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Lots of Pots: Cooking-Pot Deposits in Early Roman Jerusalem

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Extensive excavations over the last few decades in and around Jerusalem have yielded large quantities of cooking vessels, including instances of intentional cooking-pot deposits. Since not all concentrations of cooking pots can be grouped as a single phenomenon, this article aims at categorizing and defining the different categories of cooking-pot deposits in Early Roman Jerusalem to better understand each occurrence and to offer a refined interpretation thereof. This allows us to trace and evaluate different processes and behaviors prevalent in Jerusalem during the Early Roman period. It also sheds light on the dynamics of interaction between the local population, visitors and pilgrims in the 'Temple City' of Jerusalem during the late Second Temple period.

Keywords: Early Roman period, Jerusalem, cooking vessels, punctured vessels, Second Temple, intentional depositing

Introduction

Pottery deposits are well-documented in the archaeological record (Guri-Rimon 2013), although not all concentrations of pottery vessels represent the same phenomenon, including *favisae* (Kletter, Ziffer and Zwickel 2010; 2015), foundation offerings, and the sealing of water installations, such as cisterns (Lynch 2011), wells (Kletter and Rapuano 1998) and *miqva'ot*. The extensive excavations over recent years, of sites surrounding the Old City of Jerusalem have yielded large concentrations of Early Roman period pottery vessels, mostly cooking vessels, often found intact. These findings are anomalous, as they surpass ceramic finds from other sites in quantity, and are distinct in deposition method. Recently, Reich and Shukron (2021b) presented a more complex picture of cooking-pot assemblages

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throughout the city, although it does not include all known concentrations and the discussion is limited. This article presents a new, as yet unpublished context of cooking pots from the summit of the City of David, while suggesting a more general approach to the cooking-pot phenomenon, by addressing it on several levels:

(1) The archaeological contexts of the recently excavated assemblage of cooking vessels, and of previously exposed cooking-pot concentrations, are presented, focusing on the number of cooking pots in each context and the different nature of each findspot.

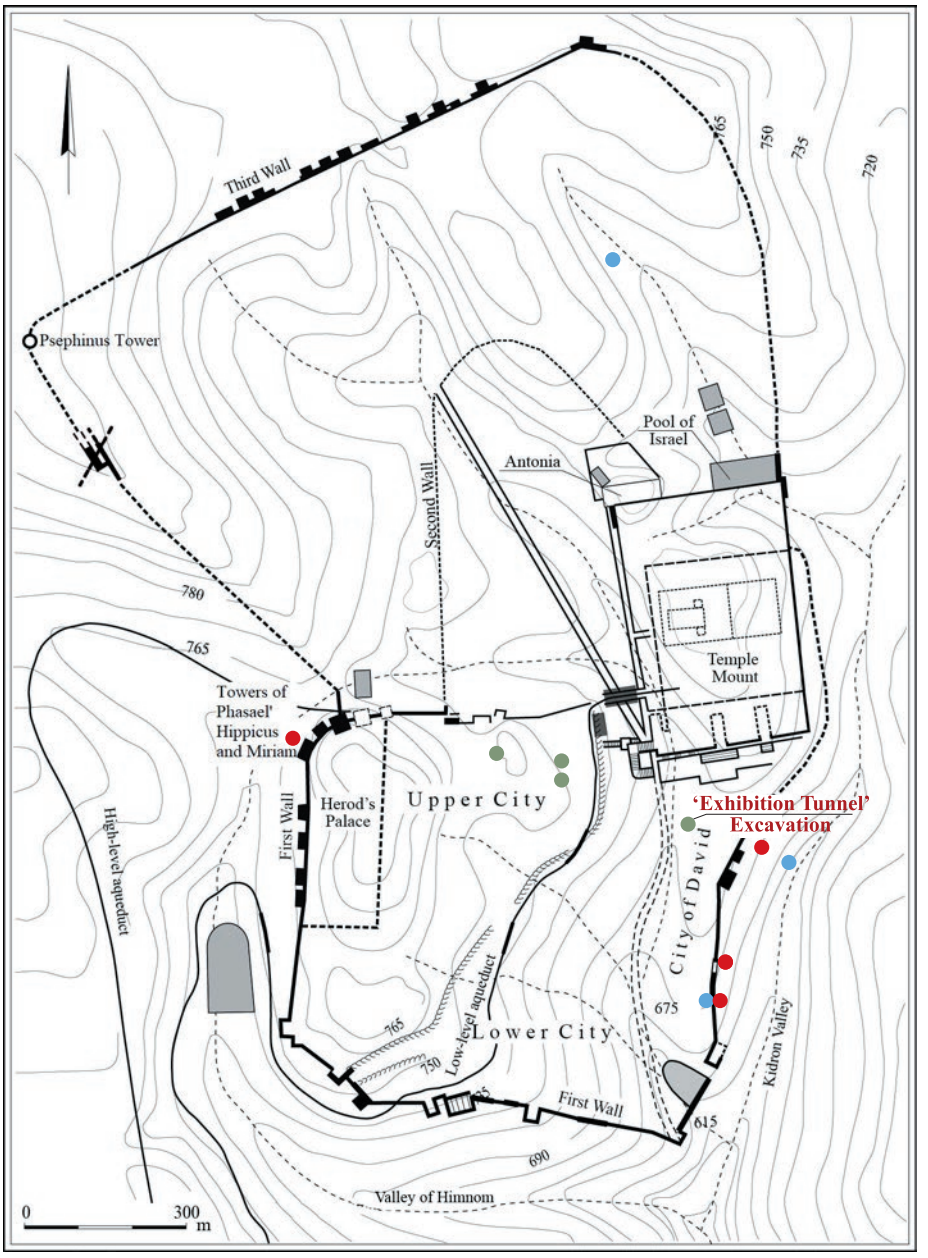
(2) The various depositions are categorized into three groups.

(3) Subsequent to the contextual and content definitions, possible explanations are suggested for this ceramic anomaly in social and historical contexts.

The different categories of deposit or refuse allow us to trace and evaluate different processes and behaviors prevalent during the Early Roman period in Jerusalem, further shedding light on dynamics of interactions between the various classes of people traversing Jerusalem's cityscape during the late Second Temple period: residents and pilgrims.

Cooking-Pot Deposits in Early Roman Period Jerusalem

Several first century BCE–first century CE layers have yielded vessel concentrations, many comprising cooking pots (Fig. 1). The cooking pots were found in various locations, in a variety of forms and in different quantities. In this section, the different occurrences will be discussed in light of the recently exposed assemblage deposited in an installation on the summit of the City of David (Fig. 2). Most of the other concentrations discussed were retrieved from earlier excavations conducted by different expeditions in various areas of the city. It is noted that the publication level of the deposits is inconsistent: some of the excavations were published in final reports, others still await final publication, and in some final reports, the information provided is not always sufficiently detailed. One of the main avenues for investigating the phenomenon of cooking-pot concentrations in the ceramic assemblages is through an examination of the quantitative material: How many cooking vessels were discovered in each site or in each context? What percentage are they of the general assemblage? How does this percentage compare to similar contexts at other sites? How does it compare to different contexts? These and several other questions may potentially illuminate many aspects of this subject. The quantitative information presented hereby is based on the information provided in the various publications; however, sometimes this information is patial or absent. In the future, it is hoped that more general ceramic studies will be carried out and published, including detailed quantitative data.



