

Roman-period pottery from a trench by the northern city wall in Beit Ras/Capitolias



Abstract: Insight into the chronology of the defenses of ancient Capitolias comes from a standard typological ceramic analysis of pottery finds from relevant stratigraphic contexts. Remains of a defensive city wall were uncovered in one of the trenches opened by a PCMA team working at the site of Beit Ras (ancient Capitolias) in the governorate of Irbid, northern Jordan, in 2015–2016. Neither the foundation nor the earliest walking level connected with the wall was reached; however, three upper floors, all posterior to the construction of the city wall, were identified. Apart from chronological indications, an analysis of the ceramics from under the floors facilitated a study of the repertory of local, regional and some imported wares in Roman-period Capitolias.

Keywords: pottery, Roman period, city wall, Beit Ras/Capitolias

A section of the city defences of ancient Capitolias, founded as a city most probably in the late 1st century¹, was discovered in one of the trenches excavated at Beit Ras over the seasons in 2015 and 2016 by a team from the PCMA UW (Młynarczyk 2017: 497–502, Figs 23–25). The location of the trench in question (the Central North trench) is in accord with the course of the northern section of the city defences as traced by Gottlieb Schumacher [*Fig. 1*], the author of the first (and so far

Jolanta Młynarczyk

University of Warsaw, Faculty
of Archaeology,

¹ All dates are AD (CE) unless otherwise noted.

Acknowledgments

Words of gratitude are due our Jordanian partner on behalf of the DOA, Eng. Amjad Batayneh, for his most friendly and fruitful cooperation, as well as Prof. Nabil Bader of the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, Yarmuk University, Irbid (Dean of the Faculty in 2012–2015), for his unfailing help. Our team benefited from the continuous support of Dr. Aktham Qweidi, Director of Excavations and Surveys in the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, and the then Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Jordan, Dr. Krzysztof Bojko. Last but not least, the author wishes to express her warm gratitude to the staff of the DOA Beit Ras office for their most kind attitude toward our team and their assistance on a daily basis. The Beit Ras archaeological project was sponsored by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw.

only) archaeological map of the ancient site (Schumacher 1890: 154). With the exception of a short section of the wall abutting the western face of the theater (see below), the course of the wall today is completely obliterated.

Difficult field conditions, specifically, the location of the excavations inside a privately-owned olive grove, restricted the size of the trench to 5.40 m east–west by 4.45 m north–south (for the trench plan, see Młynarczyk 2017: 499, Fig. 23). The unearthed wall was 2.50 m thick. The section excavated in the trench was roughly 3.80 m long and was aligned east–west. The inner (southern) face

was carefully constructed of limestone ashlars, the core made of both undressed and semi-dressed stones, and the outer (northern) side faced with square basalt blocks (Młynarczyk 2017: 500, Fig. 25). On the outside, the trench reached a depth of approximately 1.50 m below the present ground surface, that is, the top level of the first preserved course of basalt blocks. On the southern side, however, excavation stopped at 572.50 m ASL, 3.50 m below the modern surface. The dig had to be halted for logistical reasons; the deepest point reached was about 0.40 m below the level of the wall plinth, leaving its full height unknown [Fig. 2].

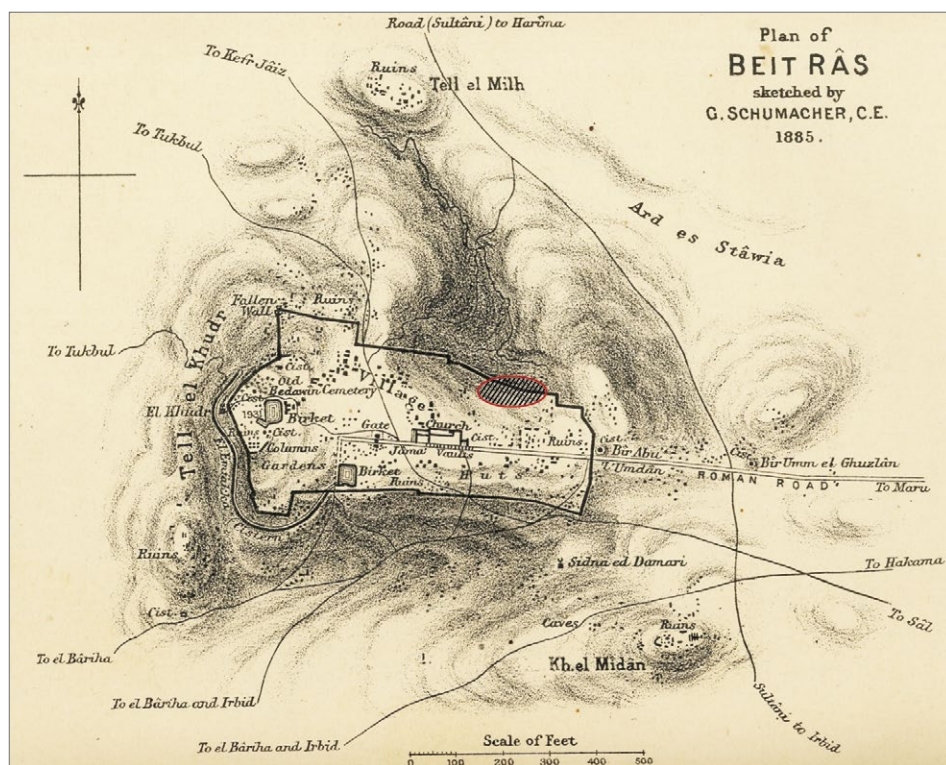


Fig. 1. Plan of the remains of ancient Capitolias with the city wall as recorded in 1885 by G. Schumacher; the hatched area indicates the location of the PCMA UW trenches (2015–2016) (After Schumacher 1890: 154 | updated M. Burdajewicz)



Fig. 2. Section of the northern city wall of Capitolias (W I in Areas 2-N and 3-N) with the inner (southward) face of limestone ashlars, facing northwest (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photo M. Drzewiecki)

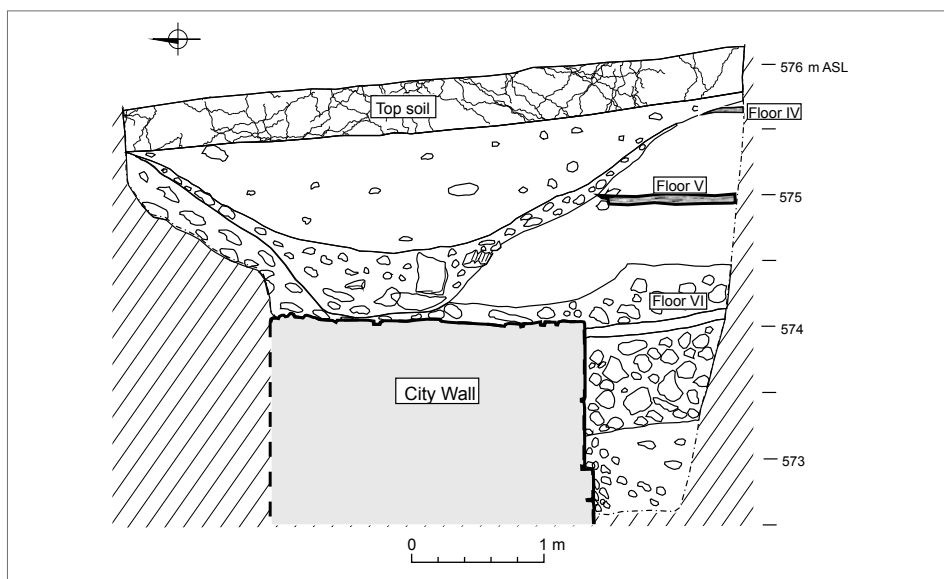


Fig. 3. The eastern section of the Central North trench with the robber pit, 2016 (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | drawing M. Drzewiecki, digitizing M. Burdajewicz).

The aim of the present paper is twofold: a repertory of pottery shapes and wares, based on the finds from the fill connected with the wall, and insight into the chronology of this particular section of the city wall. In both cases, the fact that the excavation did not reach the lowermost original walking and/or construction level renders our knowledge incomplete. The extremely narrow area of the bottom of the trench yielded a rather small sample of pottery.

STRATIGRAPHY

During the first phase of the excavations in 2015, two floors were identified on the southern side of the city wall: FI and FII (Młynarczyk 2018: 184–185, Figs 28–30). After the trench was enlarged in 2016, three floors, once abutting the southern face of the city wall, were identified: FIV (corresponding to FI of 2015), FV (corresponding to FII of 2015) and FVI. Two of them, FIV and FV, were cut through by a robber pit 1.45–1.60 m deep [Fig. 3], associated with the dismantling of the upper part of the city wall and the extraction of limestone ashlar from its southern face (Młynarczyk 2017: 498). The pit was backfilled with earth, rubble and ceramics (baskets B111, B114 and B116), mostly of the Byzantine and Umayyad period, with just a couple of glazed sherds. The fills under FV were recorded as B115 and B118–B122, of which the upper ones (B115 and B118–B119) may have contained some intrusive material from the adjoining robber pit. Potsherds in B118–B121 included also several joining fragments, proving that the contexts in question were parts of the same leveling layer about 1 m thick,

while context B122 should be interpreted as a deposit accumulated on the only undisturbed floor, FVI. The level of this floor corresponded to the top of the city wall as preserved under the robber pit. Of the contexts recorded below FVI (B123 through B126), the lowermost B126 rose from the deepest point 0.40 m below the top of the plinth to the level corresponding to the top of this plinth.

