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THE ABBASID OCCUPATION AT GADARA (UMM QAIS), 2011 EXCAVATION SEASON

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the Abbasid remains that were uncovered during the season of 2011 excavation in Gadara, Jordan. It describes the architectural remains and the main types, shapes, and characters of the groups of pottery findings. Part of the paper is a comparative study for the pottery types. It is clarified the Abbasid settlement in the site through studying the pottery objects, and provides clues on the relations and trade bounds that link the site with the centers of pottery production of the Abbasid period. Especially more light is shed on settlement patterns in the Islamic Umm Qais and attest to the intensive development of the site over a period of the Abbasids.

KEYWORDS: Abbasid, Occupation, Gadara (Umm Qais), Excavation, Jordan, Pottery.

1. INTRODUCTION

West of the Ottoman village, within the borders of the ancient city of Gadara (Umm Qais), and along the southern side of the main colonnaded street (Decumanus Maximus), a season of excavation was held in summer 2011 to reveal the archaeological features of that part of the city (Figure 1). Seventeen squares were excavated and at least six strata were detected. The results of the excavation showed different periods of occupation, the most recent is dated to the Mamluk period (late 14th century) followed by two phases of the Abbasid occupation (747 AD-10th century), and phases of the Umayyad, the Byzantine, and the Roman occupations in consequence.

The region of Umm Qais can be divided into two main parts: the ancient city of Umm Qais, including the Greco-Roman, Byzantine and Islamic occupation levels, and the modern village of Umm Qais and the rural landscape including farms and green spaces within the region (Segal 1988). The Greco-Roman remains are of great importance and are especially interesting for they show the main features of an integrated Roman city in terms of city planning, monuments, and artistic works, as well as its distinctive type of basalt stone (Kerner 1994).

Umm Qais locations' gave it the ability to compete with other sites on Bilad al-sham not only on trade and agricultural fields, but also on the transferring of pottery production techniques; as Umm Qais located on the road from Damascus to Tiberias and hence to the Palestinian seaports, overlooking Lake Tiberias and the Golan Heights, (Figure 1).

2. THE IRRIGATION SYSTEM OF UMM QAIS

It was very common in the classical cities to transfer water from the springs to the city; even if it was a far distance, and the fact that the inhabitants of the city need water for their daily use; so the provision of water is necessary in order to meet the needs of humans, animals and for agri-

cultural purposes. Therefore it was a necessity to cut tunnels, dig water wells and carved reservoirs. It is a fact that Umm Qais witnessed a human settlement in the Roman, Byzantine and Islamic times (Whitcomb, 1992: 387). However, the main springs in Umm Qais did not meet the need of the Roman city, because most of those springs were much lower than the level of the site. Those springs: *Ein Umm Qais* and *Umm Magoug* and *Umm Al-Turab* served agricultural purposes directly, where the average annual rainfall in Umm Qais (400-500 mm) (El-Gohary and Al-Shorman 2009: 147). The rain water was stored in wells and reservoirs, and in order to take advantage of the rainwater number of channels has been erected in the agricultural areas to collect water in the wells and small pools for watering agricultural terraces scattered on the slopes (Awad, 1998: 45-43).

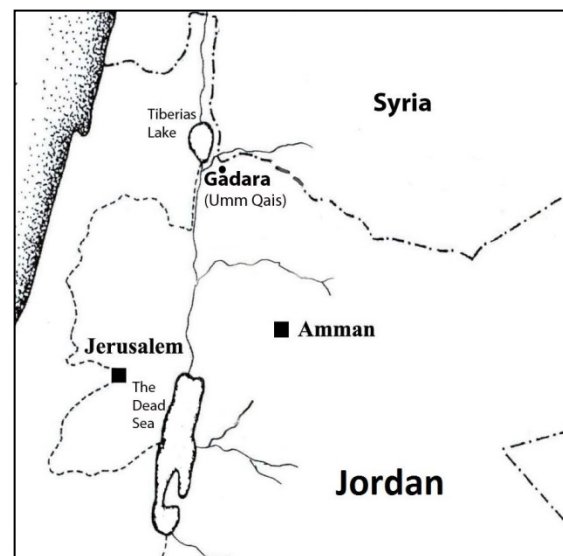


Figure 1: Map of Jordan, location of Gadara.

