

RESULTS OF THREE SMALL EXCAVATIONS IN NAHF, UPPER GALILEE

HOWARD SMITHLINE

The village of Nahf, immediately north of Karmi'el, is situated on the southern lower slope of the Mount Meron massif and on the northern fringe of the Bet Ha-Kerem Valley. This valley delineates the border between Upper and Lower Galilee and is today the major east–west trunk in the north of Israel. The village and the site command all traffic passing through this section of the valley. The present-day village sits upon a large tell whose exact contour is not known. Crowded residential buildings and lack of open areas leave very few opportunities to conduct large-scale excavations at the site. The sporadically projecting bedrock is an additional hindrance to the mapping of the tell's contour.

Three salvage excavations were conducted in June–August 2001 on three separate lots adjacent to existing buildings (Areas A–C; Fig. 1).¹ All of the excavated areas lie on either the

eastern or western slope and not atop the hill itself. The distance between the lots varies from 100 to 300 m.

Previous reported excavations in the village (Hasson 1970; Sussman 1982; Vitto 1986) uncovered burial caves and a collecting vat (winepress?) dating to the Hellenistic and Roman–Byzantine periods, and a Late Roman–Byzantine potter's workshop and kiln. Northeast of the village, Intermediate Bronze Age burial caves with Hellenistic intrusions were excavated (Aviam 1991; Getzov 1995). A limited excavation was conducted in 2003 in very close proximity to Area C, discussed below (Tepper 2007). A surface survey of the site was conducted by Frankel et al. (2001), identifying the following periods: Early Bronze Age II–III, Middle Bronze Age II, Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Early Islamic, Crusader–Mamluk, and Ottoman.

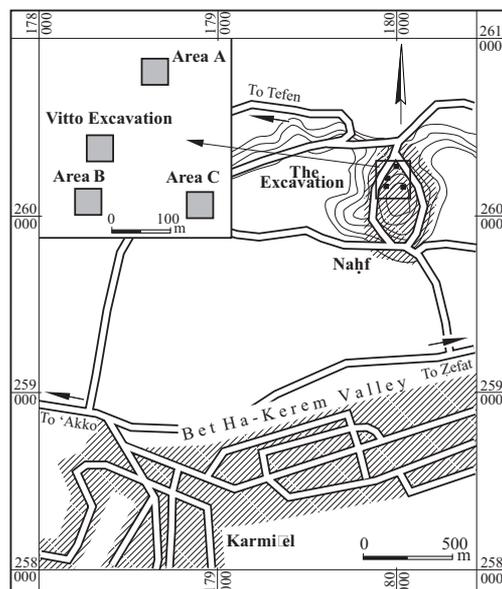
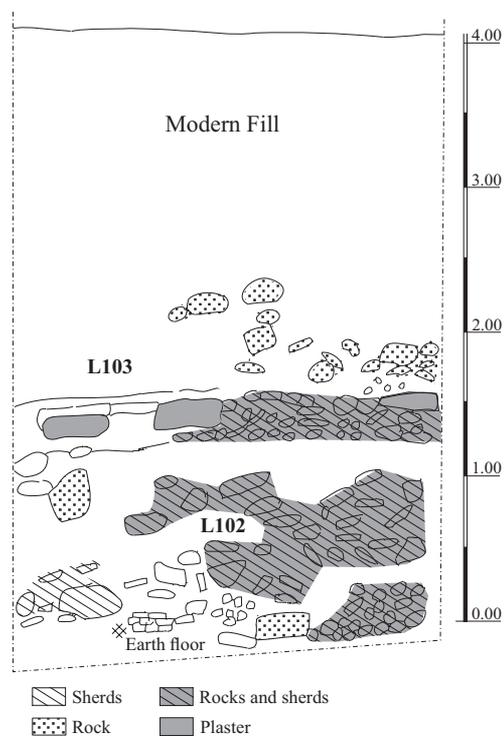


Fig. 1. Location map.

AREA A

A 5 × 5 m square was opened on the north-eastern slope, in an area severely damaged by large-scale earthmoving operations that cut into the slope and removed a swath nearly 4 m deep and 15–20 m long.² The upper 2.0–2.3 m consisted of modern fill. Below the fill was a plaster floor (L103) 30–40 cm thick, dated to the Late Roman–Byzantine periods, which lay upon a rich Hellenistic accumulation (L102) (Plan 1; Fig. 2). A large quantity of storage-jar fragments, both locally manufactured and imported, was found in the accumulated packed earth. A packed-earth floor with the remains of a small cooking installation was discerned at the bottom of the section.



Plan 1. Area A, southern section.



Fig 2. The southern section; a Late Roman–Byzantine floor (L103) below a modern fill and accumulation; a Hellenistic accumulation (L102) is at the bottom.

In the eastern half of the excavated area, the Hellenistic presence disturbed a living surface dated to EB IB. The remnant of a coarsely constructed wall adjacent to this surface is likewise attributed to EB IB. This is the first documented presence of an EB IB occupation at this site. Although the EB IB level was not excavated to its maximum depth, it appears to suggest an extended, intensive settlement.

Ceramic Finds

Early Bronze Age IB

The small but varied group of vessel fragments dated to EB IB is typical of northern assemblages. Two features stand out in the Nahf EB IB repertoire: the common occurrence of red slip or thin red wash on vessels of light colored fabric, and the popularity of grain wash on jar fragments.

The red-slipped bowl (Fig. 3:1) has a low, carinated, triangular-profiled rim. It belongs to

a type characteristic of the western Galilee in EB IB. Figure 3:2 is a coarsely made cooking pot.

Holemouth jars were the most common EB IB vessel type found in the excavation. Most have a red slip and burnish. Their rim forms are varied: plain, rounded (Fig. 3:3), thickened, and tapered (Fig. 3:4, 5). The holemouth jar with the thick squared rim and exterior ridge (Fig. 3:6) is similar to jars from 'Afula and 'En Esur. At both sites jars of this type are dated to EB IA.

A small amphoriskos (Fig. 3:7), not commonly found so far north, is related to amphoriskoi unearthed at 'En Shadud and 'En Esur.