A small ceramic assemblage retrieved in 2015 from under FI (equal to FIV of 2016) contained common-ware pottery of the Byzantine to Umayyad periods. The latest potsherds were dated to the 7th century (Młynarczyk 2018: 188–191), but with a strong prevalence of 5th-century ceramics, such as a jar rim of an early “Beisan” type (Młynarczyk 2018: Fig. 33:34), casseroles of “Competing Form C3A” (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 156–158; see Młynarczyk 2018: Fig. 33:40–41) and a neckless cooking pot of “Competing Form C4A” (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 159–162; see Młynarczyk 2018: Fig. 33:39). Fragments of the same type of neckless cooking pot as above, but also other vessel forms and wares clearly of pre-Byzantine date, were found within the floor make-up of FII of 2015 (equal to FV of 2016) and directly beneath it (Młynarczyk 2018: 189, Fig. 34).

Within the Central North trench extension in 2016, the FV floor was dated provisionally to the late Roman/early Byzantine period (4th–5th centuries), and FVI to the 3rd century AD (Młynarczyk 2017: 500). Despite the presence of these two distinct ancient floors no sharp chronological division could be drawn between the two sets of contexts: B118–B122 (between FV and FVI) and B123–B126 (under FVI), respectively. This is

mainly because the pottery represents common wares that have a rather wide chronological range. This means that the same vessel forms repeatedly occur in different contexts, while examples of fine ware, which traditionally support the dating of ceramic assemblages with more precision, are extremely few (see below). Definitely the most common category of pottery in all the contexts were fragments of cooking pots and cooking bowls of several different fabrics and shapes. In

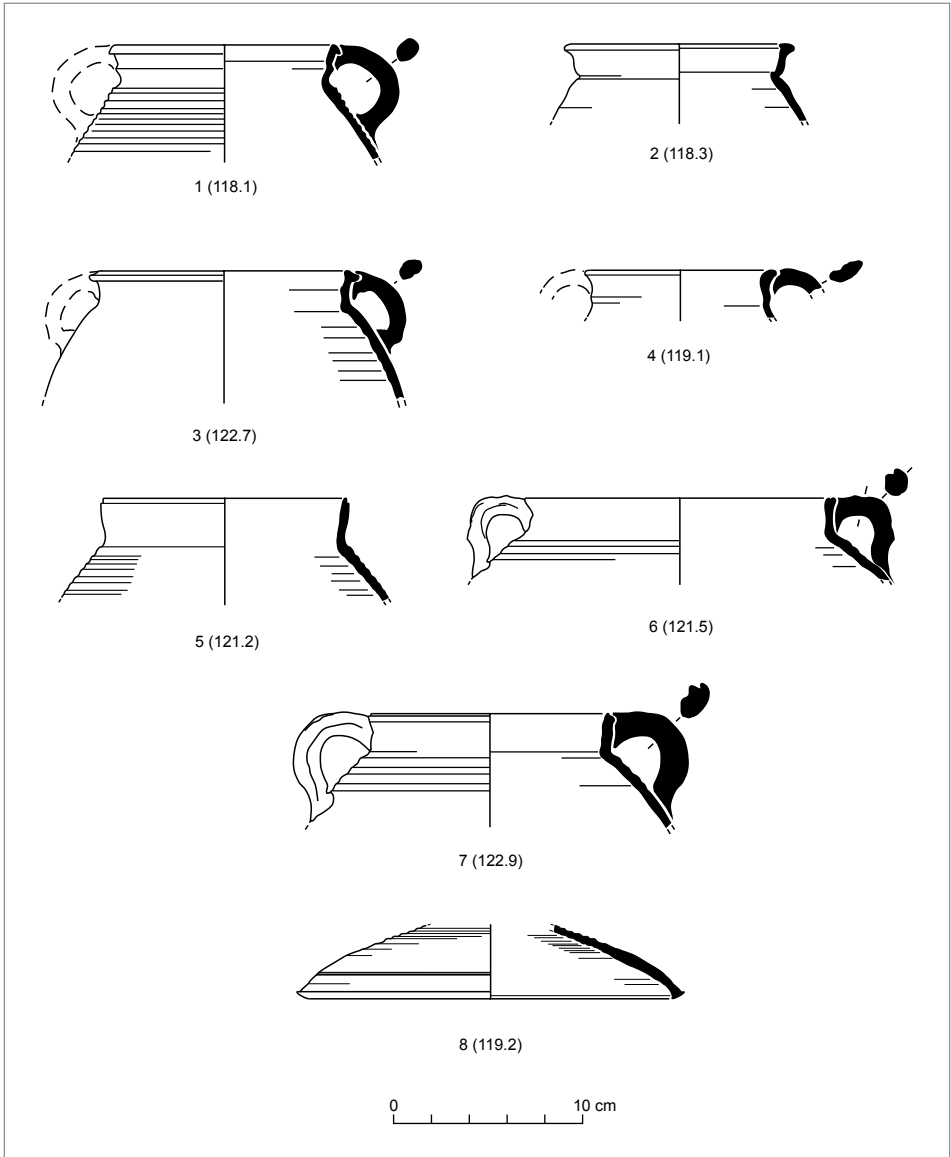


Fig. 4. Cooking pots from different contexts under FV and above FVI; contexts indicated in brackets (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | drawing M. Burdajewicz)

many contexts, especially B121 and B124–125, the ceramics were accompanied by considerable amounts of animal bones. The contexts directly above FVI (B121–B122) and below it (B123–B125) contained also pieces of low-baked clay interpreted as fragments of a *tabun* or oven (kiln?).

Moreover, contexts below FVI (B123–B125) contained many small pieces of raw clay. Alongside a waster of a jug (deformed during the firing), such finds may bear testimony to pottery making in Roman-period Capitolias (Młynarczyk 2017: 503–504).

CERAMIC TYPES AND FORMS

The pottery documented in drawing during the excavation of the city wall in 2016 is presented in groups divided by function, such as cooking pots (plus a cooking ware lid), cooking bowls, jugs and juglets (plus a funnel), basins, fine wares, local/regional storage jars and imported amphorae. Vessels are identified by their registration number (basket number accompanied by serial number). The state of preservation is described using the following abbreviations: R for rim, N for neck, W for wall, H for handle and B for base.

COOKING POTS

CP form 1a

No. 1 (118.1). RNWH of a cooking pot [Fig. 4:1]. Fabric gritty dark red with white grits; surface with very dark grey “skin” outside, dark brown inside. A fragment of a cooking pot from Hippos, closely similar to 118.1 and misidentified as Díez Fernández T 10.2, was found in a 3rd-century context (Kapitaikin 2018: Pl. 14:17). Actually, this fragment, as well as another Hippos example (Kapitaikin 2018: Pl. 12:9), pertain to Díez Fernández T 10.6c, dated to between the 3rd and 4th century. A parallel from Jerash comes from a 3rd century context (Clark et al.

1986: Fig. 20:2), and three examples of a closely related form were discovered in a context dated to the late 3rd century (Lichtenberger and Raja 2015: 315–319, Figs 1, 10, 13). Similarly, a fragment from Caesarea, classified as Riley Caesarea Cooking Pot Type 2A, is attributed to the 3rd–4th centuries (Johnson 2008: No. 786). The prototypes of the form go back to the early Roman period, suffice it to mention Díez Fernández T 10.2, dated to the 1st century BC–1st century (Díez Fernández 1983: 201) and Cooking Pot Type 4 from an early Roman assemblage at Jiyeh in the Sidon hinterland (Wicenciak 2016: 87 and Pls 65–67, especially No. 304).

CP form 1b

No. 2 (118.3). RNW of a cooking pot [Fig. 4:2]. Fabric very gritty, strong brown (7.5YR5/6) with many small (up to some large) white grits, few small black grits and occasional small circular voids; similar surface, partly fired brown (7.5YR5/4). The shape occurs in Gadara and Pella (Vriezen 2015: 130, Note 202, and Fig. XII.21:18, dated to the mid-5th? century), and in Caesarea (Johnson 2008: No. 784, identified as Riley Caesarea Cooking Pot Type 2A of the 3rd and 4th centuries). It is close to

Kefar Hananya Form 4C (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 129, especially Nos 3 and 7), dated to between the early 2nd and mid-4th century. A close parallel comes from Capernaum, classified as PENT 12 and broadly dated to between the mid-1st and mid-4th century (Loffreda 2008a: 150). A related shape occurred in Beirut in the 1st–2nd centuries (Pellegrino 2007: 150, Fig. 5:8).

No. 3 (122.7). RNWH of a cooking pot of the same form and fabric as No. 2 above [Fig. 4:3].

Cooking pots Nos 1–3 pertain to two variants (a–b) of the same form, one (No. 1) with a ribbed outer surface of the body, and the other (Nos 2–3) with a smooth shoulder. In the Decapolis region, the variant with ribbed body continued into the mid-5th century (Młynarczyk 2009: 128, No. 113, with references).