The main spring which had supplied Umm Qais is *Ein Umm Al-Turab* to the east of Umm Qais about 12 km. The water reaches the city through a tunnel which extends from the *Ein Al-Turab* spring to the site. Such tunnels were not plastered and it is possible that the reason for this is that the flowing water which reaches Umm Qais city, will not seep inside the ground, to be stored in reservoirs and wells on the site (Kerner, 1994: 77-76).

Some reservoirs in Umm Qais were cut in the rock, and others were built of trimmed basalt stones. There are three reservoirs to serve the inhabitants of the archeological site, two of which were dependent on rain water and the other depends of the supported system of water channels which was extending within the Roman- Byzantine city (Awad, 1998: 83). As for the wells, they have been used heavily and they mainly rely on rainwater harvesting storage and the water entering the well by channel carved on the part of the slope of the ground. According to (Awad, 1998) the number of wells in Umm Qais in the archaeological site up to 110 wells, with a depth ranges between 5-10 m for each. Each well has been plastered with two layers; the first is of rough plastering so as to be installed on the walls of the well soft rock, then it comes above a soft plastering layer to prevent contamination and leakage of water into the ground (Awad, 1998: 79).

It is worth to note that, Umm Qais is not a pure Umayyad-Abbasid site. Most of the installations were reused from the Roman and Byzantine periods. As for the irrigation system, as the area which has been excavated was a residential area only, not dedicated as an agricultural fields. the inhabitants of the site during the Abbasid era must have been using the Roman cisterns for their water supply, even fragments of the pottery water pipes of the Roman and Byzantine periods were found almost everywhere in the squares, during 2011 season; especially in the 6th century and the Mamluk levels. For instance, a huge Roman cistern was found on the north-eastern corner of the excavated squares. So, there were no visible Abbasid water pipes, even the floors were mostly a kind of compact soil and some were even destroyed.

3. RURAL ACTIVITIES OF THE INHABITANTS OF UMM QAIS

Umm Qais is a rural area, and its inhabitants – even today- used to raise goats, sheep and other domesticated birds such as chickens, and pigeons.

Main traditional crops have been cultivated since the Roman- Byzantine period such as olives, vines. Besides, other crops were planted among the trees such as onion, garlic and radishes; the Early Islamic period (Umayyad and Abbasid) saw the introduction of numerous new crops into the Middle East area, ushering in an agricultural revolution (Amar 1996; Watson 1983; al-Hassan and Hill 1986:203-208). Many of these new crops, such as sorghum, Asiatic rice, wheat, barley, sugar cane, cotton, citrus fruits, banana, watermelon, and spinach, among others, are from the tropical climate of South Asia and were not well suited for the cooler and drier climates of the Middle East; but, all of these plants faced success in Jordan area with failure in rice planting.

It is useful to note here that many of the Islamic historical sources dealt with many of these plantings in detail and identified the methods of cultivation, with reference to the appropriate environment and the suitable season of cultivation according to the nature of climate and rainfall. So; it is beyond the scope here to discuss the methods and techniques to grow these crops and other various plants. Therefore, it is appropriate here to mention some examples of these references and writings of the historians, chroniclers, and geographers of the Muslim world¹.

4. THE ABBASID OCCUPATION, 747 AD-10th CENTURY (MAYBE LATER, 2 PHASES)

The Abbasid occupation in Gadara was mentioned by the Arab geographers (cited in Walmsley 1987: 281-282). It has been also

¹ See for example Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, Cairo, 1957, pp. 291,351-353, 356, 359f; Abu Yusuf, *Kitab al-Kharaj*, Cairo, third edition, 1382 H, pp. 57, 94; Falih Hussain, *Al-Hayat al-Ziraiyyah fi Belad al-Sham fi al-Asr al-Umawi*, Amman, 1978, pp. 43-63; Mustafa Abbas al- Musawi, *Al-'Awamil al-Tarikhiyyah Li-Nash'at wa-Tatawwur al-Mudun al-Islamiyyah*, Baghdad, 1982, pp. 300-320; Awwad Majid Al-Azami, *Al-Zira'a wa-l-Islah al-Ziral fi 'Sadr al- Islam wal-Khilaphah al-Umawiyyah*, Baghdad, 1978, pp. 30 ff., 53,73, 79, 123, 144.