Cooking-pot concentrations in water cisterns and ritual baths

Cooking-pot concentrations along the city walls

Cooking-pot concentrations in secondary deposition

Fig. 1. Map of sites in Jerusalem yielding cooking-pot concentrations dating to the Early Roman period (preparation: M. Birkenfield).

The 'Exhibition Tunnel' Pottery Assemblage

The concentration of cooking pots discussed here was found in a water cistern on the summit of the City of David, adjacent to the Giv'ati Parking Lot excavations (Figs. 1, 2).[2] A preliminary report of the excavations has been published (Dan-Goor and Tchekhanovets 2020), without a detailed presentation or discussion of the cooking-pot phenomenon,[3] and this is the first detailed record of this cooking-pot concentration. The excavation was conducted on the summit of the City of David, just outside Jerusalem's Old City. In the course of the excavation, a cistern was found, consisting of a hewn shaft (L173) and tunnel (L247), dating to the Early Roman period (Stratum VI), later sealed by a Roman-period structure (Fig. 3; see Dan-Goor and Tchekhanovets 2020). The large pottery assemblage, dated to the first century CE, was dumped into the cistern and included a corpus of various vessels: cooking

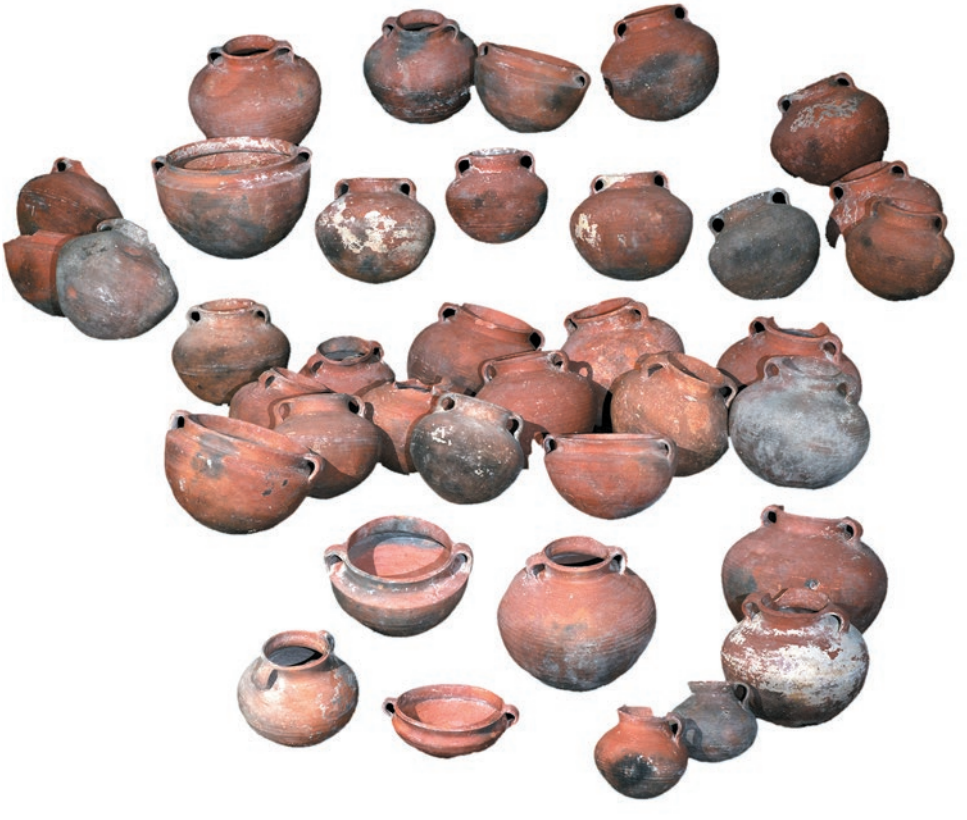


Fig. 2. Selection of intact cooking vessels from 'ExhibitionTunnel' excavation Stratum VI (photography: C. Amit).

[2] The pots were discovered in the excavations of the so-called 'Exhibition Tunnel,' conducted by Salome Dan-Goor and Yana Tchekhanovets, with a short supplementary excavation directed by Yiftah Shalev and Filip Vukosavovich, both excavations on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, and funded by the City of David Foundation, within the confines of the City of David National Park.

[3] The complete analysis of the Early Roman period pottery assemblage from the excavation is currently underway by Barak Monnickendam-Givon and will be published in the final report.

