

## THE SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF NAZARETH IN THE IRON AGE AND EARLY ROMAN PERIOD

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### INTRODUCTION

In three short seasons in 2009 and 2011, a small-scale archaeological excavation was carried out next to the Franciscan Church of the Annunciation compound in central Nazareth (Nazerat), prior to the conversion of an Ottoman-period building into the International Mary of Nazareth Center (map ref. 228190/734250; approximately 120 sq m; Figs. 1; 2:A).<sup>1</sup> The excavation was limited to the area designated for a new entrance lobby into the building, and was restricted on three sides by buildings—the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent on the west (Fig. 2:B), the Mary of Nazareth Center building on the north, and a private house

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<sup>1</sup> The excavations (Permit Nos. A-5740, A-6080) were undertaken to investigate the archaeological remains in the small area designated by the Chemin Neuf Community proprietors for the construction of the entrance lobby. The excavations were conducted in three stages: Permit No. A-5470, carried out during two weeks in September 2009 (25 sq m) and during three weeks in December 2009 (enlargement to 100 sq m), and Permit No. A-6080, carried out for three weeks, from February to March 2011 (c. 20 sq m; a small area not accessible in 2009). This third stage of the excavation, which took place after construction works that covered the site were completed and included purpose-built roofing, was undertaken with the aim of preserving the archaeological remains as an exhibit for the visitors to the Center. The excavations were directed by the author, with the assistance of Yosef Yaaqobi (administration), Anastasia Shapiro (GPS), Assaf Peretz (photography), Yinon Shvitiel (photography of Figs. 23, 24), Rivka Mishayev, Yelena Nemichenicher and Mendel Kahan (surveying and drafting). The present report was prepared by the author with the assistance of Dov Porotsky (final drafting), Anastasia Shapiro and Elena Ilana Delerzon (Fig. 2), Leea Porat (pottery restoration), Hagit Tahan-Rosen (pottery drawing), Edna Stern (medieval pottery consultation), Edward Mussallam, curator of the Franciscan museum in Nazareth (consultation on ancient Nazareth), Hila Rosenstein and Helena Kupershmidt (metal laboratory), Donald T. Ariel (numismatics), Yael Gorin-Rosen (glass), Ayala Lester (bronze lamp) and Nimrod Marom (archaeozoology). The Chemin Neuf Community staff and the contractors working on their behalf at the site provided considerable help and encouragement throughout the project. The author is extremely grateful to all. The author is indebted to David Gurevich, for his academic generosity and thorough editing process that made a most significant contribution to the content and final form of the article.

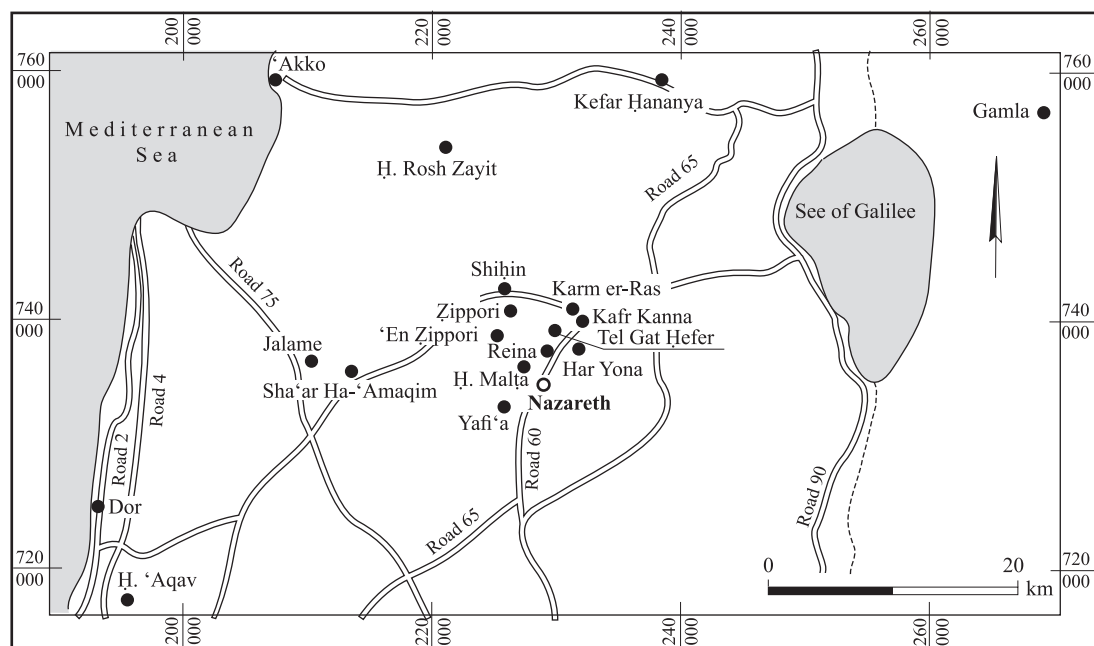


Fig. 1. Location map of Nazareth, showing settlements mentioned in this article.

and courtyard on the east.<sup>2</sup> The southern boundary of the excavation was the old narrow el-Bishara Annunciation road that runs between the Franciscan Church of the Annunciation compound and the Mary of Nazareth Center, traversing the length of Nazareth to the spring at Mary's Well (Fig. 2).

The principal remains exposed in the present excavation were of a late Hellenistic- to Early Roman-period dwelling that incorporated a three-level complex of subterranean pits or silos. Additional limited remains of an earlier building dating to the Iron Age, and of an overlying building dating to the Crusader and Mamluk periods, were also uncovered.

In this article, the description of the present excavation is preceded by a summary of the previous archaeological research that has been carried out in the area. The discussion focuses on the early settlement history of Nazareth: the Iron Age (tenth–eighth centuries BCE) and the late Hellenistic to Early Roman periods (late second century BCE to early or mid-second century CE). The analysis, based on the archaeological data and the early written sources, offers an insight into settlement in Nazareth in these periods.

<sup>2</sup> The archaeological remains of the Early Roman-period house are accessible to visitors to the International Mary of Nazareth Center. It is sincerely hoped that a conservation of the fragile remains will be carried out in the near future, and that some careful and faithful restoration work will be undertaken in order that the many visitors to the site will gain a coherent glimpse into the village of Nazareth of this period.

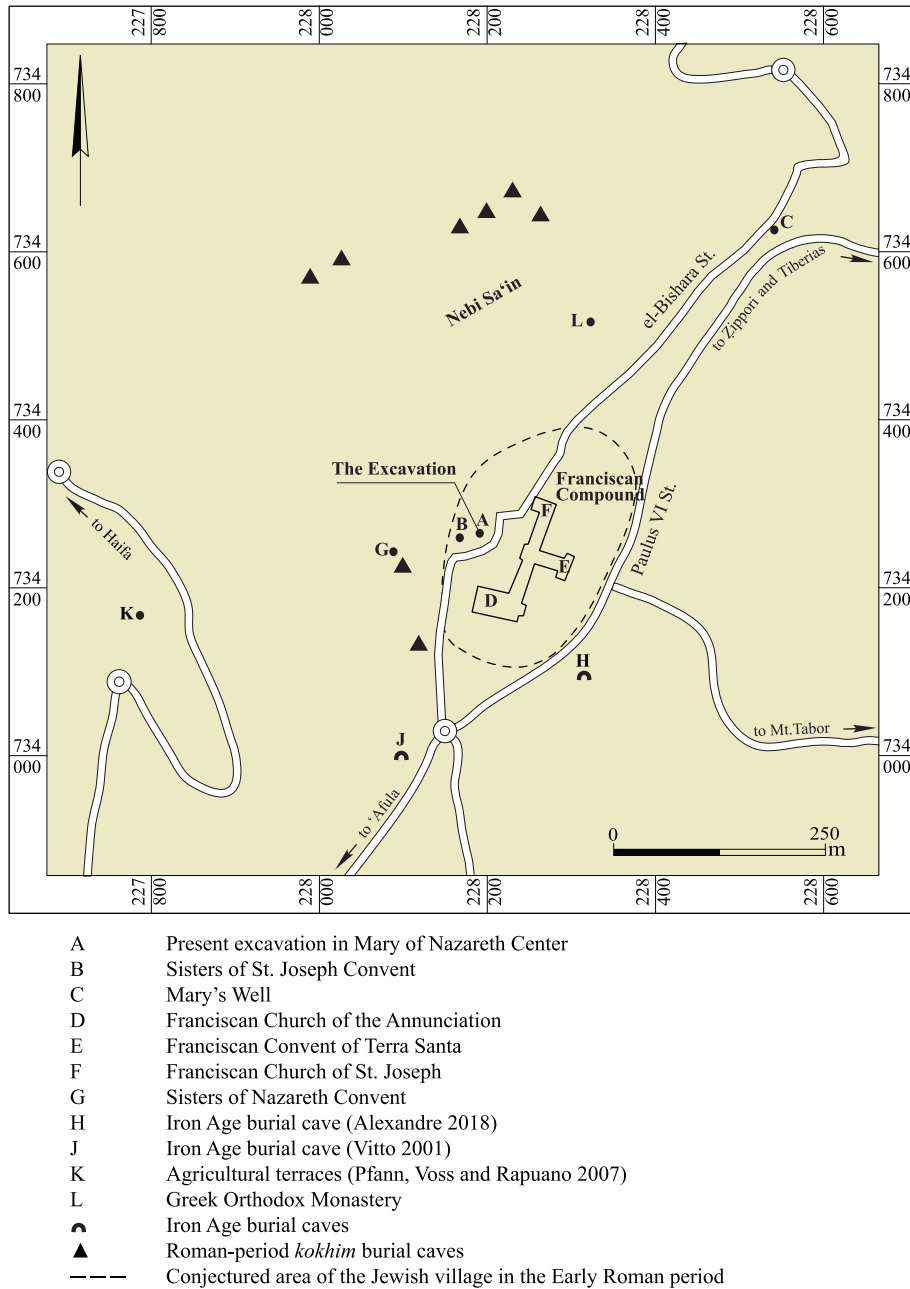


Fig. 2. Map of Nazareth, showing the location of the present excavation and other sites.

### History of Research

Until the mid-nineteenth century, historical Nazareth was a small village situated on a chalky limestone slope in a saucer-shaped basin, surrounded by hills on all sides. Its copious perennial spring, traditionally known as the Virgin's Fountain or Mary's Well, was located



Fig. 3. General view of the initial excavation (25 sq m), looking south; the Church of the Annunciation compound is in the background.

beyond and northeast of the settled village (Fig. 2:C), while a much smaller spring may have flowed seasonally within the village (Bagatti 2001:30–32). The location of old Nazareth on the slope, with a small wadi to its west and a steep drop to its east, is illustrated in a 1839 lithograph by David Roberts (Roberts 1855, reproduced in Alexandre 2012a:149, Fig. 8.3). From the mid-nineteenth century onward, Nazareth expanded rapidly into a large town that encompassed the spring area and spread over the surrounding hill slopes. The area of the small ancient settlement is dominated today by the large (c. 28 dunam) Franciscan

stone-walled compound (hereon the Franciscan compound) that encloses the Church of the Annunciation, the Convent of Terra Santa and the Church of St. Joseph (Fig. 2:D, E, F).

At the turn of the twentieth century, and again in 1955–1956, extensive archaeological excavations were undertaken in the Franciscan compound in the wake of large-scale development works. These excavations revealed some evidence for occupation in the Middle Bronze Age, the Iron Age, and the Roman, Byzantine and Crusader periods (Vlaminck 1900; Viaud 1910; Bagatti 1969; 2002). The Church of St. Joseph was constructed in 1911 along the lines of a newly uncovered Crusader-period church, and over various earlier archaeological remains, some of which are still accessible in the basement below the church. The modern Church of the Annunciation was constructed in the 1960s, incorporating the reconstructed northern wall of the huge, but mostly ruined, Crusader basilica and the underlying remains of a Byzantine basilical church.

In addition to the excavations within the Franciscan compound, from the later part of the twentieth century onward, a few small-scale salvage excavations were carried out near old Nazareth, exposing archaeological remains from various periods—from the Bronze Age to the Ottoman period (see Alexandre 2012a:5–9 for a summary of these excavations). Excavations carried out at Mary's Well in 1997 and 1998, revealed water channels and fountain houses from the Roman, Crusader, Mamluk and Ottoman periods (Alexandre 2012a).

Over the years, several rock-hewn burial caves were uncovered during the construction of houses in Nazareth, mostly on the western hill-slope of Nebi Sa'in, above the old town (for references, see Alexandre 2012a:9). Even though most of the caves were not systematically excavated, the majority were recognized as Roman-period Jewish *loculi*, or *kokhim*, burial caves (Fig. 2). A couple of Early Roman-period rock-hewn *loculi* burial caves, which were uncovered long ago in the precinct of the Sisters of Nazareth Convent, located about 100 m west of the present excavation (Fig. 2:G), were recently reexamined (Dark 2012:165). An additional shaft burial from Iron IB–IIA, reusing a Middle Bronze I–II burial cave, was excavated on the slope south of the Church of the Annunciation (Fig. 2:H; Alexandre 2018).

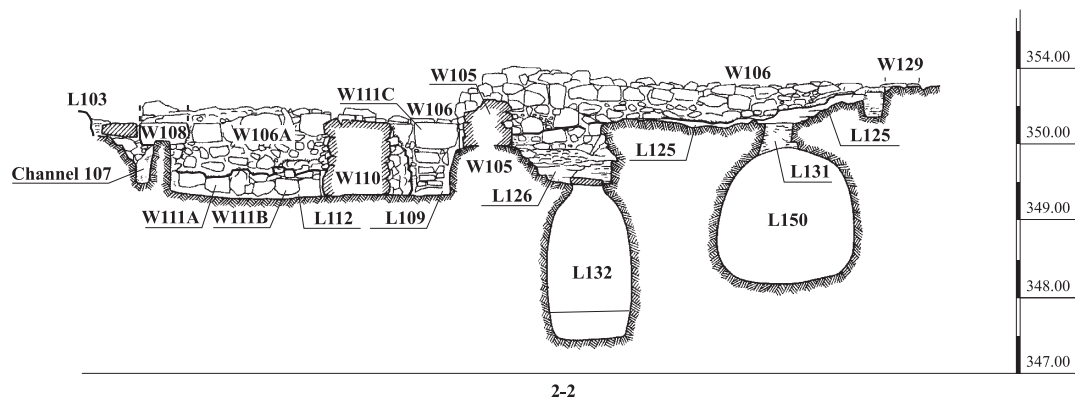
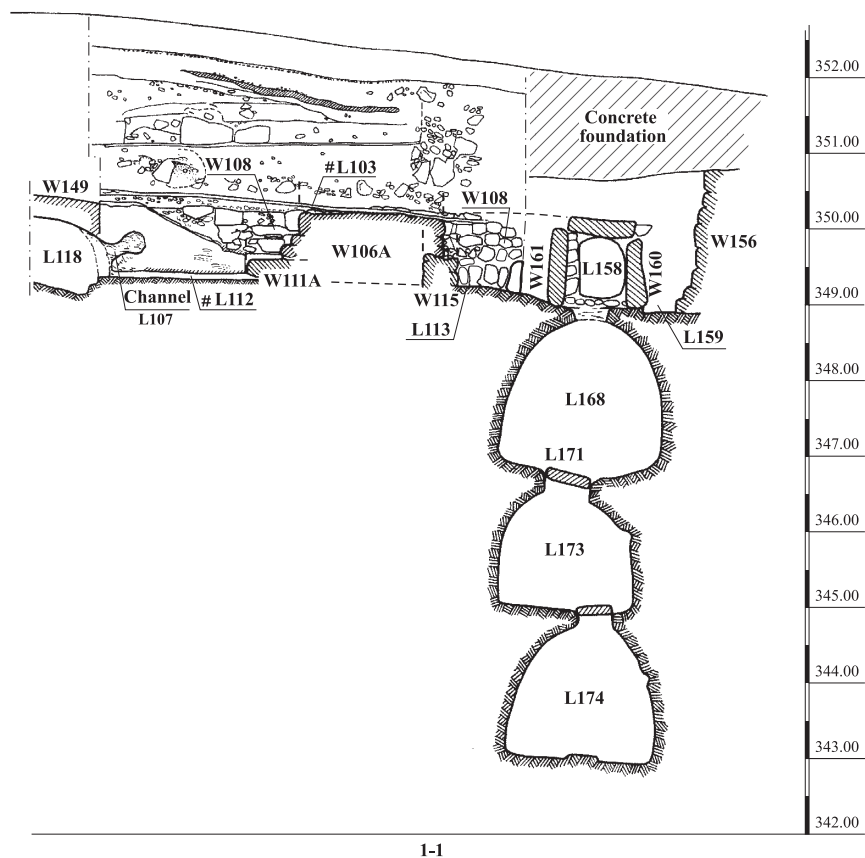
#### ARCHITECTURE AND STRATIGRAPHY

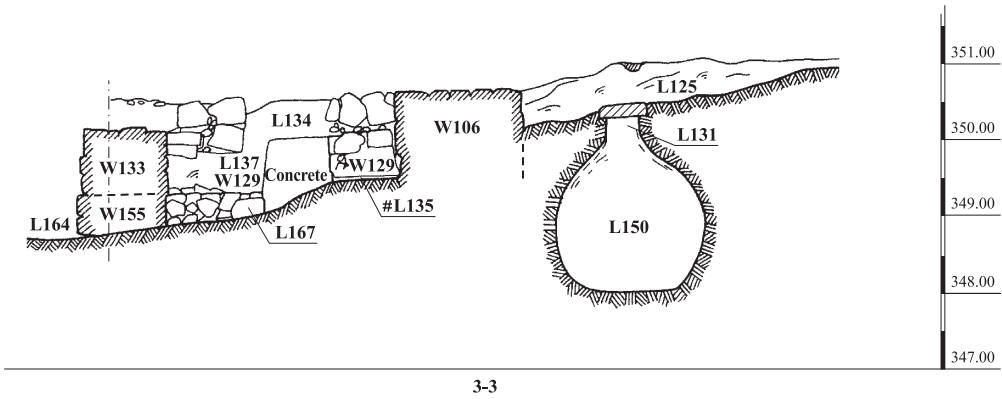
Three building strata were identified in the excavation: Stratum III, from Iron IIA–B (tenth–early eighth centuries BCE); Stratum II, from the late Hellenistic to the Early Roman period (late second century BCE–first third of the second century CE); and Stratum I, from the Crusader to Mamluk period (twelfth–fifteenth centuries CE).

In the excavated area, the bedrock sloped down to the southwest (gradient about 17%, descending about 2 m over a distance of 12 m). The walls of Strata III and II were set directly on bedrock. The exposure and the state of preservation of Stratum II was poor; the Stratum I walls, as well as three concrete bedrock-cast foundation blocks of a modern building, damaged and covered over the earlier walls of Stratum II.

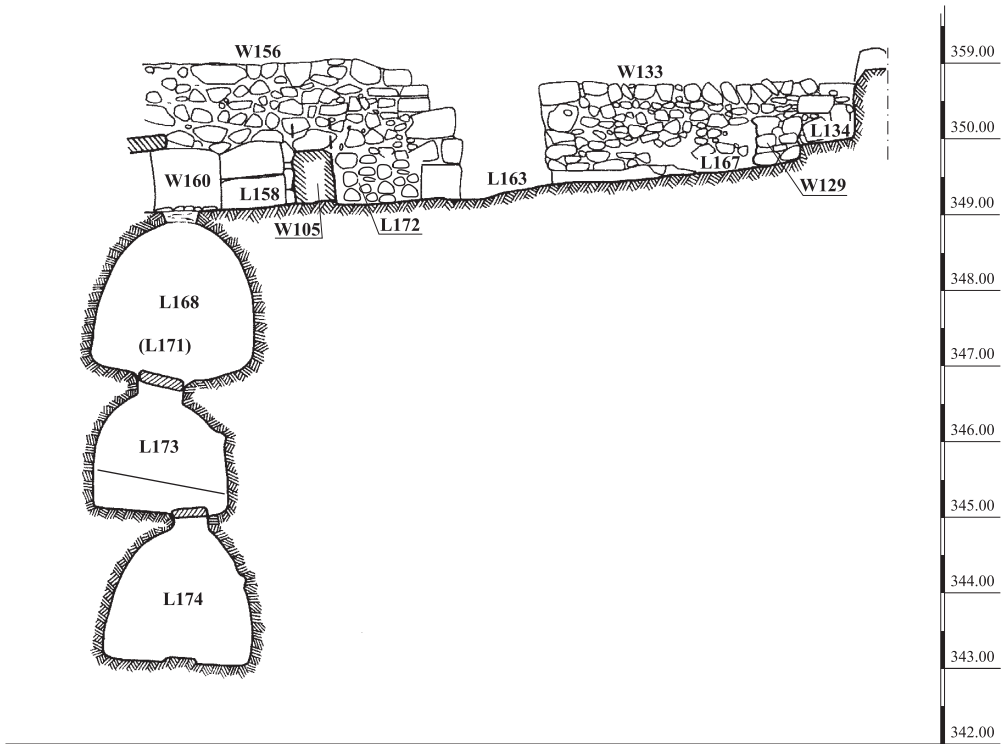








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4-4

was located at the western edge of the excavation and was overlain by the Ottoman-period Sisters of St. Joseph convent wall. The northern end of the Stratum III wall formed an integrated corner with another, just visible, east–west oriented stone wall (W175; Fig. 5). These walls were probably the corner of a Stratum III building situated under the convent. A thin (c. 0.2 m thick) accumulation layer on the bedrock next to these walls (L157, L159,





Fig. 4. Stratum III W156 and Stratum II W105 built against it, looking west.



