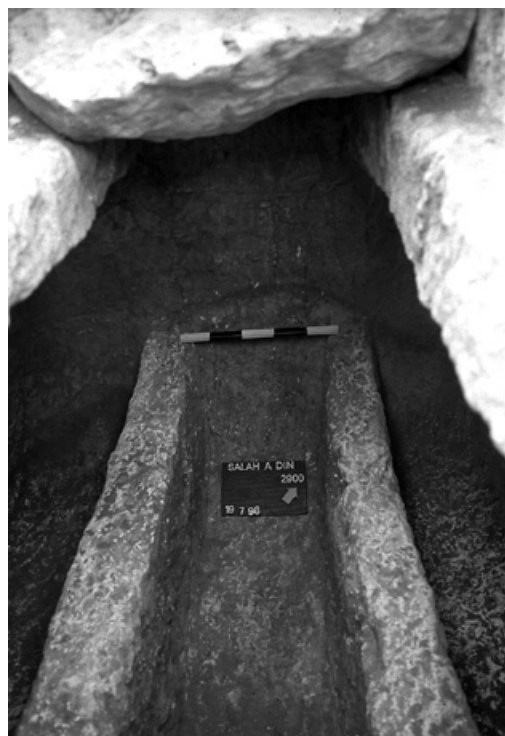


Fig. 2. Cave I: Trough 104.

**Table 1. The Northern Area: Tombs and Grave Goods**

Tomb	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	No. of Deceased	Orientation	Grave Goods	Comments
Cave I, L103	1.85	0.50	0.50	9	E–W	Clay jug (Fig. 23:2) Glass bowl Glass bottle	
Cave I, L104	1.85	0.50	0.50		E–W		
Cave I, L105	1.85	0.50	0.50	18	E–W	5 glass bracelets 5 glass beads Glass gem/amulet 20 glass ribbed beads Gold diadem 2 pairs of gold earrings with pendants Copper bracelet Copper finger ring Seven iron shafts Iron chisel 2 iron nails Iron cylinder 44 various iron fragments Wooden bracelet Wooden amulet case Wooden bead Shell pendant Bone needle 7 bone pins	See Winter, this volume: Fig. 12; Table 3
T106	1.65	0.50	0.40	1	E–W		
T107	1.70	0.45	0.50	Bone fragments	N–S	Glass bowl Glass bottle	
T108	1.70	0.60	0.40		E–W		
T109	1.65	0.50?	0.40		NW–SE		
T110	1.45	0.40	0.30	Bone fragments	N–S		
T111	1.80	0.45	0.45	2	E–W		

Fig. 3. Cave I: jar *in situ*.

All the troughs were filled with alluvium and debris (L102; Plan 2: Sections 1–1) that had penetrated into the cave after it went out of use. An intact jar (Figs. 3; 23:1), characteristic of the third–fourth centuries CE, together with an ovoid oil lamp of the Bet Nat̄if type (see Fig. 23:8), were found in the lower part of this fill, and probably represent the final phase of use in the cave.

#### *Cave II*

This cave was not excavated. Only its rectangular entrance (0.4 × 1.4 m) was exposed next to the northeastern corner of Cave I. It apparently consisted of a single burial chamber.

### *Cist Tombs*

Six rock-cut cist tombs were excavated in the northern area, four in the northern part of the excavation area, next to Cave I (T106–T109; Fig. 4), and two others (T110–T111; Fig. 5), near the southern boundary of the northern area. The tombs were hewn in different directions and in a random manner, and their

average dimensions are  $0.4\text{--}0.5 \times 1.5\text{--}1.8$  m and  $0.3\text{--}0.4$  m deep (Table 1). Ledges were hewn in the upper part of the rock cuttings for the placement of stone sealing slabs. Tomb 106 contained one individual and T111 two individuals, while in the other tombs only unidentifiable bone fragments were recovered.



Fig. 4. Northern area: general view of of the tombs.



Fig. 5. Northern area: Tombs 110–111 in the south.





Fig. 6. Northern area: tombs cut by the Byzantine quarry.

A few of the cist tombs were cut by the Byzantine quarry (T107–T109; Fig. 6), and these were mostly devoid of finds. Tomb 109 was severed by the quarrying and only its northern wall remained. No other tombs were discovered in the area between the northern and southern clusters of tombs (Plan 1), and it would seem that any tombs that had existed there were destroyed by the later quarry. The fill above bedrock, 2–3 m thick, contained a layer of chipped stones and rock-cutting debris with a few fragments of Byzantine pottery, representing the quarrying activities at the site.

#### *The Southern Area*

Two burial caves were discovered in this area (Caves III, IV), as well as 51 rock-cut cist tombs (Plan 3), 47 of which were excavated.<sup>2</sup> The two burial caves each consisted of a single burial chamber with hewn burial troughs in their floors (Cave III was documented but not excavated owing to safety concerns).

Evidence of intensive quarrying activity was discovered throughout the excavated area. The tombs were cut into rock surfaces that had been leveled by quarrying (Fig. 7), whereas the later quarrying destroyed many of these Late Roman tombs.

#### *Cave III*

Situated in the northwestern corner of the excavation area, this burial cave consisted of a trapezoidal burial chamber (length of walls: 1.2, 1.6, 1.4, 1.7 m) with an opening on its northern side, about 1.5 m below the ceiling (inner width of the opening 0.95 m, outer width 0.65 m, distance between openings 0.5 m, height 0.95 m; Fig. 8). Two parallel ledges (0.15–0.20 m wide) were installed on the northern and southern sides of the burial chamber, for placement of the sealing slabs above the troughs. A thick layer of fill covered the floor of the burial chamber, containing large amounts of hewing debris, suggesting that this cave may not have been completed. As