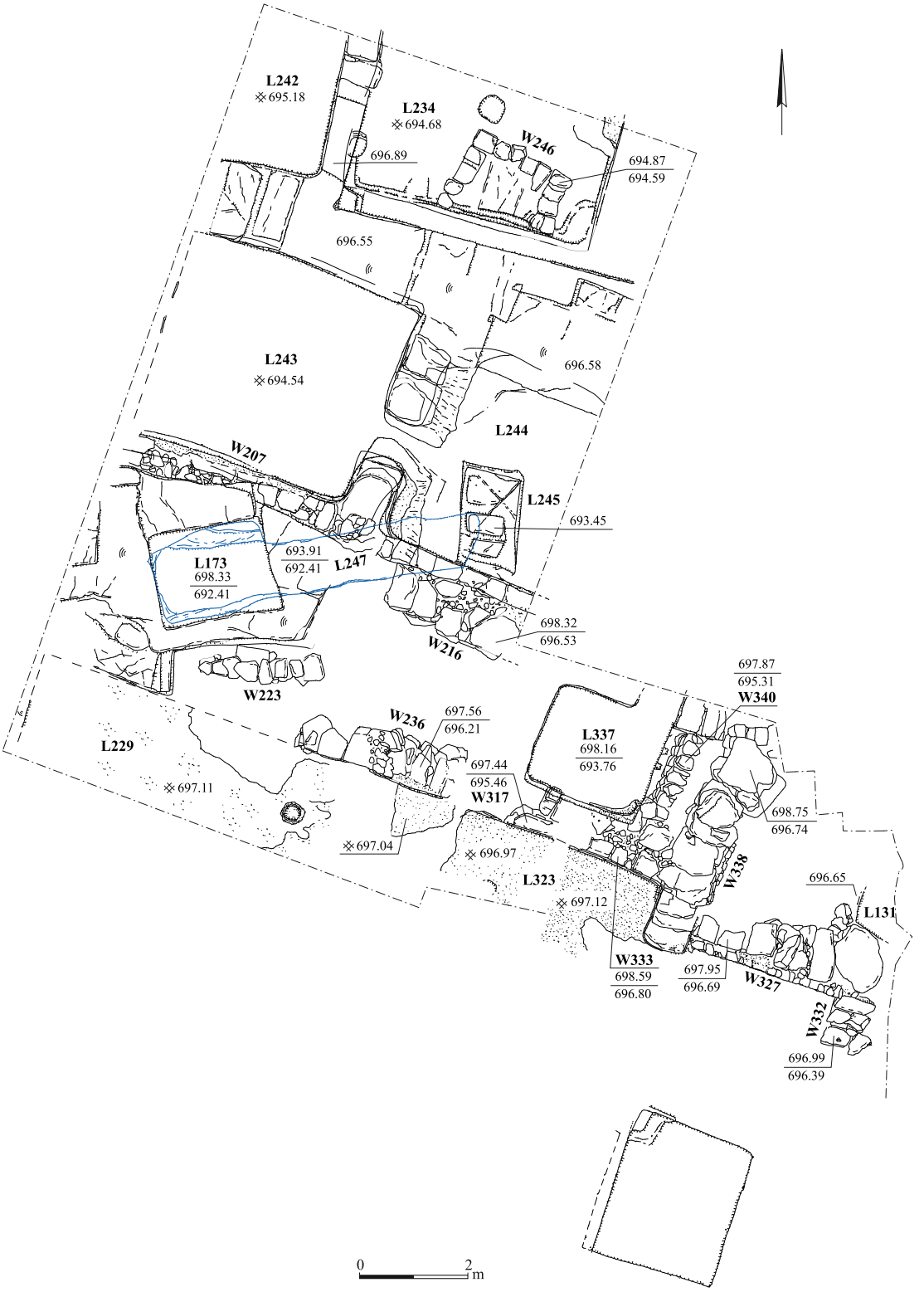


Fig. 3. Plan of ‘ExhibitionTunnel’ excavation Stratum VI (drafting: V. Essman).

vessels, tableware, utility vessels, storage jars, lamps and miniature vessels. Of the total 4887 potsherds and complete vessels counted from Stratum VI cistern, cooking vessels comprise 49.5% (n = 2419) of the overall pottery assemblage retrieved from the cistern (Fig. 4). Closed globular cooking pots comprise 83.1% (n = 2008) of the cooking-vessel assemblage (Fig. 5).

Some of the complete cooking pots were intentionally punctured (Fig. 6). The holes are relatively small and irregular in shape, apparently made with a sharp tool. They appear on various parts of the vessels, between the shoulder and the base. As it is not possible to assess how many of the broken cooking vessels were punctured, only nine (22.5%) complete vessels were counted out of the 40 complete cooking pots; this contrasts with other vessel types, including casseroles and cooking jugs, none of which were punctured.

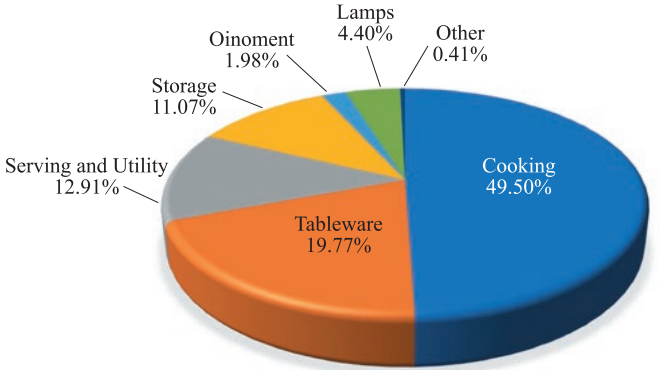


Fig. 4. Pottery vessels from 'ExhibitionTunnel' excavation Stratum VI according to functional groups (n = 4887).

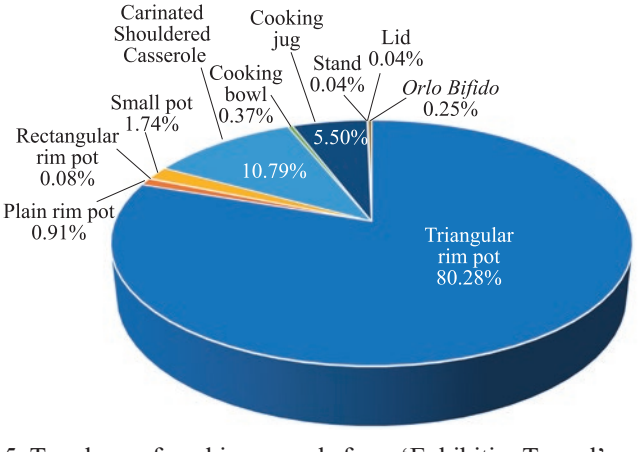


Fig. 5. Typology of cooking vessels from 'ExhibitionTunnel' excavation Stratum VI (n = 2419).

Fig. 6. Selection of punctured cooking vessels from 'ExhibitionTunnel' excavation Stratum VI (photography: C. Amit).

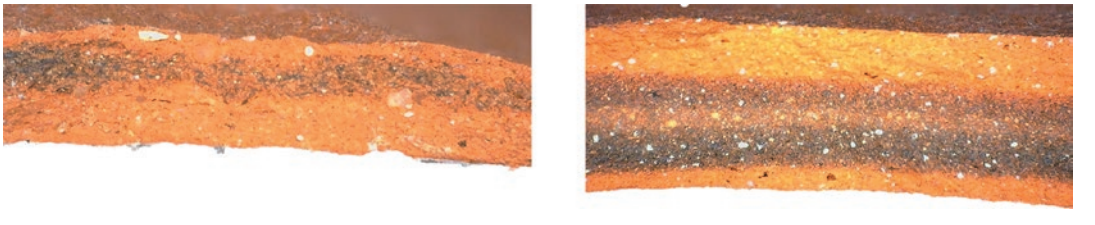


Fig. 7. Section of Judean Late Hellenistic–Early Roman Compact Cooking Ware (photography: B. Monnickendam-Givon).

Most Stratum VI cooking vessels were made of a fine, thin local ware, designated 'Judean Late Hellenistic–Early Roman Compact Cooking Ware' (Monnickendam-Givon, Berlin and Sandhaus 2020), associated with the kilns site excavated at the western entrance to modern-day Jerusalem (Berlin 2005; 2018; Be'eri and Levi 2018; Sandhaus and Meyerson 2018). This compact ware is characterized by its bright red-brown color and occasional small white inclusions that are hardly visible on the vessel surface (Fig. 7). All the local cooking pots, cooking jugs and some of the open casseroles (or cooking bowls) were made of this ware. A few imports, such as Italian *orlo-bifido* pans and a lid from Southern Phoenicia (the northern coastal plain of modern Israel) were also discovered.

