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NOTES ON MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM TOWER 11

ADRIAN J. BOAS

INTRODUCTION

The limited assemblage of pottery discussed here was recovered in the surroundings of Tower 11. Because of the rough terrain — a result of the collapse of the tower situated at the edge of a very steep decline — mechanical means were used to excavate the area. This must be taken into account when regarding the ceramic assemblage. The pottery comes from two loci, L34 at the foot of the northern wall (W7) of Tower 11, and L202, at the foot of its eastern wall.

CATALOGUE

Locus 202

Fig. 196: 1: Holemouth jar or pot. Rim. D 50 cm. Fabric: Hard, red-brown to grey with some silt-size inclusions.

Cooking Vessels

Several examples of large cooking basins similar to Fig. 197: 2 were found in Mamlûk contexts of the late thirteenth to fourteenth centuries in the Pan Sanctuary excavations at nearby Banias (Boas, in preparation).

Fig. 197: 2: Glazed cooking basin. Ledge rim. D 48 cm. Fabric: Red, brown surface, possibly self slip, silt-size inclusions. On the interior remnants of greenish-brown lead glaze over slip.

Fig. 197: 3: Glazed cooking basin. Everted rim; handle pressed up against the wall; interior slightly ribbed. D 29 cm. Fabric: Coarse, thickly-potted medium-soft orange ware, turning pale brown near the outer surface. Colorless lead glaze on the interior.

Parallels: Pringle 1984: 99, Fig. 5:29

Monochrome Slip-Glazed Ware

The bowl in Fig. 197:4: is a common thirteenth–fourteenth century form.

Parallels: Salamé–Sarkis 1980:186191, Fig. 29:10; Pl. XXII:8–9; Pringle 1984:103, Fig. 7:41–47.

Fig. 197: 4: Monochrome slip-glazed bowl. Rim D 31 cm. Fabric: Orange with silt-size and some larger inclusions. On interior and over the rim a thick white slip covered with green lead glaze.

Parallels: De Vaux and Steve 1950: Fig.32:1; Pringle 1984:103, Fig. 7:42–44; 1986:147–148, Fig. 49:52.

Fig. 197: 5: Monochrome slip-glazed bowl. Ring base with finger impressions.

D of base 7 cm. Fabric: Hard, brown ware with small inclusions and some voids. On interior a green glaze, apparently not over a slip, thus appearing very dark in colour.

Slip-Painted Ware

This type had a high-footed ring base unlike the typical low ring base of slip-painted bowls of the twelfth century, but common in local thirteenth–fourteenth century ceramics, as well as in thirteenth century Cypriot imports and in Mamlûk period Egyptian glazed wares. The date of this bowl is therefore probably thirteenth–fourteenth century. In support of this date is the use of a tripod stilt during firing, a technique introduced into the Mediterranean region at the beginning of the thirteenth century and not found on locally manufactured vessels before the Mamlûk period.

Parallels: De Vaux and Steve 1950: Fig.3:8–18; Pringle 1985: 179, Fig. 5:26–29.

Fig. 197:6: Slip-painted bowl. High ring-base with everted foot. D of base 10 cm. Fabric: Pink-orange with many silt-size inclusions. On interior a dark-green glaze over a pattern of broad, slip-painted lines converging at the center of the vessel. There appears to be a tripod stilt scar.

Yellow and Green Gouged Ware

These bowls and basins are decorated with yellow lead glaze stained with green and with fine sgraffito combined with broad gouging. Pringle (1984: 106) notes that these vessels are common in assemblages in Transjordan.

Parallels: Pringle 1984:106–107, Fig. 8:69–71; 1995:186, Figs. 10:51, 11:55; Bagatti 1971:24, Fig. 19:5–8; 1984: Fig. 56:7; Loffreda 1982:420, Fig. 9:2; Salamé–Sarkis 1980: Pl. LII:2.

Fig. 197:7: Yellow and green gouged ware bowl. High ring base with everted foot. D of base c. 10 cm. Fabric: Red to brown, many fine inclusions and some voids. On interior, incised decoration consisting of double lines converging at the center of the bowl and rows of pierced dots. Yellow lead glaze stained with green.