Fig. 5. Stratum III, the corner of W156 and W175, looking southwest.

L163–L165, L167, L169, L170, L172) yielded diagnostic Iron Age pottery sherds that date the original construction and use of the wall to Iron IIA–B. Some Early Roman-period sherds were also found here, and are attributed to the reuse of the wall (see below). A few animal bones found on the bedrock (L170, L172)<sup>3</sup> were identified as sheep/goat and cattle (see Marom, this volume).

<sup>3</sup> Due to the several technical stages of the excavation, numerous loci were assigned.



Fig. 6. Stratum III, rock-hewn Channel 107 and overlying cover slab, looking north.



Fig. 7. Stratum III, Channel 107, intersected by rock-hewn base of Stratum II W108, looking south.

At the southeastern corner of the excavation, a very short section of a small rock-hewn channel, running northeast–southwest, was exposed within the rock-hewn base of a Stratum II wall (Channel 107 in W108; inner cavity of channel c. 2.5 m long, 0.3 m wide, c. 0.3 m high; Plan 1: Sections 1–1, 2–2; Fig. 6). Channel 107 must have been encountered and cut by the Stratum II builders when hewing out the surrounding bedrock for the Stratum II basement room (L112; Fig. 7). The channel still retained a single, worn rectangular stone cover slab

that seems to have been secondarily incorporated in the overlying, beaten-earth make-up of the Stratum II crushed chalk floor (L116 below L103). The channel was attributed to Iron Age Stratum III, as it could only have functioned prior to the rock-hewing activities carried out for the construction of the Stratum II building. The few small late Hellenistic sherds that were found in the debris inside the channel do not date its construction or functioning period. A large, roughly arch-shaped hollow cut in the adjacent rock-hewn wall (L118 in W149) may have been the original, subsequently damaged, eastern continuation of the Stratum III channel, but this element could not be investigated, as it extended beyond the excavation limits (Plan 1: Section 1–1).

## STRATUM II: LATE HELLENISTIC–EARLY ROMAN PERIODS

In Stratum II, the remains of a building consisting of a few small rooms were exposed (Plan 1). The walls were mostly poorly preserved due to later building activities, but it seems that the rooms were part of a single house that may have extended beyond the excavation limits.

A general photograph of the building could not be taken for several reasons: (1) the Stratum II walls were both damaged and covered by the wide Stratum I walls and by the modern concrete foundations; (2) the site was flooded by winter rains when the photographs of the intermediate stage of the excavation were taken; (3) an overhead, broad-view photograph was not possible at the final stage of the excavation as the ancient remains were now obscured by a new low concrete roof. In addition to all these exigencies, the significant subterranean elements of the house are not visible in overhead photographs. Consequently, a relatively detailed description of the house is provided here, with reference to the plan and the sections, in order to comprehensively explain the building and its components, while the photographs mostly illustrate specific details. The list of loci and walls is provided for further clarification (Appendix 1).

The house comprised three parallel east–west walls (W108, W105, W129, from south to north), laying about 4 m apart from each other. The central section of the middle wall (W105) was just visible, incorporated within and built over by the overlying Stratum I W106, while its western end abutted the still-standing Stratum III wall (W156; Figs. 4, 8). In addition to the reused Iron Age wall (W156), three new parallel walls (W115, W111, W149) ran north–south between W105 to W108, delimiting three small rooms south of W105. The reconstruction of the walls delimiting the rooms to the north of W105 is more conjectural. A north–south wall (W155) probably adjoined the western end of W129, but most of W155 and the proposed junction of the walls was obscured by the later overlying Stratum I W133 (Fig. 9). It seems that an additional north–south wall must have run from W105 to W129 in the central area of the excavation, separating the western room from the eastern one, but the location of this conjectured wall was entirely built over by the wide Stratum I W106. The easternmost wall (W149) probably continued northward from W105 and formed a corner with the possible easterly continuation of W129. Five rooms of the house (L112, L125, L135, L153, L117) are described here, counterclockwise.





Fig. 8. Stratum II, W105 abutting Stratum III W156, looking southwest; Room 153 is located behind W105, with the short, stone-walled corridor housing the subterranean pit complex supported by scaffolding.



Fig. 9. Stratum II W155 and Stratum I W133, looking south.



Fig. 10. Stratum II sloping rock-cut foundation W108 and bedrock Floor 112, looking south.



Fig. 11. Stratum I W110, bedrock and overlying Stratum II fieldstone W105, forming a corner with bedrock W149 on the right, looking north.

*Room 112.*— Room 112 was a semi-basement room ( $3.5 \times 2.5$  m), whose walls comprised bases hewn out of the sloping bedrock overlain by roughly worked fieldstone courses (Plan 1: Sections 1–1, 2–2; Figs. 10, 11). The rock-cut eastern wall base (W149) was 0.9 m high, while the rock-cut bases of the southern and northern walls sloped down from east to west following the natural slope of the bedrock (W108: 0.25–0.90 m high; W105: 0.3–0.6 m high). It was the hewing of W149 and W108 that cut off Stratum III Channel 107 and the arched hollow (L118). The western wall (W111) had only a minimal rock-hewn base (c. 0.1 m high), overlain by a row of stones, but this wall was destroyed by overlying Stratum I W106 (Plan 1: Section 2–2; Fig. 12). The walls of Room 112 were originally at least 1.2 m high, and access into the room may once have been via an entrance in the western wall (W111), or via steps or a ladder leading down from the presumed, but no longer extant, overlying room. The uneven bedrock surface of Room 112 was partially covered by a thin (c. 0.2 m) packed, light brown accumulation layer exhibiting cream-colored chalky floor patches (L112, including L109) that yielded a few animal bones, identified as sheep and goat (see Marom, this volume) and a few late Hellenistic sherds. This room was reused in Stratum I, when a thick wall (W110; Fig. 11) was built directly on the bedrock floor, the later occupation presumably removing most of the Stratum II accumulation layer (see below).

*Courtyard 125.*— To the north of Room 112, there was an area that was probably an internal courtyard in the house. Courtyard 125 ( $4.5 \times 3.5$  m estimated dimensions; Fig. 13) was delineated on the south by W105, and on the north by W129, whose two extant stone courses were just visible within and protruding out of Stratum I W106, while its former continuation here was marked only by a few faint cuttings in the bedrock. On the east, it





Fig. 12. Single stone course Stratum II W111 underlying Stratum I W106A, looking west; uneven bedrock Floor 112 is a continuum with the rock foundations of W111 and W108.

was probably delimited by the presumed stone-built northern continuation of W149 and on the west, by the conjectured wall underlying Stratum I W106. The courtyard's uneven bedrock surface sloped down from northeast to southwest, and was marked with several shallow cuts that would have directed run-off water into a small cistern (L150) located in the courtyard (Fig. 14; Plan 1: Sections 2–2, 3–3). A small cupmark hollow located north of the cistern at a slightly higher elevation may have trapped dirt or may have been intended to hold a water jar. Cistern 150 was a small, wide, bell-shaped rock-hewn cistern with a narrow tallish neck and a circular opening with a stepped rim for a lid (1.8 m deep; neck 0.3 m high, diam. of opening 0.4 m). The absence of plaster coating the cistern walls may be due to erosion from constant water seepage. The cistern was found packed almost to the brim with an intentional fill that we removed with extreme difficulty due to the narrow neck (Fig. 15). The fill comprised earth, chalky stone chips from stone-working and hundreds of smashed pottery sherds, almost all from the Early Roman period, apart from a few residual late Hellenistic and even fewer Iron Age sherds (weight of all sherds from Cistern 150, including L131—16.4 kg), and in addition, a soft chalk vessel fragment and a sheep/cattle bone (see Marom, this volume). The pottery in the fill indicates that the cistern ceased to function for water storage around the end of the Early Roman period.

In the southern part of Courtyard 125, a roughly rectangular cavity (L126) was haphazardly hewn out of the courtyard bedrock surface, carving out deeper the northern rock-hewn face of W105 (L126; 0.8 m deep; Plan 1: Section 2–2; Figs. 13, 16). Hewn into its uneven floor was a deep, narrow, rock-hewn pit with a circular opening, still lidded with a matching circular stone slab, and its interior hewn with a steep step to facilitate descent (L132; 1.4 m depth down to step, 2 m max. depth; Fig. 17). Pit 132 contained a very small





Fig. 13. Courtyard 125, general view to the south, during the intermediate stage of the excavation (c. 100 sq m), under rainwater.



Fig. 14. Stratum II Cistern 150 and the cupmark in Courtyard 125, looking west.



Fig. 15. Stratum II, the narrow opening and the stepped rim of Cistern 150, looking west.



Fig. 16. Stratum II Courtyard 125, rectangular rock-hewn hollow (L126) covering lidded Pit 132, looking west.

quantity of light brown soil that had seeped in, with some chalky limestone chips and a few Early Roman sherds. On the eastern side of the rectangular cavity there were signs of some rough but discontinued rock-hewing (L130). A few stone floor slabs lay at the original courtyard level at the eastern and western ends of the rectangular cavity (L127; Fig. 16). These slabs may have been part of a floor that covered over the rectangular cavity, possibly concealing it from view. The thin accumulation layer on the courtyard's bedrock floor and in the rectangular cavity (L120/L125/L126) produced a few sherds of Early Roman-period date.

The above evidence points to three consecutive phases in Courtyard 125. It seems that the bedrock surface of the courtyard originally sloped down gradually to W105. It is probable that only at the second stage, the rectangular cavity (L126) and Pit 132 within it, were haphazardly hewn out. The cavity and the pit were intentionally covered with some stone slabs, or possibly some wooden planks, thus concealing the pit. In the third and final stage, the rectangular cavity overlying the lidded empty pit was filled with earth.

*Room 135.*— This room (estimated dimensions  $4.5 \times 3.5$  m) was delimited on the south by W105, on the east by a conjectured wall (underlying Stratum I W106), and on the north by W129 (Plan 1: Section 3–3; Fig. 18). The western wall comprised the northern part of the still-standing Stratum III W156 and new W155, later built over by Stratum I W133. A simple entrance was installed between these walls (W156, W155) that may have been the main entrance into the house (Fig. 4). Room 135 had a thin cream-colored, crushed chalk floor that ran up to the walls along the eastern side of the room (L135; Plan 1: Section 3–3; Fig. 19). On its western side, this floor was cut by modern concrete foundations earthworks. Room 135 produced a few late Hellenistic and Early Roman sherds. North of W129, a





Fig. 17. Stratum II, the circular opening of Pit 132, showing its rock-cut step and lower bedrock floor.



Fig. 18. Stratum II W129 incorporated within Stratum I W106 and intersected by the concrete foundation, looking east.



Fig. 19. Stratum II Room 135, the extant narrow strip of the Stratum II crushed chalk floor (also designated L135), looking north.



Fig. 20. Stratum II W115 incorporating two upstanding slabs and the bedrock-layer corner with W105, looking east.

small niche (L134), partially hewn into the bedrock and partially lined with some large fieldstones, may have been a wall cupboard accessed from Room 135 (Fig. 18).

*Room 153 and the Underground Pit Complex.*— This small, semi-basement room ( $3.5 \times 3.0$  m), housed a small built passage or corridor, beneath which is a complex of subterranean





Fig. 21. Stratum II, the short, walled corridor in Room 153, roofed with stone slabs, looking south.

pits or silos (Plan 1: Sections 1–1, 4–4; Fig. 8). The room was bordered on the north by W105, on the west by reused Stratum III W156 and on the south by W108. The eastern wall (W115) was narrower (0.45 m wide) than the other walls, and it had a minimal rock-hewn base (c. 0.1 m high) that formed a continuum with the bedrock bases of the adjoining walls (W105, W108). The poorly preserved superstructure of W115 consisted of three worn, smallish upstanding ashlar blocks, spaced along the wall 0.6–0.9 m apart, and small fieldstones filling the intervening spaces (Fig. 20). This ‘pier-and-rubble’ technic is characteristic of Phoenician sites in the Hellenistic period, and is unusual in lower Galilee.

Inside Room 153, a short narrow passage (L158; c. 1.5 m long, 0.7 m wide) was walled on both sides by large, upstanding ashlar stone slabs (W160, W161; largest slab:  $0.90 \times 0.25 \times 0.80$  m) set on a few small stones leveling out the sloping bedrock (Fig. 21). The northern end of the passage abutted W105. Its southern end was blocked with a large upright stone slab visible in the southern section of the excavation, where it was overlain by a single extant stone roofing slab. Therefore, the short low passage was originally roofed over. Passage 158 was found intentionally blocked with fieldstones and earth. The filling contained many Early Roman pottery sherds, including a Herodian knife-pared lamp and a single coin of Emperor Claudius (50/51 CE; see below) that was found on the bedrock floor. In effect, this was part of a short, roofed passageway concealing the access to the underground pit complex, and its continuation and entrance must have originally been from the southern, stone-blocked side that was inaccessible at the time of the excavation.

A circular opening with a worn, stepped rim (diam. 0.5 m) was cut in the sloping-down bedrock floor of Passage 158 (Fig. 22). It led down into a bell-shaped, rock-hewn pit that was found intentionally packed with a fill (L168). The fill in Pit 168 was removed, revealing



Fig. 22. Stratum II, the interior of Pit 168, once emptied, viewed from Room 153; note the slab covering the entrance into the second pit.



Fig. 23. Stratum II, view from Pit 174 up into Pit 173 and Pit 168.



Fig. 24. Stratum II, the rough chisel marks in the lowest Pit 174.

another circular opening with a stepped rim (diam. 0.4 m) cut into its floor, partially covered by a large, roughly rectangular stone slab that led down into a second bell-shaped pit (L173). Pit 173 (1.6 m deep) contained only a small amount of fill that had seeped in from the pit above, and once this fill was removed, a third circular opening hermetically covered by a circular stone slab, was exposed in its floor, leading down into a third bell-shaped pit (L174; Plan 1: Sections 1–1, 4–4; Fig. 23). Pit 174 (1.8 m deep) was empty and its floor also



exhibited the initial, but discontinued, hewing-out of another circular contour. A noteworthy detail is that the circular openings of the three pits were placed slightly offside and not directly beneath one another, enabling the difficult descent into the pits without the danger of falling right down into the pit below. The pits' walls were hewn with a 20 mm wide chisel. It was observed that the walls of the upper pit were more carefully hewn than those of the two lower pits (Fig. 24). A small niche cut in the wall of each of the two lower pits was probably a ledge for an oil lamp.

The large quantity of intentional fill in Pit 168 and the small quantity that had seeped into Pit 173 consisted of earth, stones, limestone chip waste from stone-working and enormous quantities of sherds. The pottery overwhelmingly comprised Early Roman as well as some residual Hellenistic sherds, and a few Iron Age sherds (the sherds from Pit 168, including L171, weighed a total of 44.9 kg!). In addition, there were a couple of small fragments of basalt Olynthus millstones (not illustrated) and grinding bowls (Fig. 37), four fragments of soft chalk vessels, a few animal bones identified as sheep/goat, cattle, chicken and donkey (see Marom, this volume), a small glass lump (see below) and some charcoal traces.

*Room 117.*— This small space or room is located between Rooms 153 and Room 112, delimited by four walls (W108, W111, W105, W115). This space was entirely built over and obscured by Stratum I W106/106A and the tiny bedrock floor area exposed here (L117) exhibited only a few late Hellenistic sherds.

In the narrow strip excavated to the south of W108, the bedrock surface was exposed at an elevation about 1 m higher than the bedrock surface to the north of this wall in Room 112. The fragmentary remains of a thin, cream-colored, crushed chalk floor (L103, including its chalky makeup layer L116) were uncovered here. The higher elevation of the bedrock and the overlying chalk floor (Floor 103) supports the understanding that the row of Rooms 112, 117 and 153 were semi-basement rooms that must have had overlying ground-floor rooms via which they were accessed. Although Floor 103 was badly damaged by the modern earthworks, leaving only a narrow strip of the floor at the southern edge of the excavation (Plan 1: Section 1–1; Fig. 25), it was observed that the crushed chalk floor ran up to the top extant course of W108. Floor 103 and its underlying makeup on the bedrock (L116) produced a fragment of a loaf-shaped, basalt grinding stone (Fig. 37:1) and a few Early Roman pottery sherds.

### *Summary of Stratum II*

The house yielded small quantities of late Hellenistic and Early Roman pottery. The large quantities of Early Roman pottery came from the fills blocking up Cistern 150, Pits 168 and 173 and overlying Passage 158. The pottery in these fills comprises the typical range of 'Lower Galilean Early Roman household wares'. In addition, the fills contained a few chalk vessel fragments, a few glass shards, a few basalt grinding stone fragments and a few animal bones, as well as a few residual late Hellenistic and Iron Age sherds. Our understanding is that the large quantities of pottery sherds and the fragments of the other items, which were



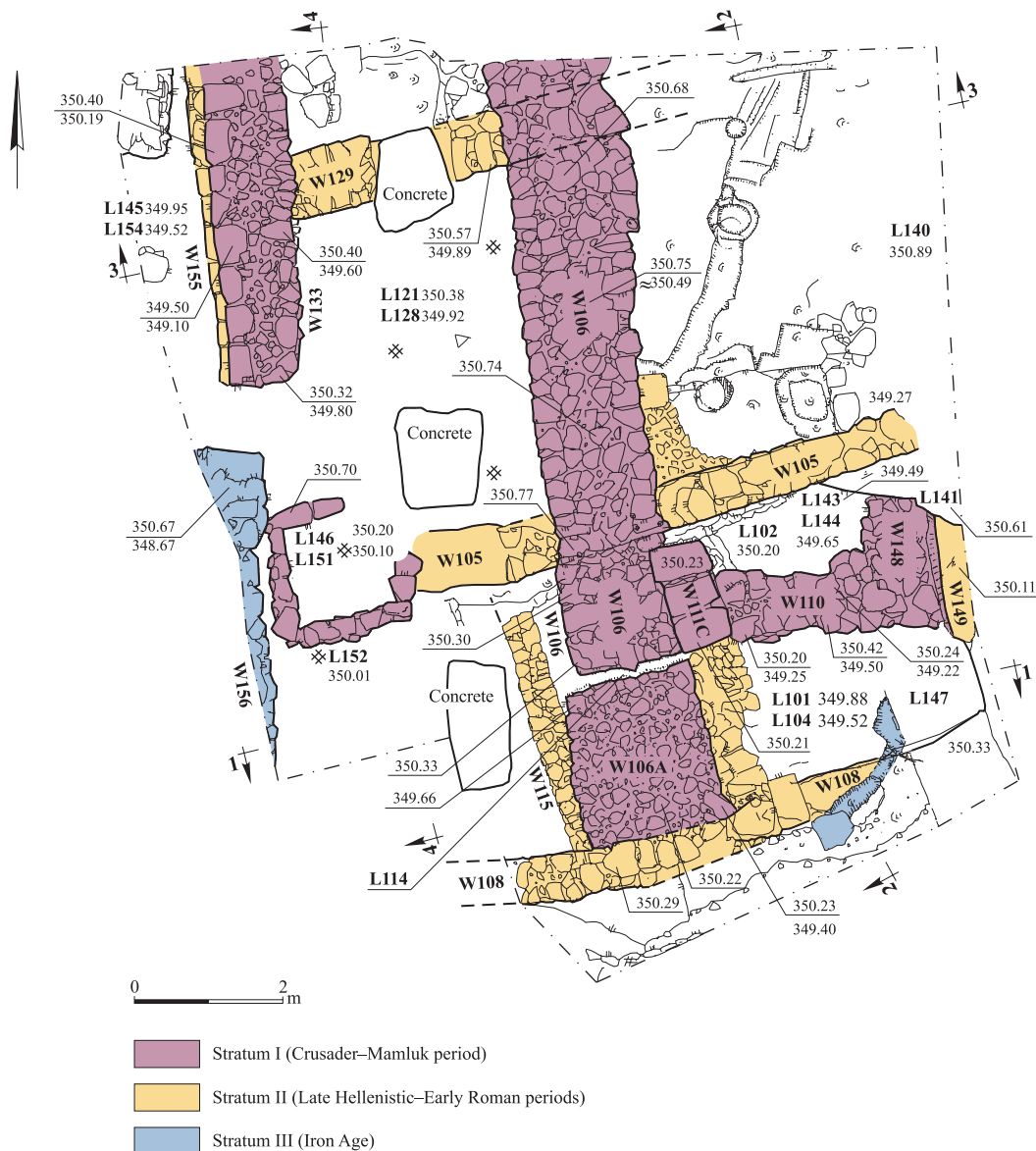
Fig. 25. Stratum II Floor 103 and W108, looking south.

found in the pits, constitute the household wares of the Stratum II house. At some specific point in time, the vessels were collected and intentionally disposed of in the pits, entirely blocking them up. The contemporaneous pottery in the fill in the pits and in the rooms suggests that the pits were filled in about the same time as the house was abandoned.