Globular Cooking Pots

Closed globular cooking pots, suitable for cooking dishes like soups and stews (Berlin 1997; Skibo 1992:162–173, Villing and Spataro 2015) were the preferred cooking-vessel type in the Southern Levant in the Classical periods (Berlin 2015:632–633; London 2016:217). It is, therefore, not surprising that the globular cooking pot is the most common type in the Stratum VI ceramic assemblage. It has a globular body, a narrow neck and strap handles extending from rim to shoulder. This vessel type comprises 83.1% of the cooking vessels and 41.9% of the entire ceramic assemblage.

Triangular-Rim Cooking Pot with External Ridge (Fig. 8:1, 2).— This is the most common globular cooking pot and the most common vessel type in the Stratum VI assemblage. It comprises 80.3% of the cooking-vessel assemblage and 97% of the closed globular cooking pots. It is characterized by a small ridge on the exterior rim that forms the triangulated rim profile. The small triangular rim sometimes forms an outer ridge on the lower part of the rim. All these pots were made of compact cooking ware, and are very common in assemblages in the adjacent excavations in Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Type CP4; Tchekhanovets 2013:113–114, Figs. 5.1:12; 5.6:4; 5.10:14–16; 5.15:12, 13) and the Jewish Quarter (Geva and Hershkovitz 2006: Pls. 4.5:19, 20; 4.8:9; 4.9:18; 2014: Pl. 3.13:11; Geva and Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2003: Pls. 6.5:25; 6.5:40; 6.9:17, 18).

Plain Rim Cooking Pot (Fig. 8:3).— Only a few examples of this type with a plain rim were found in Stratum VI, comprising roughly 1% of the cooking-vessel assemblage and 1.1% of the closed cooking pots. These pots have two handles extending from rim to shoulder. This type is known from the Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Type CP1; Tchekhanovets 2013:113; Fig. 5.1:10; 5.6:1; 5.15:10) and the ‘Ofel (Ophel Type CP1; Mazar and Pinsky 2018:136, Fig. A1:26).

Rectangular Rim Cooking Pot (Fig. 8:4).— This subtype has an upright neck and a thickened folded rim, rectangular in section. It is a rare cooking vessel, with only one example found in Stratum VI. Similar pots were found at the adjacent Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Tchekhanovets 2013:114, Fig. 5.6:6).

Small Cooking Pot with Plain Rim (Fig. 8:5).— Numerous examples of this type were found in Stratum VI, comprising approximately 0.6% of the cooking-vessel assemblage and 1% of the closed cooking pots. A globular body, a short, outturned neck, and a plain rim characterize the pot. Usually, one strap handle extends from the rim to the neck. Similar vessels were found in Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Type CP3; Tchekhanovets 2013: Fig. 5.1:12).

Cooking Jugs (Figs. 8:6, 7)

Cooking jugs are characterized by a very narrow neck and rim diameter; they were used to heat and boil water (Berlin 2005:39) and possibly other liquids. The cooking jugs first

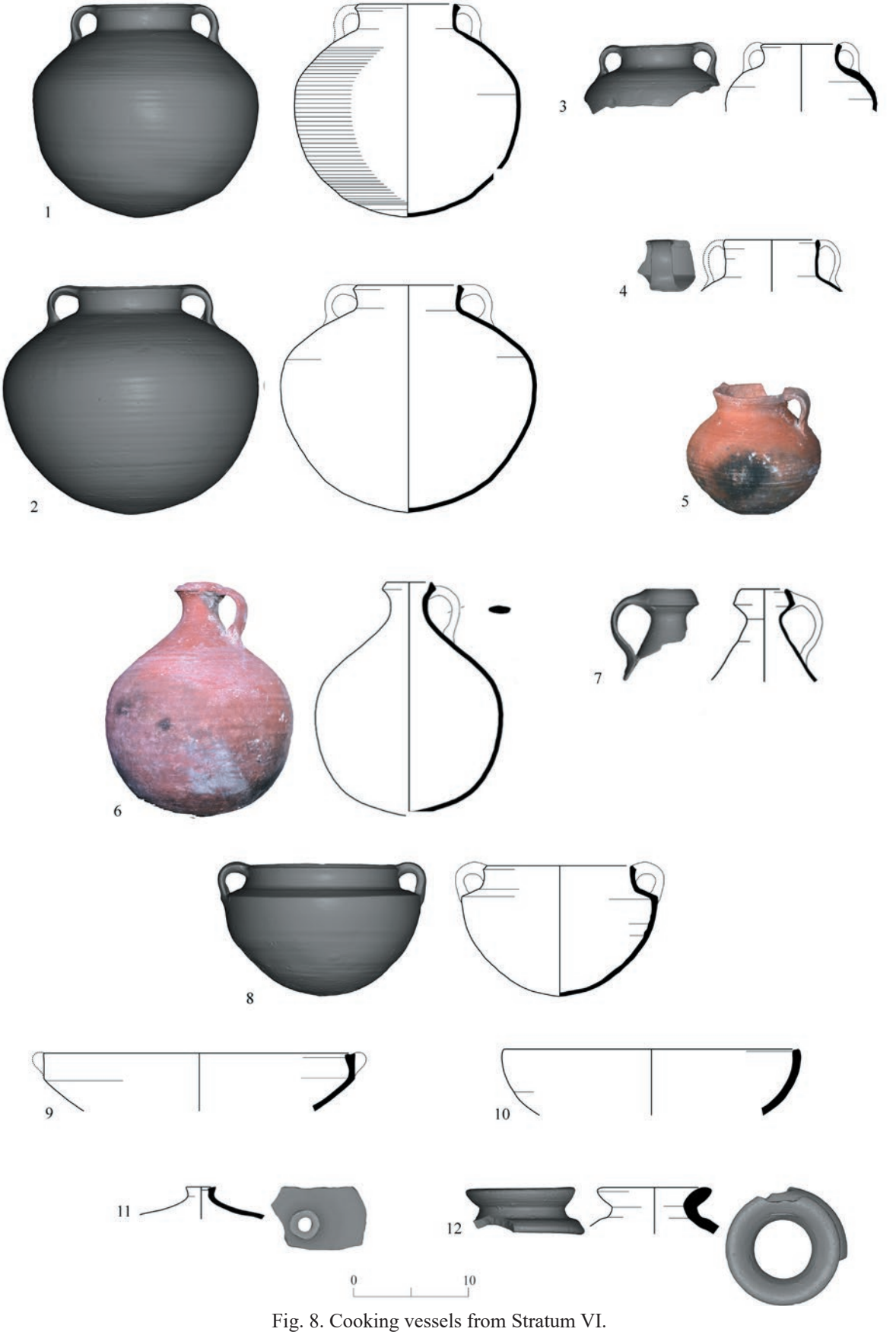


Fig. 8. Cooking vessels from Stratum VI.

appeared both in Judea and northern Israel in the Early Roman period. The jugs found here have a globular wide body, sometimes ribbed, that ends in a narrow neck and an outturned, folded everted rim with an external groove. Cooking jugs comprise 2.2% of the overall vessel assemblage and 4.8% of the cooking-vessel repertoire. This type is made of compact Central Hill cooking ware and is known from Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Type CJ1; Tchekhanovets 2013:115; Figs. 5.1:18; 5.6:9, 10; 5.11:8).

