



Oren Tal

A Winepress at Apollonia-Arsuf: More Evidence on the Samaritan Presence in Roman-Byzantine Southern Sharon

Apollonia-Arsuf, located on the Mediterranean coast of Israel some 17 kilometers north of Jaffa (ancient Joppa, south of Tel Aviv) and 34 kilometers south of Caesarea, has been excavated continuously during the last thirty years.¹ Once a

* The current study is supported by the German-Israeli Foundation — Young Scientists' Program (Grant no. 2190). I am indebted to E. Ayalon and R. Frankel for valuable comments on the manuscripts; the responsibility for the ideas expressed below, however, is mine alone.

¹ The first systematic excavations at Apollonia-Arsuf were carried out in 1950, north of the medieval city wall, by the Israel Department of Antiquities, directed by Immanuel Ben-Dor and later by Penuel Kahane. The latter published only an abridged preliminary report. See P. Kahane, "Rishpon (Apollonia); B," *Bulletin of the Department of Antiquities of the State of Israel* 3, 1951, 42-43 (in Hebrew); an English summary is found in A. Perkins, "Archaeological News: The Near East," *American Journal of Archaeology* 55, 1951, 86-87, fig. 11. A completely new approach, that of exploring the site in a historically and methodologically more coherent way, indicative of a new era of archaeological fieldwork, began in 1977 by Israel Roll. Since then, Roll, who directed seventeen seasons of excavations at the site until 2004, explored large sections of the site, establishing for the first time a chronological and developmental framework for Apollonia-Arsuf. In 2006, an eighteenth season of excavations at Apollonia-Arsuf was carried out, a transition during which the directorship and responsibility over the future excavations at Apollonia-Arsuf were transferred from Roll to Oren Tal. For an overview on the site and its history of excavations, see I. Roll: "Introduction: History of the Site, Its Research and Excavations," in Israel Roll and Oren Tal, *Apollonia-Arsuf: Final Report of the Excavations*, v. 1, *The Persian and Hellenistic Periods (with Appendices on the Chalcolithic and Iron Age II Remains)*, Tel Aviv University, Monograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology 16, Tel Aviv, 1999, 1-62. A more updated overview is to be found in K. Galor, I. Roll and O. Tal, "Apollonia-Arsuf between Past and Future," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 72/1, 2009, 4-27. In 2009 Tal directed a nineteenth season of excavations at the site and the current study is based on its results. This season of excavations at Apollonia-Arsuf (IAA license G56/2009) was carried out on behalf of the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University. The season was a study dig for BA students of the Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures of Tel Aviv University that together with the staff, advanced students of archaeology and local and foreign volunteers numbered some 50 participants over 5 weeks season each (from July 5 to August 7). Registrar was T. Harpak; area supervisors were M. Edrey, N. Lecet, G. Lerner, N. Reshef; coordinator was I. Shachar; administrator was D. Shachar. The team also included D. Porotsky, S. Pirsky (surveying and drafting) and P. Shargo (photography). The excavations were conducted in the Apollonia National Park, and received the full cooperation of the park's director, H. Yohanan, and his staff. I am indebted to them all.



modest coastal settlement, Apollonia-Arsuf became the urban center of the southern Sharon plain as early as the Persian period (late sixth century BCE) through the Crusader period (until the mid-13th century CE).

Apollonia is mentioned in a series of classical sources. Josephus² refers to it as one of the *poleis* that belonged to the Jews under Alexander Jannaeus. The city is also mentioned in lists of Judaea's coastal towns compiled by Pliny³ and by Ptolemy.⁴

Apollonia is also noted in some written sources from the Byzantine period. It is recorded twice in the anonymous *Cosmography of Ravenna*: in a list of urban centers of *Iudaea-Palaestina*, where it is listed after Caesarea and before Joppa, and again between Joppa and Caesarea in a long list of the coastal cities of Sinai and Palestine.⁵ Apollonia also appears in the detailed list of 25 cities of that name compiled by Stephanus Byzantius under number 13 "near Joppa".⁶ On the other hand, Apollonia does not appear in early ecclesiastical lists. Two nineteenth century scholars, Stark and Clermont-Ganneau, assumed that the reason for its absence derived from the fact that Apollonia's name had been changed to *Sozousa* — a common change for cities named after Apollo Sōter in Byzantine times.⁷ Later texts and critical editions of texts, which recount the Persian-Sassanian capture of Jerusalem, record the death of the patriarch Modestus in a city named *Sozos*: *Sozousa* in Georgian texts and Arsuf in Arabic texts.⁸ Official documents of the synod of Ephesus held in 449 indicate that in the mid-fifth century CE *Sozousa* was a city

² *Ant.* 13.15.4 [395].

³ *NH* 5.69.

⁴ *Geogr.* 5.15.2. Roman-period remains were discovered during excavations at the site; cf. I. Roll and O. Tal, "A Villa of the Early Roman Period at Apollonia-Arsuf," *Israel Exploration Journal* 58, 2008, 132-149.

⁵ *Ravenna Cosmography* 2.14.2 and 5.7.2. See J. Schnetz, ed., *Itineraria Romana*, v. 2, *Ravenatis anonymi cosmographia et Guidonis geographica*, Leipzig: Friderici Nicolai, 1940, 25, 90, and 133. The *Cosmography of Ravenna* was compiled soon after 700 CE from earlier sources that go back to early Byzantine or even Roman times; see J. Schnetz, "Untersuchungen über die Quellen der Cosmographie des anonymen Geographen von Ravenna," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Abteilung* v. 6, 1942, 1-87. O. A. W. Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps*, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985, 174-176.

⁶ *Stephani Byzantii Ethnorum quae supersunt*, ed. A. Meineke, Berlin: G. Reimer, 1849, 106. It is worth noting that in Stephanus Byzantius' text the name *Sozousa* (*s.v.* no. 1, p. 596) is also mentioned (for which see below) — most probably because Stephanus used sources from different periods: one from Roman times when listing *Apollonia*, and a source from Byzantine times when mentioning *Sozousa*. For Apollonia, see also *Stephani Byzantii Ethnica*, v. I, ed. Billerbeck, Berlin and New York: W. de Gruyter, 2006, 228-229.

⁷ K. B. Stark, *Gaza und die philistäische Küste*, Jena: F. Mauke, 1852, 452, note 5; C. Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches in Palestine during the Years 1873-1874*, v. 2, London: Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1896, 337-339.