CP form 2

No. 4 (119.1). RNH of a cooking pot [Fig. 4:4]. Fabric orange-brown with some small white grits and some deep voids; surface “pitted”, fired orange to brown, dark brown at rim. Form comparable to Jiyeh Early Roman Cooking Pot Subtype 6.2, dated by parallels from Beirut to the Flavian period, 69–96 (Wicenciak 2016: Pl. 70, Nos 317–318; see also Pellegrino 2007: Fig. 5:4–5).

CP form 3a

No. 5 (121.2). RNW of a thin-walled cooking pot [Fig. 4:5]. Fabric reddish yellow with white grits and some tiny black inclusions; inner surface fired reddish yellow (5YR7/6 and 7/8), outer surface fired between light red (2.5YR6/8) and reddish yellow (5YR7/6), with

very delicate ribbing on the shoulder. A parallel pot from Pella comes from a 3rd–4th century context (Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 6:1), the shape corresponding to Kefar Hananya Form 4E1 (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 132–135, No. 3), dated to between an earlier 4th and an earlier 5th century. It is also related to Capernaum form PENT 14.2, common throughout the Byzantine period, that is, from the mid-4th century on (Loffreda 2008b: 190).

CP form 3b

No. 6 (121.5). RNWH (three joining fragments) of a cooking pot with grooved rim and pinched handle [Fig. 4:6]. Fabric brownish pink, granular, with some minute sand grits(?); surface yellow-beige inside, light brown outside. Cooking pots of this form are known from a 3rd–4th century context at Pella (Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 6:1, with narrower neck) and from Gadara, broadly dated on the grounds of parallels to between the 2nd and mid-4th century (Vriezen 2015: 129, and Note 203, Fig. XII.21:9). The general shape seems to correspond to Díez Fernández T 10.6b–c, dated to the 3rd–4th centuries (Díez Fernández 1983: 205).

Cooking pots Nos 5 and 6 are similar in their grooved lips and ribbed shoulders, even if they differ in proportions. However, their respective fabrics prove that they come from two different workshops, of which neither seems to be local to Capitolias.

CP form 4

No. 7 (122.9). RNWH of a cooking pot with externally ribbed body [Fig. 4:7]. Fabric with “sandwich” break: grayish brown inside, orange-red outside; inner

surface yellowish pink, outer surface orange-red. Related to a form known from Beirut and attributed to the 1st–2nd centuries (Pellegrino 2007: 150, Fig. 5:10), and to Díez Fernández T 10.12 (1983: Nos 352–353) of the same period. The rim/shoulder profile is related to that of pot No. 5 of CP form 3a (see above).

CP form 5

The deepest context reached in the trench, B126, yielded two fragments of Galilean cooking pots of Kefar Hananya form 4C (not illustrated), dated to between the early 2nd and mid-4th century AD (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 129–130).

LID

No. 8 (119.2). RW (two joining fragments) of a lid [Fig. 4:8]. Fabric brick-red with white grits; some deep voids; surface “pitted”, fired light brown inside, orange-brown outside with dark brown spots; rim sooted inside. A comparable lid comes from a context of the second half of the 3rd century at Jerash (Rasson 1986: 68, Fig. 17:7, different fabric); in Capernaum, it is classified as COP 1 and dated to the 4th–5th centuries (Loffreda 2008b: 219).

COOKING BOWLS

CB 1 (ledge-handle casserole)

No. 9 (121.3). RWH of a thin-walled casserole with thumb-indented ledge handle [Fig. 5:9]. The same fabric as cooking pot No. 5, but here the exterior surface is fired a reddish yellow (5YR6/6). An exact parallel dated to the 3rd century, doubtlessly of local manufacture, comes from Jerash (Clark

et al. 1986: 248, Fig. 20:7). An example from Pella displaying the same profile, but provided with “regular” horizontal handles, comes from a context dated to the 3rd–4th centuries (Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 6:4); two fragments with horizontal handles were found under FI in the Central North trench in 2015 (Młynarczyk 2018: Fig. 33:40–41); a related example from Caesarea is dated from the 3rd/4th century on (Johnson 2008: 71 and No. 819). The general form is close to the “Competing form C3A” (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 157), dated to between the 4th and 5th century (and later). This form, very common in the Decapolis area and elsewhere in Palestine, continued to develop through the Umayyad period.

CB 2 (Kefar Hananya forms)

No. 10 (122.1). RW of a cooking bowl [Fig. 5:10]. Fabric fired between light red (2.5YR6/6) and red (2.5YR5/6), with occasional black and white grits, the latter including large eruptions. Kefar Hananya form 1B (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 94, No. 14) dated to between the 1st/2nd and mid-4th century. Imitation of Kefar Hananya ware(?).

No. 11 (122.2). RW of a cooking bowl, the same fabric as No. 10 above [Fig. 5:11]. Kefar Hananya form 1E (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 103–107), between the mid-3rd and earlier 5th century.

CB 3 (regional variations of Kefar Hananya forms)

No. 12 (122.12). RW of a cooking bowl [Fig. 5:12]. Fabric soft, pink (light red) with lots of white grits, up to large. The shape is related to Kefar Hananya bowl form 1A (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 88–91,

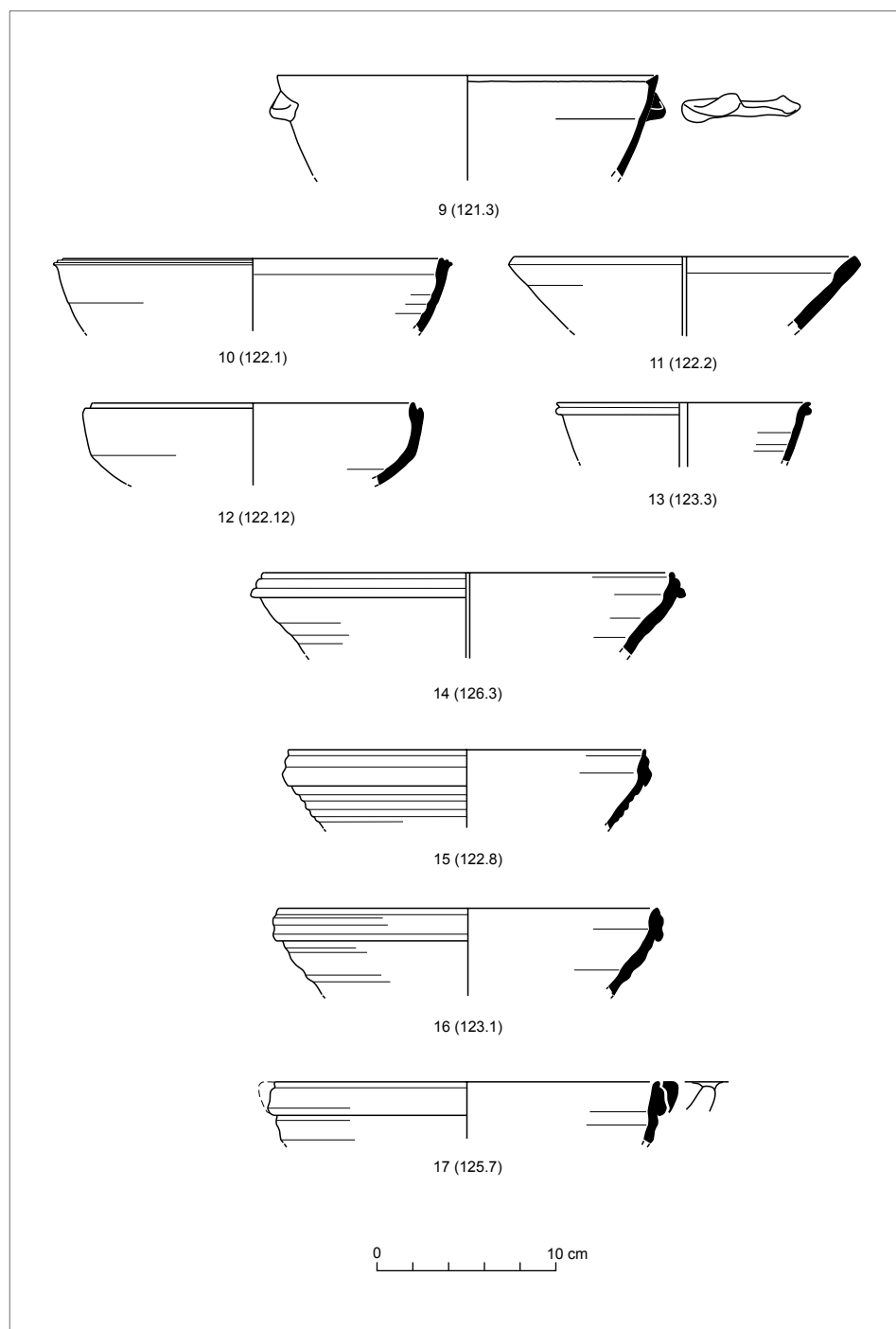


Fig. 5. Cooking bowls from different contexts under FV and above FVI; contexts indicated in brackets (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | drawing M. Burdajewicz)

Pl. 1A:2–3), dated to between the latter 1st and latter 3rd century. The profile of the bowl recalls Early Roman Jiyeh Pan Type 2 (Wicenciak 2016: Pl. 73:336), but also a bowl from Pella found in a 3rd–4th century context (Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 7:2) and a bowl from Gadara, dated broadly to 365–750 (Vriezen 2015: 133, Note 235, Fig. XII.22:17).