Casseroles

Casseroles are versatile vessels intended for both broiling and roasting of large portions of food, with liquid evaporating, alongside the boiling of stews and porridge. The introduction of casseroles as part of the ancient Jerusalem *batterie de cuisine* during the late Hellenistic period onward reflects a change in the local dietary habits and a diversity in the way food was prepared. Two types of casseroles were found in Stratum VI, comprising 10.8% of the cooking-vessel assemblage and 5% of the overall ceramic assemblage.

Carinated-Shouldered Casseroles (Fig. 8:8).— This is the most common casserole in the assemblage. Carinated-shouldered casseroles comprise the majority (95.3%) of Stratum VI casseroles. This type is characterized by a rounded base, a relatively upright, straight body, straight shoulders and a wide neck and rim with a triangulated section. It is found in other assemblages in the vicinity of Jerusalem, e.g., Jerusalem International Convention Center (Berlin 2005:39–42) and Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Type CJ1; Tchekhanovets 2013:114, Figs. 5.1:16; 5.6:8; 5.11:2–6), as well as throughout the Southern Levant (Berlin 2006:41). This form of casserole is a local pottery version of the Italian metal casseroles (Berlin 2005:39–42).

Cooking-Bowl Casseroles (Fig. 8:9).— This type is characterized by a slightly rounded base with an everted body, thickened ridges and two small, degenerated handles on the rim. It had a versatile function for broiling and could serve as a frying pan or baking tray, just as the *orlo bifido* pans (see below). This casserole bowl is very similar in shape to Kefar Ḥananya Form 1A–1B (Adan-Bayewitz 1993:87–111). The cooking-bowl casseroles are a very rare type of cooking vessel during the Second Temple period, only found in a few sites in Provincia Judaea. Eight such fragments were found in Stratum VI, comprising 0.5% of the overall cooking assemblage. Lending to its rarity is its limited chronological framework, as other cooking bowls/pans were preferred, such as the knife-pared rim cooking vessel (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2019:90–91). Only a few, fairly similar parallels, were found at nearby sites, such as the Eastern Cardo (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2019:90–91, No. 679) and the Jerusalem ICC kilns site (Berlin 2005: Fig. 19:4). In northern Israel, this shape is very common at Kefar Ḥananya and the Golanite repertoire (Berlin 2006:45–47, Fig. 2.19).

Orlo Bifido Pan (Fig. 8:10)
Thick-walled cooking vessels used as frying pans or baking trays are rare in the Stratum VI assemblage, represented only by a few sherds of imported *orlo bifido* pans, which comprise 0.3% of the cooking vessels. The *orlo bifido* pans are shallow flat-based pans with slightly concave walls and a grooved rim and no handles. *Orlo bifido* pans were found in the Jewish Quarter (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2003:216–217, Pl. 6.6:6) but are absent in the Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Tchekhanovets 2013). Other types of thick-walled cooking vessels, such as Pompeian red ware, were completely absent.

Lid (Fig. 7:11)
Lids are shallow bowls made of cooking ware, usually with a thickened outturned rim and in some cases, with a ribbed body, used to cover pots or casseroles so the boiled water would not evaporate. Only one fragment of a cooking lid was found in Stratum VI. It has an outturned hollow knob and is made of cooking ware typical of Southern Phoenicia (Monickendam-Givon et al. 2012). It was probably imported from a site in Southern Phoenicia, such as Dor-Dora or ‘Akko-Ptolemais. Cooking lids are absent in the Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Tchekhanovets 2013:115).

Stand (Fig. 8:12)
Only one sherd of a cooking-ware stand was found in Stratum VI. Stands are usually associated with pottery production where they were used to dry leather-hard vessels in the manufacturing process (Berlin 2005:45, Fig. 10), but they could also serve as pot stands during cooking, as some of them bear soot traces (Mazar and Pinsky 2018:139). The stands are usually made as a hollow concave ring with two out-turned rims. Stands were found in small quantities at nearby Giv‘ati Parking Lot (Tchekhanovets 2013:115) and the ‘Ofel (Mazar and Pinsky 2018:139, Fig. A1:77).

The pottery found in the cistern in the ‘Exhibition Tunnel’ excavations represents a few decades of discarded pottery, spanning the early and mid–late first century CE. The exact nature and reasons for discarding the vessels remains unknown. That said, it is clear that the assemblage is dominated by cooking vessels, primarily cooking pots, attesting to their common use in first-century CE Jerusalem. Furthermore, the large number of intentionally punctured cooking vessels, alongside the presence of many complete specimens, indicate that the pots were not discarded only due to their breaking but for some other reasons as well. As abovementioned, the cooking-pot concentration from this cistern is not unique and therefore calls for a discussion within the wider framework of cooking-pot abundancy in assemblages of the Late Second Temple period in Jerusalem.

Categories of Cooking-Pot Deposits

The cooking-pot concentrations in Jerusalem can be divided into three groups, based on their find-contexts (see Fig. 1):

Group 1: Cooking Pots in Water Cisterns and Ritual Baths
The cistern uncovered in the 'Exhibition Tunnel' excavations is one of four similar contexts, where cooking pots were intentionally deposited in water installations, cisterns or ritual baths. Of these, the context presented above is the only assemblage discovered in the Lower City.

The 'Exhibition Tunnel' Excavations. The large amount of first-century CE cooking pots (see above) intentionally deposited in the water cistern put it out of use. Although they were complete, they were discovered in a broken, yet restorable state. Some of the cooking pots were perforated at the base or shoulder. As most of the vessels in the assemblage were broken, it is hard to estimate how many of the vessels were intentionally perforated.

Upper City, Area P. Two find-contexts of cooking-pot concentrations were reported by Avigad from this site: (1) a water cistern abutting the Palatial Mansion, which contained 750 broken cooking pots that were cast into it (Avigad 1983:119); and (2) a water cistern beneath the central courtyard of the Palatial Mansion, where 35 intact cooking pots were found on its floor. Avigad notes that many of the cooking pots, both in the cistern outside the mansion and the one inside it, had small perforations in their walls (Avigad 1983:119, Fig. 111).