⁸ G. Garitte, ed., *La prise de Jérusalem par les Perses en 614*, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, v. 203, Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1960, 55; id., *ibid.*, v. 341, 1953, 38, 70; id., *ibid.*, v. 348, 1974, 131.

in the Byzantine province of *Palaestina Prima* and that its Christian community was headed by a bishop. Bishops of *Sozousa* appear again in the records of two sixth-century ecclesiastical meetings.⁹ They may have served in the church with an inscribed mosaic floor that was uncovered in Apollonia in 1962.¹⁰

The importance of *Sozousa* in Late Byzantine Palestine (sixth to seventh centuries CE in archaeological terms), seems to have been enhanced by the large and affluent Samaritan community that resided in the city until the Islamic conquest, as is evident from the archaeological finds.¹¹ Arsuf is also mentioned in connection with the Sassanian military campaign in the Holy Land.¹² As there is no evidence of destruction, we may assume that the city surrendered peacefully to its Persian-Sassanian conquerors.¹³ The *Acta Anastasii Persae* relate that the escort conveying the relics of the Christian martyr Anastasius the Persian from Caesarea to Jerusalem in 631 — soon after the Persians evacuated Palestine — marched via *Sozousa*. This indicates that the name *Sozousa* continued to be used for Apollonia-Arsuf until the Islamic conquest.¹⁴

This article examines the results of the 2006 and 2009 seasons in the far northern end of the site, beyond the fosse of the Crusader castle and that of the medieval (i.e., Early Islamic-Crusader) walled town (Area O). The area is located near the excavated areas of the site's first digs, held in 1950 (fig. 1). The 2006 excavations were minimal and confined to the exposure of a medium-sized white-*tesserae* (1.5-2.0 cm on average) mosaic floor, adorned with a partially preserved Greek inscription that was published shortly after its discovery.¹⁵ The 2009 excavations were much enlarged; the excavation area included eight squares, 5 × 5 m each, five of

⁹ *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, Berlin: W. de Gruyter, v. 3, ed. E. Schwartz, 1940, 80 and 188, and v. 4, no. 1, ed. J. Straub, 1971, 221. For a more detailed discussion on the issue, see Roll (note 1 above), 9 with relevant bibliography in notes 14-15.

¹⁰ R. Birnbaum and A. Ovadia, "A Greek Inscription from the Early Byzantine Church at Apollonia," *Israel Exploration Journal* 40, 1990, 182-191; see also Roll (note 1 above), 31 and 45.

¹¹ Roll (note 1 above), 26-53 *passim*. It should be emphasized, however, that Abū L-Faḥ reports Samaritan synagogues in villages between Zaytā (north of Ṭūl Karem) and Arsūf, but only a Dosithean (not Samaritan) 'meeting place' in Arsuf in the early ninth century long after the Islamic conquest. Cf. M. Levy-Rubin, *The Continuatio of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū L-Faḥ Al-Sāmīrī Al-Danaḥī*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 10, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002, 69-70.

¹² P. Peeters, "La Prise de Jérusalem par les Perses," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth* 9, 1923-1924, 13. G. Garitte, ed., *Expugnationis Hierosolymae A.D. 614*. *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, v. 341, Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1953, 4 and 42. *Id.*, *ibid.*, v. 348, 1974, 75, and 104. For discussion, see R. Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study*, Princeton, New Jersey: Darwin Press, 1995, 20-25.

¹³ Schick (note 12 above), 20-25, and esp. 250.

¹⁴ Bernard Flusin, ed., *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VII^e siècle*, Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1992, v. 1, 105, and v. 2, 339.

¹⁵ I. Roll and O. Tal, "A New Greek Inscription from Byzantine Apollonia-Arsuf / Sozousa: A Reassessment of the Εἰς θεὸς μόνος Inscriptions of Palestine," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 28, 2008, 139-147.

which were dug down to virgin soil. The aim was to investigate the nature of the mosaic floor with its inscription, and to find out whether there had been extramural occupation in Early Islamic times, as previously suggested.¹⁶ Our inquiry shows no post-seventh century CE occupation; upper fills in the excavated area included pits containing pottery and fragmented glass vessels dated to the sixth-seventh centuries CE. More interesting is the considerable amount of raw-glass production refuse (as well as secondary glass production refuse) that was found below the upper fills all over the excavated area. Given the amount of raw-glass production refuse that was dug out (weighing some two tons) this refuse must have originated in raw-glass furnaces that occupied the area and were dismantled while the raw glass was hammered out.¹⁷ Few of our previous studies were dedicated to the examination of the cardinal role of Late Byzantine Apollonia / Sozousa as a production center of raw glass, and most probably secondary glass, and the above-mentioned evidence strengthens our earlier conclusions.¹⁸ The ca. 0.60 m layer of raw-glass production refuse practically covered a large winepress complex which occupied most of the excavated area. Only now it became clear that the inscription we discovered in 2006 occupied the central part of the preserved treading floor of the winepress (figs. 2-3). The medium-sized white-*tesserae* mosaic floor was divided into horizontal panels (five were preserved), and two of the panels in the center of the treading floor were divided into smaller frames of uneven dimensions (four were preserved). The inscription was set in the central panel (or in the center of the preserved floor, as the northern edge of the floor had washed down to the ravine below). The mosaic inscription was made of small-sized black-*tesserae* (0.5-1.0 cm on average). Small parts of the inscription were extracted from the floor in later periods and over time it was covered by whitewash that had accumulated on the floor. Nonetheless, the inscription was found almost complete. It could be deciphered only after conservation by a team from the Israel Nature and National Parks Protection Authority and we were able to transcribe the letters of the inscription in the following manner:

1. EICΘE[O]CMONOCBO[HΘEI]
2. KACC[IA]NΩAMACYMΒIΩ
3. KAITE[K]NOICKAIPACEI

¹⁶ Kahane (note 1 above); Roll (note 1 above), 26-29.

¹⁷ The publication of these finds will be presented in a different study.

¹⁸ O. Tal, R. E. Jackson-Tal and I. C. Freestone, "New Evidence of the Production of Raw Glass at Late Byzantine Apollonia-Arsuf, Israel," *Journal of Glass Studies* 46, 2004, 51-66; I. C. Freestone, R. E. Jackson-Tal and O. Tal, "Raw Glass and the Production of Glass Vessels at Late Byzantine Apollonia-Arsuf, Israel," *Journal of Glass Studies* 50, 2008, 67-80.

Hence, the transliterated and restored version of the inscription may be read as follows:

1. Εἷς θεὸς μόνος βοήθει
2. Κασσ(ι)ανῶ ἅμα συμβίῳ
3. καὶ τέκνοις καὶ πάσει

The translation is: “One God only, help / Cassianos together with (his) wife / and children and everyone”.

The inscription was analyzed against the other Εἷς θεὸς μόνος formula inscriptions of Palestine.¹⁹ One of our main conclusions was that it is reasonable to assume that the Εἷς θεὸς μόνος formula inscriptions of Palestine have an exclusive Samaritan provenance. Indeed, these inscriptions are far fewer and rarer than the Palestinian Εἷς θεός formula inscriptions, but they are found in Roman and Byzantine sites in the region of Samaria and in cities where Samaritan communities are attested by both the archaeological finds and the written sources.

The finds recovered during the excavations lend support to our previous chronological conclusions. Regardless of the small quantity of Persian, Hellenistic and Early Roman pottery fragments that were found in fills within and right above the natural yellow sand as discovered in Square B5 (in the southeastern part of the area and possibly originating in tombs that did not survive, cf. fig. 4),²⁰ pottery and fragments of glass vessels found below the level of the winepress complex can be dated to the fourth-fifth centuries CE (fig. 5).²¹ Such a date accords with the earliest coins found in the area of excavation. In any case, the winepress complex was relatively short-lived. Its large, circular collecting / settling (and fermentation) vat included substantial amounts of broken pottery and glass vessels (weighing some 500 kg) accumulated in a series of superimposed layers in Late Byzantine (sixth-seventh centuries CE) times, showing that the winepress ceased to function sometime in the early sixth century CE given the pottery and coin evidence (fig. 6).²²

¹⁹ Roll and Tal (note 15 above), 141-147; see also in this respect L. Di Segni “Εἷς θεός in Palestinian Inscriptions,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 13, 1994, 100-101, nos. 16, 20a, Formula C on p. 111.