No. 13 (123.3). RW of a small cooking bowl [Fig. 5:13]. Fabric with sandwich section: grey inside, red outside; surface reddish brown (to dark brown on the rim outside), with white mineral eruptions on the outer surface. A related vessel has been reported from Gadara (Vriezen 2015: Fig. XII.22:18). The parallels from Capernaum, classified as TEG 14, are dated to between the end of the 1st and the end of 3rd century (Loffreda 2008b: 206–207; 2008a: 178–181, DG 193, especially Nos 124, 126). A similar form has also been attested elsewhere in Galilee (Díez Fernández 1983: T 15.1a, Nos 420 and 424) and in Caesarea (Johnson 2008: No. 809). It seems to be related to Kefar Hananya Form 1A from the late 1st through the late 3rd century (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 88–91); the presence of a gray core would identify this object as a Golan product, form G1A (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 173).

No. 14 (126.3). RW of a cooking bowl [Fig. 5:14]. Fabric fired to grey, containing many white grits of all sizes; surface fired red inside, grey (with red spots on the rim) outside. It appears to derive from Kefar Hananya form 1B dated to between the 1st/2nd and mid-4th century (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 94–95). For a parallel profile, see examples from Pella (Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 9:7, context of the

3rd–4th centuries), Gadara (Vriezen 2015: 133, Note 229, Fig. XII.22:11, dated by parallels to the mid-5th century) and Hippos (Kapitaikin 2018: Pl. 12:7). In the Central North trench, the same form of cooking bowl occurred also in B121 and B125.

CB 4 (outfolded rim, ribbed on exterior; undulated wall profile)

This type of bowl is typical of the Decapolis region, attested at such sites as Hippos (Młynarczyk 2009: 133, Nos 154 and 171, with numerous local parallels), Gadara (Vriezen 2015: 133, Fig. XII.22, Nos 11, 13–14, 16, all attributed to the mid-5th century) with neighboring Hammat Gader (Ben-Arieh 1997: 348–349, Pl. I:15–18, of a pre-455 date), as well as Pella (McNicoll et al. 1992: Pl. 109:9–10, about mid-5th century; Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 6:3, from a 3rd–4th century context). The type may be a distant development of Kefar Hananya form 1B as suggested by its apparent relationship to No. 14 (above).

No. 15 (122.8). RW of a cooking bowl [Fig. 5:15]. Fabric rather hard baked, brown, partly burnt to very dark grey, with some tiny white grits.

No. 16 (123.1). RW of a cooking bowl, sooted on the exterior [Fig. 5:16]. The same form and fabric as No. 15, fired to a deeper reddish brown color.

No. 17 (125.7). RWH of a cooking bowl with lug handle [Fig. 5:17]. Fabric dark grey (5YR4/2 dark reddish grey) with many white grits of all sizes; surface very coarse, outside fired reddish brown (near 5YR4/3 and 4/4), inside red (10R5/6). Similar lug-handled bowls from Gadara are dated on the basis of parallels to the

mid-5th century (Vriezen 2015: 133, Notes 230 and 234, Fig. XII.22:12 and 16), but the type is virtually the same as Nos 15–16, therefore it must have started not later than the 3rd century.

JUGS/TABLE AMPHORAE(?)/JUGLETS

No. 18 (118.2). RNWB of a jug with ribbed body, standing on a small concave base; rim strongly deformed during firing [Fig. 6:18]. Fabric a very gritty light brown (near 7.5YR6/4) with voids, some medium to small black grits and a few very small white ones; surface fired reddish yellow (7.5YR6/6). A related form is known from Caesarea (Johnson 2008: Nos 435 and/or 445, undated), while a very similar body/neck/rim profile is represented by a table amphora (base not preserved) from Samaria, allegedly from the 1st century (Díez Fernández 1983: 191 and No. 140).

No. 19 (121.4). RNW of an oinoche jug [Fig. 6:19]. Fabric rather hard, dense, pink (5YR7/4), with occasional white grits (tiny to large) and some small black ones(?); surface the same as in the break. Jugs of a similar shape come from the Roman-period tombs in Pella (McNicoll, Smith, and Hennessy 1982: Pl. 133:17, from Tomb 13; McNicoll et al. 1992: Pl. 92:5, from Tomb 64), from a context dated to the second half of the 3rd century in Jerash (Rasson 1986: 68, Fig. 17:1), and from Gadara (Vriezen 2015: Figs XII.24:18 and XII.27:10–11), the latter with a range of parallels dating from the 3rd to 6th–8th(!) century (Vriezen 2015: 151, Note 287).

No. 20 (122.3). RNH of an amphoriskos (parts of both handles preserved) in “cooking ware” [Fig. 6:20]. Fabric red (2.5YR5/6) with rare black and more

numerous white grits. It is paralleled by fragments from Gadara (Vriezen 2015: Fig. XII.28:7) and Caesarea (Johnson 2008: No. 441, from a sealed locus, probably from the 4th century, and No. 496, undated).

No. 21 (122.4). RNH of a juglet with flanged neck in “white ware” [Fig. 6:21]. Fabric (both in the break and on the surface) is very pale brown (10YR8/3) with rare white and black grits. The form corresponds to Díez Fernández T 8.3 (1983: 197–198, Nos 199–200) with examples from southern and eastern Palestine dated to between the late 1st and late 3rd century, and to Capernaum type VAS 2 dated to between the late Hellenistic and the beginnings of the “middle Roman” (i.e., 1st/2nd century) period (Loffreda 2008b: 157). A comparable form comes also from a sealed context from the second half of the 4th century in Caesarea (Johnson 2008: No. 438), probably residual.

No. 22 (122.5). BW of a jug or small table amphora in “white ware” [Fig. 6:22]. The fabric (break and surface) is very pale brown with rare white and black grits. The size and shape resemble a jug, No. 18 (above); the wall, however, is ribbed. It is also similar to the “table amphora base” category of the early Roman assemblage from Jiyeh in the Sidon hinterland (Wicenciak 2016: Pl. 53), and a base of a jug from Caesarea (Johnson 2008: No. 435 with ribbed body, undated).

No. 23 (125.3). BW of a juglet with thick flat base and ribbed body, in “white ware” [Fig. 6:23]. Fabric white, rather porous; outer surface slightly darker (very pale brown). Form similar to Juglet Type 1, common in Jiyeh during the early Roman period, manufactured already in

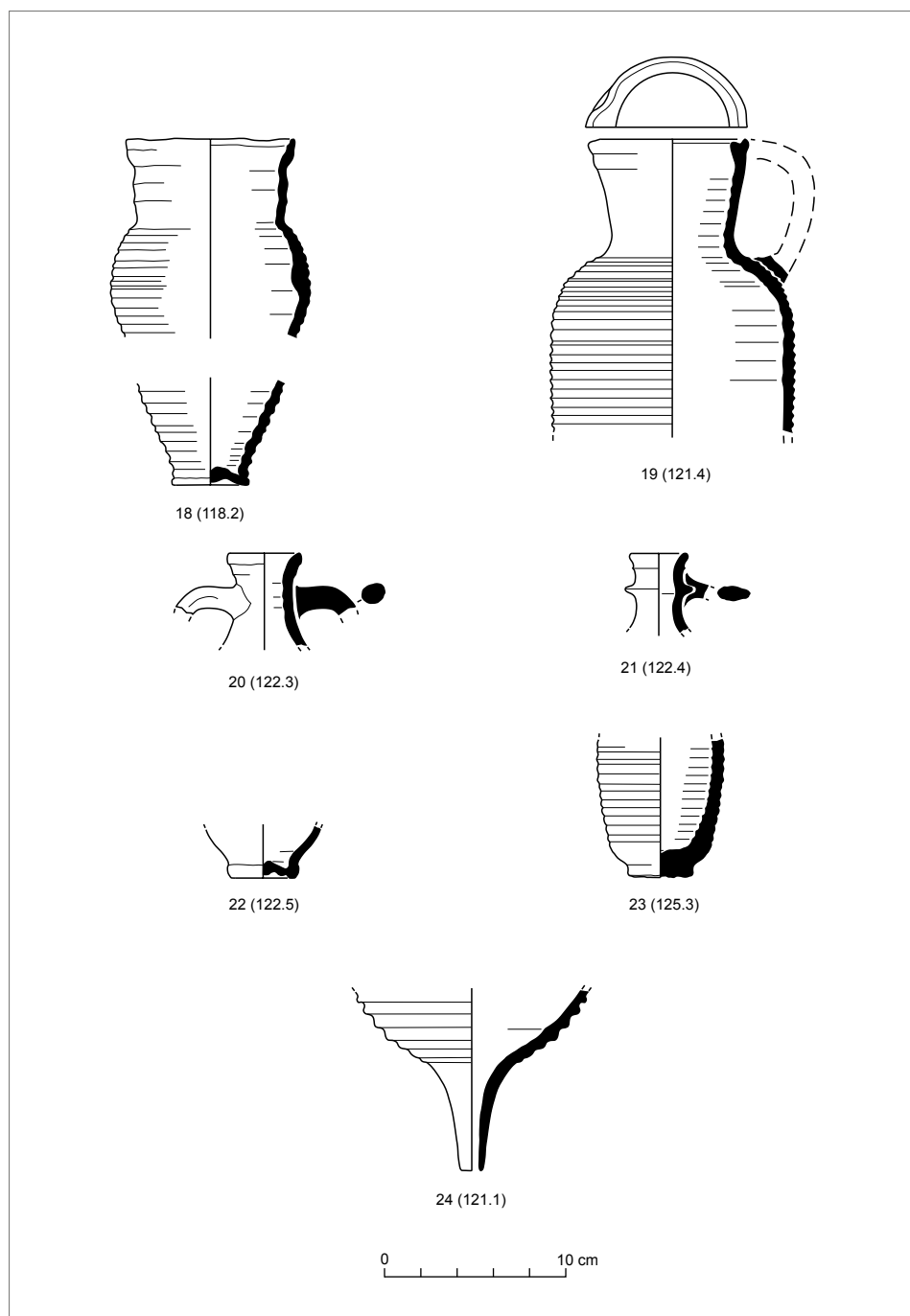


Fig. 6. Vessels from different contexts under FV and above FVI: jugs (Nos 18–19); amphoriskos (No. 20); juglets (Nos 21–23); funnel (No. 24); contexts indicated in brackets (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | drawing M. Burdajewicz)