Jewish Quarter, Area J. A ritual bath (*miqveh*) discovered inside a private home was filled with a large number of complete vessels, alongside a large quantity of glass refuse and over 100 Hasmonean coins. The finds indicate that the ritual bath was filled around the mid-first century BCE. A variety of pottery vessels were found, including 15 complete cooking pots. There is no information regarding the quantities of the other vessel types; however, it is clear that there were other vessels, including intact specimens (Geva 2014:50–53).

Group 2: Cooking Pots along City Walls
Another phenomenon noted is the placement of cooking pots along the external faces of Jerusalem's city walls. In all cases, a group of cooking pots was placed in an orderly manner along the walls in an upright position. Most of the cooking pots from there wall-deposits are intact, lacking perforations. Four such occurrences, chronologically and geographically unique to Early Roman-period Jerusalem, have been documented to date.

City of David, Area A. In Reich and Shukron's excavations along the Kidron Valley, a concentration of some 30 cooking pots was discovered along the eastern face of W10 (Reich and Shukron 2021b). The pots were found above the capstones of an Iron Age II

water channel, however, clearly dating to the Early Roman period, when the earlier channel wall continued to serve as a retaining wall at the base of the slope. Along the eastern face of the wall, three stratified layers of cooking pots were uncovered. The two lower layers included most of the intact pots, while the uppermost layer consisted of a single intact pot and additional sherds of others. The pots were not scattered along the entire wall but rather grouped in a specific area. The presence of large cooking-pot sherds, alongside complete vessels, indicates that there were more vessels in this group, which were also intentionally placed or abandoned, and broke due to post-depositional processes. Several other vessels were retrieved together with the cooking pots, including small saucers that were often placed on the pots as lids. A lamp was found inside one of the pots. Interestingly, the stratification of the cooking pots reflects a long process of deposition, evident from the vessel typology. The lowest layer of cooking pots is dated typologically and numismatically to the late second–first centuries BCE; the middle layer is dated to the first century CE, although it also contains vessels dating from the first century BCE; and the uppermost deposit is characterized by vessels dating exclusively to the first century CE (Ariel 2021; Lieberman 2021a:135–150; Reich and Shukron 2021b:679–681). Therefore, not only were the cooking pots deposited in a specific area along the wall, but this area was used for this purpose for a long time.

City of David, Area J. North of Area A, a similar phenomenon was observed. Intact cooking pots were discovered along the eastern face of W501 and W502. These were either placed on bedrock or on a thin layer of debris that had accumulated on bedrock. All the cooking pots discovered along the walls of Area J are typical of the late first century BCE and the first century CE (Lieberman 2021b:242–246; Reich and Shukron 2021a:204).

City of David, Area A1. Shiloh's excavations in Area A1 yielded a fill containing thousands of potsherds, mostly of cooking pots, and including some intact cooking pots (with no details of their exact number or location) between two massive walls, which were part of the city's eastern fortification system. The context of the intact cooking pots along the city walls, and their state of preservation, may indicate that in Area A1, a similar phenomenon occurred of placing cooking pots along walls, with later debris deposited above them (Shiloh 1984:5, Pl: 6:1; De Groot, Cohen and Caspi 1992:15–17, Fig. 27).

Mamillah. Reich reported a similar phenomenon in Mamillah, along the western wall of the city, although it has not yet been published (Reich and Shukron 2021b:679).

Group 3: Cooking Pots in Secondary Deposition

The third group of cooking-pot concentrations was retrieved from first-century CE fills and deposits found in secondary deposition along the circumference of the city. Their concentration and abundancy are, however, irregular compared to normal ceramic assemblage distributions, as those presented above from contemporary sites. These fills, rich in cooking-pot sherds, were discovered to the north and south of the Old City.

Herod's Gate. In an excavation near Herod's gate, in the northern part of the Old City, fragments of more than 150 cooking pots were found (Baruch and Avni 2019). The ratio of cooking vessels to other types is unknown. However, the excavators' impression is that the assemblage, dated to the first century CE, contained: "…mainly cooking vessels" (Baruch and Avni 2019). They also noted that some of the cooking vessels were perforated.

City of David, Area A1. As noted above, two wide walls were exposed in Shiloh's Area A1, possibly part of a first-century CE fortification system (with the possibility that the basic framework may have been slightly earlier). In addition to the intact cooking pots noted above, the area between the two massive walls was filled with debris that contained sherds of over 3500 vessels, of which 2645 (75.57%) were cooking pots (Shiloh 1984:5, Pl: 6:1; De Groot, Cohen and Caspi 1992:15–17, Fig. 27).

City of David, Area D3. South of the Old City, a large quantity of cooking pots was found in landfills identified as the city's garbage dump during the first century CE (Machline and Gadot 2017). Within the fills, cooking vessels comprised 29.43–53.05% of the overall pottery assemblage (depending on the sifting method; see Machline and Gadot 2017: Table 5). Based on quantitative information regarding other dumps in the area, cooking vessels generally comprise between 10–31% of the assemblage, thus the concentration of cooking pots in this dump is rare (Machline and Gadot 2017: Table 6). Some of the cooking vessels were perforated, the holes understood as mending holes (Machline and Gadot 2017:140).

City of David, Area L. Within a garbage dump in this area, cooking pots comprised the most common vessels type, constituting 31% of the ceramic assemblage (Bar-Oz et al. 2007:7).

Discussion

The data presented above paints a clear picture of the significant role of cooking vessels in the pottery repertoire of Jerusalem. There were lots of cooking pots in Jerusalem of the Late Second Temple period, especially during the final decades of the Temple's existence. However, carefully defining the different assemblages and occurrences of cooking pots in the city implies that they do not represent a single phenomenon. The abundancy of cooking pot remains was divided into three different categories, enabling a better understanding of the usage of cooking pots in the city during the period under discussion. Apparently, many cooking pots were used and deposited differently throughout the city and over a long period of time, spanning the late first century BCE and the first century CE. Yet, the distinction between the methods of deposition does not lessen the supposition that cooking pots were abundant in and around the city. This situation emphasized the fact the cooking-vessel concentrations were not limited to a single context, but rather occurred in several varied contexts.

The first group of discarded cooking pots was discovered in intentional deposits, sealing different types of water installations. These were dumped over a relatively short period of time, probably not with an intention to fill in the installations, but rather to deposit the cooking vessels, with the disused installation chosen for this purpose. In these contexts, the deposits represent excess cooking vessels, dumped intact after they had been used many times. These deposits were located inside private homes and reflect domestic behavior of consumption and discarding. Thus, the nature of the deposit in the 'Exhibition Tunnel' excavations is similar to that found in the cisterns and baths in the Upper City, all of which were associated with a domestic structure. Within the domestic sphere, cooking vessels were largely used. Interestingly, the removal of such vessels into a household when the vessels were still in an adequate, seems to have been common. In these cases, it seems as though the deposited cooking pots were the outcome of clearing the house. The heaps of vessels were not a goal in themselves, but rather a practical solution for discarding vessels no longer in use.