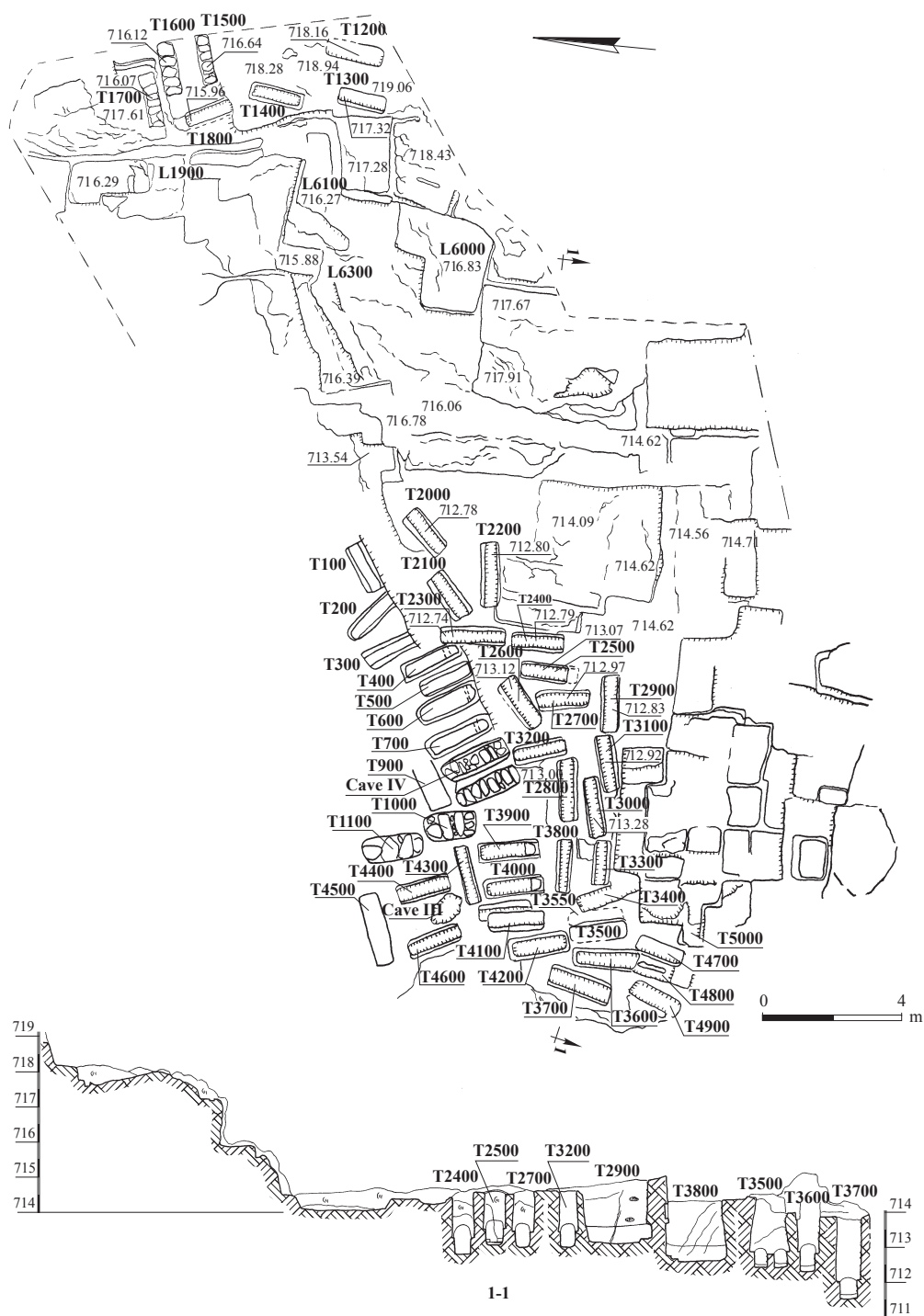




Fig. 7. Southern area: early quarry.

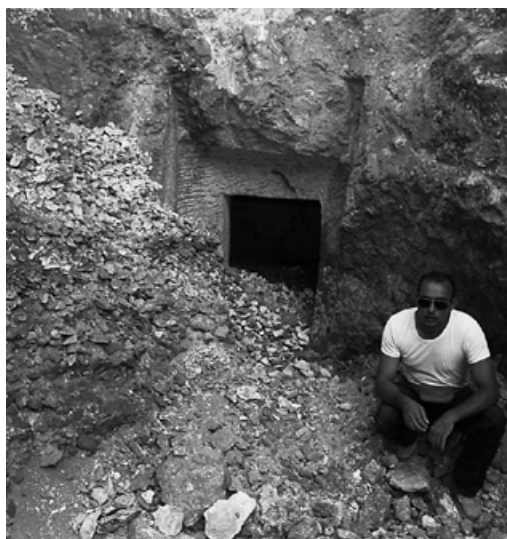


Fig. 8. The opening of Cave III.

excavation here was not possible due to safety considerations, the number and location of the burial troughs could not be ascertained. Based

on the dimensions of the cave floor, it can be estimated that three troughs were installed.

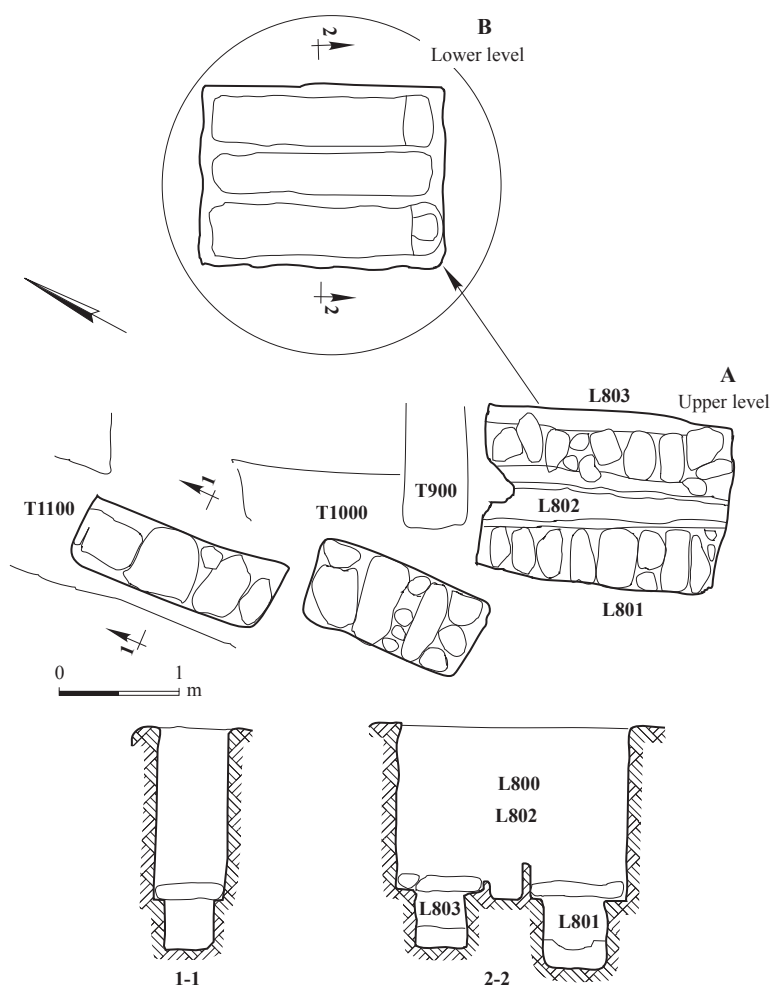
#### *Cave IV* (Plan 4; Fig. 9)

This cave is located several meters to the east of Cave III, next to the southwestern corner of the Ministry of Justice building. Only the floor level of the cave was preserved, as the walls of the cavity had been removed by later quarrying activity. It contained a single chamber ( $1.7 \times 2.0$  m) with two burial troughs in its floor (L801, L803), separated by a passage (L802). One individual was found in each of the burial troughs.

#### *Cist Tombs*

The cist tombs were hewn to a depth of 2–6 m below the surface, in very close proximity to each other. In a number of cases, the tombs were so close together that the partitions between them were damaged. They were not oriented in a uniform direction, but two predominant





Plan 4. Cave IV and surrounding cist tombs: plan and sections.

directions were observed: c. 33 tombs lay along a north–south axis, with a slight inclination toward the west, while 18 tombs were hewn along an east–west axis with a slight inclination to the north (Table 2). Four tombs (T1200, T1800, T3400, T4500) were found empty and probably were never used.