the late Hellenistic period (Wicenciak 2016: 84, Pl. 59: 277–282, different fabric). A similar vessel comes from a Roman-period tomb in Pella (McNicoll et al. 1992: Pl. 92:6), with more examples from Amman and Jerash attributed to the Roman period and beginnings of the Byzantine period (Díez Fernández 1983: 194–195, T 6.3); parallels from Hippos come from a deposit securely dated to the 3rd century AD (Kapitaikin 2018: Pl. 19:81–83).

FUNNEL

No. 24 (121.1). BW fragment of a funnel, in "white ware" [Fig. 6:24]. Fabric very pale brown (10YR8/3) with few tiny black and small white grits; some brown sediment inside. A fairly close parallel is known from the Roman-period Tomb 64 in Pella (McNicoll et al. 1992: Pl. 92:3). Apparently designed for filling bottles or narrow-necked jugs rather than jars.

CRATERS AND LEKANAI

No. 25 (122.6). RN of a krater or deep basin in "white ware" [Fig. 7:25]. Fabric very pale brown with small voids and some medium-sized white grits (surface eruptions). A parallel shape in the same ware is known from Gadara (Vriezen 2015: Fig. XII.26:1); a similar form attested in early Roman Beirut pertains to a group of large open forms in a fabric, which is clean, well-fired and whitish or pink in color, possibly from the Antioch area (Pellegrino 2007: 153, Fig. 14:15).

No. 26 (123.4). RN/W of a krater(?) [Fig. 7:26]. Fabric dense, brownish red with many white grits; surface red to pale red. A similar vessel in a different fabric was found under FII excavated in 2015 in the

Central North trench (Młynarczyk 2018: Fig. 34:48).

No. 27 (125.1). RW fragment of a lekane [Fig. 7:27]. Fabric reddish yellow (5YR6/6) with some small black grits, many tiny white grits and some small oblong voids; surface light red (2.5YR6/6) with occasional large white eruptions. A similar fragment from Jerash is dated to the 3rd century AD (Clark et al. 1986: 248, Fig. 20:17); the form is related to lekane Type 1 from early Roman Jiyeh (Wicenciak 2016: Pl. 78, No. 354), comparable also to a Caesarea example from a sealed locus dated to roughly the mid-1st century or slightly later (Johnson 2008: 43, No. 347).

No. 28 (125.2). RW fragment of a lekane or basin [Fig. 7:28]. Fabric dense, red, with many small white grits; surface smooth, dark red. The form is comparable to Capernaum type PIAT 46, dated between the 3rd and 5th centuries (Loffreda 2008b: 240), with a similar vessel coming from Gadara (Vriezen 2015: Fig. XII.26:4). A basin of comparable profile from Caesarea is classified with the so-called North Syrian mortaria, a category manufactured in an area much wider than North Syria, and dated to the 3rd and early 4th century (Johnson 2008: 38, No. 278).

FINE WARES

No. 29 (122.11). R of an ESA bowl [Fig. 7:29]. Fabric reddish yellow (5YR7/6) with some tiny white grits; surface very pale brown (10YR8/4) with a worn red slip (2.5YR5/8). Probably form 50, common in the time between 60/70 and 100 or later (Hayes 1985: 37).

No. 30 (125.6). RW of a small ESA plate [Fig. 7:30]. Fabric dense, reddish

yellow (5YR7/6), with some tiny red grits(?); slip red, smooth (10R5/8). Form 57, dated to the first half of the 2nd century (Hayes 1985: 39; Johnson 2008: No. 248), or Form 59 of the same date (Hayes 1985: 40; Johnson 2008: No. 250).

No. 31 (123.2). BW of a bowl in Color-Coated ware [Fig. 7:31]. A pinkish beige (very pale brown) fabric of granular texture with fine white, dark brown and occasional larger reddish grits; some white lumps on the surface; slip brown inside, orange-red

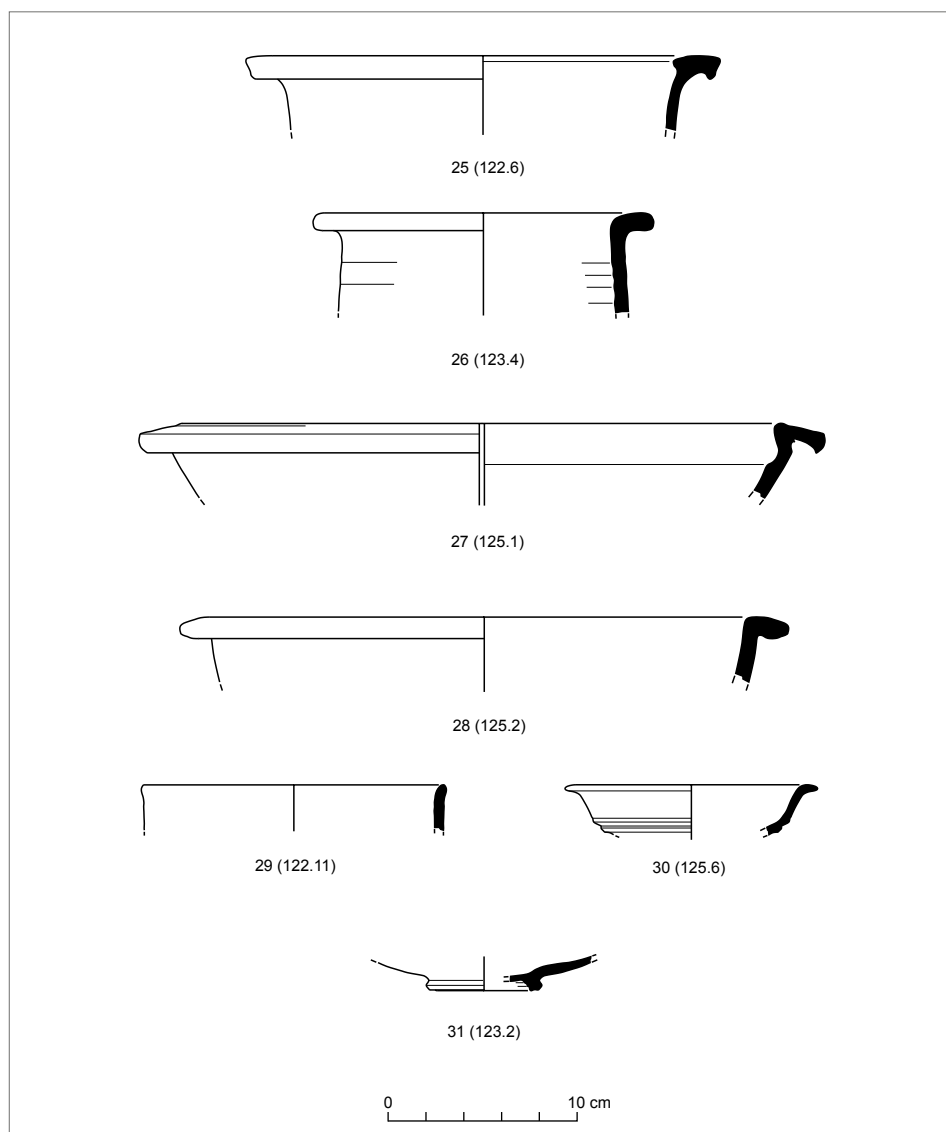


Fig. 7. Vessels from different contexts under FV and above FVI: kraters(?) (Nos 25–26) and lekanai (Nos 27–28), fine wares (Nos 29–31) (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | drawing M. Burdajewicz)

with darker spots outside, not covering the base. Possibly a Jerash workshop of the 1st century (Braemer 1989: Fig. 2:4).

Not illustrated here are the three fragments of ARS ware, specifically, a floor fragment of a flat-based dish, Form 58, dated to about 290–375 (Hayes 1972: 93–96), from context B121 (below FV), and two fragments of Form 50A, dated to about 230/240–360 (Hayes 1972: 73), found in contexts B123–124 (below FVI).