The second group of cooking-vessel concentrations—those found along the city walls—attests to intentional deposition. In these cases, people intentionally deposited cooking pots in a specific place, which was clearly significant to them. This significance, however, is not clear to us, and may be connected to ritual aspects of the city or a ritual practice connected to the city walls or gates.[4] Unlike the Group 1 depositions, which reflect a domestic activity, the depositions of Group 2 seem not to have been functional. While a water cistern may have been an obvious candidate for reuse as a household dump, lining the city walls with pots cannot be easily explained as a solution for unused pots or clutter clearance. In this case, the depositing of the pots was the main intention and objective.

The third group of dumps and fills on the margins of the city comprises vessels that were discarded after they had gone out of use. In this manner, Group 3 resembles Group 1; however, the Group 3 vessels were discarded in the urban refuse system and not inside a private dwelling. The pots deposited in the landfills were not used in their findspot, but rather brought to the large dump from elsewhere as a secondary deposition.

These three categories of deposition differ from one another in context, intention and character. They may may bear some similarities, but they clearly do not express a single mode of behavior. Yet, while each of the contexts must be examined individually, the phenomenon may also be addressed. Pottery assemblages reflect the ceramic culture of a city. Therefore, vessels discovered in contexts throughout a city, express the trends and lifestyle of its inhabitants and visitors. In this case, the large number of cooking pots, and their various concentrations throughout the city, likely represents Jerusalem's unique character. The plethora of cooking pots in Jerusalem attests to the extent of its function as a Temple-City, with sacrificial ceremonies during the late first century BCE and first

[4] See, for example, Jeremiah 19, which echoes a connection between ceramic vessels and the city gate. Although clearly earlier than the phenomenon mentioned here, it still may reflect on this practice.

century CE until 70 CE. Previous observations of cooking-pot abundancy had led to similar conclusions, suggesting that pilgrims would consume their offerings and dispose their pots afterward (Reich and Shukron 2021b:681). However, the abundancy of cooking pots in the Holy City of Jerusalem mainly attests to plenty of cooking and eating, not necessarily related to eating tithes and sacrifices. Another explanation suggested for the cooking-pot concentrations found on the city's outskirts (around the City of David and next to Herod's Gate) was that they represented the boundaries of the city, where only certain sacrifices were allowed to be eaten within the city's boundaries (Grossberg 2004; 2008; Reich and Shukron 2021b:680).

Usually, large concentrations of pottery represent the most prevalent activity in a given context, site or even city. In our case, this attests to the significance of cooking and the consumption of cooked food in the city. Comparing the pottery assemblages from Jerusalem to other assemblages, especially assemblages of discarded pottery, emphasizes the use of specific vessels, reflected in their percentage according to the different categories of use. For instance, one of the largest concentrations of vessels in the Roman world is from second-century CE Rome. Monte Testaccio, located south of the city of Rome, is a mound of discarded amphorae, which were used in the vast trading of olive oil throughout the Mediterranean. Most amphorae were discarded in the second and third centuries CE, but the early stages of discarding amphorae at the site can be dated as early as the first century BCE (Peña 2007:301). The mound represents the city's vast commercial activity and the prevalent oil consumption (Peña 2007:302), or the industries of the city (Peña 2007:303).

Another example of pottery concentrations reflecting on a city's material culture is the fifth-century BCE well in the Athenian Agora (Lynch 2011). The vessels discarded inside the well after the Persian sack of 480 BCE represent the extensive production of table and drinking vessels and the emphasis on drinking habits (Lynce 2011). Just as drinking must have been a significant behavior in the culture of Athens prior to the Persian invasion, food cooking and consumption was significant in the cultural makeup of Late Second Temple period Jerusalem.

When compared to other sites, the abundancy of cooking pots in Jerusalem can be quantified. Comparing the Jerusalem pottery corpora with other Early Roman sites shows that the percentage of cooking vessels in Early Roman-period Jerusalem is somewhat higher. Unfortunately, limited quantitative data was published from sites dating to the Early Roman period in Judea and the broader Eastern Mediterranean area. In first-century CE Gamla, inhabited by Judeans with relations with Jerusalem and Judea (Adan-Bayewitz et al. 2008), cooking vessels comprise 24–43% of the overall pottery assemblage (Berlin 2006: Table 1.2). In the Roman Temple of Paneas, cooking vessels comprise about 28% of the overall pottery assemblage (Berlin 1999: Figs. 7, 14), less than in the Hellenistic period (Berlin 1999: Figs. 4; 14). In Machaerus, 'En Gedi and Masada, cooking vessels similarly comprise about one-third of the ceramic assemblage, ranging between 30–33% (Loffreda 1996:199–203; Bar-Nathan 2006; Vincenz 2007:301–304).

In Early Roman and Roman-period sites outside Israel, the percentage of cooking vessels was not always recorded. Even in architectural complexes recognized as kitchens or pantries, cooking vessels were not found or kept, as in Olynthus (Cahill 2008:63; 78; 89–90; 153–161, 180). In Corinth (Slane 2003: Fig. 19.12), cooking vessels comprise only 15–20% of the Early Roman coarse ware, with an average of 17–25% of the East Theatre pottery assemblage during the Roman period (first century BCE–fifth century CE; Slane 2003:333). In Nea Paphos, two rooms interpreted as kitchens yielded 15 complete cooking vessels (Więch 2017). Although no further numbers were given, the report does note that cooking vessels were the major functional category in the rooms, most being deep globular pots (Więch 2017:443). In a survey in eastern Greece (southern Epirus), cooking ware dated to the Roman period comprised 48% of the assemblage that was identified during the survey. This, however, may not be comparable to excavated assemblages (Moore 2001: Fig. 3).

Returning to Jerusalem, the cooking vessels comprise the lion's share of the pottery assemblages: 49.5% of the pottery retrieved from the cistern in the 'Exhibition Tunnel' excavation; 29.43–53.05% of the pottery assemblage in the City of David Area D3; and 31% of the assemblage in the City of David Area L (see above). In contrast, in the Giv'ati Parking Lot excavations Building 760, dating to the first century CE, cooking vessels comprised only 26% of the quantified representing pot sherds. Unfortunately, despite extensive excavations in Jerusalem, the remains have only been partially published, and even in cases of published contexts, inclusive quantitative information of the ceramic assemblage is not always provided, making the comparison between the cooking-vessel deposits and their presence in domestic contexts a challenge. In Building 721 in Area E of the Jewish Quarter excavations, for example, all complete and near-complete vessels are listed, but sherds are not. Of the complete vessels listed, only 9% are cooking vessels (Geva 2006:61–64). In the Burnt House in Area B, cooking vessels constitute 18% of the published pottery, but the report does note that "cooking vessels comprise the largest group of complete ceramic vessels from the Burnt House" (Geva 2010:125). Hopefully, further publications will allow a more cohesive quantitative analysis. Regardless, when comparing the quantitative information from Jerusalem to other contemporary sites, both domestic and in fills, it seems that the frequency of cooking pots in Jerusalem is equivalent or greater than their presence at other sites. When comparing the depositions and domestic contexts in Jerusalem, it appears that the former contains a significantly larger percentage of cooking pots than the latter.