The largest concentration of cist tombs was discovered in the western part of the excavation area near the southwestern corner of the Ministry of Justice building (Fig. 10), where scores of tombs were densely located side by side, some aligned north–south, others east–west. Most of

these tombs were rectangular rock cuttings in the bedrock ( $0.3\text{--}0.7 \times 1.5\text{--}2.0$  m,  $1.4\text{--}2.3$  m deep from rock surface to floor of cist; see Table 2; Figs. 10–16; Plans 4, 5). On the upper part of the rock cuttings were hewn ledges for supporting the sealing slabs, four to seven of which were set in place above each tomb. Slabs such as these were found *in situ* in Tombs 1000, 1100, 1500 and 1700. Very small stones were inserted between the slabs to prevent the penetration of soil and water into the tombs. Brown soil (*terra rosa*) and quarrying debris were then heaped on top of the covering slabs.

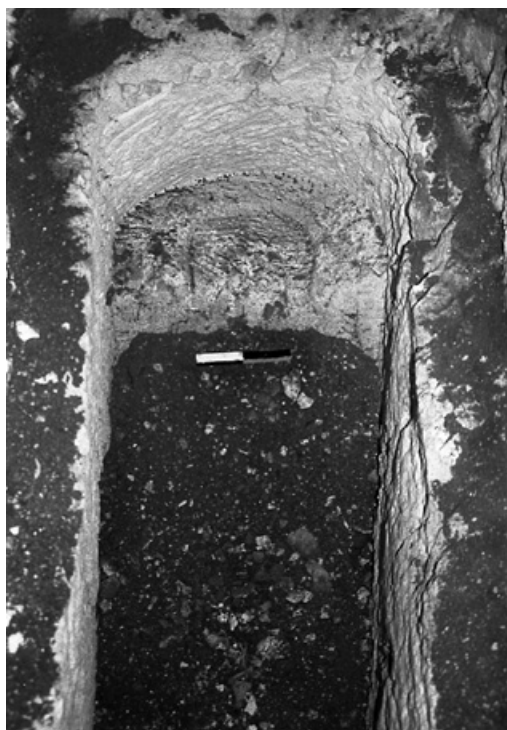


Fig. 9. Cave IV, L801.

The tombs were cut into bedrock to a depth of 1.0–1.7 m, to the level of the covering slabs, and an additional 0.3–0.5 m, from the covering slabs to the bottom of the burial trough. In 19 tombs, a tiny ledge extended across the burial trough at one end, where the head of the deceased was placed (length 0.25 m, width 0.3 m, height 5 cm); four of them were fashioned in the shape of a rounded pillow (T2500, T3800, 4900, and L801 in Cave IV). Fourteen of the tombs aligned north–south had headrests at their northern end, and two in the southern end. Only four headrests were installed in the tombs aligned east–west, two in the east and two in the west. In most of the tombs, an arch was fashioned above the headrest.

While the majority of the tombs were rectangular in shape, several were irregular, perhaps due to the inferior quality of the bedrock, such as Tombs 3500/3550 and 4100. Tomb 3500/3550 (Fig. 16) is composed of two narrow, adjacent burial troughs (width 0.3–0.4 m), a type unknown in Late Roman burial



Fig. 10. Southern area: general view.

Table 2. The Southern Area: Tombs and Grave Goods

Tomb	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Head Rest	No. of Deceased	Orientation	Grave Goods	Fig. <sup>i</sup>
T100	1.55	0.50	1.50		1	E–W	7 glass candlestick-type bottles	1:5, 6; 2:7
T200	1.70	0.50	1.55		2	N–S		
T300	1.80	0.50	1.60		1	N–S		
T400	1.90	0.50	1.60	Ledge	2	N–S		
T500	1.60	0.50	1.70		1	N–S		
T600	1.90	0.60	1.80	Ledge	1	N–S		
T700	2.05	0.50	1.85	Ledge	1	N–S		
Cave IV, L801	2.00	0.60	2.05	Round pillow		N–S		
Cave IV, L803	2.00	0.55	2.05	Ledge		N–S		
T1000	1.50	0.60	1.60			N–S		
T1100	1.70	0.55	1.80		1	N–S	Glass fragments	
T1200	1.70	0.50	1.05			N–S		
T1300	1.50	0.50	1.65		1	N–S		
T1400	1.60	0.45	1.60	Ledge	1	N–S		
T1500	1.60	0.40	2.00		1	E–W	5 glass candlestick-type bottles Glass mold-blown jar Silver object	1:2, 3; 2:9 3:1 5:14
T1600	1.60	0.50	1.80		1	E–W		
T1700	1.80	0.40	1.90		1	E–W		
T1800	1.50	0.50	0.75			N–S		
T2000	1.50	0.55	1.60		1	NE–SW		
T2100	1.60	0.60	1.95		1	NE–SW	Tiny copper/bronze three-point star	
T2200	1.95	0.60	1.50		1	E–W	4 miniature glass vessels Glass gem/inset Glass fragments 2 gold-plated cylinders 9 glass beads Miniature lead juglet Miniature lead vessel/marine object Miniature lead vessel/bell Lead mirror frame Miniature lead table Circular lead object 2 circular copper mirrors Copper bracelet Bone pin with gold-plated head Bone female figurine	13
T2300	1.95	0.50	1.70		1	N–S	Tiny copper/bronze three-point star	
T2400	1.55	0.50	1.60		1	N–S	Gold earring with flat hoop Gold crescent earring Gold-plated cylinder Copper buckle Iron chain links Iron pin 19 small nails Bone pin with knob head	5:6 5:7  7:7 8:13 8:14 10:5
T2500	1.80	0.60	1.40	Round pillow	1	N–S		
T2600	1.60	0.50	1.50		1	NE–SW		
T2700	1.60	0.60	1.50		1	N–S		

<sup>i</sup> See Winter, this volume.

Table 2. (cont.)

Tomb	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Head Rest	No. of Deceased	Orientation	Grave Goods	Fig. <sup>1</sup>
T2800	1.60	0.50	1.70		1	E-W		
T2900	1.70	0.50	1.70			E-W	Clay oil lamp 11 glass candlestick-type bottles	1:1, 4; 2:8, 10-13
T3000	1.80	0.50	1.60	Ledge	1	E-W		
T3100	1.80	0.50	1.70		1	E-W		
T3200	1.55	0.50	1.65		1	N-S		
T3300	1.25	0.50	1.45		1	E-W	2 clay oil lamps (Fig. 23:4, 5)	
T3400	1.60	0.50	0.25			N-S		
T3500/3550, Trough 3500	1.70	0.35	1.95	Ledge	1	N-S	Gold-plated crescent Gold-plated spacer Gold cylinder Perforated coin	5:12 5:13 7:6
T3500/3550, Trough 3550	1.70	0.40	1.95	Ledge	1	N-S		
T3600	1.90	0.55	1.50	Ledge	2	N-S	Glass fragments Gold earring with pendant Gold crescent earring Gold finger ring with inset 21 gold discs Copper pin	5:4 5:8 5:9 5:10, 11 7:8
T3700	1.90	0.70	2.30	Ledge	1	N-S	Clay oil lamp (Fig. 23:7) Glass candlestick-type bottle Glass jar	3:2
T3800	1.50	0.50	1.75	Round pillow	3	E-W		
T3900	1.80	0.60	1.80	Ledge	1	N-S	Gold earring with oval disc	5:5
T4000	1.80	0.60	1.80	Ledge	1	N-S		
T4100	1.70	0.70	1.60		1	N-S		
T4200	1.80	0.60	1.70	Ledge	1	N-S		
T4300	1.70	0.40	1.60	Ledge	1	E-W	Clay oil lamp (Fig. 23:6)	
T4400	1.60	0.50	1.70		1	N-S		
T4500	1.70	0.55				N-S		
T4600	1.70	0.50	1.60		1	N-S	Glass bowl	
T4700	1.50	0.50	1.60	Ledge	1	N-S		
T4900	1.60	0.50	1.70	Round pillow	1	N-S		
T5000	?	0.50	1.40		2	E-W	Coin inside skull (see Bijovsky, this volume: No. 2)	

complexes in Jerusalem. A mid-fourth century coin, perforated and used as a pendant, was found in this tomb, suggesting that it was in use later than the rest of the cemetery (see Bijovsky, this volume: No. 3; Winter, this volume: Fig. 7:6).