LOCAL JARS

While contexts B118–B119 below FV yielded some sherds of “Beisan” type jars characteristic of the Byzantine and Umayyad periods, 5th to 8th centuries (e.g., Vriezen 2015: Fig. XII.8–9 and Pl. XII.1; Młynarczyk 2017: Fig. 7), possibly intrusive from the adjacent robber pit, they were totally absent from contexts B121–B126, in which the jar fragments were of fabric(s) fired in shades of pink

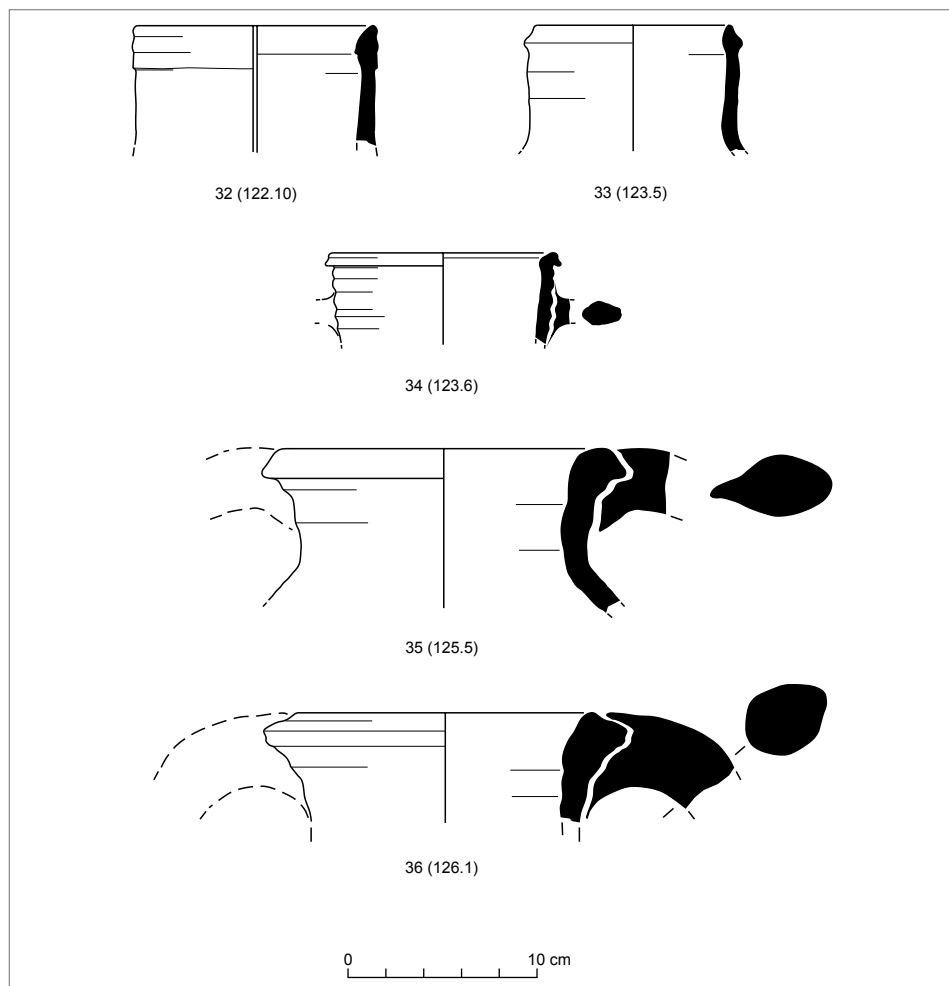


Fig. 8. Vessels from contexts on and below FVI: jars Nos 32–33 and amphorae Nos 34–36 (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | drawing M. Burdajewicz)

and beige to light brown, with very pale brown (“white”) external surface. Their rim is thickened outside, the lowest part of the neck (or sometimes the top of the shoulder) features a ridge, and the body is ribbed [Fig. 9].

No. 32 (122.10). RN of a jar [Fig. 8:32]. Fabric hard baked, light pink with rare tiny white grits and occasional oblong voids; smooth very pale brown (“white”) surface. Close to a fragmentary rim from a 3rd–4th century context in Pella (Da Costa et al. 2002: Fig. 8:5), and to jars from Caesarea classified as Riley Caesarea Type 1A shape dated from the 2nd to the 4th centuries (Johnson 2008: 87, Nos 1019 and 1023).

No. 33 (123.5). RN of a jar [Fig. 8:33]. Fabric dense pink with few white grits, including occasional eruptions; smooth, very pale brown surface. The same general type and fabric as No. 32 (above) and a jar/jug fragment retrieved from under FII in 2015 (Młynarczyk 2018: 189, Fig. 34:47). Similar rims in the same ware come from the 3rd century contexts at Jerash (Clark et al. 1986: Fig. 20:8) and Hippos (Kapitaikin 2018: Pl. 17:68), as well as from a 3rd–4th century context in Pella (Da Costa et al. 2002: Figs 8:8 and 10:6). They seem to correspond to Riley Caesarea Type 1A Shape, dated from the 2nd to 4th centuries (Johnson 2008: Nos 1018, 1021).

IMPORTED AMPHORAE

No. 34 (123.6): RNH of an amphora [Fig. 8:34]. Fabric pale pink with small white and dark brown inclusions and voids; surface of the same color as the break (“white ware”). The shape corresponds to Amphora Type 6 (=Beirut 2) from Early Roman Jiyeh, dated

to between the mid-1st and beginning of the 2nd century AD, with production places attested so far in Beirut, Jiyeh and Heldua (Wicenciak 2016: 77–78, and Pls 44–45). Despite this formal parallel, the fabric of No. 34 is completely different from that of the Lebanese examples, being close instead to the “white ware” represented by several finds from the Beit Ras assemblage under discussion (Nos 21–25), the origin of which remains unknown.

No. 35 (125.5): RNH of a transport amphora [Fig. 8:35]. Fabric very pale brown with some small white grits, occasional red inclusions and many small voids; surface color very pale brown, similar to the break, with some white eruptions. Type Almagro 50/Keay XVI or XXII from the Iberian Peninsula, manufactured in Lusitania (Portugal), but also in the Strait of Gibraltar area and in many places in southern Spain, between the first half of the 3rd and the 5th century; it was intended for carrying fish products (Quevedo and Bombico 2016: 312–313, and Fig. 6:1–2). Two comparable fragments from Caesarea have been identified as Keay Amphora Type XVIA, dated to between the late 2nd and mid-4th century (Johnson 2008: 104, Nos 1245–1246).

No. 36 (126.1). RH of a transport amphora [Fig. 8:36]. Fabric reddish yellow with some white grits, from small to large, with occasional sizeable voids; surface very pale brown. The same type and dating as No. 35 (a variant fabric).

OIL LAMPS

Very few fragments of lamps were discovered, apparently parts of just

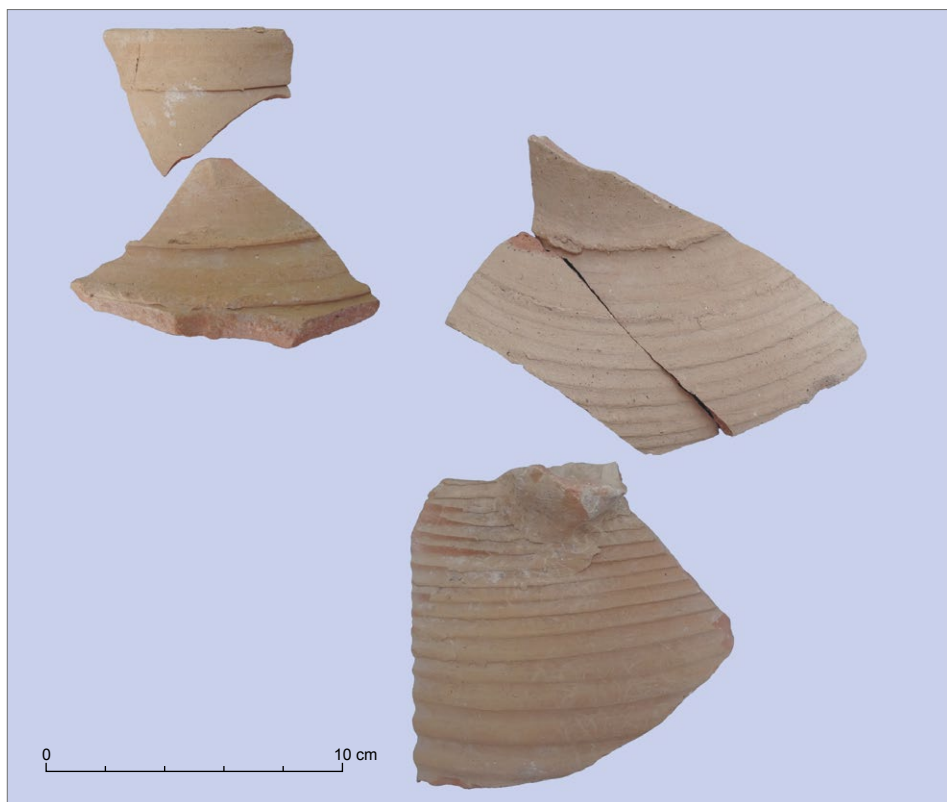


Fig. 9. Fragments of local jars from contexts B121 and B123 (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photos J. Młynarczyk)