Smoking Pipe

Fig. 197:8: Pipe. Bowl and keel with most of shank. Fabric: Buff. Moulded decoration on bowl. Parallels: Robinson 1985:194, Pl.61:A4; Humphrey 1990:Fig. 2.

Locus 34*Handmade Ware*

Handmade painted or burnished vessels are very common, particularly in rural sites throughout the region. They were probably introduced in the twelfth century and continued with slight variations until the twentieth century. A wide range of forms includes storage vessels, cooking vessels and coarse table wares. Parallels: De Vaux and Steve 1950:133–137, Pl. F; Pringle 1984:95, 97–98.

Fig. 197:9: Handmade jar(?). Ring-base? D c. 12 cm. Fabric: Soft pale-brown thickly potted ware with black core; many voids and some inclusions. Traces of red slip on the surfaces.

Coarse Wares

Fig. 197:10: Storage jar. Lower part of a strap handle. W 3 cm. Fabric: Red with a grey core; many silt-size inclusions. Slight impression at base of handle where joined to the jar wall. Probably belongs to the handle of a long-necked storage jar typical of the Mamlûk period. Parallels: Many such vessels were found at Banias (Boas forthcoming).

Fig. 197:11: Everted rim basin. Rim. Est. D c. 26 cm. Fabric: Hard, orange with a grey core; silt-size inclusions. Self-slip on surface.

Glazed Cooking Ware

Lead glazed cooking pots, pans, and bowls are common in ninth–thirteenth century assemblages. For a coverage of these vessels see Avissar 1996:132–146.

Fig. 197:12: Glazed cooking pan. Body sherd near base. Fabric: Coarse, hard-fired buff to grey ware. Colourless lead glaze on interior and traces of soot on exterior, at the base.

Monochrome Slip-Glazed Ware

Figs. 197:13–15 are monochrome slip-glazed bowls with a brownish glaze.

Parallels: For Nos. 14 and 15 see St. Mary of Carmel, Pringle 1994:100, Fig. 6:31, 32. Identified by Pringle as metallic and roulette wares as also found in Corinth in late thirteenth–early fourteenth century contexts: cf. MacKay 1967: 252, 254–255, Nos. 1–6, 11–13; also Friedman 1979, Pl. 30; Salamé–Sarkis 1980:186–191, Figs. 29:12.

Fig. 197:13: Carinated monochrome slip-glazed bowl. Rim and body, base missing. D 18 cm. Fabric: Red-orange with fine white inclusions; colorless glaze on interior to just over the rim.

Fig. 197:14: Carinated monochrome slip-glazed bowl. Part of rim and upper wall. D 24 cm. Fabric: Brown-grey. Glaze on interior is black due to poor firing of subsequent burning.

Fig. 197:15: Carinated monochrome slip-glazed bowl. Rim and upper wall. D 22 cm. Fabric: Red. Dark green lead glaze on interior extending over white slip beyond glaze on exterior.

Fig. 197:16: Hemispherical monochrome slip-glazed bowl. Rim and upper wall. D 24 cm. Fabric: Red-brown, silt-size inclusions, fine voids. On the interior green lead glaze over slip extending beyond glaze on exterior.

Sgraffito Decorated Slip Glaze Ware

Sgraffito (under-glaze incised decoration) — one of the most popular medieval techniques for decorating lead glazed vessels — is here probably of twelfth–thirteenth century date.

Fig. 197:17: Sgraffito decorated bowl. Body sherd. Fabric: Pink. Yellow-ochre lead glaze over white slip on both interior and exterior. On interior — part of sgraffito decoration.

Parallels: Pringle 1985: 183, Figs. 6: 37–38; 7:40–45.

Yellow and Green Gouged Ware

Fig. 197:18: Yellow and green gouged ware bowl. Body sherd. Fabric: Red-brown, very thickly potted ware, many silt-size inclusions. On interior greenish-yellow lead glaze over thick white slip with part of two concentric circles incised on wall.

Reserved Slip Decorated Ware

The slip under the lead glaze does not cover the entire surface so that the transparent — usually green or yellow — lead glaze appears in its true colour on only part of it and the remainder of the surface appears brown.