²⁰ E.g., cooking-pots (nos. 1-2) and bottle (no. 3) of Hellenistic date with well-stratified equivalents at Dor, cf. e.g., B. Guz-Zilberstein, “The Typology of the Hellenistic Coarse Ware and Selected Loci of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods,” *Excavations at Dor, Final Report I B. Areas A and C: The Finds*, Qedem Reports 2, E. Stern et al., Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Israel Exploration Society, 1995, 298-299 (CP1), 304 (UG1/2) passim.

²¹ E.g., basin (no. 1), cooking-pot (no. 2) and storage jars (nos. 3-6) of Late Roman date with well-stratified equivalents at Jalame, cf. e.g., B. L. Johnson, “The Pottery,” *Excavations at Jalame: Site of a Glass Factory in Late Roman Palestine*, ed. G. D. Weinberg, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988, 183 (Nos. 488-493 passim), 195-197 (Form 12), 214-219 (nos. 762-827 passim).

²² As is represented by the late Samaritan oil lamps found in the refuse pit of the collecting vat, cf. e.g., V. Sussman, “The Samaritan Oil Lamps from Apollonia-Arsuf,” *Tel Aviv* 10, 1983, 71-96; id., “Samaritan Oil Lamps,” *The Samaritans*, ed. E. Stern and H. Eshel, Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi

This is also the date of the several post-occupation fills found above the winepress complex and the glass refuse (fig. 7).²³ Moreover, excavations in the collecting vat show that once the winepress was out of use a stone-built pier was constructed in its center (fig. 8). The fact that the foundations of the pier were based upon the refuse fills and not directly upon the mosaic-paved floor of the collecting vat precludes a direct relation between the pier and the production process of the winepress. It thus seems likely that the stone-built pier served another installation — on the function of which we can only speculate. A section of stone-paved floor discovered to its northeast (F8054) some 0.15 m above the mosaic floor surface may have belonged to the same installation (fig. 2).

The winepress complex is generally oriented north–south; all its surfaces were paved with medium-sized white-*tesserae*, whereas the upper and lower levels of its circular collecting vat were paved with medium-sized white-*tesserae* that are unevenly ‘dotted’ with medium-sized black-*tesserae*. The delimiting walls as well as the walls and the openings of the intermediary (filtration) and collecting vats were covered by white-grayish hydraulic plaster (fig. 9). Prior to the foundation of the winepress complex its area was dominated by natural yellow sand; once building operations began the area was apparently covered by red loam (*hamra*) soil, which was then covered by layers of mortar and plaster. The latter served as the foundation for the mosaic paving. Originally, the treading floor was delimited by four walls only two of which are now preserved: W8040 in the west and W8005 in the south (both walls are ca. 0.40 m thick and 0.30 m high). The maximal preserved dimensions of the treading floor are 6.50 × 3.80 m, and it has some 0.03 m height differences from north to south. The treading floor is elevated from the floor surface of the intermediary and collecting vats by some 0.15 m. It is unclear whether the inscription that occupied the central part of the preserved treading floor of the winepress was set in the center of the floor or off the center of the floor. The latter possibility would suggest that north of the inscription there may have been a stone base for the affixing of a wooden screw. Given the dimensions of the

Press and Israel Antiquities Authority, 2002, 339–371 (in Hebrew). Out of 15 identifiable coins found in Area O, one is dated to the reign of Gallienus (260–268 CE), two are dated to the reign of Galerius (305–311 CE) and Valentinian I/Valens (364–378 CE), whereas the remainder are almost exclusively dated to the sixth century CE. The current study is by no means a final report of the area of excavations (Area O) hence the loci appearing on the plan are selective. The Late Byzantine refuse found in the collecting vat (L8061) awaits restoration and publication.

²³ As is represented by Byzantine/Late Byzantine deep casseroles (nos. 1–2), and especially Palestinian bag-shaped jars (nos. 6–8, 11–13) and late Gazan amphorae (nos. 3, 9–10) in these three selective loci (L8015, L8020, L8049). For the Palestinian bag-shaped jars, cf. e.g., S. A. Kingsley, “Bag-Shaped Amphorae and Byzantine Trade: Expanding Horizons,” *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 14, 1994–1995, 39–56 passim; for the Gaza amphora, cf. e.g., G. Majcherek, “Gazan Amphorae: Typology Reconsidered,” *Hellenistic and Roman Pottery in the Eastern Mediterranean: Advances in Scientific Studies, Acts of the Second Workshop at Nieborow*, ed. H. Meyza, and J. Mlynarczyk, Warsaw: Polska Akademia Nauk, 1995, 163–178.

collecting vat (below) the existence of a wooden screw installation in the northern part of the treading floor (used for the second pressing of the grapes' skin and pulp) seems a more logical reconstruction. Wall 8005 divides the treading floor and the floor surface of the intermediary and collecting vats; a carved u-shaped *kurkar* stone channel fixed across this wall allowed the flow of the treaded grapes (i.e., must) into the intermediary vat (F8062) (fig. 10). This horseshoe-shaped vat is ca. 0.95×0.55 m and is about 0.50 m deep. A lead pipe (0.04 m in diameter) was set across its lower, southern wall onto the collecting vat (8061). This vat is circular (some 2.90 m in diameter and about 2.35 m deep) and has two levels: an upper level, some 1.60 m deep, surface of which was accessible via two built beach-rock plaster-covered stairs set along the southern wall of the vat; and a lower level, some 0.75 m deep, which is of a smaller diameter (ca. 1.20 m top and 0.75 m bottom), serving as a sedimentation basin (fig. 11). On top of the rim of the circular collecting vat, right above the lower stair, there is a rounded dent on the mosaic surface (ca. 0.20 m in diameter), as if to serve the placement of a storage jar. The surface of the intermediary and collecting vats is delimited by four walls, approximately 0.30 m high (W8005, W8033, W8074 and W8072). These walls create a square mosaic-paved surface of some 5.50×5.00 m, which together with the treading floor encompasses an area of 9.70×6.50 m. However, excavations have made it clear that the winepress complex formed part of a larger complex of a yet-undiscovered nature. Wall 8005 has an integral continuation to the west (W8029) and to the east (W8010) (fig. 12). Moreover, W8030 was built together with W8072 and thus reflects the same date of foundation. In fact, excavations in Squares B2, B3, C3 (in the western part of the area) revealed two rooms with stone-paved floors that are contemporaneous with the winepress complex; a northern room (W8042, W8029, W8039 and F8045) and a southern room (W8030, W8072), with a badly preserved floor (8032, 8052) (fig. 2). By contrast, the east side of the area (Squares A5, B5) revealed the probable remains of storage facilities of the winepress as can be seen in the southeast, where a surface of medium-sized white *tesserae* (F8035) is delimited by W8033 and W8077 (fig. 13). There are also some badly preserved plaster foundations in the northeast (F8067) that may have served the same purpose. Furthermore, there is evidence of an earlier occupation layer in the northeast, where W8010 of the winepress complex was built on top of a plastered channel (I8060) (fig. 10).