The large jars and pithoi with flaring or everted rims are, in contrast, typical of northern assemblages. The red-slipped jar with flaring rim (Fig. 3:8) is a characteristic component of the western Galilee EB IB repertoire. Incised

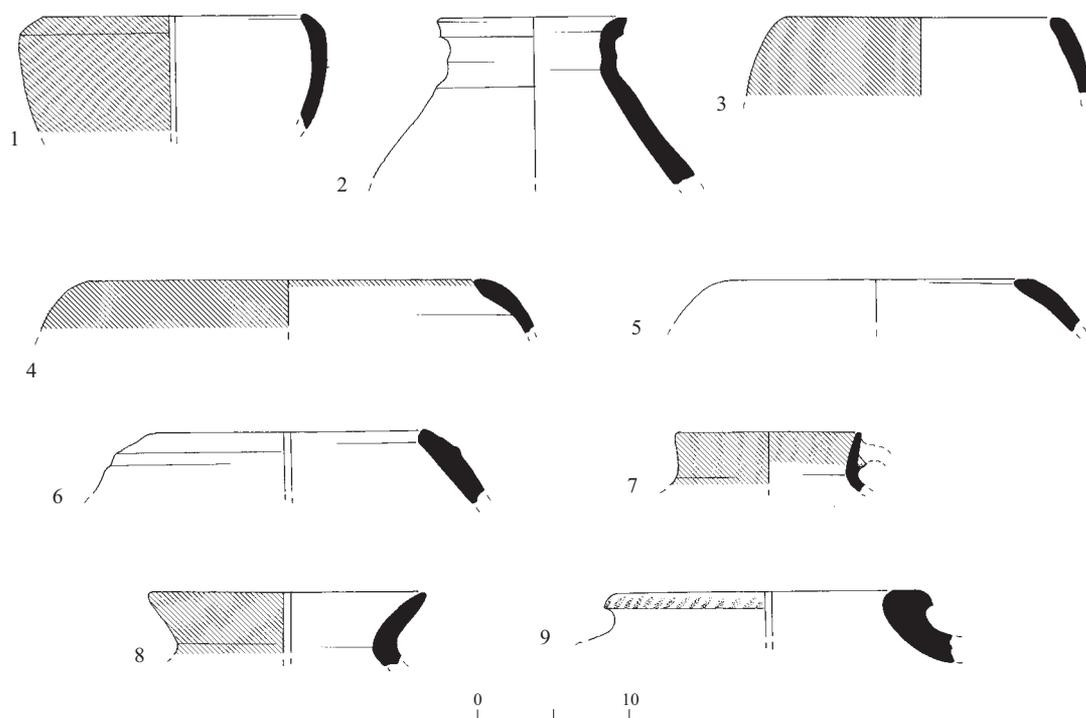


Fig. 3. Pottery from Area A.

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Description | Comparisons |
|-----|---------------|-------|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Bowl | 101 | 1014/1 | Red slip; yellowish red surface; gray and white inclusions | Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: Fig. 1:1 Asherat: Smithline 2001: Fig. 21:19 Me'ona: Braun 1996: Fig. 11:1 |
| 2 | Cooking pot | 101 | 1006/1 | Coarse surface; gray and brown inclusions | |
| 3 | Holemouth jar | 101 | 1003/1 | Red slip; yellowish red surface; gray and white inclusions | Me'ona: Braun 1996: Fig. 12:9 |
| 4 | Holemouth jar | 101 | 1019 | Red slip; yellowish red surface; white inclusions | |
| 5 | Holemouth jar | 101 | 1014/2 | Light red surface; quartz, white and gray inclusions | |
| 6 | Holemouth jar | 104 | 1023/1 | Remnant of red slip; light buff surface; quartz, gray and white inclusions | 'Afula: Gal and Covello-Paran 1996: Fig. 5:6, 7 'En Esur: Yannai 2006: Fig. 4.72:15 |
| 7 | Amphoriskos | 104 | 1023/2 | Red slip; buff surface; gray and white inclusions | 'Ein Shadud: Braun 1985: Fig. 20:1-4 'En Esur: Yannai 2006: Fig. 4.60:2 |
| 8 | Jar | 101 | 1014/3 | Red slip; yellowish red surface; gray and white inclusions | Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: Fig. 1:5 |
| 9 | Pithos | 104 | 1023/3 | Brown slip; black and brown inclusions | Bet Yerah: Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: Fig. 2:5, 6 Rosh Ha-Niqra: Tadmor and Prausnitz 1959: Fig. 6:1-4 |

rail-rim pithoi (Fig. 3:9) were found in the EB IB Stratum 2 at Rosh Ha-Niqra, but are more commonly found further south in the vicinity of the Jezreel Valley and to the east, at Bet Yerah.

The Hellenistic Period

Familiar Hellenistic incurved-rim bowls, either with or without red slip, were found (Fig. 4:1, 2).

Numerous cooking-pot fragments are representative of the Hellenistic period. Figure 4:3, with its thin triangular-shaped rim, is common

in second century BCE contexts. Figure 4:4 has a slanting hammerhead rim with a shallow internal channel.

The series of drilled holes in the jug illustrated in Fig. 4:5 indicates that it was repaired in antiquity. The type is found in third- and second-centuries BCE contexts at Dor, Yoqne'am, and Samaria.

While a relatively large number of fragments of Galilean Coarse Ware (GCW) jars and pithoi were among the finds (Fig. 4:6, 7), there were