Most of the tombs contained the articulated bones of a single individual. In four tombs

(T200, T400, T3600, T5000), two individuals were interred, and in one tomb (T3800; Plan 6), the remains of three individuals were found (see Nagar, this volume).

Several tombs contained numerous finds, mainly glass vessels and jewelry. Particularly outstanding are the finds from T2200, including a rare concentration of miniature lead and glass





Fig. 11. Tomb 2500.



Fig. 13. Tomb 3800.



Fig. 12. Tomb 2900.



Fig. 14. Tombs 4000, 4100.



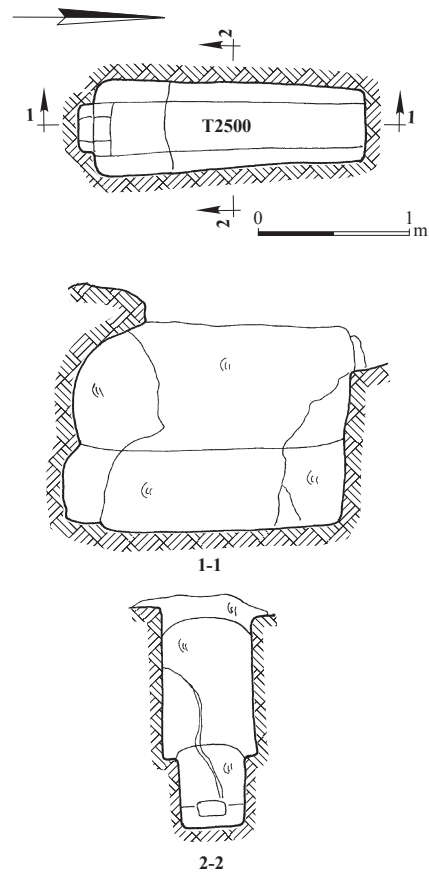
Fig. 15. Tomb 2000.



Fig. 16. Tomb 3500/3550.



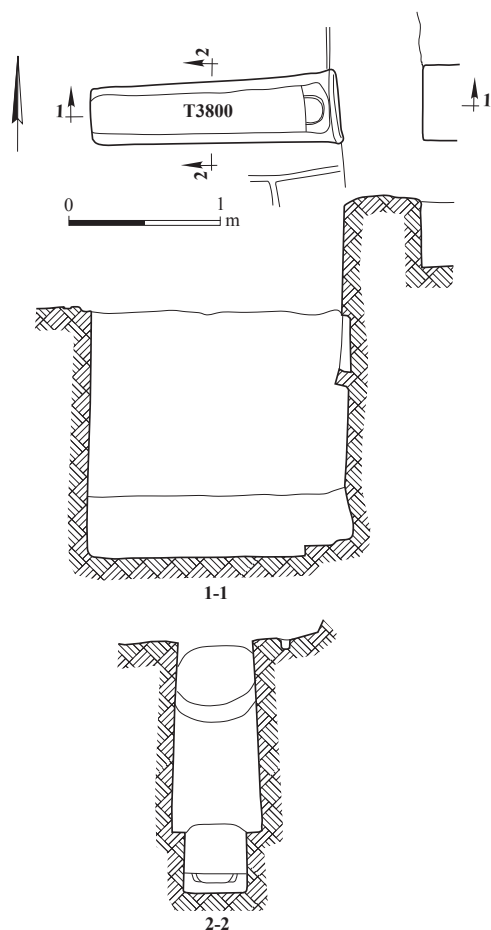
Fig. 17. Tomb 5000.



Plan 5. Tomb 2500, plan and sections.

vessels, as well as gold jewelry, a lead mirror frame and a bone figurine (see Winter, this volume: Fig. 13, Table 4). The reason for the multitude of small finds in this particular tomb is unclear, as it is no different in size or shape than the other cist tombs in the compound. The isotope ratios of the lead vessels reveal that some of them originated in the mining districts of West Cumbria and Durham, England (see Segal, this volume).

A relatively large quantity of glass vessels and jewelry were recovered in T3600; a number of candlestick-type glass bottles, dating to the second and third centuries CE, originated in four other tombs (T100, T1500, T2900, T3700; see Winter, this volume: Figs. 1, 2). A coin from the second century CE, found inside the skull of the deceased in T5000, is noteworthy (Fig. 17; see Bijovsky, this volume: No. 2).



Plan 6. Tomb 3800, plan and sections.

### *The Quarries*

Extensive bedrock surfaces exposed in both excavation areas yielded evidence of intensive quarrying activities, which apparently took place during two periods: in the late Second Temple period, before the use of the site for burial, and at a later stage, probably during the Byzantine period, when the site ceased to function as a burial ground.

In the northern area, the late quarry destroyed a large section of the cemetery, leaving few tombs intact. From the negatives in the bedrock outcrops, and the marks of the stone chiseling,



Fig. 18. Southern area: Second Temple-period quarry.

it is evident that large rectangular stone blocks measuring  $0.5\text{--}0.6 \times 1.0\text{--}1.3$  m were removed in this part of the quarry. Remains of severance channels used to remove the masonry during the quarrying process were preserved around some of the blocks that remained *in situ*.

In the southern area, two stages of quarrying were discerned, predating and postdating the tombs. Remains of the early quarry were uncovered over extensive surfaces in the eastern part of the excavation area (Figs. 18, 19), comprising a number of large stone terraces c. 2 m high, where detachment channels were visible. Based on these remains, it is apparent that enormous stone blocks (up to  $1.3 \times 2.0$  m) were produced here. The sizes of the stones that were removed from this quarry match those of the stones used for the construction of the nearby 'Third Wall' in the middle of the first century CE (Suknik and Mayer 1930; Ben-Arieh and Netzer 1974). The pottery recovered from the fill deposited directly upon the