Notwithstanding the small scale of the excavation and the fragmentary nature of the remains, the architectural evidence led to the understanding that a simple house comprising small rooms and an inner courtyard was inhabited in the late Hellenistic and the Early Roman periods. The soft Nazareth rock slope on which the house was built, was hewn out to form semi-basement rooms, rock foundation courses of the stone walls, and underground lidded pits that were accessed from the interior of the house. These hollowed-out pits may have served as cisterns, silos and underground hideouts.

#### STRATUM I: THE CRUSADER TO MAMLUK PERIODS (Plan 2)

A wide north–south wall (W106/106A) was built directly overlying the Stratum II crushed chalk floor (L135) on the bedrock, incorporating and overriding two of the Stratum II walls (W129, W105), its southern end abutting the southern Stratum II wall (W108; Plan 1: Sections 1–1, 2–2, 3–3; Fig. 13). Wall 106 (9.9 m long, 1.6–1.9 m wide, 0.4–0.6 m high with two to three extant courses) comprised two separate segments (W106 and W106A) divided by a narrow space (L114) that may have been created to allow water drainage (Fig. 26). Additional elements, namely a single row of three ashlar stone slabs (designated W111C, possibly Stratum II stones in secondary use), a wall built of large fieldstones abutting Stratum II W149 (W110; Fig. 11), and an adjoining jumble of fieldstone collapse (designated W148), were also contemporaneous. An additional wall (W133) ran parallel to the west of W106/106A, overlying the extant courses of Stratum II W155 (Fig. 9).



Plan 2. Stratum I (for sections, see Plan 1).

Above the Stratum II accumulation layer, a small quadrangular installation, flimsily built of a single row of upstanding stone slabs (L151; Fig. 27), stood leaning against the top course of the still-standing Stratum III W156. A couple of basalt grinding bowl fragments and a few Crusader and mostly Mamluk sherds were found within the installation (L151, L146, L152). Crusader and mostly Mamluk sherds were also found in the dark brown earth accumulation loci associated with W110 (L104, L141, L143, L144, L147) and with W133 (L145), as well as in the overlying surface loci. A hammered brass sheet open lamp was found with the Mamluk pottery in the fill (L145). The many animal bones found in a few Stratum I loci comprised predominantly sheep and goat, but also cattle, pig, donkey, equid, dog, chicken, cat and camel (L104, L144, L145, L147; see Marom, this volume).





Fig. 26. Stratum I W106 and W106A divided by a narrow space, looking west; see also Fig. 12.



Fig. 27. Stratum I, installation L151, built against Stratum III W156, looking east.

The Stratum I accumulation debris was easily distinguishable in the excavation by its darker brown color and its looser, and more organic, consistency than the lighter brown, more packed, drier consistency of the Stratum II layers.

The wide Stratum I walls did not form a coherent structure, but may have been the foundations of a large, possibly vaulted building. A plaster floor (no locus number, elevation 351.00 m asl) and the base course of a wall overlying it, observed in the upper part of the southern section cut by the mechanical earthworks prior to the excavation, may have been the superstructures contemporary with these walls (Plan 1: Section 1–1; Fig. 25).

## THE POTTERY

About 880 pottery rim sherds were retrieved in the excavation, dating to Iron Age II and the late Hellenistic, Early Roman, early Byzantine, Crusader and Mamluk periods. The Iron II pottery was mainly on the bedrock adjacent to Stratum III W156. The Hellenistic and Early Roman pottery originated mostly from the elements of the Stratum II building. The few Crusader and more plentiful Mamluk sherds appeared in the accumulations associated with the Stratum I walls. The scant early Byzantine sherds appeared mostly in the Stratum I accumulation layers but were not associated with architectural remains. The excavation did not yield loci with restorable pottery or entirely clean assemblages; the pottery assemblages often included intrusive or residual sherds. However, the pottery repertoires in the loci were sufficiently clear to date those loci to the specific periods. Parallels from selected sites are cited in the pottery description tables for the pottery of all the periods.

### The Iron Age (Fig. 28)

The Iron Age sherds (56 rim sherds) came mostly from the thin accumulation layer loci on the bedrock next to Stratum III W156 (30 rims). A few residual Iron Age sherds (15 rims) appeared among the large quantities of Early Roman pottery in Cistern 150 and Pit 168. A few others (11 rims) were found in Stratum I and in surface loci. Despite the small quantity of sherds and limited vessel forms present, it is evident that the pottery comprises vessels that are characteristic of the tenth to mid-eighth centuries BCE (Iron IIA–B) repertoires from the major tell sites in northern Israel, e.g., Bet She'an, Hazor, Megiddo, Ta'anakh and Yoqne'am. Smaller assemblages of similar Iron IIA–B pottery have also been uncovered at the Iron II sites excavated within the Nazareth hill range (Fig. 1), e.g., at Ḥorbat Maḥta (Covello-Paran 2008:32–46), Tel Gat-Hefer (Alexandre, Covello-Paran and Gal 2003:159–164) and Karm er-Ras, next to Kafr Kanna (Alexandre, in prep.).<sup>4</sup> At Ḥorbat Rosh Zayit, 21 km northwest of Nazareth, a rich Iron IIA stratified pottery repertoire was uncovered in a storage fort, and a smaller Iron IIB repertoire was retrieved from slightly later buildings in the village in adjacent Areas A and B (Gal and Alexandre 2000). Therefore, it seems that the Iron Age pottery from Nazareth exhibits a similar material culture to that predominant throughout northern Israel.

#### *Bowls*

*Carinated Bowl.*— The bowl fragment has a thickened, slightly inturned rim and an orangey slip (Fig. 28:1). It was probably the upper part of a carinated bowl, the most common Iron

<sup>4</sup> At Karm er-Ras, a low hill adjacent to Kafr Kanna, 25 small salvage excavations have been carried out, exposing significant settlement remains from Iron II and the Persian, Hellenistic, late Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods (Alexandre 2015; in prep.). Remains of a walled settlement dated to Iron II were exposed. In the Roman period, remains were exposed of a Jewish village with parts of houses, ritual baths (*miqva'ot*), underground hideouts, local Galilean pottery and chalk vessels.

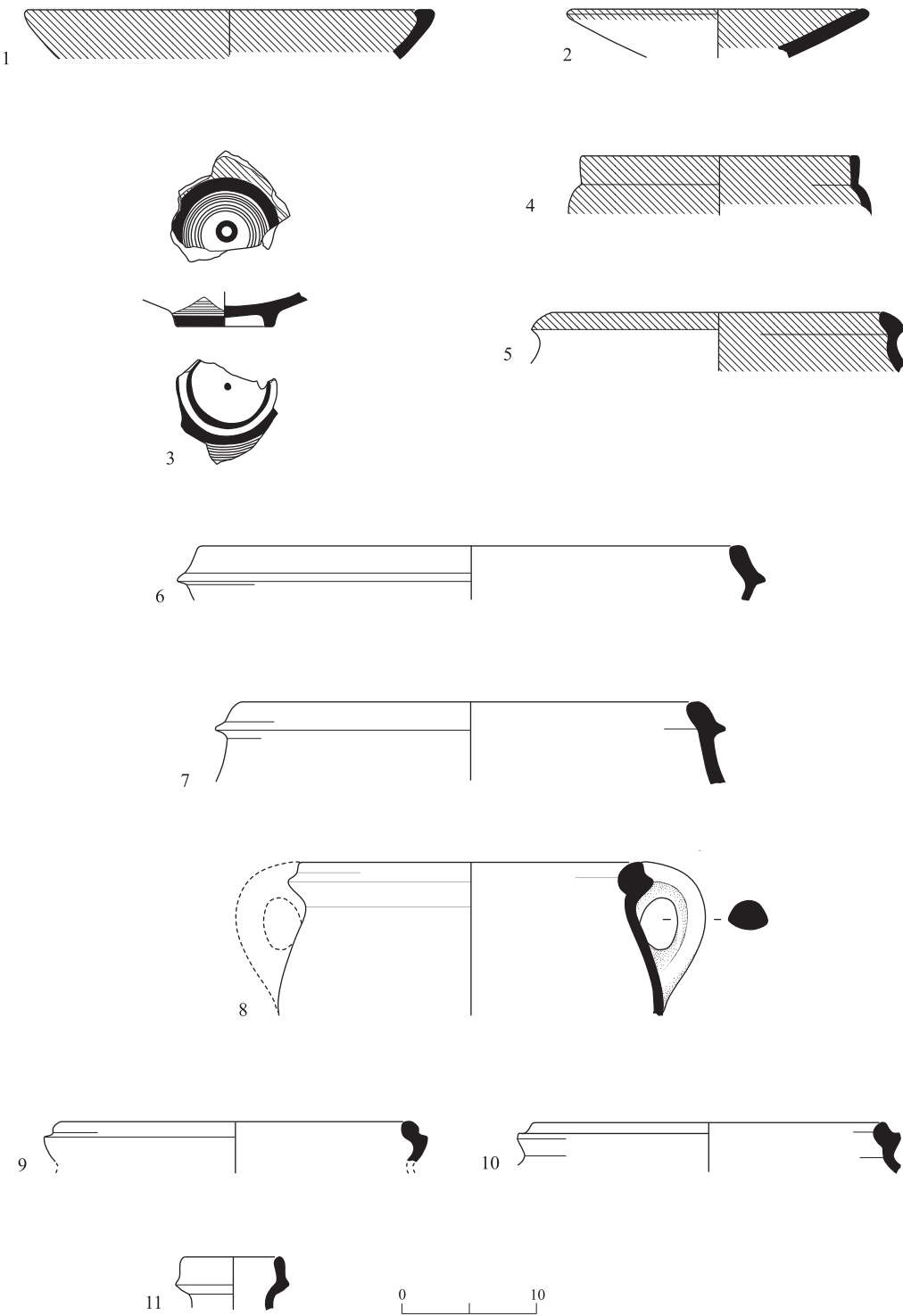


Fig. 28. Stratum III, Iron Age pottery.



◀ Fig. 28

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels
1	Bowl	170	1156/1	Fairly well-levigated light brown clay, matt orangey slip on int., lighter orange on ext.	Gal and Alexandre 2000:34–35, 167: Type B I
2	Bowl/plate	170	1156/2	Light brown clay, matt red-slipped int.	Gal and Alexandre 2000:38, 169: Type B VI
3	Bowl	164	1139/1	Black-on-Red ware, concentric bands and circles	Gal and Alexandre 2000:71–73: Type BOR Ia
4	Large bowl	172	1166/1	Soft biscuit ware, irregular red slip on int. and ext.	Gal and Alexandre 2000:36: Type B II variation
5	Krater	172	1170/2	Gray core, matt red-slipped int. and on rim ext.	Gal and Alexandre 2000:40, 157, 170: Types K II, K III
6	Cooking pot	172	1170/1	Dark red cooking ware, gray core	Gal and Alexandre 2000:40–42: Type CP I
7	Cooking pot	141	1081/1	Gray (burned) cooking ware, black core	As No. 6
8	Cooking pot	125	1037/2	Dark red cooking ware, gray core, gray from burning	Gal and Alexandre 2000:43, 157–158: Type CP III
9	Cooking pot	165	1141/1	Dark red cooking ware, gray core	As No. 8
10	Cooking pot	170	1164/1	Dark red cooking ware, gray core	As No. 8
11	Jug	167	1148	Orangey, white grits	Gal and Alexandre 2000:56: Type J 1c

IIA–B bowl form. A shallow plate with straight sides and a red-slipped interior continuing over the rim (Fig. 28:2) is a characteristic Iron IIB form.

*Black-on-Red Bowl* (Fig. 28:3).— The ring base of a large Black-on-Red bowl is like the many Cypriot Black-on-Red bowls uncovered in the Iron IIA storage fort at Ḥorbat Rosh Zayit.

### *Kraters*

A large closed bowl or krater, made of a light-colored, soft clay and entirely covered with an irregular matt red slip (Fig. 28:4). This is an unusual krater form. Its fabric and finish comply well with the soft, biscuit-like fabric of a red-slipped ring base carinated bowl uncovered in the Iron IIA fort at Ḥorbat Rosh Zayit. A krater with a thickened curved triangular rim and a red-slipped interior continuing over the rim (Fig. 28:5) is a more characteristic Iron IIA–B krater form, the rims becoming more triangular in profile in Iron IIB.

### *Cooking Pots*

Cooking pots were the most common vessels in the Nazareth assemblage; both the triangular rim (Fig. 28:6, 7) and the ridge rim (Fig. 28:8–10) forms were present. The

triangular rim cooking pots are characteristic of Iron IIA and the ridged rim cooking pots appear in Iron IIB.

*Jugs* (Fig. 28:11)

A single small jug sherd with a narrow neck and a ridged rim. It bears some similarity to jugs from Horbat Rosh Zayit.

**The Hellenistic Period** (Fig. 29)

The Hellenistic pottery (119 rim sherds) was uncovered in various contexts. Some residual Hellenistic sherds were retrieved from Stratum I accumulation layers and in surface loci (33 rims), and several appeared with the predominantly Early Roman pottery in the Stratum II pits (28 rims). In Room 112 in the Stratum II house, the thin accumulation layer on the bedrock (L109, L112) produced only Hellenistic sherds (13 rims). In the thin accumulations in Rooms 135 and 153, and in Courtyard 125, Hellenistic sherds (45 rims) were retrieved together with Early Roman sherds. The Hellenistic pottery, mostly found together with the more plentiful Early Roman pottery, led to the understanding that the Stratum II house was built in the late Hellenistic period and that it continued to be occupied continuously in the Early Roman period.

The Hellenistic pottery repertoire comprised predominantly storage jars, with a few cooking vessels, a mortarium bowl, a jug and a single fine-ware bowl. While some of the vessel types appear at other sites in the earlier part of the second century BCE, most of the vessel types point to a date in the late Hellenistic period, in the later part of the second century BCE.

Few Hellenistic repertoires have been published from the Lower Galilee. Parallels to the Nazareth vessels are found in the well-stratified rich pottery repertoires from the coastal city of Tel Dor (Guz-Zilberstein 1995, including classification into types and discussion), as well as from Yoqne'am (Avissar 1996), and from Sha'ar Ha-'Amaqim, a small site located 19 km west of Nazareth, where Hellenistic-period vessels found in Cistern G/R were dated to the mid-second century BCE (Młynarczyk 2009; see Fig. 1). Some references are made to the pottery from Gamla in the central Golan, where additional parallels are found, and where the late Hellenistic jar forms have been shown to reflect Judean influences (cf. Berlin 2006).

*Bowl* (Fig. 29:1).— The ring base of a bowl with a central 'omphalos' depression made of a well-levigated light brown fabric with a worn red slip on the interior is a shallow bowl or plate, designated as a fish plate. Such plates were common at Dor, where they are dated from the mid-third to the early first century BCE. Fish plates with omphalos bases and drooping rims, found at Yoqne'am and at Sha'ar Ha-'Amaqim, are dated to the second century BCE.

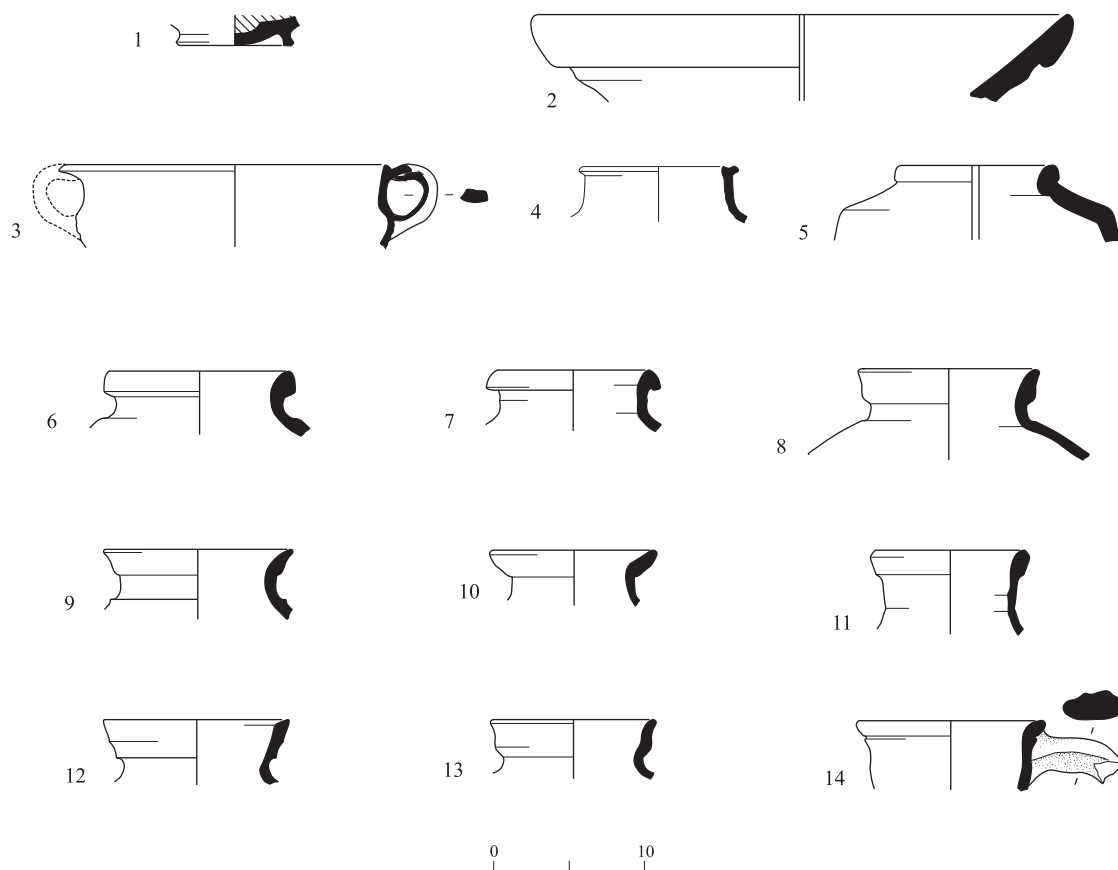


Fig. 29. Stratum II, late Hellenistic pottery.

*Mortarium* (Fig. 29:2).— The mortarium bowl has a rolled rim made of a buff gritty ware. Mortaria are found in Persian and Hellenistic contexts, as at Dor and Yoque‘am, where they appear as late as the early second century BCE.