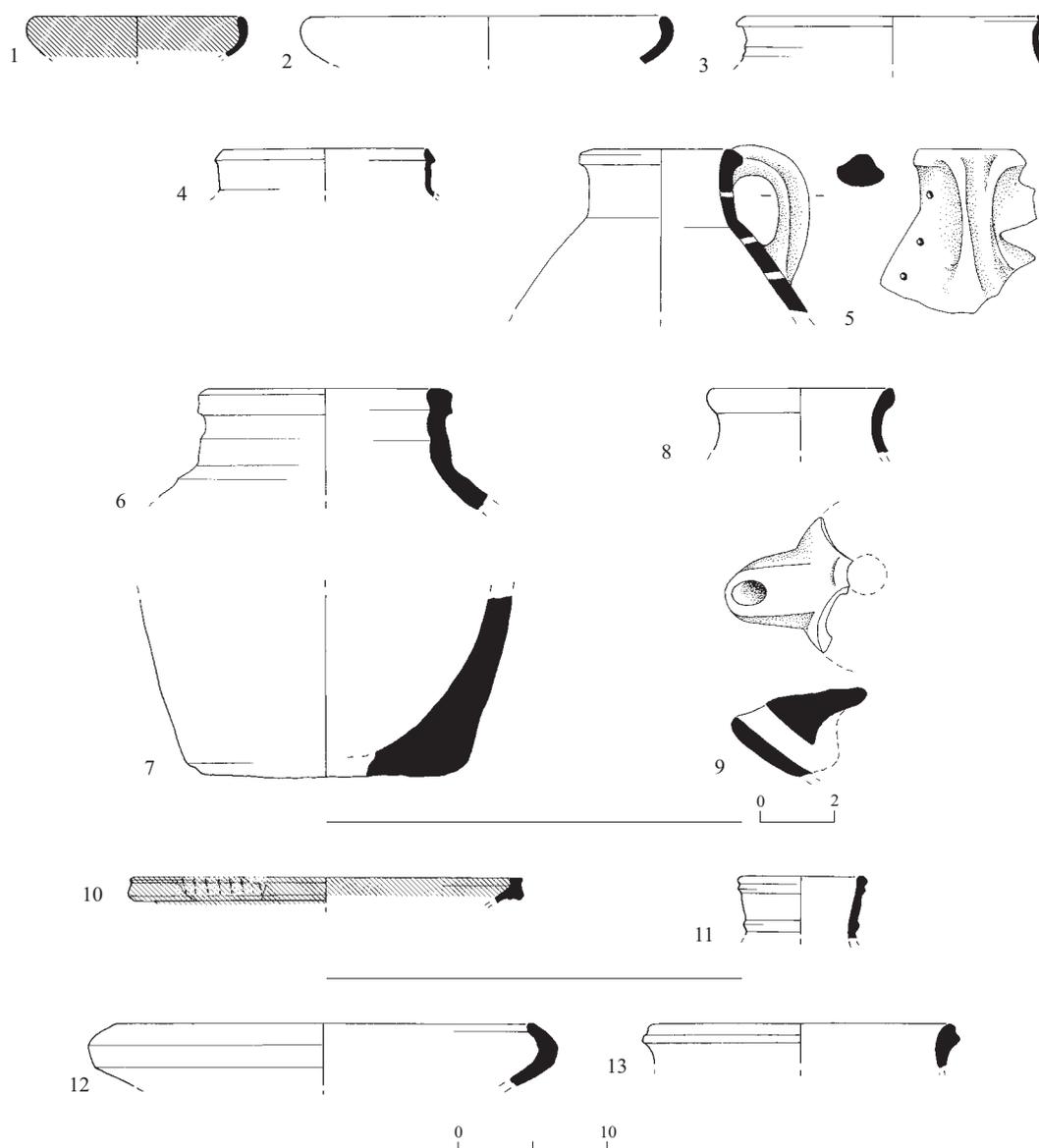


Fig. 4. Pottery from Area A.

few fragments of the more common Hellenistic storage jars, with either a thickened everted rim (Fig. 4:8), or of the Phoenician-type Persian-period carryover (cf. below Fig. 5:6). The coarse handmade GCW is associated with third–second centuries BCE sites in the north of Israel and has been recovered at sites such as Ḥorbat ‘Uza³ (Smithline, forthcoming) and Yodefat. Also relatively abundant were fragments of imported amphoras.

The common plain, locally made lamp (Fig. 4:9) shows no evidence of slip. One lamp (not illustrated) has remnants of black glaze and a small, unpierced lug on its shoulder, and was dated to the second century BCE (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995:237, Fig. 5.16:2).

The Late Roman–Byzantine Periods

The severe damage to the site prior to the excavation left few diagnostic sherds directly associated with the floor of the Late Roman–Byzantine periods.

The two illustrated sherds represent material uncovered in the section in close proximity to the floor. This material also appears in the debris that apparently originated from the floor’s recent destruction. The Phocaeen Late Roman C (LRC) 3C bowl (Fig. 4:10) is very common in Upper Galilee, where Naḥf is situated (Frankel et al. 2001:66). Hayes (1972:337) dates this type to the second half of the fifth century CE, while at Jalame it appears in the second half of the fourth century CE. The jar

◀ Fig. 4

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Description | Comparisons |
|-----|--------------|-------|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Bowl | 101 | 1008 | Red slip; fine gray and white inclusions | |
| 2 | Bowl | 101 | 1006/1 | Buff surface; fine quartz, and gray and white inclusions | |
| 3 | Cooking pot | 101 | 1002/1 | Brick-red fabric; fine gray and white inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.18:9 Yoqne‘am: Avissar 1996: Fig. X.3:12 |
| 4 | Cooking pot | 101 | 1006/2 | Brick-red fabric; fine quartz and white inclusions | Samaria: Kenyon 1957: Fig. 41:3 |
| 5 | Jug | 101 | 1002/2 | Remnant of red or brown slip; light buff fabric; white and brown inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.30:2 Samaria: Kenyon 1957: Figs. 42:5; 43:10 Yoqne‘am: Avissar 1996: Fig. X.7:4 |
| 6 | Pithos (GCW) | 102 | 1022 | Yellowish red surface; brown, gray and white inclusions; handmade | Frankel et al. 2001: Fig. 3.8:4 |
| 7 | Pithos (GCW) | 102 | 1011 | Yellowish red surface; brown, gray and white inclusions; handmade | |
| 8 | Storage jar | 101 | 1006/1 | Light buff surface; gray and brown inclusions; sandy fabric | |
| 9 | Lamp | 101 | 1009 | Buff surface | Dor: Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: Fig. 5.14:5 |
| 10 | Bowl LRC 3C | 101 | 1002/3 | Red fabric; smooth surface | Frankel et al. 2001: Fig. 3.11:6 Johnson 1988: Fig. 7-9:148 |
| 11 | Storage jar | 101 | 1001/2 | Grayish brown surface; white and brown inclusions | Diéz-Fernandez 1983:142, Type T 1.10:110 Meron: Meyers et al. 1981: Pl. 8.9:7 |
| 12 | Platter | 101 | 1006/3 | Reddish fabric; quartz and brown inclusions; metallic ware | Rosh Ha-Niqra: Tadmor and Prausnitz 1959: Fig. 5:2 Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: Fig. 3 |
| 13 | Cooking pot | 101 | 1001/1 | Dark red fabric | Frankel et al. 2001: Fig. 3.6:9–11 |

(Fig. 4:11), similar to one retrieved at Meron, is dated to the fourth century CE. Many Roman and Byzantine storage-jar body sherds were found in the debris.

Unstratified Sherds

An EB II metallic-ware platter is illustrated in Fig. 4:12 and a stepped-rim cooking pot characteristic of Iron II is displayed in Fig. 4:13.

AREA B

Area B is located on the tell's northwestern slope, approximately 300 m southwest of Area A. As occurred in Area A, a bulldozer destroyed the upper level of the excavated lot, although not to the depth of the destruction there.