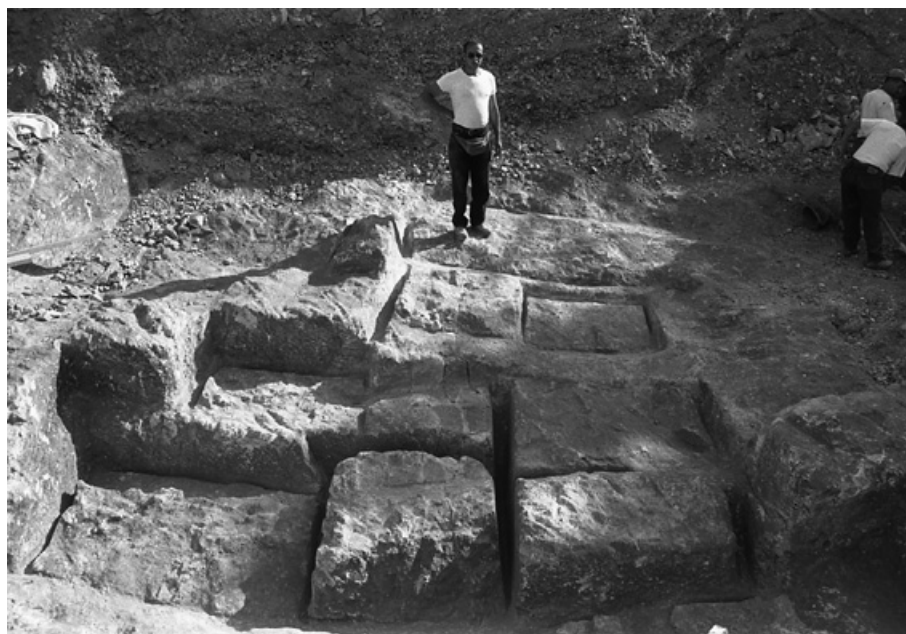


Fig. 19. Southern area: Second Temple-period quarry.

quarrying areas (see Fig. 22) dates to the first century CE (see below). A coin from the time of Agrippa I (42–45 CE) was also found in one of the areas of the quarry (L6000; see Bijovsky, this volume: No. 1). These finds, together with an iron tool or large nail discovered nearby (L6300; see Winter, this volume: Fig. 8:9), attest to intensive activity at the site in the middle of the first century CE, when the quarry served as a source for the stones in the ‘Third Wall’. A number of cist tombs were hewn into the quarrying surfaces, cutting through the blocks of stone and the detachment channels (e.g., T1600, T1700, T2200; Fig. 20), while other tombs were hewn in the leveled surfaces of the quarry terraces (e.g., T1800, T2100; see Figs. 18, 19).

Remains of the later quarry were mainly discerned in the southwestern part of the excavation (Fig. 21). This quarry caused significant damage to the southern section of the Late Roman burial ground, cutting through ancient cist tombs (e.g., T3400,

T5000). Several undetached rectangular stone blocks were found *in situ*, with their severance channels (0.10–0.15 m wide) still visible. It is interesting to note that the average size of the quarried stones in this area (c. 0.5 × 0.5 m) is similar to that of stones used in the Byzantine northern wall of Jerusalem (Hamilton 1944; Avni, Baruch and Weksler-Bdolah 2001; Weksler-Bdolah 2006–2007) and in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, monumental landmarks of Byzantine Jerusalem constructed in the fourth century CE.

Thus, it is evident that quarrying in this area was renewed in the Byzantine period—perhaps in conjunction with the construction of the northern wall of Jerusalem and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Several Byzantine monastic complexes were also established to the south and west of the quarry (Lagrange 1894; Vincent and Abel 1914–1926:775–791; Tzaferis et al. 1994; Amit and Wolff 1994), which may also have used the quarry as a source for their stones.





Fig. 20. Tombs cut into the Second Temple-period quarry.



Fig. 21. Byzantine quarry in the southwestern part of the excavation.

## THE POTTERY

The fills above the quarries contained mixed pottery, but the layers closest to bedrock were associated with small quantities of pottery from the first century CE. However, most of the ceramic finds originated from the burial caves and cist tombs, dated mainly to the second–fourth centuries CE. As oil lamps comprise the most typical finds in burial complexes, usually placed above the sealing stones of tombs, or sometimes within the tombs (see Avni, Dahari and Kloner 2008:119–120; Magness 2008), they are presented here separately.

*Pottery from the Early Quarry (Fig. 22)*

Fragments of bowls and jars dating to the first century CE and associated with the earliest quarrying activity at the site were found in the fill covering the quarried areas, mainly in the southern excavation area.

A complete bowl (Fig. 22:1) was discovered in a corner of the quarry (L1900). Similar bowls are known from Herodium (Bar-Nathan 1981: Pl. 6:9) and Jericho (Killebrew 1999: Fig. III.56:9), and dated to the first century

CE. Bowls of this type also occur in burial assemblages from the late Second Temple period in Jerusalem, as at Dominus Flevit (Bagatti and Milik 1958: Fig. 32:17–23) and in Jason's Tomb (Rahmani 1967a: Fig. 10:1–4).

Several jars (Fig. 22:2–4) and a jug (Fig. 22:5), characteristic of the first century CE, were also found in the fill above the early quarry. Similar jars were discovered in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem (Geva and HersHKovitz 2006:141, Pls. 4.12:1; 4.13:1, 2), and at Masada (Bar-Nathan 2006: Pls. 6:27; 7:31–35) and Jericho (Bar-Nathan 2002:33, Pls. 6:40–42; 20:54, 60).

*Pottery from the Burial Complexes (Fig. 23)*

An intact jar (Fig. 23:1) was discovered in Cave I, lying upon the fill over the northern trough (L102); it was apparently placed there either during the final phase of interment or immediately after the cave was no longer used for burial. This is a bag-shaped jar made of light brown fabric, typical of the third–fourth centuries CE (Magness 1993:224, Form 4A). The neck is straight and ribbed on the inside, and tapers slightly toward the shoulder. The body is ribbed and has a perforation. Handles were

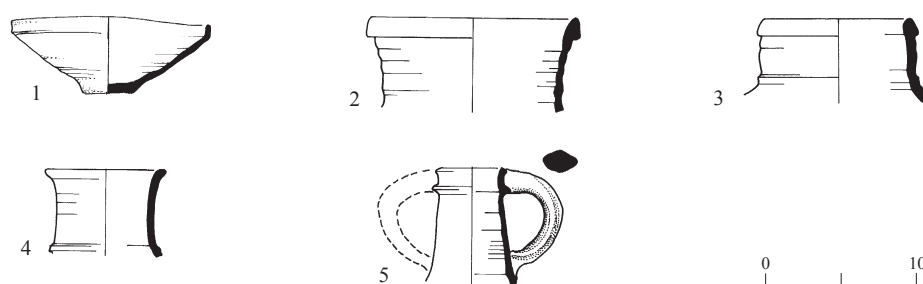


Fig. 22. Pottery from the fill above the early quarry (Second Temple period).

No.	Type	Locus/Basket	Description
1	Bowl	1900/11019	Light brown clay
2	Jar	6100/11075/2	Brownish yellow clay
3	Jar	6100/11075/3	Brownish yellow clay
4	Jar	6300/11073	Brownish yellow clay
5	Jug	6100/11057/1	Yellowish clay

attached haphazardly to the shoulders and the base is rounded. A similar jar was discovered in a burial cave in Romema, Jerusalem (Rahmani 1967b). There too, the jar was placed on top of the fill that covered the burial trough.

An intact jug (Fig. 23:2), found inside the northern trough in Cave I (L103), is squat with an omphalos-like base. Jugs of this type are known from burial assemblages in Jerusalem at Karm al-Shaikh (Rockefeller Museum; Baramki 1932: Pl. XII:5) and Dominus Flevit (Bagatti and Milik 1958: Fig. 29:6), where they date to the third–fourth centuries CE.