*Cooking Pots*.— A rounded-body casserole (Fig. 29:3) with vertical strap handles, a short straight neck and an outflaring-concave lip (used for holding a lid), is a typical form of second-century BCE open cooking pots found at Dor. A globular cooking pot with a vertical neck and flattened ledged-out rim (Fig. 29:4) is a characteristic contemporaneous closed cooking pot form.

*Storage Jars* (Fig. 29:5–13).— The storage jars comprise several different jar types that reflect a chronological development in the forms and wares. A single jar with a rounded rim, no neck and a short, slightly sloping shoulder, made of semi-fine ware (Fig. 29:5) is like the straight, short-shoulder ridged jars at Dor, attributed to the second century BCE. Several whitish-buff bag-shaped jars with short necks and thickened rounded or slightly triangular-shaped rims (Fig. 29:6, 7) are a common type at Dor (‘Buff-Ware Bag-Shaped Jars with

◀ Fig. 29

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels/Types
1	Bowl/plate	112	1014/3	Shallow bowl with omphalos base, fine light brown, worn matt red-slipped int.	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:292–293, Fig. 6.3:22–27, Type BL 4d Avisar 1996: Fig. X.I:12–17 M Młynarczyk 2009:102, Fig. 4:9–11
2	Mortarium bowl	112	1014/1	Buff gritty ware	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:295, Fig. 6.9:1–7, Type BL 14 Avisar 1996: Fig. X.2:4, 5
3	Open cooking pot	117	1025/1	Dark red cooking ware, gray ext.	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:299, Fig. 6.20:7–9, Type CP 5 Avisar 1996: Fig. X.4:3 Młynarczyk 2009:101, Fig. 3:9
4	Cooking pot	112	1014/5	Dark red cooking ware, gray ext., blackened from burning	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:298, Fig. 6.17:10, Type CP 2 Avisar 1996: Fig. X.3 Młynarczyk 2009:101, Fig. 3:5, 6
5	Storage jar	113	1021/1	Light orangey brown, semi-fine ware	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:312, Fig. 6.38:1, 4, Type JR 3b
6	Storage jar	159	1120/2	Whitish buff, squared thickened rim	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:311, Figs. 6.35, 6.36, Type JR 1a–b Avisar 1996: Fig. X.6:1 (light reddish brown clay) Młynarczyk 2009:99, Fig. 2:1–3 Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.1:5–7
7	Storage jar	112	1014/2	Whitish buff, rounded thickened rim	As No. 6
8	Storage jar	113	1021/2	Light reddish brown, tapering thickened rim	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:311, Figs. 6.37:1, 2, Type JR 1c Berlin 2006:48, Figs. 2.22, 2.23, ‘Large jars with rounded rims’
9	Storage jar	158	1128/4	Reddish	As No. 8
10	Storage jar	159	1120/1	Light reddish brown, tapering thickened rim	As No. 8
11	Storage jar	112	1014/4	Light reddish brown	
12	Storage jar	130	1044	Light brown fabric	Berlin 2006:48, Figs. 2.24, 2.25
13	Storage jar	157	1187	Light brown fabric	As No. 12
14	Jug	159	1120/3	Whitish buff	Guz-Zilberstein 1995:308, Fig. 6.30, Type JG 11 Avisar 1996: Fig. X.7:4

Outturned Thickened Rims’), where they are dated to the third and second centuries BCE. Similar jars dated to the second century BCE were found at Yoqne‘am and Sha‘ar Ha-‘Amaqim, as well as near the spring at Nazareth.

Most of the storage jars in the assemblage were bag-shaped, with short necks and thickened everted rims that tapered toward the lip (Fig. 29:8–10). These jars differed from

the buff-ware jars with thickened rims in two main features: the rims were more tapered, and they were manufactured of a light reddish brown or occasionally a reddish ware. These jars, less common at Dor, are dated tentatively between 125–63 BCE. At Gamla, in the central Golan Heights, many similar jars with either tapered rims or more rounded rims, appear both in a buff and in a brown fabric, and are dated between the late second and the late first century BCE. The brown fabric is identified there as manufactured at Shihin, near Zippori in the Lower Galilee. The light reddish brown ware of the Nazareth jars was probably of local Lower Galilean manufacture, although it was not analyzed petrographically. A single example of a light reddish brown-fabric jar with a taller neck and a thickened rim was found (Fig. 29:11).

A few bag-shaped jars exhibited an everted, or squared, rim jutting out from the neck, and were made of a light brown fabric (Fig. 29:12, 13). This rim form became the characteristic jar form in the first century CE (see Fig. 31:1, 2), but the thicker-walled rims and necks are the earliest examples of this jar type, and probably first appeared in the early first century BCE.<sup>5</sup> A similar observation was made regarding the late Hellenistic jars at Karm er-Ras (Alexandre, in prep.). Storage jars with a variety of squared rims are common at Gamla, where they date from the early first century BCE to 67 CE.

The few Hellenistic-period, bag-shaped storage jars uncovered in the excavation exhibit several different forms that reflect a chronological sequence. The same development was observed at the site of Karm er-Ras next to Kafr Kanna, and at other Lower Galilean sites (Alexandre, in prep.). The earlier jars are buff ware, thick-walled jars with thickened rims that continue the Persian and the Early Hellenistic storage-jar tradition (Fig. 29:6, 7). During the second century BCE, the buff-ware jars are superseded by jars with thinner walls and more tapered rims that are now manufactured in a softer, light brown or reddish brown ware (Fig. 29:8–10). Subsequently, in the early first century BCE, the jars continue to be manufactured in the light brown ware, and the tapered rim is replaced by a squared rim (Fig. 29:12, 13). The squared-rim jar develops smoothly into the thinner-walled squared-rim jar that was the characteristic Lower Galilean jar in the Early Roman period (Díez Fernández 1983: Type T1.3; see below). While the buff fabric jar with the thickened rounded neck is similar to the jars from Dor, the light brown fabric jar with the more tapered rim shows an affinity to contemporary Judean jar forms, for example from the Hasmonean palace at Jericho (Bar-Nathan 2002:22, Pl. 3:12, 16, 17) and from the Jewish Quarter excavations in Jerusalem (Geva 2003:122–123, Types SJ 2a and 2b, Fig. 5.1). The squared-rim jar is also similar to Judean forms (Bar-Nathan 2002:28–29, Pl. 3:18–20; Geva 2003:123–124, Fig. 5.1: Type SJ 3a). The Judean influence in the first century BCE jar forms was observed at Gamla, where it was interpreted as reflecting the emigration of Jews from Judea to the Galilee and the Golan (Berlin 2006:48, nn. 23, 24, 143). The late Hellenistic pottery forms

<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, the rim thickness is hardly distinguishable in the figures.

from Nazareth and from other sites in the Lower Galilee also support the Judean affiliations (Alexandre, in prep.).

*Jug* (Fig. 29:14).— A single rim sherd of a whitish buff fabric, wide-necked globular jug, has parallels at Yoqne‘am and at Dor, where it is noted that this jug form is the continuation of a local Persian tradition.

### The Roman Period (Figs. 30–32)

Roman-period pottery was the most abundant in the excavation, totaling about 528 rim sherds, of which some were residual, appearing in Stratum I and in surface loci (48 rims). The thin accumulation layers in most of the Stratum II rooms exhibited small Early Roman sherds (63 rims) together with some small late Hellenistic sherds (see above), but no restorable vessels or partial vessels. The clear majority of the Roman pottery came from the fills in the underground cavities (Table 1): Cistern 150—96 rims, Pit 168—232 rims, and Pit 173—37 rims; as well as in Corridor 158—47 rims. The pottery illustrated in the figures originated predominantly from the pits, where the assemblage offered a wider range and the sherds were larger than those on the floors. The impression obtained is that the pottery that was found in the pits originated in the house and is representative of the Early Roman-period occupation layer. The pottery is typical of the Galilean repertoire, comprising predominantly casseroles, cooking pots and storage jars, with a few kraters, jugs, juglets, bowls, lids and lamps. This composition is characteristic of domestic dwellings.

The cooking-ware vessels are almost all forms that were manufactured at the Kefar Hananya potteries, located about 27 km to the north of Nazareth, and are classified here according to the well-established Galilean pottery classification (Adan-Bayewitz 1993). Most of the non-cooking-ware vessels, specifically the kraters, jars and jugs, are forms that were manufactured at the Shiḥin potteries, located next to Zippori, about 5 km northwest of Nazareth (see Fig. 1), and

**Table 1. Early Roman Pottery Forms from the Stratum II Pits**

Pottery Type <sup>i</sup> Pit No.	Bowl	Krater	Cooking Pot				Storage Jar		Juglet, Jug	Other	Total
	KH Form 1B	Shiḥin	KH Form 3A	KH Form 3B	KH Form 4A	KH Form 4B	Díez Fernández Type T1.3	Díez Fernández Type T1.5			
150	3	6	2	21		25	5	26	4	4	96
168	5	14	26	45	3	34	5	80	16	4	232
173		2	1	7	5	6	1	13	1	1	37
132			1		2		2				5
Total	8	22	30	73	10	65	13	119	21	9	370

<sup>i</sup> KH = Kefar Hananya.



are defined according to Díez Fernández' Galilean typology (Díez Fernández 1983). Illustrated within Díez Fernández 1983:28–29 are examples of several similar vessels from Bagatti's 1950s excavations at Nazareth. Additional parallels were from Zippori (Sepphoris), located 4 km to the northwest of Nazareth (Fig. 1), which exhibits a closely similar Early Roman repertoire (Balouka 2013). In absolute chronological terms, the pottery with a chronological range from c. 63 BCE to c. 135 CE is defined here as Early Roman, the pottery from c. 135 CE to c. 250 CE—as Middle Roman, and the pottery from c. 250 CE to c. 360 CE—as Late Roman. At Zippori (Balouka 2013:18), the Early Roman pottery was divided into two subperiods: 'Early Roman 1' (1–70 CE) and 'Early Roman 2' (70–135 CE).

The pottery was not subjected to a systematic petrographical analysis. However, a microscopic examination ( $\times 40$ ) by Anastasia Shapiro of a few cooking-ware sherds indicated that these were probably manufactured at the Kefar Hananya potteries.

The fairly well-established chronological ranges of the cooking ware and storage-jar types, as well as the absence of types with later chronological ranges, indicate a date range for the pottery assemblage in Pits 150, 168 and 173—from the late first century BCE to the mid-second century CE. Pit 132 was not filled-in; it yielded only five vessels rims that must have seeped into the pit, and that are more characteristic of the first century CE than of the second century CE.

*Bowl* (Fig. 30:1).— A single, very thin-walled bowl or cup with an outturned rim has parallels in the delicate-ware bowls at Zippori, where they are attributed to the 'Early Roman I' period (until 70 CE). Some similar delicate bowls were found at Karm er-Ras (Alexandre, in prep.).

*Cooking Ware Bowl* (Fig. 30:2).— The few open bowls, all charred from use, were Kefar Hananya Form KH 1B cooking ware bowls, a bowl used for a lengthy period of time, dated from the late first or early second to the mid-fourth century CE. At Zippori, these bowls appear in 'Early Roman II' contexts (70–135 CE). They were common in the second to third centuries CE.

*Kraters* (Fig. 30:3, 4).— There were several kraters of this type manufactured at Shiḥin. Their form develops over the course of the Roman period, and the Nazareth kraters comply with the krater form common at Zippori, dated to the late first and the second centuries CE. These kraters are also common at Karm er-Ras (Alexandre, in prep.).

*Open Cooking Pots or Casseroles* (Fig. 30:5–15).— Two casseroles that were not Kefar Hananya forms had a V-shape carination on the walls and a short ledge-rim (Fig. 30:5, 6). Similar casseroles came from Ḥorbat 'Aqav in the southern Carmel, as well as from several Judean sites, where they are dated to the first and second centuries CE. A single example of a horizontal handle that came from a shallow casserole with two small horizontal handles (Fig. 30:7) is a casserole form that was rare at Zippori. A similar casserole was found at

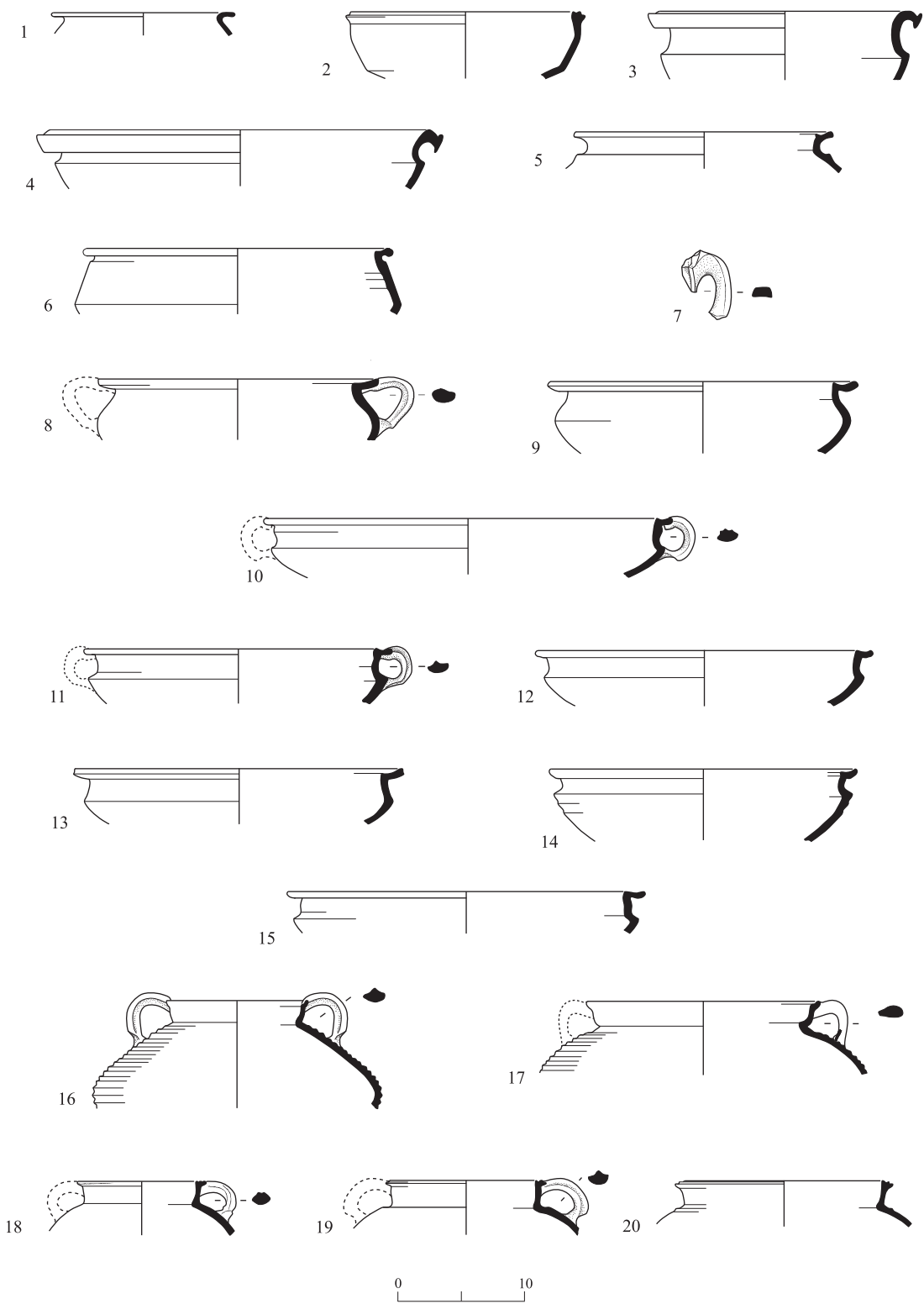


Fig. 30. Stratum II, Early Roman-period bowls and cooking pots.

◀ Fig. 30

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels, Types
1	Bowl	126	1041/1	Delicate closed bowl	Balouka 2013: Pl. 7:8
2	Bowl	150	1111/3	Reddish cooking ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:91–97, Form KH 1B Balouka 2013:32–33
3	Krater	168	1158/2	Shihin Ware	Adan-Bayewitz and Wieder 1992:196, Fig. 5:1 Díez Fernández 1983:131, 177, Type 21.2 Balouka 2013:46, Pl. 12:7, 8, Type KR 1
4	Krater	131	1047/1	Shihin Ware	As No. 3
5	Casserole	168	1155/2	Dark red, thin	Calderon 2000:95, Pl. III:46, 4753, Casserole Type 1A
6	Casserole	168	1158/3	Dark red cooking ware, charred	As No. 5
7	Casserole	101	1001/1	Dark red cooking ware, charred	Calderon 2000:95–97, Pl. III:53, Casserole Type 3 Balouka 2013:30, Type OCP7a
8	Open cooking pot	126	1041	Dark red cooking ware, charred	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:111–119, Form KH 3A Díez Fernández 1983:124–125, 164, Type 14.1
9	Open cooking pot	168	1146/2	Dark red cooking ware, charred	As No. 8
10	Open cooking pot	134	1058/2	Dark red cooking ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:119–124, Form KH 3B Díez Fernández 1983:125, 165: Type 14.2
11	Open cooking pot	158	1130/2	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 10
12	Open cooking pot	150	1099/1	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 10
13	Open cooking pot	168	1158/1	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 10
14	Open cooking pot	120	1030/2	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 10
15	Open cooking pot	103	1004/1	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 10
16	Cooking pot	158	1128/2	Dark red cooking ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:124–125, Form KH 4A Díez Fernández 1983:119–120, 154, Type 10.5
17	Cooking pot	173	1171/1	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 16
18	Cooking pot	150	1111/1	Dark red cooking ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:126–128, Form KH 4B Díez Fernández 1983:120, 155, Type 10.6a
19	Cooking pot	168	1158/2	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 18
20	Cooking pot	158	1128/1	Dark red cooking ware	As No. 18

Horbat 'Aqav, where the vessel is dated from the late first to the early second century CE. Additional Judean examples are cited.<sup>6</sup>

The many other open cooking pots are the two characteristic Kefar Ḥananya casserole forms. The rounded-profile casserole (Fig. 30:8, 9), classified as Form KH 3A with a date range from the mid-first century BCE to the mid-second century CE, is the type less common in the Nazareth house. The more common, carinated-profile casserole (Fig. 30:10–15), classified as Form KH 3B, has a date range from the early second to the late fourth century CE. Both these open cooking pot forms were also found in Bagatti's excavations in Nazareth. The long duration of Form KH 3B renders it less useful for defining the end of the occupation in the Nazareth house.

*Cooking Pots* (Fig. 30:16–20).— The closed cooking pots are all Kefar Ḥananya forms, consisting of Forms KH 4A (Fig. 30:16, 17), dated from the mid-first century BCE to the mid-second century CE, and the far more common Form KH 4B (Fig. 30:18–20), dated from the mid-first to the mid-second century CE. Cooking pots of both these forms were found in Bagatti's Nazareth excavations. The absence of the later Kefar Ḥananya cooking-pot Forms KH 4C and KH 4D, supports the abandonment of the Nazareth house by the mid-second century CE.<sup>7</sup>

*Storage Jars* (Fig. 31:1–10).— Almost all the storage jars can be classified into two jar types. A few are light brown or reddish brown ware jars with everted squared rims and a depression or ridge at the base of the neck, exhibiting some variety in the rims (Fig. 31:1, 2). These jars were classified by Díez Fernández as Type T1.3 (1983:107, 135), and are the Early Roman-period development of the late Hellenistic squared-rim jars. At Zippori, the above-mentioned form is attributed to 'Early Roman I' phase, from the late first century BCE to c. 70 CE.

There was a single storage jar made of a heavier, light yellowish brown ware that must have been of a different manufacture (Fig. 31:3).

The overwhelming mass of the jars (Fig. 31:4–10) are ridge-neck jars with everted rims and an interior gutter at the lip, classified by Díez Fernández as Type T1.5 (1983:137). These T1.5 jars all seem to have been made of a similar reddish brown thin metallic ware that has been identified as the ware of the Shiḥin potteries (Adan-Bayewitz and Wieder 1992:196, Fig. 5:1). At Zippori, the ridge-neck jars are dated from the first to the end of the third centuries CE. At Karm er-Ras these jars first appear in the latter half of the first century CE (Alexandre, in prep.). The thinnish walls of most of the Nazareth jars support a date

<sup>6</sup> The Judean parallels to this small casserole form raise the possibility that these vessels actually arrived from Judea.