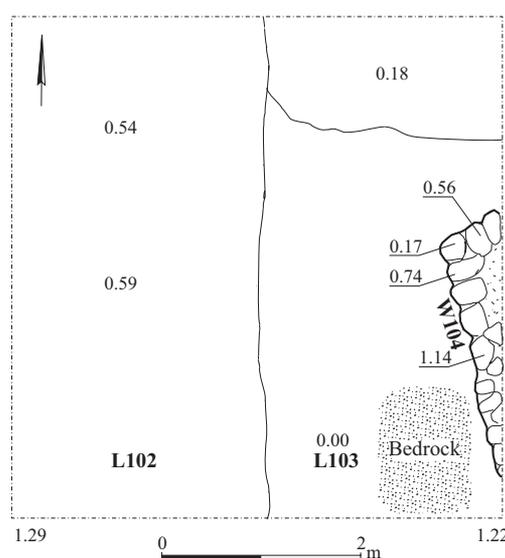
In contrast with Area A, only two occupation levels were evident in Area B. The partially excavated western half of the 5 × 5 m square showed evidence of activity in the Byzantine period. Large hammer-dressed stones in a rubble matrix were present, but no structure was traceable.

Approximately 0.4 m from the southeastern corner, a wall (W104) was exposed in the square, extending only 0.6–0.7 m before it formed a corner, cut by the eastern balk (Plan 2). Thus, only the outer face of this single wall, preserved to a maximum height of nearly 1.2 m, was exposed. The wall, built in uneven courses of hammer-dressed fieldstones with a fill of small stones, was constructed on the soft bedrock that gradually slopes down from the southeast. The remains of a packed-earth floor, which showed evidence of intense burning, may be associated with the wall. A large amount of Hellenistic pottery was found adjacent to this structure.

Ceramic Finds

The Hellenistic Period

The ubiquitous incurved-rim bowl (Fig. 5:1) was the predominant bowl type in Area B. The large gritty bowl or mortarium (Fig. 5:2) is paralleled



Plan 2. Area B.

by a vessel at Dor from a mid-second century BCE context. A coarsely produced, everted rim jug (Fig. 5:3) is related to the jug in Fig. 4:5. Another small jug with a ridge around its neck (Fig. 5:4) is nearly identical in form to a jug from a third–second-centuries BCE context at Dor. As was the case in Area A, GCW jar and pithoi sherds from the third–second centuries BCE were very common here (Fig. 5:5). Also present were fragments of imported amphoras and Phoenician-type storage jars (Fig. 5:6), probably of coastal manufacture, which developed from the flat-shouldered jars of the Persian period. They appear in Hellenistic contexts from the late fourth century BCE. Figure 5:7 illustrates the nozzle of a poorly glazed lamp typical of the Hellenistic period.

The Byzantine Period

The small LRC 3F bowl (Fig. 5:8) dates to the sixth century CE (Hayes 1972:338). The cooking pot with two grooves on its rim (Fig. 5:9) is paralleled by vessels found in Ḥorbat ‘Uza Level 7 (Avshalom-Gorni, forthcoming) and Jalame, and dates to the fourth and fifth centuries CE. The concave-neck cooking pot (Fig. 5:10) is characteristic of the Late Byzantine period in western Galilee.

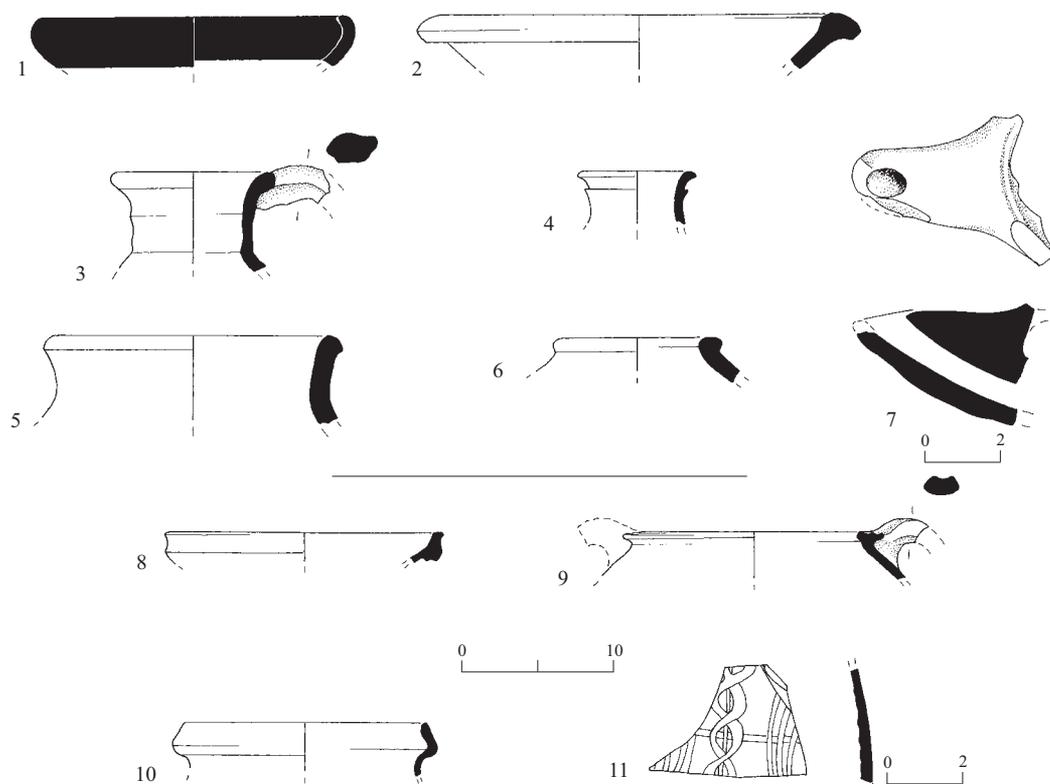


Fig. 5. Pottery from Area B.

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Description | Comparisons |
|-----|--------------|-------|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Bowl | 103 | 1011/1 | Matte brown glaze; reddish yellow fabric | |
| 2 | Mortarium | 103 | 1006/1 | Gritty, reddish brown fabric; quartz, gray, white, black and brown inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.9:11 |
| 3 | Jug | 103 | 1010/1 | Light buff; white and brown inclusions | See Fig. 4:5 |
| 4 | Jug | 103 | 1013 | Light brown surface; quartz and fine brown inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.29:11 |
| 5 | Pithos (GCW) | 103 | 1007/1 | Coarse red surface; white and brown inclusions; handmade | See Fig. 4:6 |
| 6 | Storage jar | 103 | 1012/1 | Reddish yellow fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.38:5 Frankel et al. 2001: Fig. 3.9:5 |
| 7 | Lamp | 103 | 1011/2 | Matte black glaze; reddish yellow fabric; fine white, gray and brown inclusions | |
| 8 | Bowl LRC 3F | 101 | 1002/1 | Red fabric; smooth surface | Hayes 1972: Fig. 69:19 |
| 9 | Cooking pot | 102 | 1005/1 | Dark red surface; white and brown inclusions | Jalame: Johnson 1988: Fig. 7-39:580 |
| 10 | Cooking pot | 102 | 1005/2 | Reddish brown surface; red fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | H. 'Ovesh: Aviam and Getzov 1998: Fig. 9:11 |
| 11 | Storage jar | 102 | 1005/2 | Brick-red fabric; white and brown inclusions; clear wash | |

No examples of the square, thickened storage-jar rims unearthed in Area B are illustrated. These rims are, however, identical to those found in Area C (cf. Fig. 8:6, 7) and may have been manufactured in Nahf itself (Vitto 1986:453). The excavation of a pottery workshop at Ḥorbat 'Uza, not far from Nahf, revealed evidence of the production of this type of jar (Avshalom-Gorni, forthcoming). This jar type was popular in the fourth–fifth centuries CE and has been encountered at sites throughout the Galilee

(Frankel et al. 2001:66). Numerous storage-jar body sherds were adorned with white painted linear decorations (Fig. 5:11).