### *Lamps* (Fig. 23:3–8)

Most of the oil lamps were discovered in the soil fill over the sealing slabs of the tombs, although they were probably placed there within the context of the burial. These include several fragments of Roman discus lamps typical of the first–third centuries CE, as well as an ovoid oil lamp of the Bet Naṭṭif type and a piriform lamp characteristic of the third–fifth centuries. A lamp fragment in T2900 could not be identified.

### *Discus Lamps*

*Fig. 23:3.*— This is a fragment of a mold-made, rounded discus lamp, slipped. It was recovered from the fill that covered the tombs in the western part of the site, although it probably originated in one of the tombs.

*Fig. 23:4.*— This mold-made, rounded discus lamp, is slipped pink. Its shoulder is decorated with a spiral pattern, and remains of the filling hole are visible in the discus center. The discus and shoulder are separated by a ring; two incised lines encircle the discus. The lamp was found in the fill above the sealing slabs in T3300.

*Fig. 23:5.*— This bottom part of a mold-made lamp has traces of soot. The base is decorated with three concentric circles, in the inner circle are signs of a worn, illegible decoration. It was found in the fill above the sealing slabs in T3300, perhaps belonging to the lamp in Fig. 23:4.

*Fig. 23:6.*— This fragment of a mold-made discus lamp is slipped pink; its shoulder is decorated with a spiral pattern. It was found in the fill above the sealing slabs in T4300.

*Fig. 23:7.*— This fragment belongs to a mold-made discus lamp. Its upper part is sooty, and its shoulder is decorated with a spiral pattern. It was recovered from the fill above the sealing slabs in T3700.

Roman discus lamps are common at sites in the Jerusalem area from the first–third centuries CE (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978:85–89), for example, in excavations next to the northern city wall of Jerusalem (Hamilton 1944: Figs. 20:12; 23:19), at Mount Zion (Bagatti 1970: Fig. 12:2) and at Giv‘at Ram (HersHKovitz

**Fig. 23 ▶**

No.	Type	Tomb/Locus/Basket	Description
1	Jar	Cave I/102/1001	Light brown clay
2	Jug	Cave I/103/1010	Light brown clay, small grits
3	Oil lamp	–/11075/4	Brown clay
4	Oil lamp	3300/11059/5	Dark brown clay
5	Oil lamp	3300/11059/6	Gray clay
6	Oil lamp	4300/11068/9	Dark brown clay
7	Oil lamp	3700/11064	Light brown clay
8	Oil lamp Bet Naṭṭif	Cave I/102/1003	Light brown clay

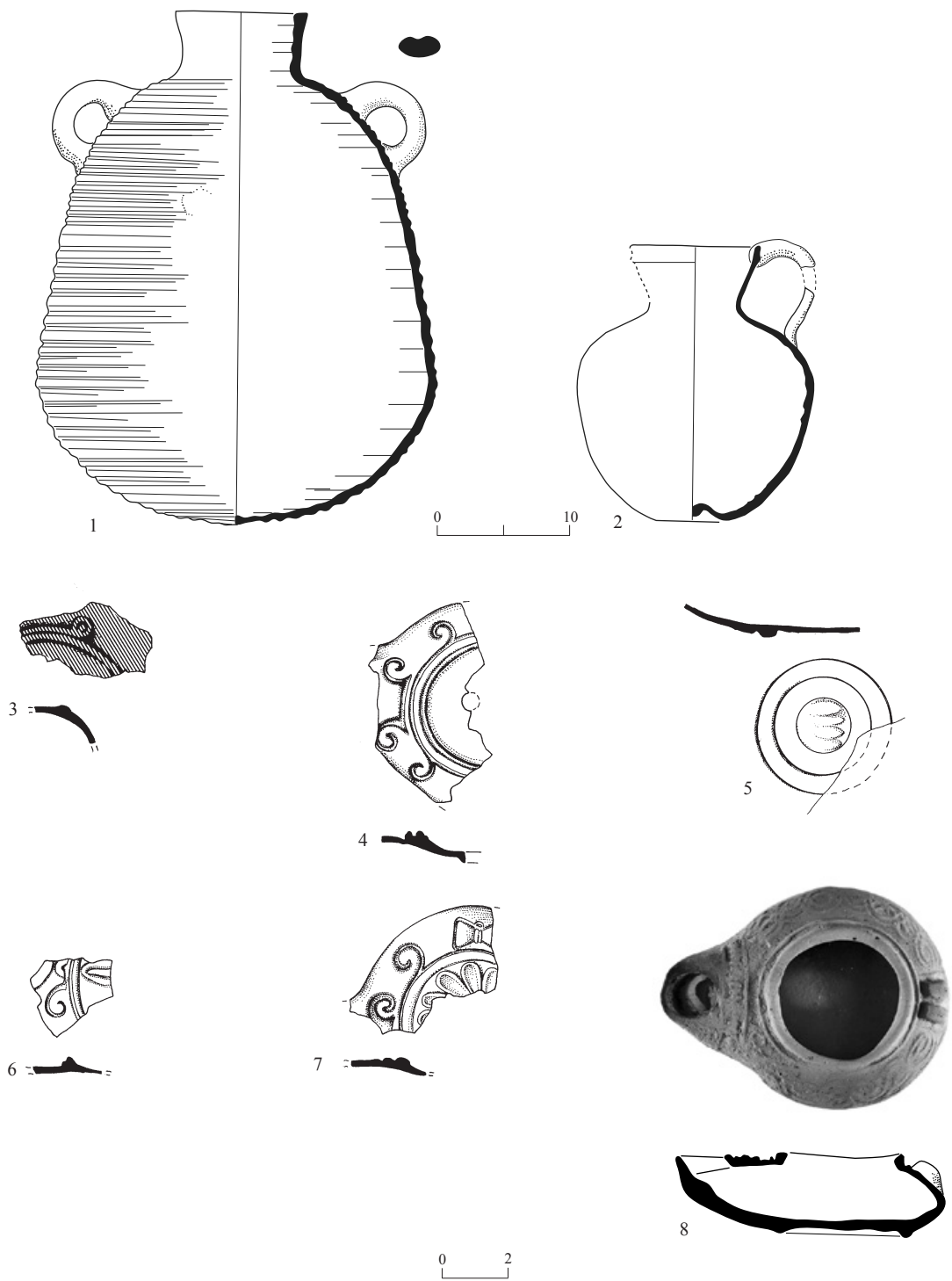


Fig. 23. Pottery and oil lamps from the burial caves and cist tombs.



1987:319–320, Fig. 11:5–7). They are also abundant in burial contexts, first appearing at the end of the first century CE, for example in a burial cave at Ḥuqoq (Ravani 1961: Figs. 4, 5), as well as in tombs dating to the second–third centuries at Karm al-Shaikh (Baramki 1932), the later burial phase at Akeldama (Ben-Arieh and Coen-Uzzielli 1996:84–86, Figs. 4.9; 4.10), Naḥal Raqafot (Rahmani 1976) and Bet Guvrin (Magness 2008:121, Fig. 5.1:1–4). Especially noteworthy is the single fragment of this type of lamp from the cemetery at Dominus Flevit (Bagatti and Milik 1958: Fig. 25:12). Their absence in the burials there indicates that this cemetery was not in use between the late first and early fourth centuries CE, when the northern cemetery of Jerusalem was the largest urban burial ground, based on the large number of Roman discus lamps found there (see below).