<sup>7</sup> The KH 4C type is considered to appear by the early second century CE (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:128–130).

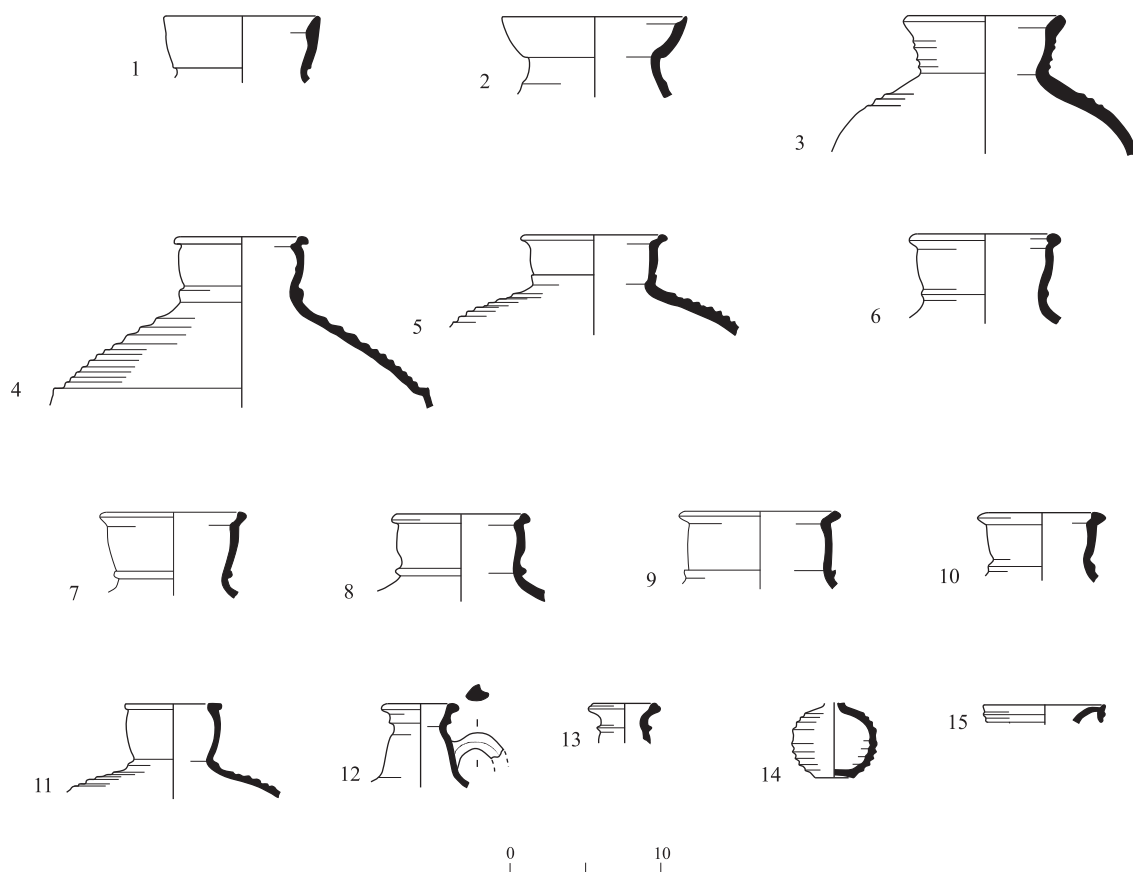


Fig. 31. Stratum II, Early Roman-period jars and jugs.

early in the range, probably in the early and mid-second century CE, as the jar walls seem to become thicker over time (Díez Fernández 1983:139, Type T.1.7).

*Small Jar* (Fig. 31:11).— A single example of a relatively uncommon, thin-walled small jar, with a fairly narrow neck and a flattened rim, is made of Kefar Ḥananya cooking ware. It is dated from the early second to the early third century CE. Fairly similar vessels came from Zippori and from Ḥorbat Ḥazon.

*Jugs and Juglets* (Fig. 31:12–15).— The most common jugs had conical necks and rounded rims with a ridge beneath the rim (Fig. 31:12, 13), and were probably produced at the Shiḥin potteries. Two jugs of this type from Bagatti's 1955 Nazareth excavations are illustrated by Díez Fernández. At Zippori, this jug is considered to appear from the first century BCE to the early second century CE. The globular ribbed body of a small juglet had a narrow neck and probably a cup-shaped mouth; it was also made of Shiḥin ware (Fig. 31:14). This vessel



◀ Fig. 31

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels/Types
1	Storage jar	163	1131/1	Reddish	Diez Fernández 1983:107, 135, Type T1.3, including No. 26 from Nazareth Balouka 2013:37, Pl. 4, Type SJ I
2	Storage jar	126	1041/2	Light brown	As No. 1
3	Storage jar	132	1051/2	Light yellowish brown	
4	Storage jar	125	1037/1	Reddish brown	Diez Fernández 1983:107–108, 137, Type T1.5, including No. 49 from Nazareth Balouka 2013:37, Pls. 3:10–12; 17:1–10, Type SJ 2
5	Storage jar	134	1058	Reddish, gray core	As No. 4
6	Storage jar	126	1041/2	Reddish brown	As No. 4
7	Storage jar	125	1038/1	Reddish brown	As No. 4
8	Storage jar	158	1130/1	Reddish brown	As No. 4
9	Storage jar	125	1038/2	Grayish brown	As No. 4
10	Storage jar	103	1009/1	Reddish brown	As No. 4
11	Small jar	150	1112/2	Reddish, thin	Bahat 1974: Fig. 4:11 Adan-Bayewitz 1993:135–138, Form KH 5A Balouka 2013:34, Pl. 8:19–21
12	Jug	168	1163/2	Reddish brown	Adan-Bayewitz and Wieder 1992:196, Fig. 5.3 Diez Fernández 1983:116, 151, Type 9.3 Balouka 2013:42, Pls. 1:25, 26; 6:1–4, Type JG 1
13	Jug	168	1158	Reddish brown	As No. 12
14	Juglet	113	1018/1	Reddish brown	Balouka 2013:45, Pl. 6:9–13, Type JT1
15	Jug	168	1146/1	Reddish	Bahat 1974: Fig. 4:15 Adan-Bayewitz 1993:143–144, Form KH 6B

is dated at Zippori from the first to early second century CE. The wide ‘hooked’ rim of a jug (Fig. 31:15) is made of Kefar H̄ananya cooking ware and is dated to the second–third centuries CE. A similar jug was found at H̄orbat H̄azon.

*Unidentified Vessels and Lids* (Fig. 32:1–4).— A few out-splaying serrated rims and wide necks of an unclear vessel form were found (Fig. 32:1–3). Similar rims were found on unusual-shaped bowl forms at Zippori, where they are defined as bowls or lids and are attributed a chronological range in the second and third centuries CE. The examination of the ware indicated that they were manufactured at Shih̄in. A single thin-walled rim fragment is also from an unidentified vessel, possibly a lid or saucer (Fig. 32:4).

*Lids* (Fig. 32:5, 6).— A small bowl-shaped vessel with an incurved rim and a string-cut base (Fig. 32:5) is a lid rather than a bowl and is found in Early Roman-period contexts at Zippori

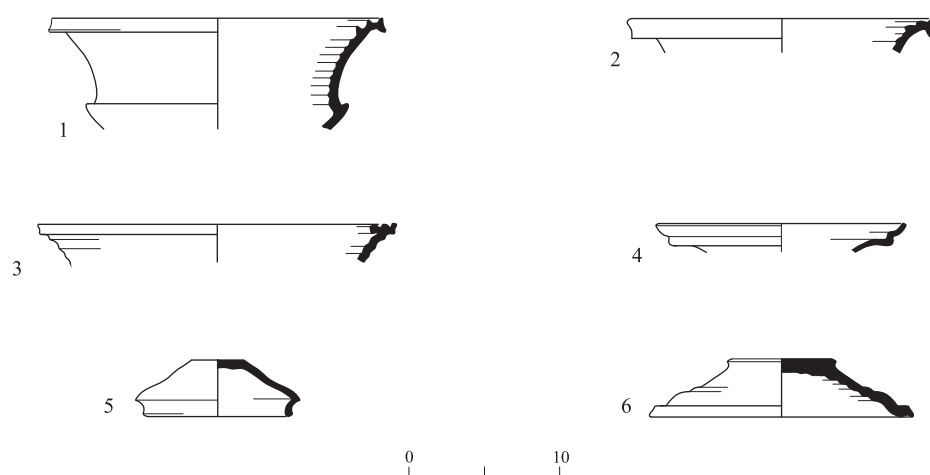


Fig. 32. Stratum II, Early Roman-period unidentified vessels and lids.

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description/Ware	Parallels/Types
1	Vessel	150	1107	Reddish brown	Balouka 2013:49, Pl. 24:3–10
2	Vessel	150	1110	Reddish brown	As No. 1
3	Vessel	168	1157/1	Reddish brown	As No. 1
4	Lid?	158	1119/1	Reddish brown, thin	
5	Lid	173	1171/2	Reddish brown	Balouka 2013:49, Pl. 7:3–7
6	Lid?	159	1120/9	Light brown, coarse production	

and at Karm er-Ras (Alexandre, in prep.). A carelessly manufactured thick-walled lid is not a characteristic Roman-period form (Fig. 32:6).

*Lamps* (not illustrated).— Four fragments of Early Roman knife-pared lamps were found, one on the bedrock surface (L164), two in the pit fills (L168, L173) and one in Corridor 158. The small fragment from Pit 168 was part of the bowl of a miniature-sized knife-pared lamp, possibly with a diameter of 4 cm. These lamps, also known as ‘Herodian lamps’, are ubiquitous in Early Roman Galilean towns and villages. A chemical analysis of lamps from many sites has shown that most of the examined lamps from the Jewish settlements in the Galilee were manufactured near Jerusalem (Adan-Bayewitz et al. 2008).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The lamps were mislaid in storeroom reorganization before they were drawn and photographed.

### The Early Byzantine Period (Fig. 33)

Only 29 rim sherds were attributed to the early Byzantine period. Since the sherds were not associated with buildings uncovered in the excavation but came predominantly from the Stratum I accumulations, this pottery may have come from an adjacent early Byzantine building, possibly the Byzantine basilical church uncovered in the excavations in the adjacent Franciscan compound, where similar pottery vessels were retrieved (Bagatti 1969:77–114, 272–298).

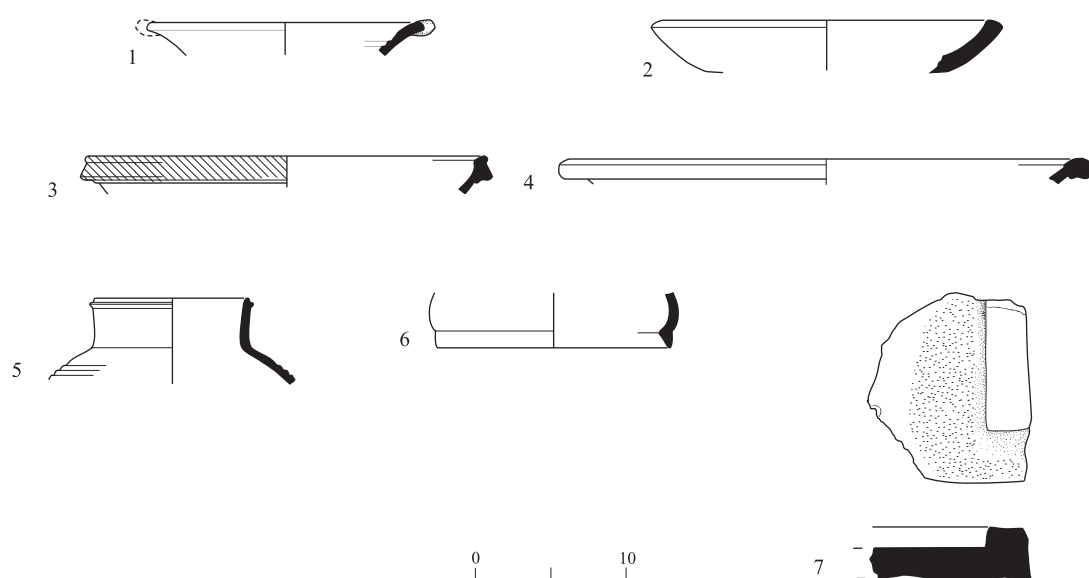


Fig. 33. Late Roman and Early Byzantine-period pottery (surface and accumulation loci).

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description/Ware	Parallels, Types
1	Bowl	128	1054	Reddish cooking ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:103–109, Form KH 1E
2	LRRW bowl	120	1030/1	Fine levigated, red-slipped int. and ext.	Hayes 1972:372–373, CRS Form 1 (Hayes' term: LR'D'W)
3	LRRW bowl	135	1061	Fine levigated, orange-slipped int. and ext., black worn band on rim	Hayes 1972:328–338, PRS Form 3 (Hayes' term: LRC)
4	LRRW bowl	128	1056	Fine levigated, red-slipped int. and ext., black worn band on rim	Hayes 1972:343–346, PRS Form 10 (Hayes' term: LRC)
5	Cooking pot	167	1148	Reddish cooking ware	Adan-Bayewitz 1993:132–135, Form KH 4E
6	Lid	101	1001	Buff-gray	Johnson 1988:219–220
7	Roof tile	122	1032	Terracotta	

*Bowl* (Fig. 33:1).— A couple of rim sherds of open cooking-ware bowls classify as Kefar Ḥananya Form 1E bowls, the latest form produced at the Kefar Ḥananya potteries, with a date range from the mid-third to the early fifth century CE.

*Late Roman Red Ware Bowls* (LRRW; Fig. 33:2–4).— There are a few imported bowls, including a bowl classified as Cypriot CRS Form 1, with a date range from the late fourth to the late fifth century CE; a Phocian PRS Form 3, with a date range in the fifth to sixth centuries CE; and a Phocian PRS Form 10, dated to the late sixth century CE on.

*Cooking Pot* (Fig. 33:5).— A single sherd of a wide, high-necked cooking pot was classified as Kefar Ḥananya Form 4E, which is the latest cooking pot form manufactured at Kefar Ḥananya, with a date range from the early fourth to the early fifth century CE.

*Lid* (Fig. 33:6).— A single bell lid is characteristic of the Late Roman period in the fourth century CE, as at Jalame.

*Ceramic Roof Tile* (Fig. 33:7).— A fragment of a locally manufactured baked clay *tegula* or roof tile with a raised border was found in the fill above the Stratum II bedrock floor (L113). Based on similar roof tiles throughout the country, the tile is to be attributed to the Late Roman–early Byzantine period. Its presence in the Stratum II fill was intrusive, possibly due to the modern construction works that were carried out at the present location.

### **The Crusader Period (Fig. 34)**

The accumulation layers in the Stratum I building contained a few sherds of medieval pottery, indicating that the walls may have been constructed in the Crusader period and continued in use in the Mamluk period.

The scant Crusader-period sherds were found together with the more predominant Mamluk-period pottery uncovered in the Stratum I accumulations, in proximity to Stratum I W106 and W110 (L104, L143, L147) and in the small square installation (L146). The Crusader-period pottery consisted of a few glazed bowls and a cooking pot. It is classified and dated in accordance with Avissar and Stern's classification, where parallels and further discussion may be found (Avissar and Stern 2005). Parallels are cited from the Crusader-period pottery uncovered in the excavations carried out at Mary's Well in Nazareth (Alexandre 2012a:61–69).

*Bowl with Gritty Yellow Glaze* (Fig. 34:1).— This bowl has a ledged rim, a thin random sgraffito line and a yellow gritty-glaze over white wash producing a yellow and brown glazed finish. These bowls were locally made in the Levant and are characteristic of the Crusader period; they were common in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries CE but did not continue into the Mamluk period (Avissar and Stern 2005:8–9, Fig. 3.3:3). Several bowls of this type were retrieved in the excavations at Mary's Well in Nazareth.



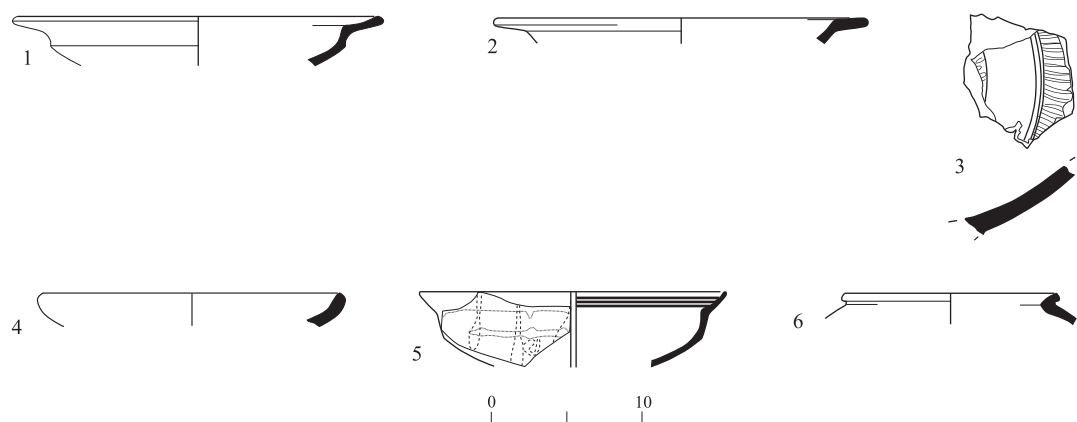


Fig. 34. Stratum I, Crusader-period pottery.

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels
1	Bowl	147	1103/1	Gritty yellow glaze and sgraffito, red clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:8–9, Fig. 3.3:3, Type I.1.2.1, Bowls with Gritty Yellow Glaze Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.3:1–4
2	Bowl	147	1091/1	Blue and dark purplish-brown glaze, light brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:37–38, Fig. 14:4, Type I.3.4.1, Egyptian Bowls with Monochrome Alkaline Glaze
3	Bowl	143	1083/1	Fine sgraffito and cream glaze, red clay	Avissar and Stern 2005: Type I.4.3 Byzantine Fine Sgraffito Bowl
4	Bowl	147	1103/1	Cream glaze, brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:45, Type I.5.1, Aegean Monochrome Ware Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.4:5–7
5	Bowl	145	1087/1	Brown incised lines and dark yellow glaze, brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:51–52, Fig. 20:3, Type I.6.3, ‘Zeuxippos Influenced Ware’
6	Cooking pot	104	1012/1	Globular with outturned rim, brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:9, Fig. 39:2, Type II.2.1 Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.5:1, 2

*Egyptian Bowl with Monochrome Alkaline Glaze* (Fig. 34:2).— A shallow bowl with a ledge rim has a blue and dark purplish brown glaze on the interior and over the rim. These bowls appear at the end of the eleventh and in the twelfth centuries CE, and are considered to have been manufactured in Egypt.

*Byzantine Fine Sgraffito Bowl* (Fig. 34:3).— A bowl with curving sides has a fine sgraffito multiple-line decoration, and a transparent glaze over a white slip with cream-color. These bowls are dated to the twelfth century CE.

*Aegean Monochrome Ware Bowl* (Fig. 34:4).— A shallow bowl with a simple rim, transparent glaze over a white slip with cream-color. It is possible that this bowl had a sgraffito decoration. These bowls date to the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries CE. Similar bowls with sgraffito decoration were found at Mary’s Well in Nazareth.

*'Zeuxippus Influenced Ware'* (Fig. 34:5).— A bowl with an everted rim, a thick layer of white slip with tongues dripping over the exterior, incised parallel lines near the rim, and a shiny yellow glaze with dark yellow and brown hues. These bowls are dated to the thirteenth century CE.

*Cooking Pot* (Fig. 34:6).— A globular cooking pot with a small out-turned rim made of a dark brown clay. These cooking pots are dated to the second half of the twelfth century CE and the first half of the thirteenth century CE. Similar cooking pots were found at Mary's Well in Nazareth.