There are also two beach-rock, axe-shaped weights that were found close to surface level (figs. 14-15). Their flattened surfaces and rounded sides may indicate that they originated in a round burial stone such as the ones seen nowadays in the Samaritan cemetery of nearby Tel Barukh, or in the upper stone of a crushing basin of an oil press. Although the weights seem to be too heavy (some 200 kg each) to be used in a simple lever-and-weights press used in the second pressing of the grapes, one cannot exclude the possibility that they were used in a space that was

part of the winepress complex but did not survive. Alternatively, both the channel and the axe-shaped weights may have belonged to an as-yet undiscovered installation or installations.

Grapes for wine production probably came from grapevines cultivated in the narrow plain located to the east of the site between the first and second *kurkar* (fossilized dune sandstone) ridges or in the *hamra* hills that cover most of the central Sharon area and are drained by Naḥal (stream/river) Poleg to the north. This assumption accords with the viticulture of the region as is evident by the many Byzantine winepresses discovered in Apollonia-Arsuf and nearby sites.

The one-axis plan of the winepress complex — that is, the treading floor (together with its inscription), the intermediary and collecting vats all aligned on the same axis (fig. 16), is not commonly found in the Sharon Plain and is more characteristic of the Galilee, where the majority of improved wineries belongs to this type.²⁴ In contrast, the circular collecting vat is more characteristic of the Sharon Plain, although the majority of winepresses scattered in the area were built on the four-rectangle plan.²⁵ Nevertheless, a recently published winepress in Kfar Ya'abetz (Kilodia) on the eastern fringes of the Sharon Plain shows a striking resemblance to our one-axis plan winepress complex in both its plan, orientation and dimensions, albeit with a circular intermediate vat rather than horseshoe-shaped such as ours.²⁶

Byzantine winepresses with inscriptions were rarely documented in Palestine. The very few that have so far been published are either of Christian or Jewish orientation. Thus, for example, a Byzantine winepress adorned with a two-line Greek mosaic inscription beginning with a cross was recorded in Castra.²⁷ Another find is a seven-line mosaic inscription ending with a horned cross that is flanked by ivy leaves, found on a partly destroyed mosaic panel some 100 m east of Tel Ashdod (in the area of Kibbutz Hazor).²⁸ Although recently a new reading and date for the inscription was offered,²⁹ the commemoration of the foundation of

²⁴ R. Frankel, *Wine and Oil Production in Antiquity in Israel and Other Mediterranean Countries*, JSOT/ASOR Monograph Series 10, Sheffield: Academic Press, 1999, 152-153, map 40.

²⁵ Frankel (note 24 above), 149-150, map 39.

²⁶ E. Ayalon, "A Byzantine Winepress in Kfar Ya'abetz," *Oil and Wine Presses in Israel from the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods*, BAR International Series 1972, ed. E. Ayalon, R. Frankel and A. Klöner, Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009, 161-162, fig. 29.1.

²⁷ Z. Yeivin and G. Finkielsztejn, "Horbat Castra — 1993-1997," *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 109, 1999, 25*, fig. 45; G. Finkielsztejn, Les mosaïques de la komopolis de porphyreon du sud (Kfar Samir; Haïfa, Israël): Un évêché (?) entre village et cité, *La mosaïque gréco-romaine* 9, 2005, 448, fig. 20.

²⁸ S. Gudovitch, "Remains of a Monastery at the Foot of Tel Ashdod," *'Atiqot* 51, 2006, 1*-2* (in Hebrew, English summary p. 233); V. Tzaferis, "A Greek Inscription from Tel Ashdod," *'Atiqot* 51, 2006, 3*-5* (in Hebrew, English summary pp. 233-234).

²⁹ L. Di Segni, "The Greek Inscription from Tel Ashdod: A Revised Reading," *'Atiqot* 58, 2008, 32*-36*.

a winepress (ληνός) together with a monastery (μοναστηρίου) is clearly visible. A four-line Εἷς θεός formula mosaic inscription that may relate to yet another Byzantine winepress of a Christian orientation is known from Beth Ḥanan some five km north of Yavneh. Based on the presence of a christogram in the third line of the inscription, it was suggested that it formed part of a room of an ecclesiastical complex (monastery?), or alternatively a private (Christian) estate.³⁰ One cannot exclude the possibility of a winepress built within a monastery (or even a private estate) as was apparently the case at the site east of Tel Ashdod. A Byzantine winepress with a Jewish orientation was the interpretation offered for the remains of what was considered a Jewish synagogue at Ḥulda because of a seven-branched *menorah*, and other Jewish motifs such as incense shovel, *shofar*, *etrog*, and *loulav* depicted on the mosaic floor together with two Greek inscriptions.³¹ These inscriptions were placed on the surface of the intermediate and collecting vats; one is a three-line inscription (ΕΥΛΟ / ΓΙΑΤΩ / ΛΑΩ) which reads ‘blessing to the people’; the other is a six-line inscription blessing and naming the three founders (ΚΤΙΣΤΕΣ). However, it should be stressed that excavations at Ḥulda were limited to the area of the winepress and one cannot exclude the possibility that additional building remains in the surrounding area, together with the winepress, formed a larger (public?) complex. Such a reconstruction may agree with our previous reconstruction, that the Apollonia-Arsuf winepress complex with the inscription on its treading floor probably formed part of a large (public) building that is yet to be discovered in the western part of the area. Given the east–west orientation of the walls of the building (W8029, W8010 and W8030, W8077), including those of the winepress complex (W8005, W8074), it may well have formed part of a Samaritan synagogue. Given the fact that Samaritan synagogues are normally oriented toward Mount Gerizim, which is generally of the same latitude as Apollonia-Arsuf, the building’s position fits such a conclusion. Our reconstruction, which is based on the architectural remains, may also find support in the contents of its inscription, as most of the Εἷς θεός μόνος formula inscriptions in Palestine come from Samaritan public buildings and are commemorative in character (excluding those that appear on amulets, of course).³² The probable integration of our winepress complex in a public building notwithstanding, it is the first winepress found with a Samaritan-oriented inscription, evidence that the practice of inserting inscriptions on mosaic-paved surfaces of winepresses was done by Christians, Jews and Samari-

³⁰ M. Fischer, I. Taxel and D. Amit, “Rural Settlement in the Vicinity of Yavneh in the Byzantine Period: A Religio-Archaeological Perspective,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 350, 2008, 24, figs. 15-16.

³¹ A. Kloner, “The Structure and Installations at Hulda and Their Function as a Jewish Winepress,” *I Will Speak the Riddle of Ancient Times: Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, II, ed. A. M. Maier and P. de Miroschedgi, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006, 853-864.