Unstratified Sherds

Five other periods are represented among the finds in this area: EB II (Fig. 6:1), Iron I (Fig. 6:2), Iron II (Fig. 6:3–5), the Persian period (Fig. 6:6), and the Roman period (Fig. 6:7–9), when Kefar Ḥananya-type vessels were common at the site.

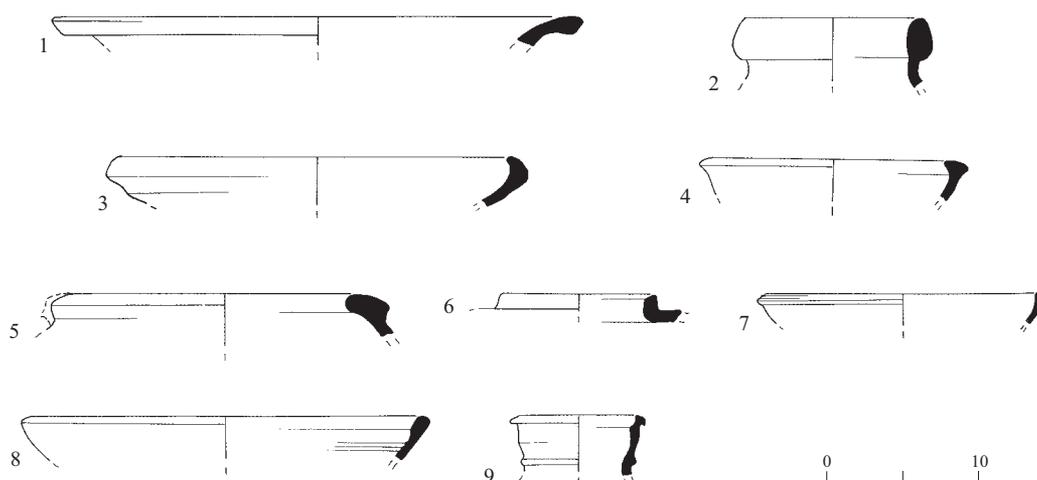


Fig. 6. Pottery from Area B.

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Description | Comparisons |
|-----|--------------|-------|----------|--|--|
| 1 | Storage jar | 103 | 1012/2 | Yellowish red exterior; burnished inside rim to gray tone; white, gray and brown inclusions; metallic ware | Rosh Ha-Niqra: Tadmor and Prausnitz 1959: Fig. 5:17–19 Dan: Greenberg 1996: Fig. 3.24:9 |
| 2 | Storage jar | 103 | 1010/2 | Grayish-red surface; brown and white inclusions | Ḥazor (Str. XI): Yadin et al. 1961: Fig. CLXVII:1 |
| 3 | Bowl | 103 | 1012/3 | Yellowish red surface and fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | Ḥazor (Str. VI): Yadin et al. 1961: Fig. CLXXXII:8 |
| 4 | Bowl | 103 | 1010 | Yellowish red surface and fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | Ḥazor (Str. VI): Yadin et al. 1961: Figs. CLXXXII:9; CCLI:9 |
| 5 | Krater | 103 | 1011/3 | Gray-pink surface; white inclusions | Ḥ. Rosh Zayit: Gal and Alexandre 2000: Fig. V.5:9 |
| 6 | Storage jar | 101 | 1004/1 | Yellowish red fabric; white and brown inclusions | Dor: Stern 1995: Fig. 2.7 |
| 7 | Cooking bowl | 101 | 1001/1 | Brick-red fabric; white inclusions | Kefar Ḥananya: Adan-Bayewitz 1993: Fig. Pl. 1B (Form 1B) |
| 8 | Cooking bowl | 101 | 1004/2 | Brick-red fabric; white inclusions | Kefar Ḥananya: Adan-Bayewitz 1993: Fig. Pl. 1E (Form 1E) |
| 9 | Storage jar | 101 | 1001/2 | Brick-red fabric; white inclusions; buff wash | Adan-Bayewitz and Perlman 1990: Fig. 3:3 Capernaum: Loffreda 1974: Fig. 1:1 |

AREA C

Area C is located on the southeastern slope of the hill, approximately 200 m east of Area B and 100 m south of Area A. An area of 2.5 × 5.0 m was excavated to a depth of 2.5 m. Two occupation levels were discerned: Hellenistic and Byzantine. The only feature attributable to the Byzantine period was the remains of a *tabun* adjacent to the outer face of the slope on the eastern edge of the excavated area. In the northwestern corner, 1.6 m beneath the accumulated sloping material, was what appears to be a fragmentary work installation consisting of an upright broken pillar with a sunken upper surface placed in a stone-lined pit cut into a stone floor. All the material associated with

this installation dates to the Hellenistic period. Between the installation and the *tabun* was a stone fill rich in Hellenistic-period sherds.

*Ceramic Finds**The Hellenistic Period*

Of the three excavated areas, Area C had the richest Hellenistic repertoire.