#### *Bet Naṭṭif (Piriform) Lamps*

An ovoid lamp with a large filling hole of the Bet Naṭṭif type was found in Cave I, in the fill above the burial troughs (L102; Fig. 23:8). This is one of the very few finds in the tombs that date to the third–fourth centuries CE, thus representing the latest stage of burial in the cemetery, or a secondary use of Cave I (Rosenthal and Sivan 1978:99–103; Ben-Arieh and Coen-Uzzielli 1996:87, Fig. 4.11; Magness 2008:129–130, Fig. 5.5:2). Similar lamps were found in a number of burial complexes in and around Jerusalem, such as Dominus Flevit, Nablus Road, Ramat Raḥel and elsewhere (Magness 2008:129–130, and references therein).

### DISCUSSION

Rock-cut cist tombs like those uncovered on Şallaḥ ed-Din Street, are common in urban burial grounds in Jerusalem from the Late Roman and Byzantine periods (Avni 2005:377). Similar tombs were found in the nearby excavations along Nablus Road (Hamilton and Hussein 1935; Vitto 1971; 1972a; 1972b),

near the ‘Tombs of the Kings’ (Glueck 1943), at Karm al-Shaikh (Baramki 1932), in the Dominus Flevit compound on the Mount of Olives (Bagatti and Milik 1958), at Romema (Rahmani 1967b) and elsewhere in Jerusalem. This is also one of the most common types of tombs from these periods throughout the country (Avni, Dahari and Kloner 2008:103–104, with references therein).

Simple burial caves containing a single burial chamber with troughs in the floor are known from excavations along Nablus Road (Vincent 1909), Karm al-Shaikh (Baramki 1932), Dominus Flevit (Bagatti and Milik 1958) and elsewhere (Avni, Dahari and Kloner 2008:105–106).

The ancient burial ground excavated on Şallaḥ ed-Din Street is the largest section of the northern cemetery of Jerusalem from the Late Roman period exposed to date. The dense concentration of tombs indicates that this area was intensely used between the mid-second and the fourth centuries CE as a major urban cemetery.

Three phases of use were defined in the excavated area: the early quarry; the Late Roman burial ground and the Byzantine stone quarry.

*The Early Quarry.* The early phase of quarrying at the site was dated to the first century CE on the basis of the pottery and a coin recovered in the fill directly above the quarry. This area was apparently an open quarry exploited for the construction of the ‘Third Wall’ during the reign of Agrippa I (Josephus, *The Jewish War* 5.4.2). The relative stratigraphy reveals that this quarry went out of use before the second century CE, when the first tombs were probably installed at the site. While there is evidence for quarries in this part of the city as early as the Iron Age (Barkay 1997:24–25), it seems that this particular quarry functioned mainly during the late Second Temple period (Kloner and Zissu 2007:15–18). It is reasonable to assume that the quarry was abandoned following the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

*The Late Roman Burial Ground.* A large burial ground was developed in this area between the second and fourth centuries CE. Based on the finds, the first tombs do not predate the mid-second century; most of the finds date from the second and third centuries (e.g., the glass candlestick-type bottles) up to the first half of the fourth century. It is evident that the burial ground was installed after the early quarry went out of use, as some of the tombs were hewn into the open bedrock surfaces of the quarry and others cut through the detachment lines of the stone blocks. Burial at the site ceased in the fourth century, and quarrying activity was subsequently renewed, destroying a large number of tombs. The latest evidence for burial, retrieved in Tomb 3500, comprises a coin struck in Trier, Germany in 352 CE, later used as a pendant, which was found with the deceased (see Bijovsky, this volume: No. 3). Further evidence for the latest use was discovered in Cave I, where the upper layer of burial contained fourth-century pottery and lamps and glass vessels (L102; see above, and Winter, this volume).

*The Byzantine Stone Quarry.* A new quarry operating at the site during the Byzantine period destroyed large sections of the previous burial ground. This quarry was apparently related to the large-scale construction in the city during the fourth and fifth centuries. In contrast to the areas to the south and west of the quarry, which were extensively built up during this period (Tzaferis et al. 1994; Amit and Wolff 1994), no evidence for construction in Byzantine times was found in this area.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The large number of tombs with skeletal remains revealed in the excavations provides ample evidence of the local population of Aelia Capitolina during the second–fourth centuries. The sex and life expectancy of the deceased (see Nagar, this volume) are typical of other urban cemeteries from the Late Roman

period (Scheidel 2007:39–41). The absence of Jewish or early Christian ornamentation and relics in the tombs, as in other Late Roman burial grounds in Jerusalem, indicates that these communities were not present among the population of Aelia Capitolina at this time.

The relatively large amounts of grave goods recovered from the tombs (Tables 1, 2) are also typical of other burial complexes of this period in Jerusalem, as in the secondary use of the Akeldama tombs (Avni and Greenhut 1996:35–36) and in the tomb at Naḥal Raqafot (Rahmani 1976b). It should be noted, however, that a number of tombs in the Şallah ed-Din Street cemetery were totally devoid of offerings, and it is difficult to ascertain whether this stems from later plundering, or because no funerary offerings were entombed with the deceased.

The exceptional discovery of a group of votive(?) miniature lead objects in T2200, together with large quantities of jewelry and glass vessels, suggests that the deceased (a youth, probably female; see also Winter, this volume: Fig. 13, Table 4) had a non-local origin or connections. The isotopic composition of the lead points to England as the possible source of the metal (see Segal, this volume).

It is interesting to note that no cremation burials were found in this particular burial ground, while in other areas of Jerusalem cremation burials associated with Late Roman tombs are known, for example, at Ketef Hinnom (Barkay 1994; Avner and Zelinger 2001; this volume; see also Avni 2005:379–380 for references to other locations).

The location of the Şallah ed-Din Street burial ground within the wider context of concentrations of tombs and burial caves, reveals a dense and homogenous distribution of Late Roman sepulchers over a large area to the north of the present-day Old City (see Fig. 1; for a comprehensive list of the finds, see Avni 1997:319–330; 2005:381–383). Several large concentrations of burials in this area are noteworthy. At the intersection of Şallah ed-Din Street and Nablus Road, a cluster of simple cist tombs was excavated (Hamilton

and Husseini 1935; Vitto 1971; 1972a; 1972b). Additional clusters of Late Roman cist tombs were excavated near the St. George Cathedral and the 'Tombs of the Kings' (Schick 1897:184; Jones 1937; Glueck 1943; Solimany and Adawi 1999; Solimany and Re'em 1999; Avner 2008). A third-century burial cave decorated with wall frescos depicting mythological scenes was discovered next to the St. George Cathedral (Dickie 1896). Many other cist tombs were discovered within the precincts of this church, but only a few have been properly documented. Among these are several Late Roman tombs bearing burial inscriptions in Latin (Clermont-Ganneau 1903; Macalister 1904; Savignac 1904; Prag 1995:250).