³² Roll and Tal (note 15 above), 145-146.

tans in Byzantine Palestine.³³ Given the fact that the winepress complex was relatively short-lived, spanning the fourth/fifth centuries to the early sixth century CE based on the finds recovered from fills below and above its floors, we cannot exclude the possibility that the building was destroyed as a result of Justinian's law (ca. 527-531 CE) prohibiting Samaritan gatherings of any kind, thus encouraging the destruction of Samaritan synagogues (*Samaritarum synagogae destruuntur*) and other productive operations of larger scales.³⁴ The abandonment or destruction of the winepress complex may have also been related to the edicts against the property rights of the Samaritans included in the *Novellae* enacted during the period of the Samaritan Rebellion (529 CE).³⁵

Excavations show that the winepress was damaged by an earthquake, the date of which is uncertain. The southern parts of the winepress complex were cracked; notable is an east–west orientated crack off the center of W8033 through F8061, and the collecting vat (8061) ending off the center of W8072 (figs. 2, 11). However, it should be emphasized that the damage done to the winepress complex by the earthquake was relatively minor and moderate repairs could have easily made it operational again. In any case, it seems clear that the winepress complex was intentionally covered by raw-glass production furnaces, which once dismantled to hammer out the raw glass, left the ca. 0.60 m layer of raw-glass production refuse in the area. Elsewhere we suggested that raw-glass production at Apollonia-Arsuf may have been a monopoly of the Church that as an administrative body was involved in the economy and daily life of Sozousa; not to mention the important role it could have played in the network of trade and circulation of raw glass.³⁶ If this was indeed the case we may suggest that ownership over the area of the winepress complex was transferred from the Samaritans to the Christian community. Hence,

³³ Di Segni (note 29 above), 33* refers to yet another inscription that commemorates the building of a wine cellar in a monastery at el-Kufr in the Huran by engraving a Greek inscription on the lintel above its entrance but this seems to relate to another practice. The same applies to the name Dosit[heos] found 'cut in the side of the large winepress' in Khirbet el-Buraq in Samaria, cf. S. Applebaum, B. Isaac and Y. Landau, "Varia Epigraphica," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 6, 1981-1982, 104-105, no. 15, which may even be a later addition to an existing winepress complex. I am indebted to L. Di Segni for the latter reference. Notwithstanding the above, another Byzantine winepress of a Christian orientation with a Greek inscription commemorating its foundation in 564 CE on its mosaic treading floor was recently discovered in excavations west of Kabri (at et-Tuweiri in the Plain of 'Akko) but is yet unpublished (D. Syon, pers. comm.; id., "Inscriptions from et-Tuweiri and the Boundary between the Dioceses of Tyre and 'Akko-Ptolemais," *'Atiqot* [forthcoming]).

³⁴ *Cod. Iust.* (ed. Krueger) 1.15.17.

³⁵ Tal, Jackson-Tal and Freestone (note 18 above), 66.

³⁶ See in this respect L. Di Segni, "Samaritan Revolts in Byzantine Palestine," in *The Samaritans*, ed. E. Stern and H. Eshel, Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press and Israel Antiquities Authority, 2002, 467-480 (in Hebrew); A. M. Rabello, "The Samaritans in Roman Law," in *The Samaritans*, id., 488-495 (in Hebrew).

even after the turbulent regime of Justinian, the Samaritan owners of the area could not regain control over their previously-owned land.

Elsewhere we discussed the rural nature of the area to the south of Apollonia-Arsuf on both sides of the Yarqon estuary.³⁷ We tried to show that the rural area between Joppa and Apollonia-Arsuf (i.e., the central coastal plain or Southern Sharon) was heavily occupied by Samaritans during the Late Roman and Byzantine period. This process probably started sometime after the Second Jewish Revolt and, as the archaeological evidence indicates, accelerated during the third and fourth centuries CE, at a time when quite a few Jewish settlements that had been abandoned in either the late first or early second century CE were reoccupied by Samaritans in the form of villages and farms. There were also several Samaritan settlements that had not been previously occupied by Jews. All these Samaritan settlements continued to exist well into the Early Islamic period.³⁸ The local settlement pattern, as reflected in the better-known excavated and/or surveyed sites in this region, is composed of small- to medium-sized villages and farms. Many of these settlements existed in their 'Byzantine' form until the eighth century CE, when a gradual decrease in their size and population led to near total abandonment in centuries to follow. This change can be related to the increased insecurity and sharp deterioration in the economic conditions of the Samaritans (as well as of the rest of the *dhimmīs* [non-Muslims]). This process started with the Abbasid period, in the second half of the eighth century, by means of persecutions of the contemporary caliphs and their governors, resulting in local revolts and disasters. Furthermore, at that time, the Muslim authorities prohibited wine-drinking, which certainly caused a major economic decline in many settlements where viticulture was a main source of livelihood. Consequently, the number of rural Samaritan settlements was substantially reduced, and most of the Samaritans were either concentrated in towns and cities or settled in villages in the mountainous region of Samaria.³⁹ The evidence from the winepress complex discovered in Apollonia-Arsuf shows that a somewhat

³⁷ O. Tal and I. Taxel, "Tel Ḥashash: Between Jews and Samaritans. On the Archaeology of the Yarqon Estuary from Classical Times to Late Antiquity," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 142, 2010 (in press).

³⁸ See also Y. Kaplan, "Samaritan Settlements of Byzantine Date in the Yarkon Basin," *Museum HaAretz Bulletin* 8, 1968, 65-66; I. Roll and E. Ayalon, *Apollonia and Southern Sharon: Model of a Coastal City and Its Hinterland*, Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz HaMeuchad, 1989, 137-183, 231 (in Hebrew).

³⁹ For the crises of the early Abbasid period see Levy-Rubin (note 11 above), 29-31; N. Schur, "Persecutions of the Samaritans by the Abbasids and the Disappearance of the Samaritan Rural Population," in *The Samaritans*, ed. E. Stern and H. Eshel, Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press and Israel Antiquities Authority, 587-590 (in Hebrew); E. Ayalon, "The End of the Ancient Wine Industry in the Central Coastal Plain," *Hikrei Eretz: Studies in the History of the Land of Israel, Dedicated to Prof. Yehuda Feliks*, ed. Y. Friedman, Z. Safrai and J. Schwartz, Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan university Press, 160, 164-166 (in Hebrew).



similar process occurred some two centuries earlier. The effects of the persecutions of the Samaritans by Justinian are not totally clear in the archaeological record. However, it is possible that Samaritan viticulture industry left the town of Sozousa from this date on and was now concentrated in the rural Samaritan settlements of the region.

Oren Tal
Institute of Archaeology
Tel Aviv University





Fig. 1. Apollonia-Arsuf, 2009: Site plan.