Bowls.— Not only were there the expected in-turned-rim bowls, but several other Hellenistic bowl forms as well. The small fishplate (Fig. 7:1) was a popular third- and second-century BCE vessel. A bowl with a thickened or slightly concave rim (Fig. 7:2) has its earliest appearance in second century BCE contexts. This bowl type

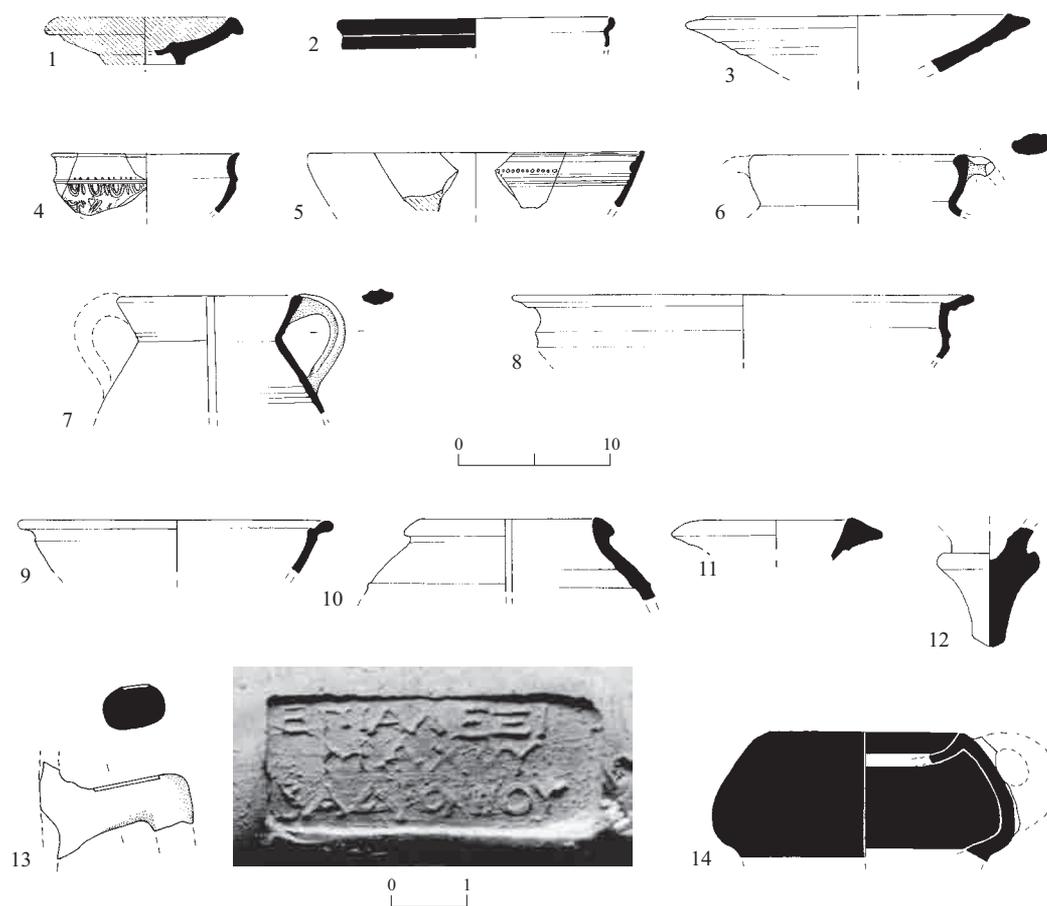


Fig. 7. Pottery from Area C.

◀ Fig. 7

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Description | Comparisons |
|-----|------------------------|-------|----------|--|--|
| 1 | Fishplate | 104 | 1019/1 | Red slip; yellowish red fine sandy fabric; white and brown inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.3:23–27 |
| 2 | Bowl | 102 | 1012 | Red/brown glaze; yellowish red fine sandy fabric | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.7:1–7 |
| 3 | Bowl (GCW?) | 104 | 1019/2 | Yellowish red surface and fabric; medium gray inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.9:13 |
| 4 | Bowl | 106 | 1021/2 | Black glaze; gray fabric; much white mica | |
| 5 | Bowl | 104 | 1019/3 | Brown glaze on smooth buff surface; fine, reddish yellow fabric | Dor: Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1995: Fig. 5.7:2–4 Samaria: Kenyon 1957: Fig. 53:5 Yoqne'am: Avissar 1996: Fig. X.1:23–27 |
| 6 | Cooking pot | 104 | 1018/1 | Many white inclusions | Tirat Yehuda: Yeivin and Edelstein 1970: Fig. 8:2 |
| 7 | Cooking pot | 104 | 1018/2 | Dark red surface; dark brown fabric; white inclusions | Tirat Yehuda: Yeivin and Edelstein 1970: Fig. 8:3 |
| 8 | Casserole | 104 | 1018/3 | Brick-red fabric | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.20:7 Samaria: Kenyon 1957: Fig. 41:20; Yoqne'am: Avissar 1996: Fig. X.4:3 |
| 9 | Casserole | 104 | 1019/4 | Reddish gray surface; brick-red fabric; white inclusions | Dor: Guz-Zilberstein 1995: Fig. 6.21:13 |
| 10 | Storage jar | 104 | 1018/4 | Reddish yellow fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | See Fig. 5:6 |
| 11 | Amphora | 101 | 1001/1 | Fine, yellowish red fabric and surface; fine mica, gray and brown inclusions | |
| 12 | Amphora | 102 | 1009/1 | Red surface and fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | |
| 13 | Stamped amphora handle | 106 | 1024 | Pink fabric | |
| 14 | Lamp | 104 | 1019/5 | Black glaze; red fabric; mica | |

commonly has two small pinched handles. An unusually thick-walled bowl (Fig. 7:3) seems to be related to the GCW pithoi in its coarse heavy fabric, but is reminiscent of a bowl from Dor.

The finely impressed, molded relief bowl with black glaze and an everted rim (Fig. 7:4) is made of a grayish, highly micaceous ware. Below a row of beading and a lower egg-and-dart register is what seems to be a four-legged animal standing on its hindlegs as it reaches for a tree(?). A bowl of similar profile found at Paphos was dated there to the late second or early first century BCE (Hayes 1991:17, Fig.

8:26). Apparently contemporaneous with the relief bowl is an Eastern Terra Sigillata (ETS) bowl with internal molding and a line of beading (Fig. 7:5). Bowls of this type have been found at Dor, Samaria, and Yoqne'am, and are dated to the second half of the second and early first centuries BCE.

Cooking Pots and Casseroles.— Several pots, characterized by their slanting triangular rim, are identical to those from Area A (see Fig. 4:4). Few cooking pots, possessing either a high everted or a concave neck and a thickened

rim (Fig. 7:6, 7), were among the finds. At Tīrat Yehuda, pots reminiscent of these were dated to the second century BCE.

Typical Hellenistic-period casseroles (Fig. 7:8) are comparable to vessels from Dor, Yoqne'am and Samaria. The less common sloping-walled casserole (Fig. 7:9) appears in second century contexts.

Storage Jars and Amphoras.—The predominant storage vessel type in Area C is the large GCW pithos (see Figs. 4:6, 7; 5:5). Few Phoenician-type storage jars were unearthed (Fig. 7:10). Similarly to Area A, imported amphoras were found here in large numbers. Illustrated are the rim of a fourth–third-centuries BCE Rhodian amphora (Fig. 7:11) and the toe of a Knidian amphora (Fig. 7:12). One Rhodian amphora handle bears the eponym Aleximachos, ΕΠΙ

ΙΛΕΞΙ-MAXΟΥ ΒΑΔΡΟΜΙΟΥ (Fig. 7:13), dated by Finkielsztejn (2001:125–127, Table 20) to c. 147 BCE.