Parallels: Caesarea — Pringle 1985: 179, Pl. XVII:1, Fig. 4:22-25, with ledge rim; at inland sites, e.g. Yoqne'am (Avisar 1996: 96, Fig. XIII. 34:1-5), and the Frankish tower at Bet She'an (Boas forthcoming), they are of hemispheric or carinated form with a simple rounded rim, similar to the examples here.

Fig. 197:19: Carinated reserved slip bowl. Rim and upper body wall. D 18 cm. Fabric: Thinly potted red-brown, with many silt-size inclusions. Slip covers parts of the interior and over it is a cream-colored glaze stained with green. Where there is no slip the glaze appears brown. Slip covers the upper part of the exterior.

Fig. 197:20: Reserved slip bowl. Rim and upper body wall. D 36 cm. Fabric: Pink with some silt-size inclusions and voids. Slip covers parts of the interior and over it is a spotty cream-colored glaze. Where there is no slip the glaze appears brown. Glaze and slip cover the upper part of the exterior.

Fig. 197:21: Carinated reserved slip bowl. Body sherd. Fabric: Red with a grey core. Slip covers parts of the interior; over it is a spotty grey, cream-colored glaze. Where there is no slip the glaze appears brown. Slip covers part of the exterior.

Alkaline Glazed Frit Ware

These vessels are made of a friable whitish paste, decorated with designs in black and blue, covered by a transparent colorless or turquoise alkaline glaze. They were manufactured in Syria and date from the late twelfth century on (see Poulsen 1957:157-230).

Fig. 197:22: Underglaze-painted frit bowl. Rim D 28 cm. Fabric: Coarse white frit. Colorless alkaline glaze covers an underglaze design of black lines and blue and green spots, both on the interior and the exterior. Parallels: Pringle 1985:107, Fig. 9:76, 77.

Rashaya el-Fukhar Ware

Wheelmade vessels decorated with red-brown paint and green lead glaze were produced in the village of Rashaya el-Fukhar on the western slopes of Mount Hermon in the Lebanon. Typical forms are jars, jugs, water-jugs (*Ibriq*) and bowls. The ware is generally orange-brown to buff and the clay is well levigated with few inclusions and is well fired. The vessels were decorated with geometric designs, wavy lines and spirals painted in brown over slip together with bands of green glaze. Rashaya ware, which may date as early as the sixteenth century, was manufactured up to the twentieth. It is found mainly, but not only, in the north of the country. (see *Rashaya of the Potters*, 1983).

Fig. 197:23: Carinated bowl. S-shaped rim. D 11 cm. Fabric: Light-brown with many silt-size inclusions. On interior and upper exterior white slip. On the lower interior, green glaze.

Fig. 197:24: Hemispheric bowl. Rim. D 26 cm. Fabric: Pink to light-brown with many silt-size inclusions and fine voids. On the interior and exterior is white slip.