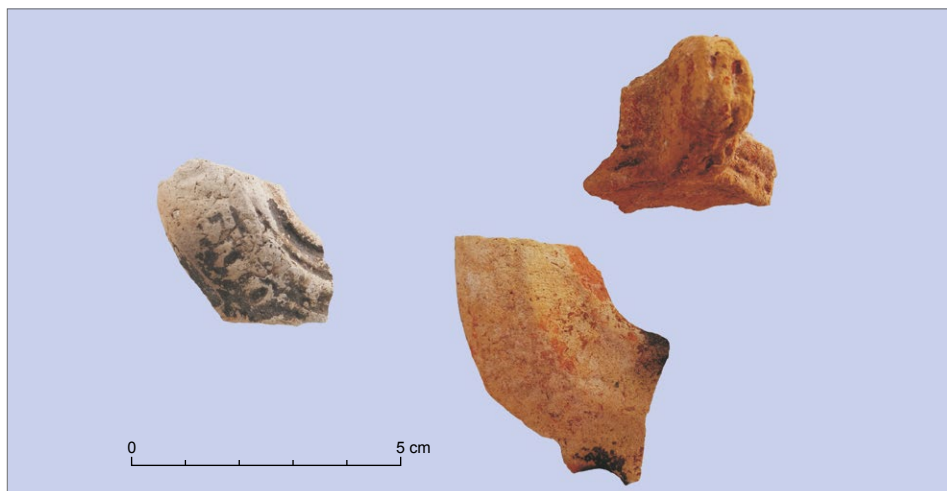


Fig. 10. Fragments of oil lamps from B118 (left) and B125 (right) (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photos J. Młynarczyk)

three different objects, found in B118, B121 (both below FV) and B125 (below FVI) respectively [Fig. 10]. Despite the stratigraphical difference, they seem to represent a single type described as “Round-bodied, no discus” lamps, rather broadly dated to between the late 2nd and 4th century (Da Costa 2010: 73, Figs 3–4).

Judging by their fabrics, however, they come from two different produc-

tion centers. Lamp fragment B118 is of a soft, very pale brown fabric with occasional large white grits on the surface, preserving remains of very dark grey (almost black) slip. Fragments of two other lamps, retrieved from B121 and B125, both made in worn moulds, are of a pink fabric, containing some tiny white and some dark (red) grits, covered with ill-preserved red slip.

POTTERY FABRICS AND SOURCES

Most of the vessel functional categories include more than one ceramic fabric, macroscopically distinguished by the color and scope of mineral inclusions in the clay matrix, as well as by the surface treatment. The logical conclusion is that the pottery supplying Capitolias came from several different sources. Setting aside such obvious pottery importations as the ESA ware (from northern Levant?), ARS ware (from northern Africa) and transport amphorae from the western Mediterranean (Iberian Peninsula), the remainder should be considered as local and regional pottery. Considering that the territory of Capitolias bordered upon Abila, Gadara and Pella, it is only to be expected that these cities were not only interconnected, but that they also could have shared some external trade contacts.

The variability of the cooking vessel fabrics is remarkable and should be treated as testimony to several different production centers, even if difficult to pinpoint exactly. Thus, a gritty bright red fabric with white mineral inclusions occurs either with dark external “skin” (No. 1 of CP form 1a), or with a dark reddish brown surface, slightly “metallic”

in appearance (Nos 2–3 of CP form 1b) [Fig. 11 top]. The latter, on account of its frequency in the Central North trench (several unregistered smaller fragments), may be considered as local to Capitolias. Next, cooking pot No. 4 shares fabric and firing characteristics with lid No. 8; there is hardly any doubt that both came from one center. A most interesting couple of sherds, apparently from one workshop, are the thin-walled cooking pot No. 5 and casserole No. 9 [Fig. 11 center], perhaps also cooking pot No. 7 [Fig. 11 bottom left]; all three share a similar orange-fired surface and can be tentatively attributed to a Jerash workshop. Another cooking pot fabric, beige-pink (No. 6), could be connected with a center at Pella; exactly the same form of cooking pot with a kind of very pale brown wash (fabric brown with partial grey core, some white grits including eruptions; semi-transparent greenish/grayish wash on the exterior) is known from B123 [Fig. 11 bottom right]. Finally, two cooking pot rims from B126 apparently represent a genuine Galilean Kefar Hananya ware.

With regard to the cooking bowls, the fabric in at least two cases (Nos 10–11)



Fig. 11. Fragments of cooking vessels: top, cooking pots of local Capitolias production; center, cooking pot (on the left) and casserole of Jerash production; bottom, cooking pot of Jerash production (on the left) and cooking pot possibly made in Pella (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photos J. Młynarczyk)

seems to be a faithful imitation (rather than a genuine product) of the Kefar Hananya ware. However, the fabric of other derivatives of the Kefar Hananya type of “Galilean bowls” (Nos 12–14) is completely different and for now still of undetermined origin. Of these, bowl No. 14 is of the same fabric as Nos 15–16 which pertain to a type rather common in the Decapolis [Fig. 12]; the characteristics of this ware may indeed indicate a local (or southern Golan?) provenance. However, the fabric of No. 17, which represents the same form as Nos 15–16, differs in that it has an abundant admixture of white grits visible both in the break and on the surface.

The group of small and middle-sized closed forms is no less heterogeneous as far as fabric is concerned. The fabrics of jugs Nos 18–19 look fairly similar and may be considered local to Capitolias, given the fact that jug No. 18 cannot be anything else than a waster from a local potter’s workshop [Fig. 13]. It is also interesting to note the visual resemblance of their fabric to the low-fired fragments

of a domestic installation (an oven or kiln) found in several contexts [Fig. 14], both above and below F VI. The fabric of amphoriskos No. 20 is comparable to that of cooking pots Nos 2–3 (local to Capitolias?). Other fragments of juglets/jugs, specifically Nos 21–23, are in what is called “white ware” [Fig. 15 bottom]. Their fabric, based on calcareous (marly) clay, is in shades of white and very pale brown, with the same or similar color of the surface, occasionally slightly porous, including a few white and sometimes tiny black grits. Two other vessel forms: funnel No. 24 and krater/deep bowl No. 25 [Fig. 15 top] are in the same ware, while a related fabric is represented by amphora fragment No. 34. Considering the variety of vessel forms made in “white ware”, one should suppose that the source of this ware must have been in a locality that enjoyed a favorable connection with Capitolias. The fabrics of other large-size open vessels (Nos 26–28) are fired in shades of red, their surface color ranging between pink/light red and red, possibly related to each other in terms of

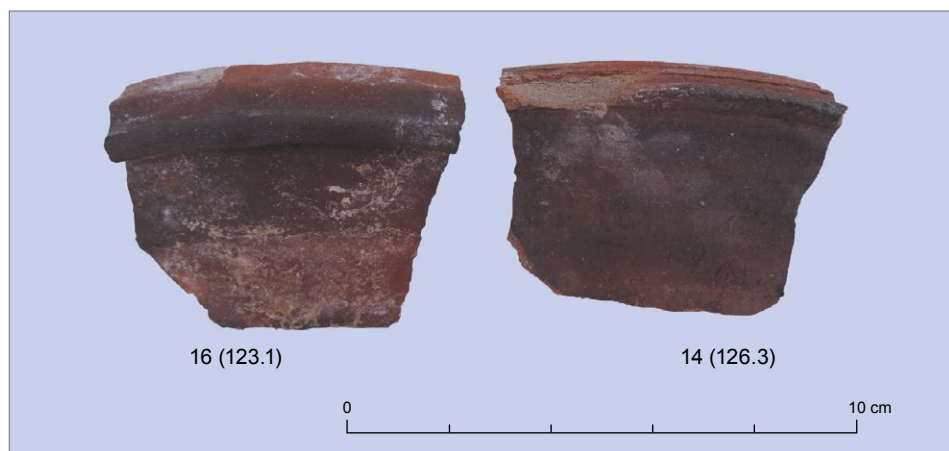


Fig. 12. Fragments of cooking bowls (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photo J. Młynarczyk)



Fig. 13. Jugs (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photos J. Młynarczyk)



Fig. 14. Pieces of an oven or kiln body from B121 (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photo J. Młynarczyk)

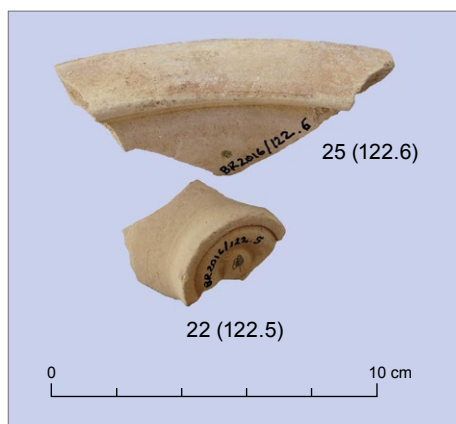


Fig. 15. "White ware" vessels: top, rim of krater/lekanē; bottom, base of jug/amphora (PCMA UW Beit Ras Project | photo J. Młynarczyk)

the production centers. As for the local/regional jars of the bag-shaped type, especially those from contexts B121–B126, it is not possible to pinpoint their exact provenance, but it is obvious that their fabric is homogeneous, fired in shades of

pink and beige to light brown, with very pale brown (“white”) external surface [see *Fig. 9*]. It seems to match the fabric of lamp fragments from B121 and B125 [see *Fig. 10*], additionally covered with an ill-preserved red slip.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE CITY WALL