Lamp.—The partially preserved black glaze on the imported lamp (Fig. 7:14) attests to its original quality. Its vertical loop handle is uncommon.

The Byzantine Period

In Area C, fifth century LRC 3C (Fig. 8:1) and sixth century LRC 3F (Fig. 8:2, 3) bowls are predominant. The gritty basin in Fig. 8:4 is paralleled at Jalame, where it was dated to the second half of the fourth century CE. Figure 8:5 is a carinated casserole, a long-lived type, lasting from the fourth century CE through the Early Islamic period. The storage jars (Fig. 8:6, 7) repeat the type of the fourth-century CE jar found in Area B.

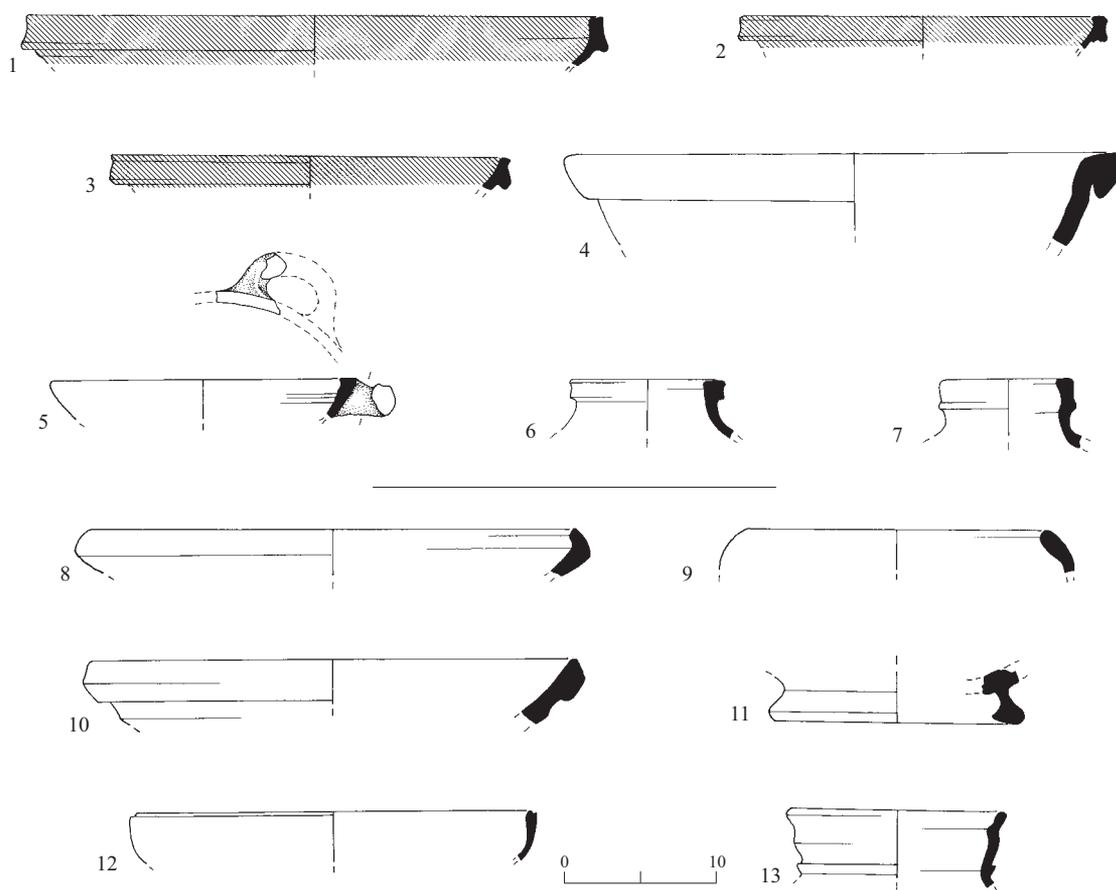


Fig. 8. Pottery from Area C.

◄ Fig. 8

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Description | Comparisons |
|-----|----------------|-------|----------|---|--|
| 1 | Bowl LRC 3C | 104 | 1017 | Smooth purplish red surface; fine red fabric | Jalame: Johnson 1988: Fig. 7–9: 151 |
| 2 | Bowl LRC 3F | 102 | 1006 | Smooth red surface and fabric | See Fig. 4:8 |
| 3 | Bowl LRC 3F | 103 | 1014 | Smooth gray exterior surface, red interior; fine red fabric | See Fig. 4:8 |
| 4 | Basin | 102 | 1013/2 | Gritty reddish yellow surface and fabric; many white, gray and brown inclusions | Jalame: Johnson 1988: Fig. 7–31: 488 |
| 5 | Casserole | 102 | 1009/2 | Brown surface; brick-red fabric; mica, gray and brown inclusions | Jalame: Johnson 1988: Fig. 7–43: 630–634 |
| 6 | Storage jar | 102 | 1009/3 | Reddish gray slip; dark red fabric; white and brown inclusions | Kh. Bata (Karmi'el): Yeivin 1992: Fig. 24:6, 7 Capernaum: Loffreda 1974: Fig. 9:7–9 |
| 7 | Storage jar | 102 | 1013/3 | Reddish brown slip; red fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | |
| 8 | Platter | 101 | 1004/1 | Gray, burnished exterior; red fabric; white, gray and brown inclusions | See Fig. 4:12 |
| 9 | Holemouth jar | 101 | 1007 | Reddish buff surface; red fabric; white and brown inclusions | |
| 10 | Mortarium | 101 | 1001/2 | Buff surface; gritty, reddish buff fabric | Dor: Stern 1995: Fig. 2.2:18 |
| 11 | Mortarium | 104 | 1020 | Gritty, greenish buff surface and fabric | Dor: Stern 1995: Fig. 2.2:14 |
| 12 | Cooking pot | 103 | 1011 | Red surface and fabric | Kefar Hananya: Adan-Bayewitz 1993: Fig. Pl. 1A (Form 1A) |
| 13 | Storage jar | 101 | 1004/2 | Red surface; white inclusions | Adan-Bayewitz and Perlman 1990: Fig. 3:3 Capernaum: Loffreda 1974: Fig. 1:1 |

Unstratified Sherds

Four additional periods were represented in the collected material: EB II (Fig. 8:8, 9); MB IIA (a straight-walled cooking pot, not illustrated; see Frankel et al. 2001: Fig. 3.4:14); the Persian period (Fig. 8:10, 11); and the Roman period (Fig. 8:12, 13), characterized by Kefar Hananya-type vessels.