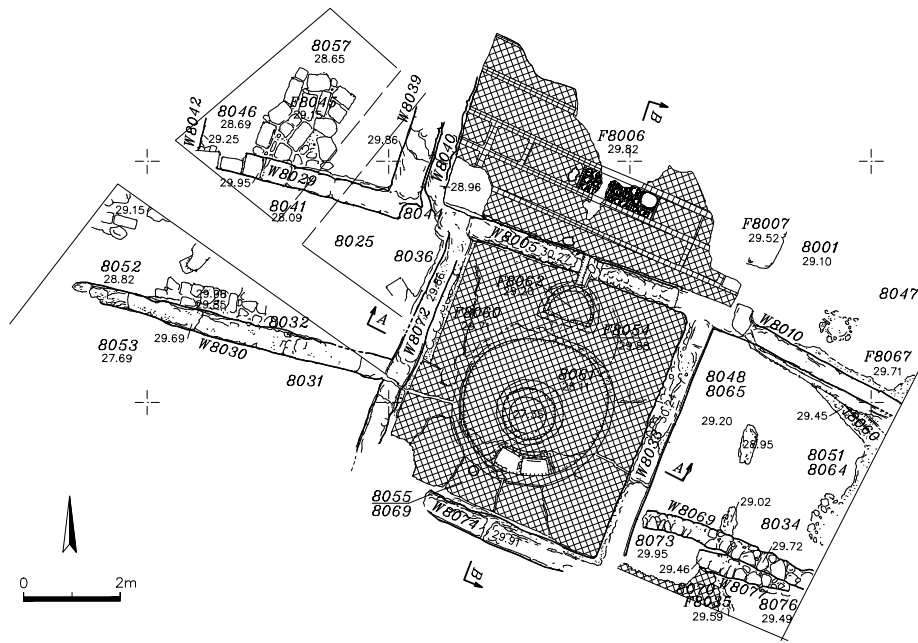
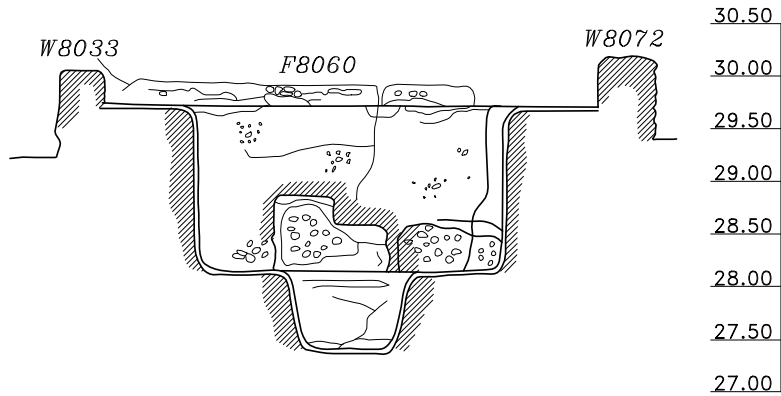


Fig. 2. Area O, 2009: Plan (drafting: D. Porotsky and S. Pirsky).

SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B

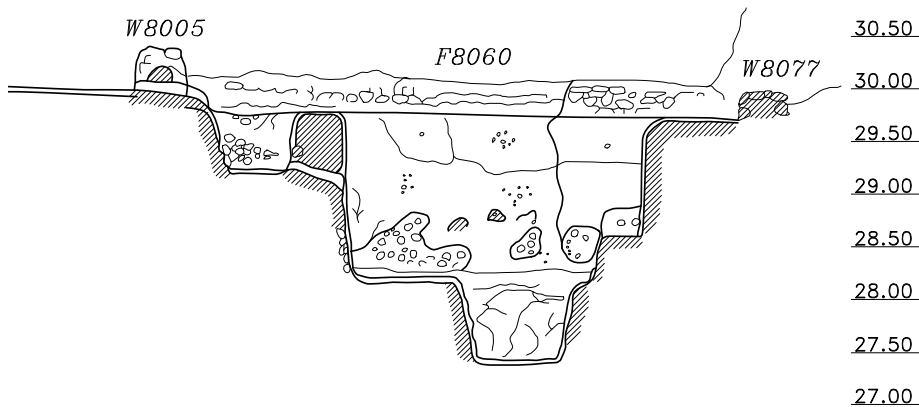


Fig. 3. Area O, 2009: Sections (drafting: D. Porotsky and S. Pirsky).

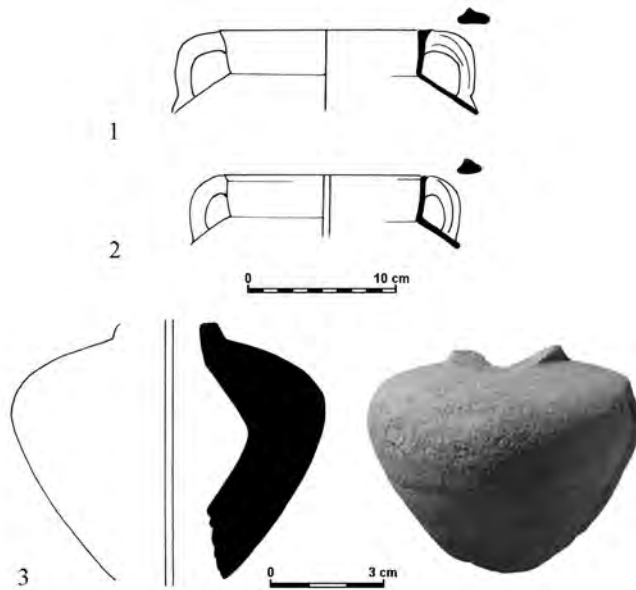


Fig. 4. Area O, 2009: Pottery from early fills: 1.-2. Cooking-pots (L8001, B80024); 3. Bottle (L8004, B. 80112) (drawing: A. Perry; photograph: P. Shrago).

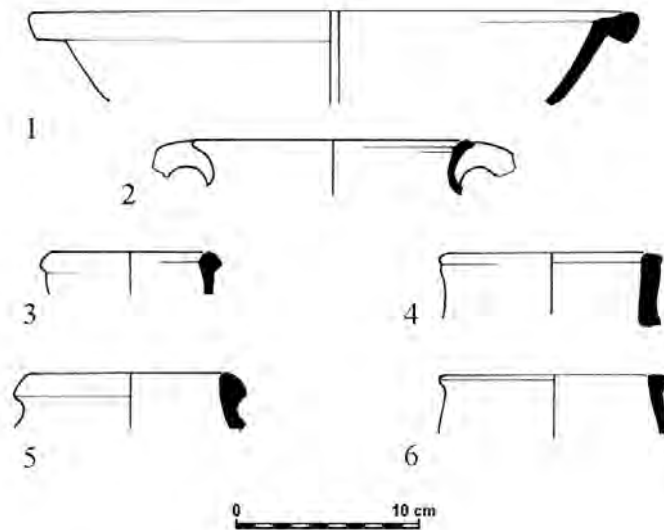


Fig. 5. Area O, 2009: Pottery from early fills below the winepress complex: 1. Basin (L8065, B80827); 2. Cooking pot (L8065, B80827); 3.-4. Storage jars (L8065, B80827); 5.-6. Storage jars (L8046, B80197) (drawing: A. Perry).