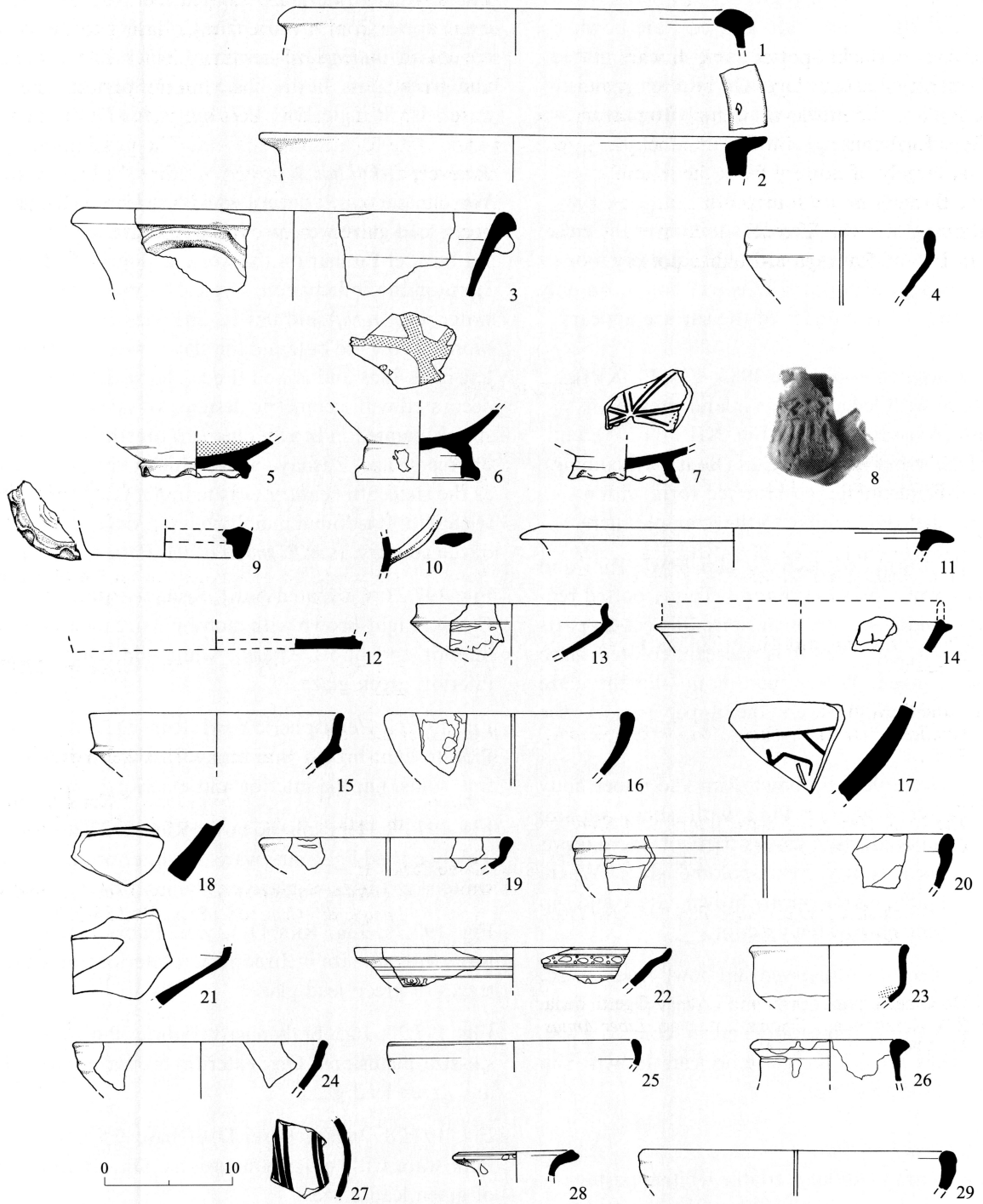
Fig. 197:25: Hemispheric bowl. Rim. D 22 cm. Fabric: Thinly potted light-buff ware. On interior and exterior white slip; traces of glaze on the interior.

Fig. 197:26: Jug. Rim D 12 cm. Fabric: Pale-brown ware with silt-size inclusions. On interior and exterior traces of green lead glaze.

Fig. 197:27: Jug. Body sherd. Fabric: Pink ware with silt-size inclusions. On exterior brown painted lines and green lead glaze.

Fig. 197:28: Jug(?). Base. D of base 9.5 cm. Fabric: Pink ware with silt-size inclusions. On exterior traces of green lead glaze.

Fig. 197:29: Hemispheric bowl. Rim. D 26 cm. Fabric: Pink to light brown with many silt-size inclusions and fine voids. On interior and exterior white slip.



DISCUSSION

Pottery of coarse, thickly-potted pinkish ware is typical of medieval assemblages in this region and forms the bulk of the medieval pottery from nearby Baniyas (Boas forthcoming). Both of the loci presented here consist largely of pottery from the mamlûk period—late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, possibly continuing into the fifteenth. Were it not for the presence in L34 of Rashaya al-Fukhar pottery —

generally not considered to appear before the sixteenth century — and of a tobacco pipe dating to the late seventeenth–eighteenth centuries in L202, we would have dated these fills to the Mamlûk period. The presence of these later pieces suggests an Ottoman period date for both of the loci. The possibility, however, should not be ruled out that the later pottery is intrusive, coming from upper levels due to the use of mechanical means in excavating the site.

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