In the 'Tombs of the Kings', which was originally an elaborate Jewish burial estate of the first century CE, evidence of intensive secondary use during the second and third centuries was observed (de Saulcy 1853:219–281; 1865:345–410; Avni 1993). It seems that this large cemetery also extended to the north of the 'Tombs of the Kings', where additional concentrations of cist tombs and simple burial caves were found (Schick 1897; Vincent 1909; Marshal and Prag 1995).

These extensive burial grounds, to which the tombs described here belong, comprise the northern cemetery of Aelia Capitolina, which was characterized by a prevalence of cist tombs and simple, single-chamber burial caves (Avni 2005:373–378). Large-scale burial in this cemetery commenced in the mid-second century CE, one generation after the founding of Aelia Capitolina, and continued, uninterrupted, for almost two centuries. The use of this area for burial reached its zenith during the third century. By the beginning of the fourth century there were fewer interments at the site, and burial activity ceased in the early Byzantine period, when the main open-air cemetery of Jerusalem was transferred to the western slopes of the Mount of Olives. The extensive excavations at the large burial ground of Dominus Flevit on the Mount of Olives (Bagatti and Milik 1958) revealed that

this cemetery was intensively used in the late Second Temple period and then again in the Byzantine period. It was deserted between these two periods, during the second to fourth centuries, when the northern cemetery was the main burial ground of Aelia Capitolina (Avni 2005:381–384).

The spatial distribution of the Late Roman burial caves and cist tombs in the northern cemetery of Jerusalem demonstrates a striking connection with the line of the 'Third Wall' from the first century CE (Sukenik and Mayer 1930; Avi-Yonah 1968; Kloner 1986). The line of the wall passes circa 20 m south of the southern area of the cemetery excavated in the grounds of the Ministry of Justice building, and all the tombs described above are situated to the north of this wall. A careful study of other tombs and burial caves in northern Jerusalem reveals that all the Late Roman burials were located to the north of the 'Third Wall'. Thus, it is evident that between the second and fourth centuries CE, the 'Third Wall' was of major significance in defining the limits of urban Jerusalem, or the area which was designed for future urban construction. This does not imply that the 'Third Wall' was constructed in the time of Aelia Capitolina, as suggested by Magness (2000), but rather that the ruined wall, still visible, was used to delimit the outer urban borders of the city. In any case, a clear division between the city and its necropolis was defined by the line of this wall (Avni 2005:387–388).

During the second–early fourth centuries CE, the Late Roman cemetery to the north of the wall was characterized by a multitude of cist tombs and simple burial caves densely arranged in an open-air burial ground. Such a burial pattern is seen in many urban burial grounds in the western part of the Roman Empire, for example, in Carthage, North Africa (Ellis and Humphrey 1988), and in France, Germany, Spain and England (Pilet 1980; Jones 1984; 1987; Purcell 1987; Philpott 1991; Farwell and Molleson 1993:219–222; Barber and Hall 2000). This pattern of urban burial may have been introduced to the Aelia Capitolina necropolis by the massive presence

of Roman legions following the conquest of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

Burial patterns and the locations of tombs began to change gradually during the fourth century. Examination of burials in the area between the Old City walls in the south and the 'Third Wall' in the north, reveals that all the tombs in this area date to the Byzantine period, and do not predate the end of the third–beginning of the fourth centuries CE. To the north of Damascus Gate, a number of Byzantine burial caves and large built tombs were integrated into the monastic compounds established here. In addition, the remains of several burial complexes were discovered in this area—in the grounds of the *École biblique et archéologique française* (Church of St. Etienne; Lagrange 1894) and in the large Byzantine and Early Islamic monastic complexes excavated along *Ḥel Ha-Handassa St.* (Amit and Wolff 1994; Tzaferis et al. 1994; Tzaferis, Amit and Sarig 1996).

The Late Roman cemetery to the north of the 'Third Wall', and the Byzantine-period sepulchers to its south, are differentiated by a number of features. The Late Roman open-air burial ground shows a uniformity in types of graves, consisting of cist tombs and single-chamber burial caves. In contrast, the Byzantine burial complexes are characterized by burial caves and subterranean burial structures that are incorporated with the rooms above them, sometimes in the form of crypts, the lower parts hewn into the bedrock and the upper parts consisting of stone-built vaults. These burial complexes often contain inscriptions and decorations that are distinctly Christian in nature.

#### SUMMARY

The *Şallah ed-Din Street* excavation has contributed to a delineation of the northern cemetery of Aelia Capitolina and a clarification of its relation to the 'Third Wall'. From the distribution of the tombs in the northern cemetery, we suggest that the line of this wall, which was built in the first century CE, was still

a prominent landmark in the city's topography (the remains of the wall were still visible in the nineteenth century, see Robinson 1841:314–315). Although it was not used as a defensive wall, it defined the northern boundary of the city limits in the second and third centuries CE (Avni 2005:386–391). With the construction of Jerusalem's new northern city wall at the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century CE, which passed along the line of the present-day city wall of the Ottoman period, the city's boundaries were changed accordingly.

During the Byzantine period, Jerusalem expanded beyond the line of the new city wall, with a dense construction of monasteries and public buildings in the area to the north of the Damascus Gate, up to and beyond the line of the 'Third Wall'. Separation between the city and its necropolis, which was strictly observed during the Second Temple and Late Roman periods, was no longer preserved, and burials were installed within the monastic compounds and even dug into the base of the city wall (Ben-Arieh and Netzer 1974). Thus, beginning in the fourth century CE, urban burial in Jerusalem spread south of the 'Third Wall', and the character of the cemetery gradually changed from burials in open city plots to interments inside monastic compounds.

Based on the data from the northern cemetery, the urban development of Jerusalem to the north, from the first century CE to the Early Islamic period, can be reconstructed as follows:

In the first half of the first century CE, the area north of Damascus Gate was used mainly as a large quarry to provide masonry stones for the massive construction in Jerusalem, including the 'Third Wall'. To date, little evidence has been discovered of private construction from the end of the Second Temple period, nor is there any evidence of the existence of burial complexes here until the second century.

During the second and third centuries CE, a large cemetery was established to the north of the 'Third Wall', which served the urban population of Aelia Capitolina for about 200 years. This burial ground was gradually



abandoned during the fourth century, when the focus of the open-air, urban burials in Jerusalem moved to the city's eastern cemetery, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives.

A dense network of Christian monasteries and public buildings now developed north of

the Damascus Gate, during the Byzantine and Early Islamic periods, thus expanding the city limits beyond its fourth-century walls. The Late Roman cemetery was destroyed by renewed quarrying, which supplied building stones for the large-scale Byzantine construction.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Two seasons of excavations were conducted in 1998–1999 (Permit No. A-2900, northern area; Permit No. A-3130, southern area), under the direction of the authors and with the assistance of Rafeh Abu-Raya, Gideon Solimany, Dani Weiss, Jon Seligman, Amit Re'em, Vered Barzel and Boaz Zissu (area supervisors), Haled Abu Ta'a (administrator), Vadim Essman, Mark Kunin and Tania Kornfeld

(surveyors), Yossi Nagar (anthropologist), and Tsila Sagiv and Sandu Mendrea (photographers). For the preliminary report, see Avni and Adawi 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Four tombs in the northern section of this area (L900, L4500, and two unnumbered tombs) were not excavated due to safety considerations owing to their proximity to sectional trenches that were about 8 m deep.

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