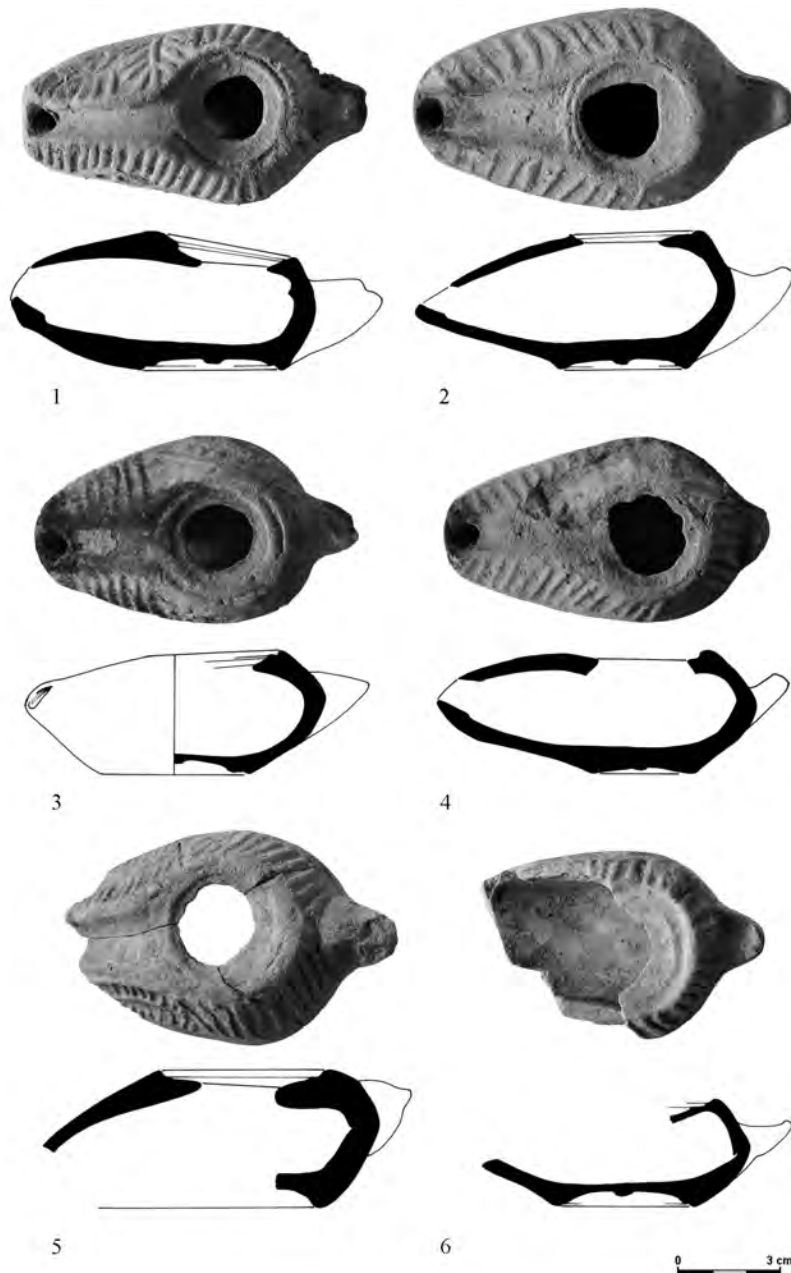


Fig. 6. Area O, 2009: Lamps from the refuse pit of the collecting vat (1.-2. L8061, B80359; 3. L8061, B80344; 4. L8061, B80414; 5. L8061, B80415; 6. L8061, B80391) (drawing: A. Perry).

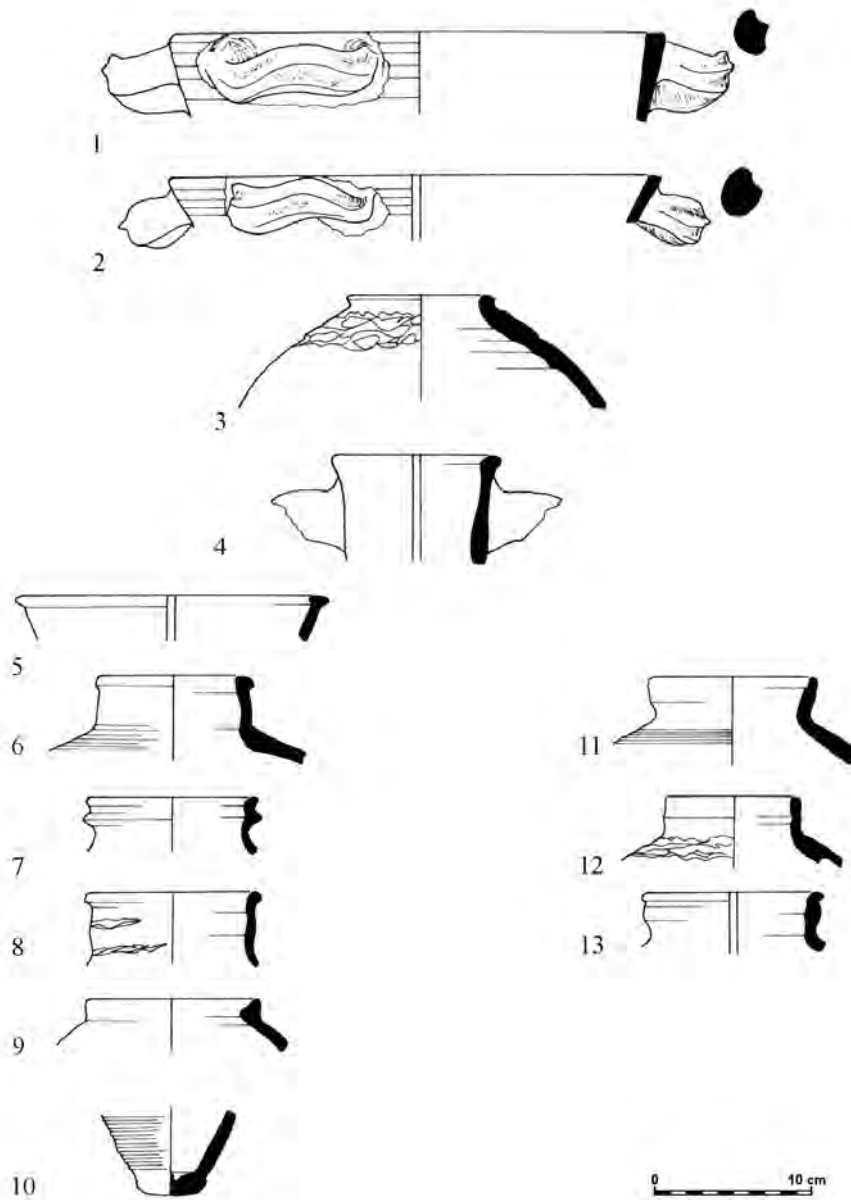


Fig. 7. Area O, 2009: Pottery from post winepress complex fills: 1.-2. Casseroles (L8020, B80114); 3. Storage jar (L8020, B80114); 4. Amphora (L8020, B80114); 5. Bowl (L8049, B80220); 6.-10. Storage jars (L8049, B80220); 11.-13. Storage jars (L8015, B80065) (drawing: A. Perry; photograph: P. Shrago).



Fig. 8. Area O, 2009: The stone built pier found in the collecting vat, looking north (photograph: author).



Fig. 9. Area O, 2009: The treading floor, W8005 and the collecting vat, looking southwest (photograph: P. Shrago).



Fig. 10. Area O, 2009: The carved u-shaped stone channel and the intermediary horseshoe-shaped vat, looking east (photograph: P. Shrago).



Fig. 11. Area O, 2009: An overview on the carved u-shaped stone channel, the intermediary horseshoe-shaped vat and the circular collecting vat, looking south (photograph: P. Shrago).





Fig. 12. Area O, 2009: Walls 8029, 8005 and 8010 and the northern room with its stone-paved floor (F8045) in the foreground, looking east (photograph: P. Shrago).



Fig. 13. Area O, 2009: Remains of storage facilities with a surface of white *tesserae* (F8035) delimited by Walls 8033 and 8077, looking west (photograph: P. Shrago).