### **The Mamluk Period** (Figs. 35, 36)

The Mamluk pottery consisted of about 130 diagnostic sherds that were retrieved predominantly from the Stratum I accumulations adjacent to thick-walled W106, W110 (accumulations L104, L147) and W133 (accumulations L128, L145), as well as from the surface (L101). The assemblage contained glazed and plain bowls, cooking pots, storage jars and jugs, including a variety of hand-painted wares. The vessels are classified and dated according to Avissar and Stern's classification, where a comprehensive discussion and parallels are found (Avissar and Stern 2005). Parallels are presented from the similar Mamluk-period pottery repertoire uncovered at Mary's Well in Nazareth (Alexandre 2012a:69–84).

*Monochrome Glazed Bowls* (Fig. 35:1, 2).—The bowls have curved or carinated profiles, thickened rims, and green glaze over white slip. The bowl in Fig. 35:1 is entirely glazed with a shiny, deep green slip, while the more matt-greenish brown slip of the bowl in Fig. 35:2 covers the interior, dripping over the rim. These are the most common glazed bowls in the Mamluk period, dating from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries CE and later. Similar bowls were found at Mary's Well in Nazareth.

*Yellow-Glazed Bowl with Slip-Painted Decoration* (Fig. 35:3).— A bowl with a slightly outflaring rim; it had a white slip-painted net pattern and yellow glaze on the interior. These bowls were popular in the Mamluk period during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries CE.

*Bowl with Molded Decoration* (Fig. 35:4).— A molded sherd with a well-melted and well-adhering yellow glaze, belongs to a vessel type dated to the fourteenth century CE.

*Soft-Paste Bowl with Black and Blue Painted Decoration* (Fig. 35:5).— A small body sherd of a bowl with a ledge rim with black-blue on white soft-paste decoration. These bowls were manufactured in Syria between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries CE. A couple of similar bowls were found at Mary's Well in Nazareth.

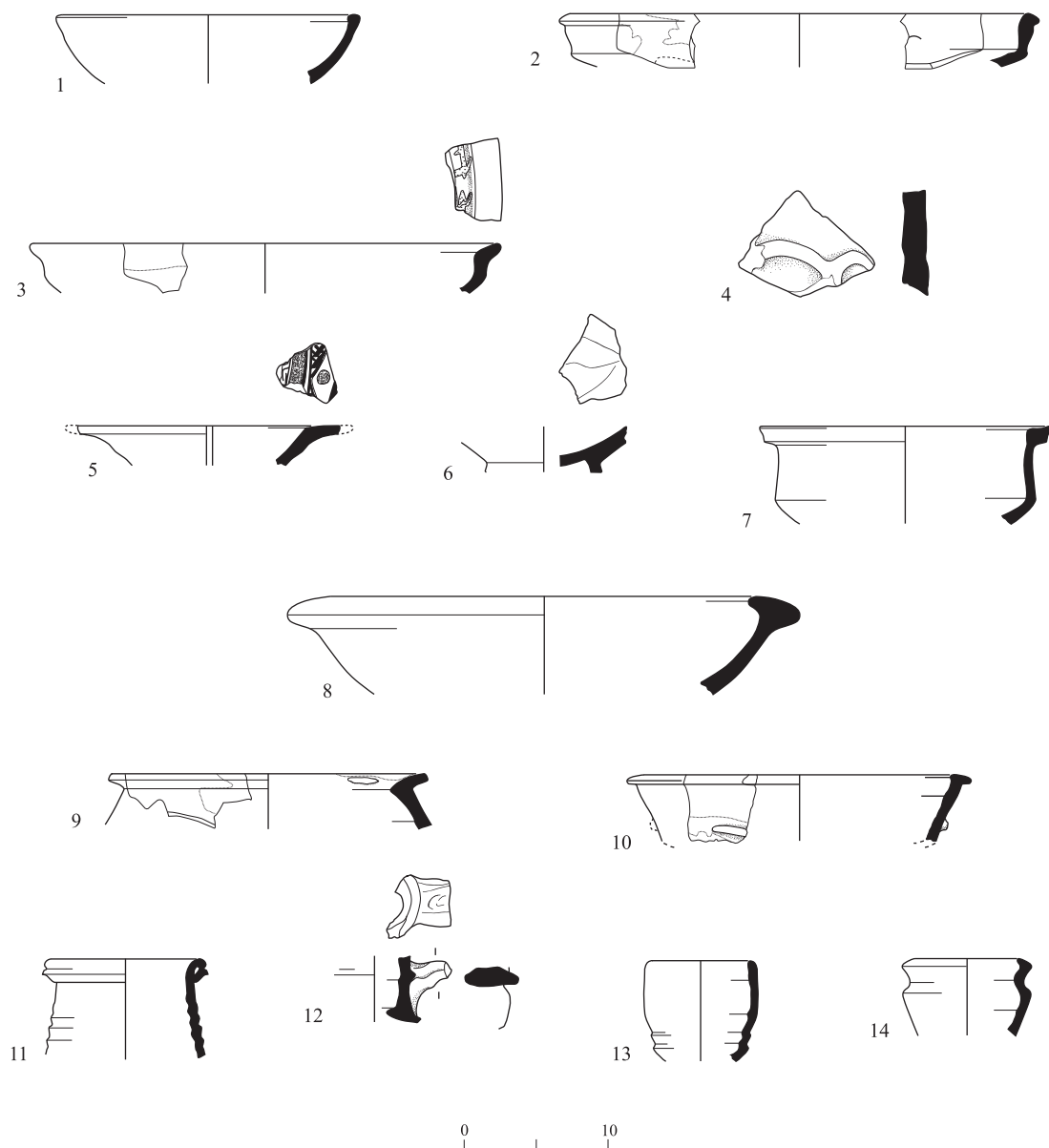


Fig. 35. Stratum I, Mamluk-period pottery.

*Italian Monochrome Sgraffito Bowl* (Fig. 35:6).— A base sherd of a green-glazed bowl with a thin-line sgraffito design. These bowls are of Italian manufacture, dated to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries CE.

*Italian Glazed Basin* (Fig. 35:7).— A basin with a straight-sided wall, a low carination and a squared rim. The vessel was covered with a dark green glass on its interior and

◀ Fig. 35

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels
1	Bowl	104	1012/2	Curved profile, green glaze, light brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:12–13, Fig. 4, Type I.1.4, Monochrome glazed bowls II Alexandre 2012a:73, Fig. 3.9:1, 2
2	Bowl	104	1012/3	Carinated profile, green glaze turning brownish, light reddish brown clay	As No. 1
3	Bowl	147	1091/2	Shallow with slightly outflaring rim, slip-painted, yellow glaze, reddish brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:19, Fig. 7.3, Type I.1.6.1–I.1.6.2, Bowls with Slip-Painted Decoration
4	Bowl	147	1091/5	Body sherd with molded decoration and shiny yellow slip on int. and ext., light brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:22–24, Type I.1.7, Bowls with Molded Decoration
5	Bowl	147	1091/4	Body sherd with black and blue glazed decoration, white soft-paste clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:75, Type I.2.3.3, Soft-Paste Ware Painted in Black and Blue under Transparent Colorless Glaze Alexandre 2012a:75, Fig. 3.10
6	Bowl	145	1089/1	Base with thin sgraffito design and green glaze, red clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:73, Type I.9.5, Italian sgraffito, imported
7	Basin	147	1103/3	Dark green, carinated, red clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:74, Fig. 34:9, 10, Type I.9.7, Italian basin, imported
8	Bowl	145	1085/3	Large, protruding rim, red clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:84, Fig. 36:5, Type II.1.2.3, Mamluk Large Plain Bowls Alexandre 2012a: Figs. 3.8:2
9	Cooking pot	147	1098/1	Globular with ledge rim and dark brown glaze splash on rim, light brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:92, Fig. 39:10, Type II.2.1.5, Mamluk Globular Cooking Pots Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.11:1
10	Cooking bowl	104	1011/1	Yellow glazed int., orangey clay, black from burning	Avissar and Stern 2005:97, Fig. 41:6, 7, Type II.2.3.4, Mamluk Cooking Bowls with Out-turned Rim Alexandre 2012a:3.11:6
11	Storage jar	147	1091/6	Mamluk, reddish clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:102, Fig. 42:7, 8, Type II.3.1.4, Mamluk Storage Jars Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.12
12	Jug	101	1005/2	Green-glazed neck, red clay	
13	Jug	104	1012/4	Swollen neck, reddish brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:109–110, Fig. 45:4, 5, Type II.4.2, Jugs with Swollen Neck
14	Jug	147	1103/4	Profiled swollen neck, brownish clay	As No. 13



exterior. These basins are found in the late fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries CE.

*Large Plain Bowl* (Fig. 35:8).— A large plain bowl with a thickened ledge rim. These bowls are common from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth century CE. Similar plain bowls were discovered at Mary's Well in Nazareth.

*Globular Cooking Pot* (Fig. 35:9).— The rim sherd of a globular cooking pot exhibits a ledge rim and a splash of shiny dark brown glaze on the rim. These cooking pots date to the fourteenth, and probably also to the fifteenth centuries CE. Similar cooking pots were retrieved at Mary's Well in Nazareth.

*Cooking Bowl* (Fig. 35:10).— The outflaring profile sherd of a cooking bowl with an out-turned rim, a yellow-glazed interior and a slight protrusion where the horizontal handle had broken off. These cooking bowls were manufactured in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries CE and probably later. Similar cooking bowls were found at Mary's Well Nazareth.

*Storage Jar* (Fig. 35:11).— A long and plain-necked sherd with a thickened rim was part of a storage jar that would have had a bulbous, slightly piriform body and two handles on the shoulder. These are standard jars in the Mamluk period and were in use from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth century CE. Several whole jars were found at Mary's Well in Nazareth, where they must have been used for the transportation of water.

*Glazed Jug* (Fig. 35:12).— A fragment of a jug neck exhibiting thin sgraffito and a green glaze.

*Jugs with Swollen Neck* (Fig. 35:13, 14).— These two bulging necks were fragments of spouted jugs with squat globular bodies. They were manufactured from the thirteenth to fifteenth century CE and probably later.

*Handmade Vessels with Geometric Painted Decoration* (Fig. 36:1–3).— Several handmade jugs and jars were found in the Stratum I accumulation layer. They were decorated in black, occasionally in red, geometric patterns. These handmade vessels with elaborate patterns flourished from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century CE. Several examples were found at Mary's Well in Nazareth.

*Wheel-Made Pinched Lamps* (Fig. 36:4).— A simple bowl with a pinched nozzle is characteristic of the Mamluk period. This vessel had a nozzle burned from use. The lamp exhibited a woven pattern on its base from the cloth on which it was standing prior to firing.

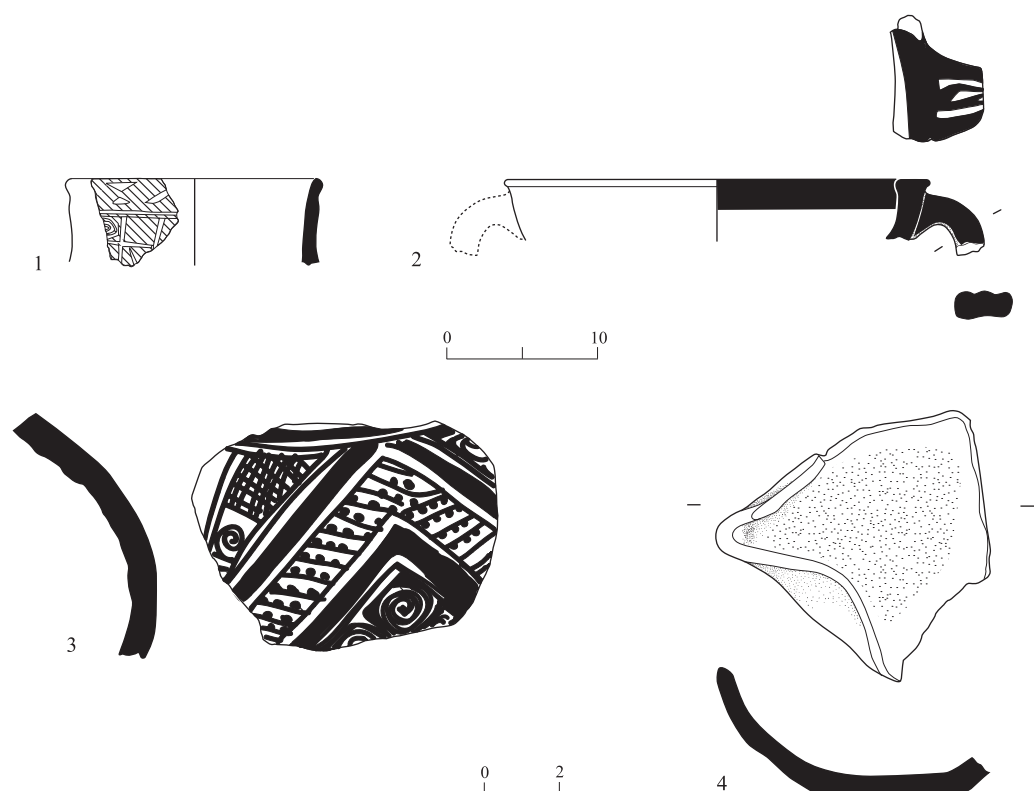


Fig. 36. Stratum I, Mamluk-period pottery.

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels, Types
1	Jug	101	1005/1	Handmade, red decoration, light brown clay	Avissar and Stern 2005:113, Figs. 47, 48, Type II.4.4 Handmade Vessels with Geometric Painted Decoration Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.16
2	Jar	147	1091/3	Handmade, black decoration, light brown clay	As No. 1
3	Jug	147	1085/1	Handmade, black decoration, light brown clay	As No. 1
4	Lamp	147	1103/5	Open pinched lamp, orangey brown clay, burned nozzle	Avissar and Stern 2005:128, Fig. 53:5, Type III.3.1 Wheelmade Pinched Lamps Alexandre 2012a: Fig. 3.18

### OTHER SMALL FINDS

The excavation yielded various non-pottery small finds which are presented below (Figs. 37, 38). Faunal remains are published separately (see Marom, this volume).

#### *Basalt Grinding Vessels* (Fig. 37)

Basalt grinding stones were an essential part of the domestic equipment necessary for household food preparation. Altogether, 15 fragments of basalt grinding vessels were

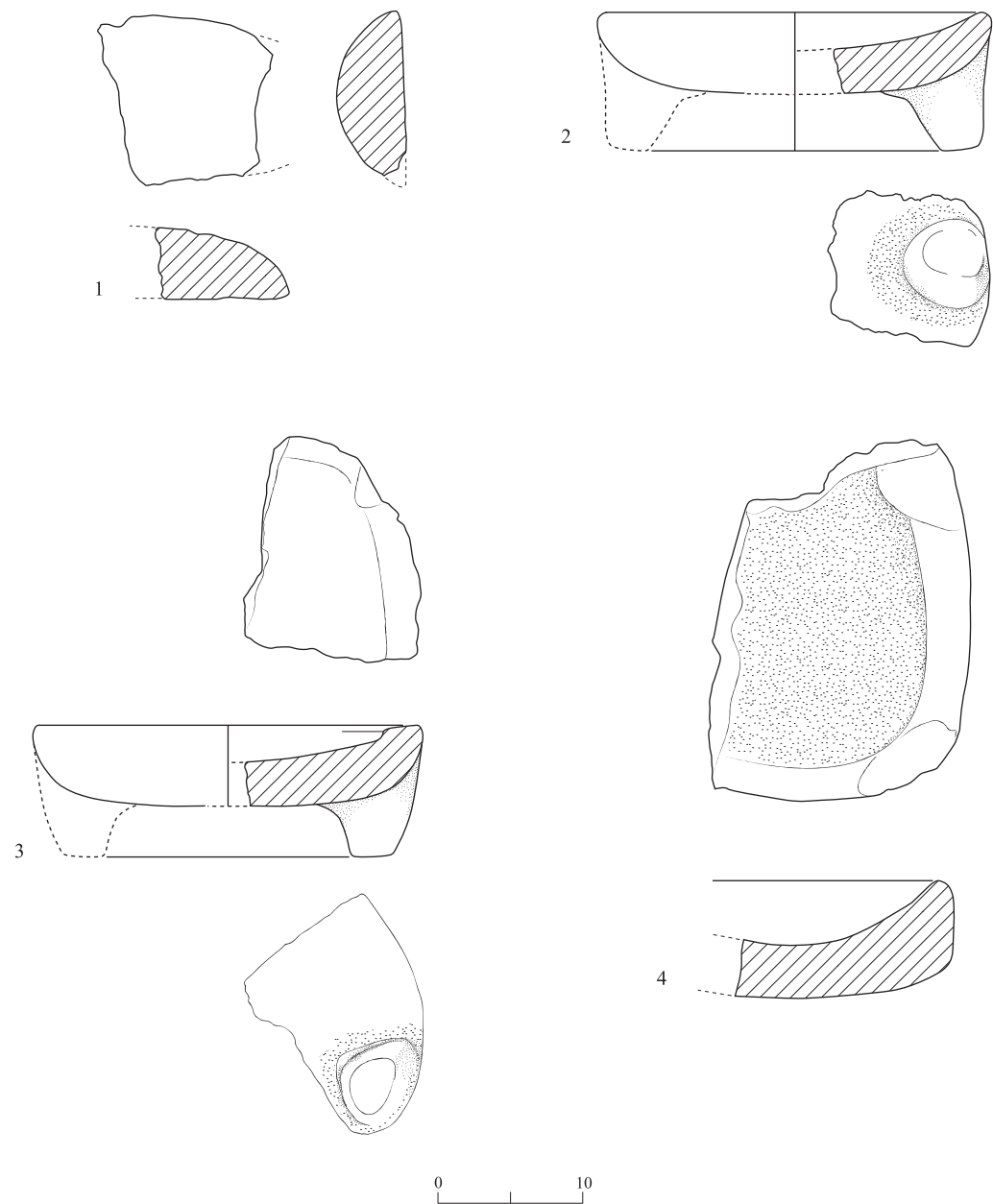


Fig. 37. Basalt grinding vessels.

No.	Vessel	Stratum	Locus	Basket
1	Loaf-shaped grinding stone	II	L103	1004
2	Tripod grinding bowl	II	L164	1139
3	Tripod grinding bowl	II	Pit 168	1163
4	Grinding basin	II/I	L147	1134

uncovered in the excavation, almost all of them from Stratum II contexts, including two from Courtyard 125, four from Pit 168, one from Pit 173 and one from Room 103. The basalt fragment (Fig. 37:1) from Stratum II Floor 103 may be residual, as it was from a loaf-shaped grinding stone that is characteristic of Iron Age sites. A small fragment of an Olynthus millstone (not illustrated), characteristic of the Hellenistic to Early Roman periods, was found in Pit 168. One three-legged grinding bowl (Fig. 37:2) came from bedrock Surface 164 together with some Iron Age and Early Roman sherds, and another similar fragment (Fig. 37:3) originated from Stratum II Pit 168. A large flat grinding basin (Fig. 37:4) came from a mixed Stratum II/I accumulation layer (L147).

#### *Chalk Vessels* (not illustrated)<sup>9</sup>

Altogether ten fragments of chalk or soft-limestone vessels were retrieved from Stratum II, in the rectangular cavity (L126, L130), the cistern (L150 and in L131) and the upper pit in the three-pit complex (L168). These were mainly body fragments of mugs and small, medium-sized and large bowls. The fragments were of the common chalk vessel types that have been found at many Jewish settlements in Early Roman Galilee (Reed 2009, and see discussion therein).

Chalk vessels were used by the Jewish population in Judea and in the Galilee in the late Second Temple period, and after 70 CE, in the Roman period. According to Jewish rabbinic law, stone vessels were impervious to ritual impurity: “stone vessels...are not subject to impurity, neither by Torah law nor by decree of the scribes” (BT Sabbath 58a). The soft limestone or chalk vessel industry first developed in the Jerusalem area in the late Second Temple period, the latter half of the first century BCE (Magen 2002:162). In the Early Roman period, chalk vessels were manufactured in Lower Galilee, specifically at two sites near Reina in the Nazareth hills, c. 3 km north of Nazareth (Gal 1991; Amit and Adler 2010:139–141). Based on the many chalk vessel fragments found in archaeological excavations at Jewish settlements in Galilee, the use of these stone vessels may have continued here into the Middle Roman period (second–third centuries CE) and even the Late Roman period (fourth century CE) (Amit and Adler 2010:142).