The ample discoveries of cooking pots in Jerusalem must be examined within the framework of the city's uniqueness as a religious center, attracting many pilgrims and visitors, shaping the character of the city as a temple-city, hosting masses who consumed sacred offerings and mundane meals. This, however, may explain the large quantities of cooking vessels but not the unusual methods of their deposition. Furthermore, while tracing the boundaries of the city may explain the findspot of some of the cooking-pot concentrations, it does not explain that of the vessels discarded inside cisterns and ritual baths, or those placed in an orderly manner along the city walls.

It is hard to determine whether the cooking-pot disposal inside cisterns and ritual baths, or along the city walls, represents a ritual/ceremonial behavior or a mundane activity. It is possible that cooking-pot disposal in cisterns and baths attests to mass food preparation and consumption, as attested along the city borders. This assumption seems likely if indeed the marginal dumps reflect the material culture of the city itself. The fact that the disposal of the vessels put the cisterns and baths out of use is evidence that their dumping then and there was preferred over a continuous use of the installations. Apparently, already during the Late Second Temple period, during the first century CE, some of the ritual baths and water cisterns in the city were no longer in use.

Considering the frequent use of cooking pots in Jerusalem, their disposal throughout the city may merely reflect their dominance in everyday life in the city. Lots of pots were used, and therefore lots of pots were deposited. This observation pinpoints a specific time in the development of the city during which many pots were deposited, a phenomenon unknown from earlier periods in Jerusalem. This may be connected to the rising popularity of the Temple. Only after the Temple was rebuilt by King Herod did the city become a vast metropolis, attracting a growing number of pilgrims and visitors. These pilgrims camped in and around the city, cooked and ate their food—both sanctified and mundane. Jerusalem of the Late Second Temple period was a year-round destination for pilgrims and visitors, peaking on the Jewish festivals (Safrai 2020, and see further references therein).

Another factor that may have prompted the increase in the number of cooking vessels during the Late Second Temple period, unrelated to any behavioral or ceremonial change, is the manufacturing of cooking vessels at the workshop unearthed in the kilns site of the Jerusalem International Convention Center (Binyene Ha-Umma), where pots, primarily the typical globular cooking pots, were produced on a large industrial scale (Berlin 2005; Beeri and Levi 2018:7–38). The mass production may have been a response to a rising demand. Once a major production center distributing many cooking vessels to the local markets was set up, the cost of these items decreased, allowing the masses to purchase pots, use them fewer times and discard them. Alternatively, the growing pilgrimage movement increased the demand for cooking pots, both for personal and sacrificial use, supporting an increased production thereof.

The increase in production, along with mass pilgrimage and camps in and around the city, may suggest an explanation for the cooking vessels in two of the three contexts. In the city dumps, the pots reflect an increase in food cooking and consumption throughout the city, an occurrence which can be understood in a wider framework as well, including the renovation of the Temple, attracting pilgrims and visitors, as well as the establishment of a large production center. The residential deposits within water installations may reflect a similar behavior. Cooking pots were discarded after use, possibly due to *halakhic* regulations limiting the future use of vessels initially used for tithes or sacrifices (Grossberg 2002; 2004).

While the many cooking pots found in the marginal deposits and in houses within the city may in fact be connected to each other and echo a similar occurrence, it seems that

the cooking pots deposited in an orderly manner near the city walls is not directly related to the two other contexts. In the case of the city walls, the method of deposition is clearly intentional, with many of the examples intact, indicating they could have still been used, but were nonetheless deposited. Hence, these pots are not meal leftovers, nor were they part of an installation such as a kitchen or production site. They are also clearly not part of a city dump, as those are different in nature from the intact cooking pots. Furthermore, their contents rule out the possibility that they contained burials. The oil lamps discovered in some of the pots further suggest the pots were not used for food preparation or consumption in their final deposition.

At Jerash, three intact cooking pots were discovered in the northwestern quarter of the city, in a trench above bedrock containing ashes and some pottery and glass sherds. The pots were covered with a tile fragment. They were carefully and intentionally deposited during the Roman period. There, the possibility that the pots were deposited for a functional reason is rejected, and they were interpreted as part of termination rituals, marking either the closure or abandonment of space or the preparation of a new space (Lichtenberger and Raja 2015). A variety of magical receipts define which objects can be considered termination deposits, some of which are compatible with the contents of the Jerash cooking pots. According to the excavators, the Jerash pots were intentionally deposited and were only in use for a short period of time. They suggest a ritual or magical function of the pots deposited prior to construction or to conclude a building project. Along the city walls of Jerash, two cooking pots were found nestled against the city walls. Those pots were interpreted as part of a city dumping area, due to the soot marks on the pots (indicating they had been used prior to their depositing) and their association with concentrations of dumped remains such as glass, plaster and pottery (Kehrberg-Ostrasz and Manley 2019:25–26).

Summary and Conclusions

In Late Second Temple Jerusalem cooking pots were used in large quantities. Consequently, many cooking pots are retrieved from various archaeological contexts, attesting to their abundance in the material culture of the city. The distribution of the pots is not consistent throughout the city, and several patterns of distribution were identified. One context, comprising intact cooking pots intentionally deposited along the city walls, often with items inside the pots and or covered by lids, is quite peculiar, resembling ritual behaviors from other sites, where they are connected to ritual or magical behavior. In Jerusalem, this phenomenon has yet to be fully comprehended.

The deposition of cooking pots in ritual baths and water cisterns is a recurring act throughout the city in the Second Temple period, before the 70 CE destruction, apparently when the installations could still be in use by the residents of the city. Some of the baths and cisterns were used as dumps when the adjacent houses and structures were still in use. This phenomenon corresponds to the third group of cooking-pot concentrations, discovered in fills and dumps surrounding the city's circumference. Together, they imply that the

material culture of the city consisted of many cooking pots, evidence of an intensive scope of food preparation and consumption. As previously suggested, the abundancy of cooking vessels may have been a result of eating 'holy' meals connected to sacrifices and tithes, with *kodashim* status—food which must be eaten within the limits of Jerusalem—but also mundane consumption of food by the many visitors and pilgrims staying in the city year-round. Thus, though an ordinary find, discovered in almost any excavation dating to the Late Second Temple period in the area of Jerusalem, the distribution, quantity and contexts of the cooking pots shed light both on possibly ritual practices in and around the city as well as on the nature of the city as a "temple city" with both sacred ramifications, but also plain, conventional consequences, such as the common need to eat.

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