Stone Finds

Basalt Bowls.— Figure 9:1, 2 illustrates two fragments of basalt mortars found in the Hellenistic fill. Both are shallow vessels. The tripod mortar (Fig. 9:1) has a rounded rim and its legs have a flat outer profile. Figure 9:2 has

a wider, flat rim with a shallow channel or spout cut through it.

Limestone Chancel Screen.— During his visit to Nahf in 1863, Guérin mentioned architectural elements that probably originated from a synagogue or a church (Guérin 1880:452). The fragment of a chancel screen, found in an unstratified context, could be attributed to a Byzantine-period church and thus would corroborate his claim of the existence of a church in the village.

Area C presents a picture somewhat similar to that of Area B. The latest attestable presence in this area is dated to the Byzantine period.

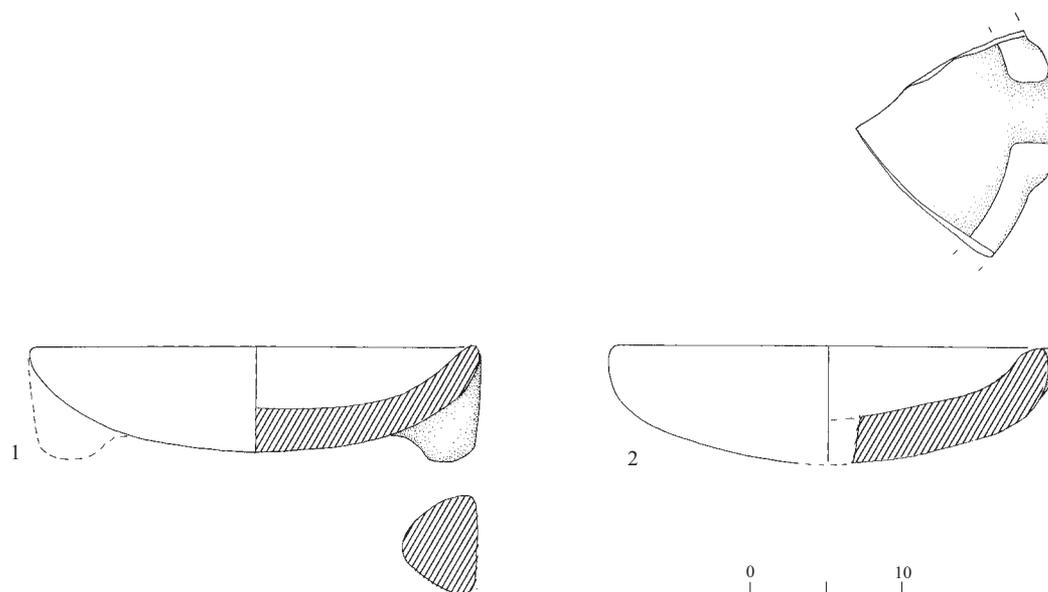


Fig. 9. Stone vessels from Area C.

| No. | Vessel | Locus | Reg. No. | Comparisons |
|-----|---------------|-------|----------|---|
| 1 | Basalt mortar | 106 | 1023/1 | Tel Mikhal: Singer-Avitz 1989: Fig. 31.2:5 |
| 2 | Basalt mortar | 106 | 1023/2 | |

Due to the steep incline of the slope, all that was found from this period is a *ṭabun* and its associated surface. The not insignificant amount of Roman-period sherds suggests a nearby Roman presence, probably higher up the steep incline. Although little physical remains of the Hellenistic period were uncovered, the large quantity of Hellenistic sherds indicates a late third to mid-second century BCE settlement.

CONCLUSIONS

The three areas excavated are located in different sections of the hill. Only in Area B did the excavation reach bedrock, and only Area C was not disturbed by heavy machinery. It is clear that there was an EB IB settlement in the northeast, but its extent is not ascertainable. An EB II presence on the tell is also obvious but its specific location was not pinpointed in any of the excavated areas. The same may be stated for MB II, Iron I–II, and the Persian period.

The site experienced a flourish during the Hellenistic period. All three excavations unearthed large quantities of Hellenistic potsherds, although with few architectural remains.⁴ The inordinate amount of storage-vessel fragments in comparison to other vessels strongly indicates that Hellenistic Naḥf was an important commercial center for the production and marketing of both oil and wine. The ceramic assemblage, in conjunction with the stamped Rhodian amphora handle, indicates that the Hellenistic settlement ceased in the second half of the second century BCE. This would appear to coincide with the Hasmonean conquest of the Galilee. In keeping with the scheme suggested by Frankel et al. (2001:108–110), the predominance of the GCW pithoi suggests the existence of a pagan population in the second century BCE. After a settlement gap beginning in the second century BCE, an apparently Jewish settlement characterized by Kefar Ḥananya ceramic types was established, possibly in the second or third centuries CE.

The village continued to exist and apparently prospered in the Late Roman–Early Byzantine periods. Evidence of the existence of a Byzantine-period church, as posited by Guérin, places the village in a Christian sphere associated with developments in western Galilee, yet near the eastern extremity of this Christian influence. The predominance of LRC 3 bowls is significant in emphasizing the Christian nature of the site (Frankel et al. 2001:116). The church

is evidence of a continuing, later Byzantine presence, although little of the material finds are unequivocally dated to this later period. As two of the areas (A and B) were excavated after destructive digging and leveling by bulldozers, and the other (Area C) was excavated on a steep, eroded slope, no later material was found in significant amounts to enable the extension of the chronology of the excavated areas to later periods.

NOTES

¹ The three excavations—Reg. Nos. A-3441 (map ref. NIG 23020/760315–57; OIG 18020/260315–57), A-3449 (map ref. NIG 22990/76020; OIG 17990/26020), A-3479 (map ref. NIG 23009/76010; OIG 18009/26010)—were directed by the author on behalf of the IAA. Each excavation was financed by the property owner, who in two cases also provided the workers. Additional assistance was given by Yossi Ya‘aqobi (administration), Leea Porat (pottery restoration), Hagit Tahan (pottery and stone vessels drawing), and Natalia Zak (final plans preparation).
² In order to best utilize the short amount of time allotted for this excavation, only an area of 2.5 × 3.0 m was excavated to the maximum attained depth.

³ Horbat ‘Uza is an important multi-layered site approximately 15 km west of Nahf, excavated under the direction of Nimrod Getzov, on behalf of the IAA. The excavation report will be published in the IAA Reports monograph series, and is currently in preparation. Exact figure references for comparative purposes were unavailable at the time of writing.

⁴ Recent excavations at Nahf undertaken by the author (February–March 2006) have uncovered impressive architectural remains dating to the Hellenistic period, which strengthen the assertion of a flourish at this time.

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