#### *Bone Artifacts* (Fig. 38:1–4)

Four small bone artifacts were uncovered. The pendant and the two spatulas came from the Stratum III Iron Age accumulation layer on the bedrock next to Iron Age W156 (L172). A fragment of a disc-shaped object, possibly a spoon, came from the overlying Stratum III/II accumulation layer (L165) in which both Iron Age and Roman-period pottery were collected.

<sup>9</sup> The chalk vessel fragments selected for drawing were mislaid (with the lamps, see n. 9), during storeroom reorganization before they could be drawn or photographed.



*Pendant* (Fig. 38:1).— A gently faceted, club-shaped bone pendant with a suspension hole and a polished surface was found. Similar pendants were found in Iron Age burials in Nazareth (Vitto 2001:164–165, Fig. 4) and at Har Yona near Nazareth (Alexandre 2003: Fig. 3:5; 2018), and in Iron II contexts in the City of David in Jerusalem, where it was noted that the club-shaped pendants may be a uniquely Israelite type of jewelry as they are almost exclusively found in Israel (Ariel 1990:136).



Fig. 38. Bone artifacts (1–4), a weight (5), a loomweight (6) and a brass lamp (7).

◀ Fig. 38

No.	Artifact	Stratum	Locus	Basket	Description	Parallels
1	Pendant	III	L172	1166B	Bone; perforated hole; length 5.6 cm	Ariel 1990:136 Vitto 2001:164–165, Fig. 4 Alexandre 2003: Fig.3:5
2	Spatula	III	L172	1166C	Bone; 7.4 × 2.2 cm	Ariel 1990:127–134, Fig. 14
3	Spatula	III	L172	1166A	Bone; width 1.7 cm	As No. 2
4	Disc or spoon	III/II	L165	1141	Bone; incised circles; extant fragment length 3.9 cm	Ariel 1990:142
5	Weight?	I	W106	1143	Gray sandstone; spherical; rough surface; diam. 2.4 cm, weight 13 g.	
6	Loomweight	II	Pit 150	1107	Rough clay with many straw inclusions; pyramidal; height 7.6 cm	Aviam 2005:195, Fig. 158
7	Lamp	I	L145	1085	Brass; diam. 7.9 cm	

*Spatulas* (Fig. 38:2, 3).— The two thin spatulas were carved from flat rib bones and have a rounded back end, while the front end of the complete spatula was worked to a broad point and has smoothed polished surfaces. Bone spatulas are common in Jerusalem and are found throughout Israel and the Near East. In Israel, they appear in contexts ranging from the Iron Age to the Early Roman period, the overwhelming majority coming from Iron II contexts.<sup>10</sup>

*Circular Disc or Spoon* (Fig. 38:4).— A fragment of a circular disc (diam. c. 5 cm) was decorated with circle-and-dot designs and a petal of a stylized rosette, surrounded by two concentric circles. An almost complete spoon with a floral and dotted circle design was found in Jerusalem, where it may date to the Early Roman period (Ariel 1990:142), and a similar artifact from Gamla, identified as a hairpin head based on part of the rod that was preserved, likewise dated from the Early Roman period (Farhi 2016:241).

#### *Possible Weight-Stone* (Fig. 38:5)

A small gray sandstone ball with a fairly rough surface was found between the stones of Stratum I W106. It could have been used as a weight-stone (13 g).

#### *Clay Loomweight* (Fig. 38:6)

A roughly manufactured pyramidal-shaped burned clay perforated loomweight was found amongst the large quantities of pottery in the fill in Cistern 150. Many similar pyramidal-shaped clay loomweights were uncovered in Early Roman Yodefath (Aviam 2005:195, Fig.

<sup>10</sup> See Ariel 1990:127–134 for a comprehensive discussion.

158) and at Karm er-Ras (Alexandre 2018). The pyramidal clay loomweight was in use in the early Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, disappearing around the end of the first century CE with the appearance of the horizontal loom that did not require loomweights (Shamir 1996:147–148).

### *Metal Objects*

An open metal lamp (Fig. 38:7), which was manufactured from a piece of hammered brass sheet, has slanting walls, a ring-shaped base, inward-turning extremities and a small spout.<sup>11</sup> This simple lamp has no decoration. The lamp was discovered damaged, with grooves and ridges over the entire surface, as well as a small hole in its walls. It was dated to the Mamluk period based on the associated Mamluk pottery (L145). The lamp belongs to a type that is characterized by an open form with a simple, flowing outline. Open clay lamps of this type were abundant from the Mamluk to the Ottoman periods (Pringle 1984:101, Fig. 7:39; Tushingham 1985: Fig. 43:16; Stern 2001:291; Avissar and Stern 2005:128, Fig. 53:5; Alexandre 2012a:82, Fig. 3.18:1–5), but there are no contemporaneous metal parallels in the Egypto-Syrian region. However, earlier, in the eleventh century CE, a Fatimid-period workshop in Tiberias manufactured lamps made of a hammered sheet: one lamp with a round body, a ring-shaped base and a faceted spout and another lamp with a portable cover decorated with groups of dots are known (Khamis 2013: Nos. 159, 160).

In addition, the excavation yielded six iron nails that came from the Stratum I layer (not illustrated).

### *Glass Objects* (not illustrated)

The glass finds came from the Stratum I loci and consisted of a few small fragments dating to the Mamluk period and single glass fragments from the Byzantine and Umayyad periods (fifth–seventh centuries CE; not illustrated). The sole glass artifact in Stratum II was retrieved from the intentional fill in Pit 168. It was a medium-sized lump of greenish bluish colored glass (max. dimensions 5.5 × 4.0 cm) covered by a chalky material that may have been waste from a Roman-period glass kiln.<sup>12</sup>

### *Coin* (not illustrated)

A single coin of Emperor Claudius was uncovered on the floor of Corridor 158, which led into the three-story pit complex. The coin was minted in ‘Akko-Ptolemais in 50–51 CE. The coin provides support for the functioning of the complex in the latter half of the first century CE, possibly in the context of the preparations for the First Jewish–Roman War in 66–67 CE.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The metal lamp was studied by Ayala Lester, who composed the description presented here.

<sup>12</sup> The glass artifact (L168/1150) was studied by Yael Gorin-Rosen (IAA internal report, A6080/2011).

<sup>13</sup> The coin (IAA No. 144151) was identified by Donald T. Ariel.

## DISCUSSION: THE EARLY SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF NAZARETH

The present small-scale excavation exposed limited archaeological remains from Iron II, and the late Hellenistic, Early Roman, early Byzantine, Crusader and Mamluk periods. Additional archaeological data on Nazareth have accumulated from previous excavations and surveys. The discussion in this article offers an analysis of the available information in the context of the historical-geographical environment of Nazareth in the Lower Galilee.

*Iron Age II*

The Stratum III walls were dated to Iron IIA–B (tenth–eighth centuries BCE) by the pottery exposed on the bedrock adjacent to W156 and W175. The walls were probably part of a building that stood just south of the excavated area.

Limited evidence for an Iron Age occupation was uncovered in the excavations carried out near the Crusader Church of the Annunciation in the 1950s (Fig. 2:D). On this site, Iron II pottery was retrieved in two of the several rock-hewn bell-shaped silos. Bagatti understood these as underground elements that must have been in the basement stories of the Iron Age houses (Bagatti 1969:44, 73, 269–272, Figs. 9, middle; 33, bottom; 211:24, 25; 214; Silo Nos. 22, 57). It is possible that some of the other rock-cut silos were first hewn out in the Iron Age. However, the intensive reuse of this area in later periods—involving large-scale rock-hewing and construction—may have removed any pottery evidence that could date the original time of the construction and its occupation periods.

In addition, three separate burial caves, excavated 200–300 m downhill to the south and southwest of the Franciscan compound (Fig. 2:H, J), contained burials and accompanying pottery vessels and other grave goods that were attributed to the transitional Iron IB–IIA time frame (Loffreda 1977 [unprovenanced pottery]; Vitto 2001; Alexandre 2018). The above-mentioned limited settlement remains and burial caves imply that an Iron I–II village existed in proximity of the present-day Franciscan compound; the village's cemetery areas were located slightly downhill, on its southern and southwestern periphery.

The similarity of some of the transitional Iron IB–IIA pottery forms in the Nazareth burial caves to the limited Iron IIA–B pottery forms uncovered in the Nazareth settlement, and more comprehensively, to the Iron IIA–B repertoires from northern Israel, supports a continuity of settlement in Nazareth, and generally, in northern Israel, from Iron IB to Iron IIA–B, from the late eleventh to the eighth centuries BCE. The absence of any Late Bronze Age remains to date in Nazareth suggests that the new Iron IB inhabitants may have settled at an unpopulated site.

Interestingly, two of the Nazareth transitional Iron IB–IIA burial caves exhibited simple bone pendants that were almost identical to the bone pendant found in the present excavation (Fig. 38:1; cf. Vitto 2001: Fig. 4.1; Alexandre 2018). A fourth, similar, bone pendant was retrieved from another Iron IB–IIA burial cave in Har Yona, Nazarat 'Illit, about 3 km northeast of old Nazareth (Alexandre 2003: Fig. 3:5). The presence of the four similar pendants in four different Iron Age excavations in Nazareth and its vicinity points to



a shared cultural feature and consolidates the view attributing a cultural significance, albeit undeciphered, to these simple bone pendants (Vitto 2001:164–165; cf. Ariel 1990:136).

In his regional survey of Lower Galilee, Gal deduced that in Iron I (twelfth–eleventh centuries BCE), the southern part of central Lower Galilee, especially the Nazareth hill range and the Bet Neṭofa Valley, witnessed a new wave of settlement comprising very small sites, mostly located close to springs or small streams (Gal 1992:84–94). In Iron IIA (tenth–ninth centuries BCE), some of these sites developed into rural settlements (e.g., ‘En Zippori, Ḥorbat Maṭṭa, Tell el-Wawiyat), while the Bronze Age tell sites (Tel Gat-Ḥefer and Yafi‘a) became Iron IIA fortified towns (Fig. 1). Gal’s conclusions have since been corroborated by excavations carried out at the above-mentioned sites.<sup>14</sup> At Nazareth, only Iron I pottery was noted in Gal’s survey. The remains uncovered in the present excavation indicate that at Nazareth as well, the Iron I presence developed into an Iron IIA–B settlement.

Nazareth is not mentioned in the Old Testament, but according to biblical descriptions of the settlement process in this area, it is associated with the tribal inheritance of Zebulun (Joshua 19:10–15). Neighboring Yafi‘a is mentioned as a border site of Zebulun, and Nazareth was probably a small internal site within Zebulun’s territory. It is also not known whether Nazareth was the ancient name of the Iron Age village. According to the biblical account, at the time of the United Monarchy, the Nazareth hill range was probably an integral part of Solomon’s districts together with the Jezreel Valley and Yoqne’am, and subsequently became part of the northern kingdom of Israel (1 Kings 4:12).

Following Iron IIB, the village of Nazareth seems to have been abandoned and to date, there is no evidence for settlement in Nazareth for over five centuries until the late Hellenistic period (between the late eighth and the mid-second century BCE). An occupation gap of over two centuries is attested in the Galilee and is to be attributed to the Assyrian conquest of Galilee by Tiglath-Pileser III in 732 BCE and the ensuing deportation of most of its Israelite population, as recorded in the biblical and Assyrian sources (2 Kings 16:29; Gal 1992:108–109; Tadmor and Yamada 2011:62–63, No. 22). Some limited evidence has accumulated for the existence of two new, very small-scale and short-lived, settlements in the Naḥal Zippori basin with transitional pottery attributed to the seventh century BCE, of possible survivors of the Assyrian deportation (Gal 2009:78–80; Oshri and Gal 2010). Nazareth itself may have been abandoned until the late Hellenistic period.

### *The Late Hellenistic and Early Roman Periods*

*The Late Hellenistic–Early Roman House.*— The Stratum II house comprised ground floor Room 135, Courtyard 125, with a small rock-hewn cistern and a camouflaged rock-hewn pit, and a row of small semi-basement rooms (from west to east: Room 153, Room 117, Room 112) incorporating a three-story underground pit complex. A schematic reconstruction of

<sup>14</sup> ‘En Zippori—Dessel, Meyers and Meyers 2001; Ḥorbat Maṭṭa—Covello-Paran 2008; Yafi‘a—Alexandre 2012b; Tel Gat-Ḥefer—Alexandre, Covello-Paran and Gal 2003.

the house is presented in Fig. 39. The few late Hellenistic potsherds, which were found on the floors among the Early Roman pottery, indicate that the Stratum II house was probably first constructed in the mid- to late second century BCE.

Additional limited evidence for a late Hellenistic presence in Nazareth was previously found in the excavations carried out in the vicinity of Mary's Well (Alexandre 2012a:13–16, 57–59, Fig. 3.1). This evidence comprised a few short stone walls, ten Hasmonean coins of Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE),<sup>15</sup> and some late Hellenistic sherds (late second–early

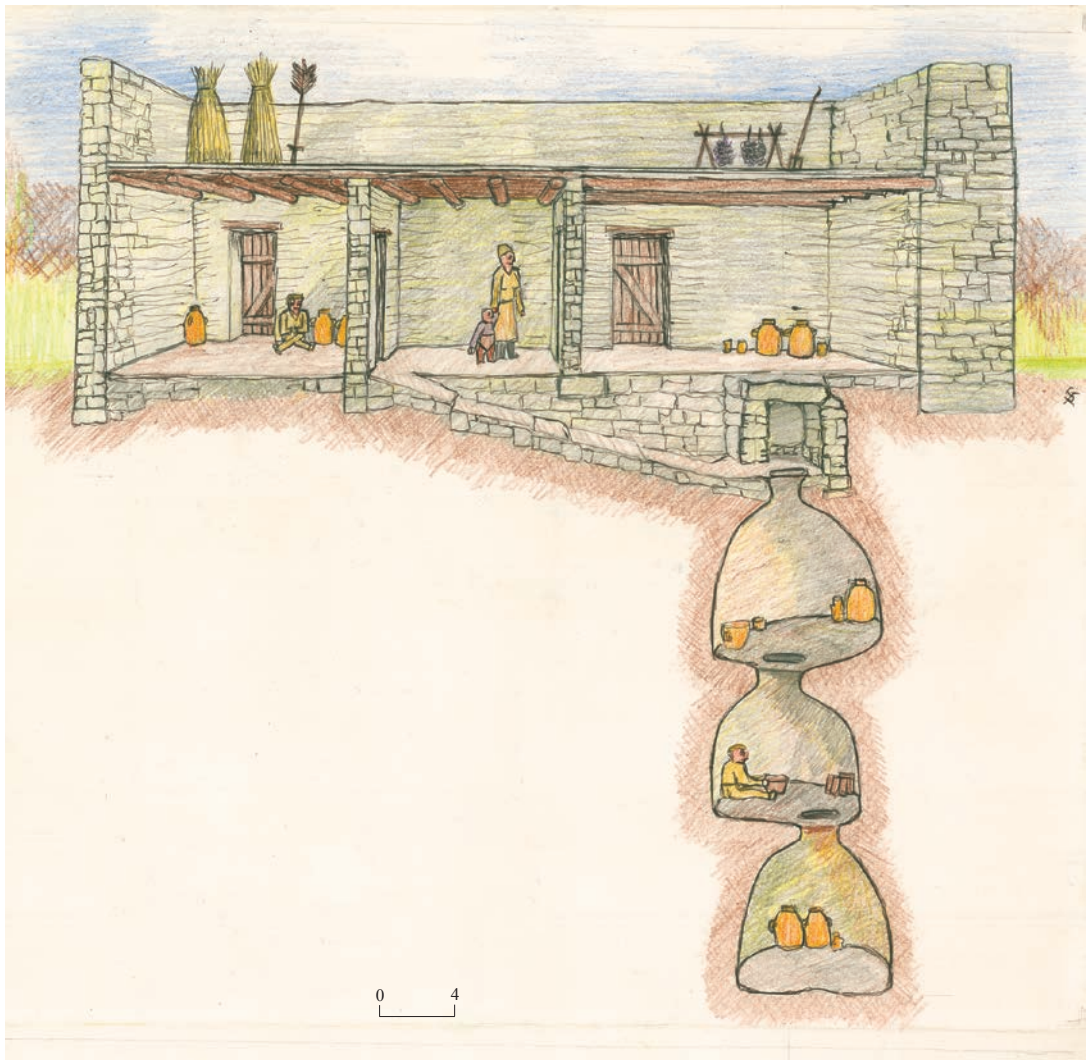


Fig. 39. Stratum II, reconstruction of the house in the Early Roman period (drawing by Stephen Rosenberg).

<sup>15</sup> Although Jannaeus coins continued in circulation into the Early Roman period.

first centuries BCE). The pottery from the present excavation is similar to that retrieved near the spring. The limited evidence points to the establishment of a new, small Jewish settlement in Nazareth in the latter part of the second century BCE.

The Stratum II house continued to be settled into the Early Roman period. The local Early Roman Galilean pottery (without any imported or luxury vessels) and the chalk vessels, which were found on the floors and in the pits, are typical of the Jewish houses in Galilee in the Early Roman period. Similar household repertoires were found in the nearby Jewish village of Karm er-Ras near Kafr Kanna (Alexandre, in prep.), in the large-scale excavations of the western-summit residential quarter in Zippori (Balouka 2013) and in several other Galilean villages of this period. Some of the pottery forms point to connections with Judea. The preference for Jerusalem-manufactured lamps observed at Nazareth and at other Galilean settlements reflected ties with the Jerusalem area (Adan-Bayewitz et al. 2008). The chronological range of the pottery assemblage in the house and the pits, and the absence of vessels with later chronological ranges, indicate that the house was occupied until about 135–150 CE.

*The Early Roman Village of Nazareth.*—Additional limited remains of Early Roman-period houses were found during excavations in the adjacent Franciscan compound in the past. In this location, Bagatti identified many rock-hewn elements as the subterranean storage facilities of houses of the Roman-period village and rock-cuttings on the surface as the possible negatives of foundations (Bagatti 1969:27–28). The presence of many *kokhim* (*loculi*) burial caves on the slope near the Roman village but no burials within the Franciscan compound area further corroborates the conjectured boundaries of the Jewish village in the Early Roman period (Fig. 2). Agricultural installations on the slope below the English hospital, the site of the Nazareth village project today, about 700 m southwest of the present excavation, reflect exploitation of agricultural lands beyond the ancient settled village (Fig. 2:K; Pfann, Voss and Rapuano 2007).

The earliest literary mention of Nazareth is in the New Testament as the childhood home of Jesus (Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38, 56). The identification of the Early Roman village with present-day Nazareth was challenged by Rene Salm, who proposed that ancient Nazareth must have been situated inside present-day Yafi'a (Salm 2008; 2015) and claimed that the identification of the Early Roman village inside modern Nazareth is a religious hoax. However, the numerous archaeological remains exposed so far in the boundaries of the old center of Nazareth clearly testify to a Jewish village of the Early Roman period at this site (Fig. 2). The present excavation joins the previous findings and supports this understanding. It is true that remains of the same period have also been exposed in present-day Yafi'a (Alexandre 2012b). However, this fact does not justify transferring the identification of Early Roman Nazareth there, which ignores the archaeological findings in present-day Nazareth and disregards the long-existing tradition that links the modern city with the New Testament location. In the Early Roman period, Nazareth and Yafi'a were two separate small villages located on separate hills 3 km apart (Fig. 1).

*The Underground Complexes of Stratum II.*— The excavation yielded rock-hewn subterranean cavities accessed from the Stratum II house: two pits in Courtyard 125 and a three-story pit complex in semi-basement Room 153. In the courtyard, the bell-shaped pit (L150) was a small cistern that collected run-off water from the roof. Rock-hewn bell-shaped pits (L168–L171, L173, L174) in the basement would have served as short- and long-term storage facilities, specifically for agricultural produce.

Several constructional features indicate that the pits were intentionally camouflaged and difficult to access. The narrow, lidded pit (L132) in Courtyard 125 was hewn out of a covered-over camouflaged sunken rock-hewn space, and it was too narrow to be an effective storage space for food supplies. The opening into the three-storied lidded pit complex in Room 153 was covered over and camouflaged by short, low, narrow Corridor 158. The upper pit was carefully hewn, while the two lower ones were carved out more carelessly, suggesting that they were hewn out at a later stage. These features indicate that, in addition to the long-term storage of agricultural produce, the pits were intended for concealing their contents from sight, possibly agricultural produce for tax evasion, and even people, during times of imminent danger.