Not being able to reach the original construction level of the city wall, it was impossible to place a precise date on it. However, the chronology of “habitation” levels connected with the defences could be determined. Contexts B123–B126 underlying the only undisturbed floor, FVI, contained no potsherds later than the 3rd century. Except for ESA fragment No. 30 and Color-Coated bowl No. 31 [see *Fig. 7*] of the 1st century and first half of the 2nd century, other potsherds of potentially earlier Roman date include juglet No. 23 [see *Fig. 6*] and amphora No. 34 [see *Fig. 8*], perhaps also cooking bowl No. 13 [see *Fig. 5*]. The latest dated ceramics below the floor FVI include Decapolis-type cooking bowls Nos 14 and 16–17, dated to the 3rd–4th century [see *Fig. 5*] and a rim of a cooking bowl of the Kefar Hananya type form 1C from the mid-3rd to the latter part of the 4th century (Adan-Bayewitz 1993: 98–100), coming from context B123 (not illustrated). A sound dating of FVI is set in two fragments of Iberian amphorae Almagro 50/Keay type XVI or XXII from between the first half of the 3rd through the 5th century [*Fig. 8:35–36*], fragments of a lamp of late 2nd- to 4th-century date [see *Fig. 10* right], as well as a fragment of ARS ware form 50A dated to 230/240–360 (see above). A 3rd-century dating may also be assigned to lekanai

Nos 27–28 [see *Fig. 7*] and jar rim No. 33 [see *Fig. 8*]. Consequently, the construction of FVI can be placed safely in the late 3rd or early 4th century.

The chronological range demonstrated by the pottery from the floor deposit B122 on FVI is very similar to that of potsherds found below the floor: cooking pots Nos 3 and 7 [see *Fig. 4*] and cooking bowls Nos 10–11 and 15 [see *Fig. 5*], of which the latest type, Kefar Hananya form 1E [*Fig. 5:11*] is dated between the mid-3rd and the earlier 5th century. Other forms in this deposit include juglets Nos 20–22 [see *Fig. 6*], krater No. 25 and ESA bowl No. 29 [see *Fig. 7*], as well as jar rim No. 32 [see *Fig. 8*]. The pottery found in other contexts above FVI and below FV is to a large extent similar to that below FVI. A possible explanation is that the leveling layer under FV was formed of a dump containing material from the 1st/2nd to 3rd centuries. Therefore, FV, disturbed by the robber pit could be late Roman, 4th to 5th century (Młynarczyk 2017: 500), just as well as later, 5th to 6th century?

It has already been pointed out that FVI from the 3rd century was the earliest level reached but it did not constitute the original walking level connected with the wall. It has been estimated that the construction of the defences did not take place later than the 2nd century

(Młynarczyk 2017: 498–499). However, a small section of the city wall that abuts the western side of the theater not only seems to be an extension of the wall course as discovered in the Central North trench in 2015–2016, but also reveals exactly the same masonry style [Fig. 16], suggesting that both sections are contemporaneous. Since the theater is considered to be a 2nd century structure (Al-Shami 2005: 511), and the wall abutting it must have been added at a later date, the question of both relative and absolute chronology of the defences

of Capitolias deserves further in-depth study.

The earliest dated potsherds from the Central North trench, regardless of their stratigraphical context (B number), testify to the first phase of habitation at the site, occurring from the second half of the 1st century (e.g., Nos 29–31), thus confirming the supposition that Capitolias was founded as a polis only at that time (Młynarczyk 2017: 473). On the other hand, the almost total absence of fine wares confirms the domestic character of this sector of Capitolias.



Fig. 16. The connection of the city wall section (on the left) with the theater wall (on the right) (Photo J. Młynarczyk, 2011)

Prof. Jolanta Młynarczyk

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3473-104X>

University of Warsaw, emerita

jolantamlynarczyk@uw.edu.pl

How to cite this article: Młynarczyk, J. (2020). Roman-period pottery from a trench by the northern city wall in Beit Ras/Capitolias. *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 29/2) (pp. 577–602). <https://doi.org/10.31338/uw.2083-537X.pam29.2.25>

References

- Adan-Bayewitz, D. (1993). *Common pottery in Roman Galilee: A study of local trade*. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press
- Al-Shami, A.J. (2005). A new discovery at Bayt Rās/Capitolias – Irbid. *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, 49, 509–519
- Ben-Arieh, R. (1997). The Roman, Byzantine and Umayyad pottery. In Y. Hirschfeld, *The Roman baths of Hammat Gader: Final report* (pp. 347–381). Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society
- Braemer, F. (1989). Une fabrique (locale?) de céramique fine à Jerash au tournant de l'ère. *Syria*, 66, 153–167
- Clark, V.A., Bowsher, J.M.C., Stewart, J.D., Meyer, C.M., and Falkner, B.K. (1986). The Jerash North Theatre, architecture and archaeology, 1982–1983. In F. Zayadine (ed.), *Jerash Archaeological Project I. 1981–1983* (pp. 205–302). Amman: Department of Antiquities of Jordan
- Da Costa, K. (2010). Economic cycles in the Byzantine Levant: The evidence from lamps at Pella in Jordan. *Levant*, 42(1), 70–87
- Da Costa, K., O'Hea, M., Mairs, L., Sparks, R., and Boland, P. (2002). New light on late antique Pella: Sydney University excavations in Area XXXV, 1997. *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, 46, 503–533
- Díez Fernández, F. (1983). *Cerámica común romana de la Galilea: Aproximaciones y diferencias con la cerámica del resto de Palestina y regiones circundantes*. Madrid: Ed. Biblia y Fé; Escuela Bíblica
- Hayes, J.W. (1972). *Late Roman pottery*. London: British School at Rome
- Hayes, J.W. (1985). Sigillate orientali. In *Ceramica fine romana nel bacino mediterraneo (tardo ellenismo e primo impero)* (pp. 1–96). Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana
- Johnson, B.L. (2008). The pottery. In J. Patrich, *Archaeological excavations at Caesarea Maritima areas CC, KK and NN: Final reports I. The objects* (pp. 13–206). Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society
- Kapitaikin, L.-A. (2018). Final pottery report of the 2010–2011 excavation seasons. In M. Eisenberg et al., *Hippos-Sussita of the Decapolis: The first twelve seasons of excavations 2000–2011*, II (pp. 88–209). Haifa: Zinman Institute of Archaeology, University of Haifa
- Loffreda, S. (2008a). *Documentazione grafica della ceramica (1968–2003) (=Cafarnao 7)*. Jerusalem: Edizioni Terra Santa

- Loffreda, S. (2008b). *Tipologie e contesti stratigrafici della ceramica (1968–2003)* (=Cafarnao 6). Jerusalem: Edizioni Terra Santa
- McNicoll, A., Edwards, P.C., Hanbury-Tenison, J., Hennessy, B., Potts, T., Smith, R.H., Walmsley, A., and Watson, P. (1992). *Pella in Jordan II. The second interim report on the joint University of Sydney and College of Wooster excavations at Pella 1982–1985* (=Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 2). Sydney: Meditarch
- McNicoll, A., Smith, R.H., and Hennessy, B. (1982). *Pella in Jordan I. An interim report on the joint University of Sydney and the College of Wooster excavations at Pella, 1979–1981*. Canberra: Australian National Gallery
- Młynarczyk, J. (2009). Pottery report. In A. Segal, J. Młynarczyk, M. Burdajewicz, M. Schuler, and M. Eisenberg, *Hippos-Sussita: Tenth season of excavations (July and September 2009)* (pp. 104–156). Haifa: Zinman Institute of Archaeology. University of Haifa
- Młynarczyk, J. (2017). Beit Ras/Capitolias: An archaeological project 2014–2016. *PAM*, 26/1, 475–505
- Młynarczyk, J. (2018). Archaeological investigations in Bayt Rās, ancient Capitolias, 2015: Preliminary report. *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, 59, 175–192
- Pellegrino, E. (2007). Les céramiques communes de Beyrouth (secteur BEY 002) au début de l'époque romaine. *Syria*, 84, 143–168
- Quevedo, A. and Bombico, S. (2016). Lusitanian amphorae in Carthago Nova (Cartagena, Spain): Distribution and research questions. In I. Vaz Pinto, R.R. de Almeida, and A. Martin (eds), *Lusitanian amphorae: Production and distribution* (=Roman and Late Antique Mediterranean Pottery 10) (pp. 311–322). Oxford: Archaeopress
- Rasson, A.M. (1986). Matériel céramique de la deuxième moitié du III^e siècle ap. J.-C. In F. Zayadine (ed.), *Jerash Archaeological Project I. 1981–1983* (pp. 67–69). Amman: Department of Antiquities of Jordan
- Schumacher, G. (1890). *Northern 'Ajlūn, "within the Decapolis."* London: Alexander P. Watt
- Vriezen, K.J.H. (2015). Ceramics. In K.J.H. Vriezen and U. Wagner-Lux (eds), *Gadara–Umm Qēs II. The twin churches on the Roman-Byzantine terrace and excavations in the streets* (=Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 30/2) (pp. 70–161). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
- Wicienciak, U. (2016). *Porphyreon. Hellenistic and Roman pottery production in the Sidon hinterland* (=PAM Monograph Series 7). Warsaw: PCMA UW