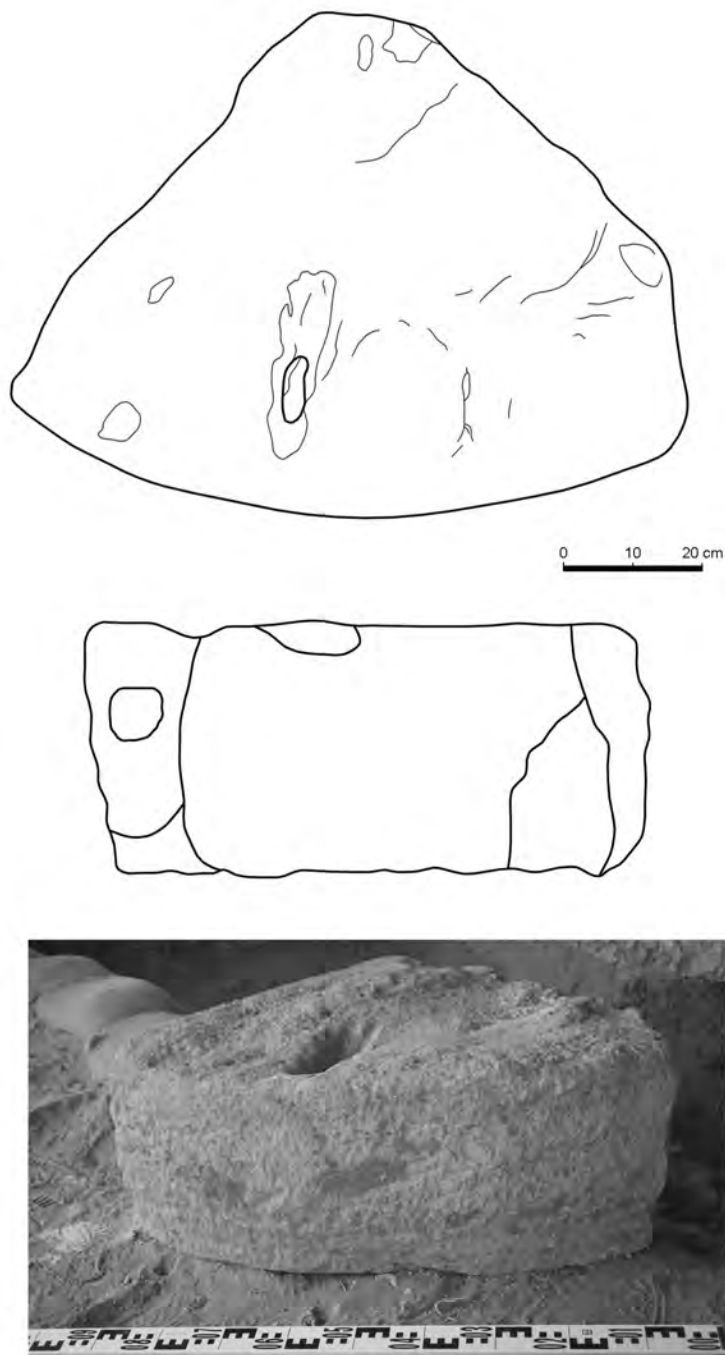


Fig. 14. Area O, 2009: Weight 1 (drawing: M. Edrey; photograph: P. Shrago).

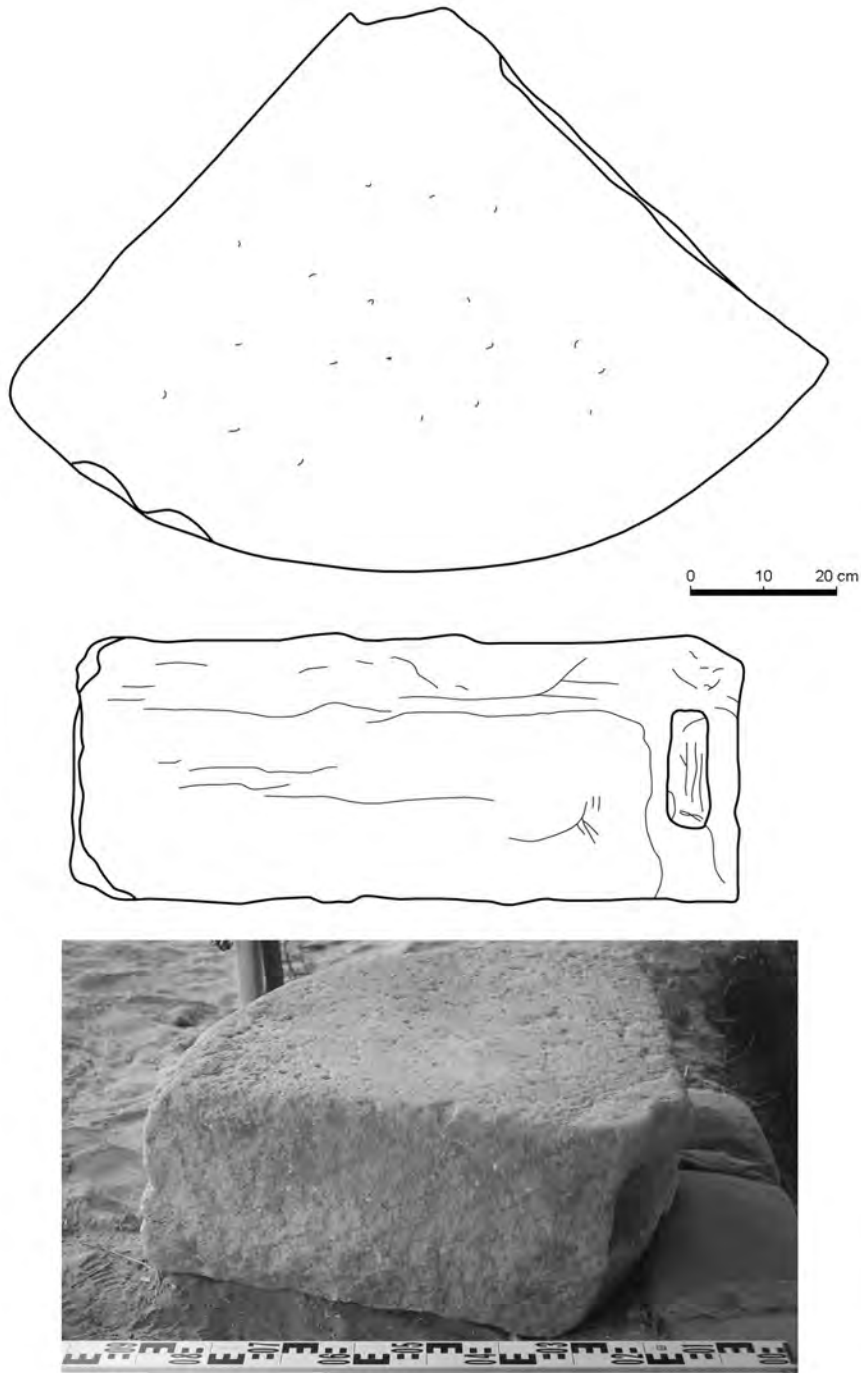


Fig. 15. Area O, 2009: Weight 2 (drawing: M. Edrey; photograph: P. Shrago).



Fig. 16. Area O, 2009: Aerial view (photograph: Skyview Ltd).