In previous excavations in the adjacent Franciscan compound, several similar subterranean elements were discovered, hewn into the bedrock surface that was exposed over a large area beneath the Byzantine and Crusader buildings, below and around the Church of the Annunciation (Fig. 2:D). In the area of the Franciscan Convent of Terra Santa (Fig. 2:E), many grottoes and silos were uncovered, but the records were lost in the course of World War II (Bagatti 1969:219). Below the Church of St. Joseph (Fig. 2:F), an astonishing rock-hewn interconnecting four-story pit or silo complex was excavated in 1890 and in 1909–1910 (Viaud 1910:134–135, 142–144; Bagatti 1969:223–227, No. 62). Near the Church of the Annunciation, the excavations exposed many rock-cut elements, including silos, cisterns, interconnecting corridors, grottos, basins, winepresses, cellar stores, and small rock-cuttings. Some of the silo complexes comprised two- and three-story pits with interconnecting corridors (Bagatti 1969:44–72, Silo Nos. 24, 46, 48, 51–53; see Pl. XI for location of elements). Additional rock-cut elements included an agricultural press, cellar stores with rock-hewn cup-holes for jars, as well as many cisterns (Bagatti 1969:35, 44, 52–58, 60–65, Nos. 6, 24, 34–37, 40–42). Two square plastered pools with narrow steps, one in the area of the Church of the Annunciation and the other with a mosaic floor in the area of the Church of St. Joseph, were interpreted as pre-Byzantine baptismal basins (Bagatti 1969:116–122, 228–232, Figs. 72, 188), but were actually winepressing installations (Taylor 1993:244–251).<sup>16</sup>

Regarding these previous findings, Bagatti resolved that pits or silos, which contained Roman pottery, functioned as basement elements over which houses probably once stood.

<sup>16</sup> Several underground rock-hewn cavities and passages are known to have been exposed below buildings outside the Franciscan compound without archaeological excavations (e.g., below the Greek Orthodox monastery; Fig. 2:L). These cavities have not been dated.

The walls of those houses had been removed by later activities (Bagatti 1969:27–28). Due to the subsequent Byzantine- and Crusader-period reuse, Bagatti did not conclude unequivocally that the underground complexes belong to the Early Roman period. In light of the present excavation, it is probable that many of the rock-hewn elements uncovered in the previous excavations were, in fact, installations in the basements of houses in the small Early Roman-period Jewish village.

The findings correlate with similar discoveries in many Jewish villages of the Early Roman period in Galilee.<sup>17</sup> At Yafi'a, 3 km southwest of Nazareth, a three-story complex was described and illustrated (Guérin 1880:104; Conder and Kitchener 1881:353–354). Also in Yafi'a, three individual bell-shaped pits or silos, which were damaged by Byzantine-period quarrying, were excavated. Inside one of the silos, a few burned sheep bones were found, next to a charred Early Roman cooking pot (Alexandre 2012b). Josephus testified on the fierce battle that was fought at Yafi'a in 67 CE, ending in a decisive Jewish defeat, contemporary with the siege of Yodfat (Jotapata) in the course of the First Jewish Revolt (*The Jewish War* 3.289–306).

Another example is Karm er-Ras (identified as Cana of Galilee), 4 km north of Nazareth, where two separate Early Roman houses with rock-hewn underground silos were excavated. One house exhibited three camouflaged rock-hewn units below a single house, together with mid-first century CE pottery and Jerusalem-minted coins dating to the second year of the First Jewish Revolt (67 CE). Another house had an extremely well-camouflaged large bell-shaped rock-hewn pit that contained a pile of eleven pristine storage jars, of the type that began to be manufactured in the latter part of the first century CE (Alexandre 2008:77\*; in prep.).

Additional camouflaged rock-hewn pits in the basements of houses dated to the Early Roman period have been exposed at other Galilean sites, including Yodfat (Aviam 2008:45\*), Khirbat Wadi Hamam (Leibner 2010:227) and Kabul (Zidan and Alexandre 2012).

Turning back to the Stratum II house in Nazareth, if the camouflaged pits were meant to conceal people at times of imminent danger, a possible historical context is the period of preparations before the First Jewish Revolt that broke out in Galilee in 66–67 CE. During the battle of Yodfat in 67 CE, the Roman army searched the hiding places in the town (*The Jewish War* 3.336). The Roman army attacked nearby Yafi'a (*The Jewish War* 3.289–306). In this geographical and historical context, there can be no doubt that in 66–67 CE, the villagers of Nazareth were actively involved in the defensive preparations in the wake of the Roman threat. To date, no evidence has been found at Nazareth for a destruction at the time of the First Jewish Revolt. The findings demonstrate that the village continued to be settled.

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<sup>17</sup> For a survey of some of the sites, see Shahar 2003.



*The Pottery in the Pits and the Issue of Ritual Purity.*— The pottery repertoire in the house and in the pits was dated to the Early Roman period till the early second century CE. The absence of Middle to Late Roman pottery forms (such as the Kefar Ḥananya cooking pot Forms KH 4C and KH 4D) suggests that this house was abandoned around the early to mid-second century CE, when the cistern, the pits and the corridor were intentionally blocked. The examination of the huge quantities of pottery sherds that were retrieved from the pits, altogether about 70 kg, led us to the understanding that the pottery vessels in the house may have been collected, smashed and intentionally thrown into the pits together with earth, small masonry chips, and a few other artifacts, which were then entirely blocked, up to the pits' brim. The small quantities of pottery extant in the house are more or less contemporaneous to the extremely large concentrations of pottery in the pits. This suggests that this specific house was abandoned about the same time, or at the most, slightly after the pits were filled in. A similar phenomenon of pits full of pottery was recorded by Bagatti in the earlier Nazareth excavations in Silo Complex No. 48, where six interconnected silos are described as “completely filled with earth and objects, especially sherds” (Bagatti 1969:67).

It is tentatively proposed that the mass disposal of the pottery in the pits may have been related to the Jewish practice regarding ritual defilement caused by contact with a corpse. The Babylonian Talmud records Rabbi Yoḥanan ben Zakai's order to remove all the pottery vessels from his house before his death in order to avoid their contamination (BT Beraḥot 26b). Jewish religious law required that ritually-defiled ceramic vessels be smashed: “it cannot be purified save through breakage” (Sifra Shemini 7; see Amit and Adler 2010:125, n. 16). It is possible that some ritual defilement event, such as corpse impurity, led to the disposal of all the household vessels into the pits.

The ritual purity observance was also evident from the chalk vessel fragments that were found in the present excavation. Similar chalk vessel fragments may not have been recognized and consequently not retained by the previous excavators of Nazareth. Another element reflecting the Jewish observance of ritual purity in Early Roman Galilean settlements was a *miqveh* used for ritual immersion (Reich 1997). Since the present excavation was of a very small scale, it is not surprising that a *miqveh* was not encountered. *Miqva'ot* were not discovered in the previous excavations in Nazareth.<sup>18</sup>

Ritual purity was a central concern of the Jewish population of Judea and Galilee in the Early Roman period (Amit and Adler 2010:122). When the Temple stood, purity was required, not only for the priests but also for the pilgrims and for the agricultural produce that was brought to the Temple. In addition to the priests, many lay Jews ate their food when they were in a state of purity (Amit and Adler 2010:122–123, n. 3). Consequently, the elements reflecting ritual purity observance in Nazareth, as well as in many other Galilean

<sup>18</sup> In the previous excavations in Nazareth, two square plastered pools with narrow steps, one in the area of the Church of the Annunciation and the other with a mosaic floor in the area of the Church of St. Joseph, were interpreted as pre-Byzantine baptismal basins (Bagatti 1969:116–122, 228–232, Figs. 72, 188). Several features, including the side steps, the mosaic paving and the sherds in the plaster indicate that these were almost certainly winepressing installations (Taylor 1993:244–251).

villages, may also have been used by lay Jews and do not necessarily reflect the presence of a priestly element.

*Jewish Priestly Courses in Nazareth.*— A few arguments may support a suggestion that priestly families lived in Nazareth before 70 CE. Nazareth is mentioned in the list of 24 Jewish priestly courses in Galilean villages (Klein 1924; Leibner 2009:404–419). Several stone plaque fragments and wall plaster fragments, with Hebrew inscriptions bearing parts of this list have been uncovered in archaeological excavations (Leibner 2009:404–419).<sup>19</sup> A fragment of the inscription from the synagogue of Caesarea Maritima from the third–fourth centuries CE reads “[The eighteenth priestly course Hapizzez] Nazareth” (after Avi-Yonah 1962). Two small fragments of the list were discovered in Nazareth (Eshel 1991). In the Late Roman period, the list of the priestly courses was used in the synagogue liturgy (Levine 2005:519–529). Previous studies suggested that priestly influx into Galilee occurred from the period following the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (132–135 CE) to as late as the fifth century CE. However, Leibner (2009:404–419) observed that the list of sites is composed completely of villages that had been settled by Jews already during the Hasmonean period. Leibner considered that the list of priestly courses was compiled with the site list at a later date. The possibility that some priestly families had already lived in the Galilean village before 70 CE, and that they played a role in the spread of concern for ritual purity observance, is worthy of further examination (Alexandre, in prep.).

The archaeological evidence from this and previous excavations brings into focus the small Jewish village of Nazareth, characterized by some Jewish and Judean characteristics in the material culture that have been observed in Jewish villages in Galilee. The Early Roman village of Nazareth developed from the initial late-Hellenistic hamlet or village that was first settled in the latter part of the second century BCE, possibly during the reign of the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus I (135–106/5 BCE). The understanding that Nazareth and several other villages in central Lower Galilee were settled by Jewish inhabitants from the Hasmonean kingdom of Judea was proposed several decades ago, predominantly leaning on the literary sources (Bar-Kochva 1977). This viewpoint has since been corroborated by the

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<sup>19</sup> The division of the priests into 24 courses for a rotation system of service in the Temple appears in I Chronicles 24:7–18. Klein reconstructed a list of 24 Galilean villages settled by the 24 priestly courses based on places mentioned in seventh-century CE eulogies that mourned the fate of these priestly courses and surmised that the source of the list was from the second–third centuries CE (Klein 1924:1–29).

archaeological data that has been excavated and surveyed at several Galilean sites (Leibner 2012).<sup>20</sup>

### *The Early Byzantine Period*

No architectural evidence from the Middle to Late Roman periods was uncovered in the present excavation. However, the small quantity of early Byzantine pottery uncovered in the fills overlying the Early Roman house implies a presence in the late fourth to early fifth centuries CE.<sup>21</sup> The more fragmentary remains underlying the church were identified as a Late Roman fourth-century CE ecclesiastical synagogue or a synagogue-church building (Bagatti 1969:114–146). The discussion on the religious affinity of the inhabitants of pre-Byzantine Nazareth as Jews or Jewish Christians lies beyond the scope of this report (Taylor 1993:253–267). Four limestone column bases that are preserved in the Franciscan compound were reported as originating from the Byzantine-period synagogue of Nazareth (Bagatti 1969:233, Fig. 190). The remains of a fifth-century CE Byzantine basilical church were uncovered in the adjacent area of the Church of the Annunciation. From this time onward, Nazareth appears as a site in the Christian pilgrims' itinerary in Galilee.

### *The Crusader–Mamluk Periods*

The wide walls uncovered may have been part of a Crusader-period vaulted building that may have still stood in the Mamluk period. The great three-apsed Crusader basilica (48 × 27 m), whose remains were uncovered in the earlier excavations in the Franciscan compound, was destroyed at the time of the Mamluk conquest in the year 1263 CE (Bagatti 2002:31–55). The extant remains were subsequently partially incorporated in the twentieth-century church. The excavations at Mary's Well exposed the remains of a Crusader-period fountain house that underwent changes in the Mamluk period (Alexandre 2012a:21–46).

<sup>20</sup> The comprehensive analysis of the numismatic evidence, specifically the distribution of the coins of the early Hasmonean rulers as John Hyrcanus I, further supports the beginning of Jewish settlement of the Galilee within the last third of the second century BCE (Syon 2015:161–165). A discussion of the various alternative scenarios proposed by scholars for the settlement of Galilee in the Early Roman period is a vast subject and lies far beyond the scope of this report. Suffice it to say that the various interpretations proposed by scholars over the last century regarding the origin of the Jewish population, such as the Israelite survivors after the Assyrian conquest of 732 BCE, the local Phoenician population, and the Iturean converts to Judaism, should now be considered as secondary, minor factors, at the most. For comprehensive summaries, see Freyne 1980; 2006; Leibner 2012.

<sup>21</sup> Among this pottery, we may count the latest Kefar H̄ananya bowl Form 1E, the latest Kefar H̄ananya cooking pot Form 4E, some Late Roman Red Ware bowls, and a lid.

## SUMMARY

The Iron Age remains from the present excavation, and from previous excavations in Nazareth, support the view that Nazareth was settled in Iron I and Iron IIA–B (Stratum III, ninth–eighth centuries BCE).

The remains of the late Hellenistic- to Early Roman-period house (Stratum II, first century BCE–early second century CE) overlay the earlier floors, reusing the Iron II wall. The finds from this period testify to the Jewish identity of the house occupants and the observance of ritual purity. Also, the filling-in of the pits with extremely large quantities of household pottery may reflect the occupants' concern for ritual purity observance.

The pottery in the house aligns with the conclusions that a Jewish hamlet was settled in Nazareth in the late Hellenistic–Hasmonean period (late second century BCE), and that it developed into a village during the Early Roman period (first century BCE–first century CE). The archaeological data from the present excavation ratifies the proposal that in the late Hellenistic period, Jews from Judea settled in new villages and settlements in Galilee (cf. Leibner 2012:468–469).

While some of the underground pits were probably originally basement components of the house that functioned as storage facilities, there are several indications that the complexes were expanded and intentionally camouflaged. It is proposed that the camouflaged pits were prepared for hiding purposes, in the historical context of the First Revolt of the Jews against the Romans in 66–67 CE. The pottery evidence in the house and in the pits indicates that this particular house continued to be occupied after the revolt, into the early second century CE, and that it was then abandoned.

The continuation of the village in Nazareth is reflected in the third- and fourth- century CE pottery that was discovered by the previous excavations in the Franciscan compound (Bagatti 1969: Figs. 220–231). The transition from the earlier Jewish village to a Christian settlement in the Byzantine period (fifth–sixth centuries CE) is signaled by the Byzantine church remains in the Franciscan compound and is also recorded by the early pilgrims who visited the site (Bagatti 1969:20–24, 77–114). However, the present excavation did not shed any new light on the Middle- to Late Roman-period settlement in Nazareth.

## APPENDIX 1: List of Loci and Walls

Locus No.	Stratum	Plan No.	Elevation (m)		Description
			Top	Bottom	
101	I	2	350.74	349.88	Surface, exposed after mechanical digger work
102	I	2	350.50	350.20	Accumulation and stone collapse
103	II	1	350.50	350.20	Floor 103, small area of crushed chalk floor on the bedrock
104	I	2	350.19	349.52	Accumulation and stone collapse
107	III	1	350.25	349.45	Rock-hewn channel
109	II	1	350.04	349.21	Bedrock floor
112	II	1	349.52	349.22	Room 112, bedrock floor with crushed chalk patches
113	II	1	349.80	349.10	Bedrock floor with chalk patches
114	I	2	349.95	349.35	Gap between W106 and W106A (including the area to its west, above W115)
116	II	1	350.15	349.72	Makeup layer of Floor 103
117	II	1	349.54	349.23	Room 117, bedrock
118	III	1	349.22	349.10	Rock-hewn channel
120	II	1	350.77	350.45	Surface, exposed after mechanical digger work
121	I	2	350.73	350.38	Surface, exposed after mechanical digger work
122	II		350.00	349.12	= L113; part of bedrock floor
123	II?		350.00	349.70	= L116; part of floor make-up
124	II		350.00	349.19	= L109
125	II	1	350.80	350.40	Courtyard 125, sloping bedrock floor
126	II	1	350.20	349.39	Rectangular rock-hewn area
127	II	1	350.82	350.50	Stone partition delimiting L126
128	I	2	350.38	349.92	Fill or accumulation
130	II	1	349.50	348.47	Small rock-hewn area in L126
131	II	1, 2–2, 3–3	349.96	349.56	= Pit 150; upper accumulation in rock-hewn pit
Pit 132	II	1	349.53	347.39	Rock-hewn pit
134	II	1	350.12	349.65	Rock-hewn space delimited by wall
135	II	1	349.92	349.70	Room 135, crushed chalk floor cut by concrete foundations
140	I	2	351.40	350.90	Bedrock overlain by modern fill
141	I	2	351.00	350.61	Bedrock overlain by modern fill
142	II		350.80	349.27	= L130, L126
143	I	2	350.65	349.90	Accumulation from Mamluk period, disturbed
144	I	2	349.92	349.65	Accumulation from Mamluk period, disturbed
145	I	2	350.50	349.95	Accumulation from Mamluk period, disturbed
146	I	2	350.49	349.80	Accumulation from Mamluk period, disturbed
147	II/I	2	350.30	349.14	Accumulation from Mamluk period, disturbed
Pit 150	II	1, 2–2, 3–3	350.30	348.21	Rock-hewn pit, cistern
151	I	2	350.70	350.05	Quadrangular installation, made of stone slabs



## APPENDIX 1. (cont.)

Locus No.	Stratum	Plan No.	Elevation (m)		Description
			Top	Bottom	
152	I	2	350.35	350.01	Dark brown accumulation
153	II	1	350.01	349.40	Room 153, reddish brown accumulation on sloping bedrock
154	I	2	349.95	349.52	Accumulation from Mamluk period, disturbed
157	III	1	349.60	349.40	Reddish brown accumulation
158	II	1	349.60	349.05	Narrow corridor (1.5 × 0.7 m) leading to the three-story pit complex
159	III	1	349.40	348.68	Reddish brown accumulation on bedrock
162			349.36	349.30	Stones and disturbed fill
163	III	1	349.52	349.32	Accumulation, disturbed
164	III	1	349.52	348.99	Accumulation, disturbed
165	III	1	350.05	349.81	Reddish brown accumulation
166	II/III	1	349.80	349.69	Reddish brown accumulation
167	III	1	349.70	349.52	Reddish brown accumulation
Pit 168	II	1, 4-4	348.82	346.71	The upper pit of the three-level subterranean complex; includes L171
169	III	1	349.52	349.30	Reddish brown accumulation
170	III	1	349.33	348.99	Reddish brown accumulation
171	II	1	347.20	346.71	Lower part of Pit 168
172	III	1	349.50	348.99	Reddish brown accumulation
Pit 173	II	1, 4-4	346.71	344.91	The middle-positioned pit of the three-level subterranean complex
Pit 174	II	1, 4-4	344.91	342.95	The lower pit of the three-level subterranean complex
W105	II	1, 2	350.71	349.20	Stone wall on hewn bedrock base
W106	I	2	350.77	349.50	Large stone wall foundation
W106A	I	2	350.23	349.40	Sothern part of large stone wall foundation
W108	II	1, 2	350.29	349.20	Stone wall on hewn bedrock base
W110	I	2	350.42	349.25	Irregular stone wall
W111	II	1	349.60	349.26	Stone wall on hewn bedrock base
W111C	I	2	350.23	349.85	Three large stone blocks in secondary use
W115	II	1, 2	349.73	349.10	Stone wall on hewn bedrock base
W129	II	1, 2	350.68	349.77	Stone wall on low hewn bedrock base
W133	I	2	350.41	349.75	Stone foundation
W148	I	2	349.79	349.25	Irregular stone wall fragment
W149	II	1	350.11		Rock-hewn foundation
W155	II	1, 2	349.50	349.15	Stone wall visible below W133
W156	III	1, 2	350.67	348.48	High-standing stone wall on bedrock
W160	II	1	349.66	349.05	Stone slab partition of the Corridor 158
W161	II	1	349.75	349.05	Stone slab partition of the Corridor 158
W175	III	1	350.47	348.87	Short wall segment, oriented east-west

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