indicated recently in the excavations of the Byzantine bath structures and their vicinity in the city (Holm-Nielsen et al. 1986; Andersen and Strange 1987). During the Abbasid period the whole region experienced a number of severe earthquakes that had a strong effect on the architectural remains. The 749 AD severe earthquake in the Jordan Valley is considered to be the limit between the Umayyad and the Abbasid occupations (Tsafirir and Forester, 1992: 231). The region might be also affected by the 1033 severe earthquake that affected Jerusalem and Samaria. In addition to the natural disasters, the political affections were also a reason for an unstable period, in particular the transformation of the center of the Caliphate from Damascus in the Umayyad period to Kufa and Baghdad during the Abbasid period, that marked the beginning of a decline in the overall prosperity of the region. However; the accession of the Abbasids to power in 750 A.D coincided, in its early period, till circa 930, with a period of stability; a situation which was encouraging for traders to pursue their activities in, more or less, a usual way, and the wheel of commerce and trade turned heavily in order to meet the demand. The main routes of trade ran between Iraq, Syria and Jordan to carry goods of many kinds; Al-Muqaddasi, the tenth century most observant geographer, mentioned some branch routes crossing the Syrian region, the configuration of *Bilad al-Sham* gave access to merchants at the Mediterranean ports, to dispatch their goods easily to the inland towns (Al-Muqaddasi, 1994:248-252). In archaeological settlement terms, this has been a self-fulfilling prophecy in which Abbasid sites and its material culture have not been identified because of the assumption that they do not exist; the failure to identify Abbasid remains in the archaeological records has been due, in part, to the misdating of local ceramic types (Whitcomb 1990; Avner and Magness, 1998: 39).²

² Many settlements in the region were also affected by the Qaramatis raids (964-975 AD) and the raids by the Fatimid army (970-975 AD) (for more details see 'Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine: Pal-

The Abbasid shift of the center of the Caliphate from Syria to Iraq led to a rapid economic decline and drop in population, especially in the cities; such an attribution of large-scale urban decline and abandonment of archaeological sites to the Abbasid revolution, common among archaeologists until recently, has been sharply criticized by Walmsley (1992) (Whitcomb 1992: 385-386). Instead, the settlement focus seems to have shifted from the traditional urban centers to formerly marginal area; in addition, Abbasid levels or sites have not been often identified because of the misdating of Abbasid ceramic types to the Umayyad period, while Umayyad types were misdated to the Byzantine period.

The Abbasid period is very well attested in most of the squares in the excavated area (Fig. 2) through the architectural remains and some common Abbasid pottery types. According to the architectural sequence of the Abbasid structure, it is evident that the area was used for residential purposes; however, there is no complete housing unit, maybe due to the continuous use and the dramatic changes of the architectural remains. Despite these changes, it seems likely to have two phases of occupation at that period. The main encountered problem in the second phase is that the fill from those rooms is fairly homogeneous, the pottery is hardly dated, most of the floors were of compacted-soil type, and hardly been detected, therefore it was difficult to determine an exact stratigraphy of those phases.

According to the collected pottery of the Abbasid period and the architectural modifications (Figure 2), the first Abbasid occupational phase could be dated to 750-800, and the second phase to 800-1000/1050.

The second phase of the Abbasid occupation is visible in squares C7, D7, D8, E5, E6, E7, E8, F5, F6, and F7 (Fig. 2). The architectural remains belonging to this phase consisted of a number of rooms. The walls are of poor quality, and were built of reused

estine in the Early Islamic Period: Luxuriant Legacy (1998) by Robert Schick, Pp. 74-108.

stones from previous structures. These walls showed several changes in the preceding structure but the rooms were used also for domestic purposes. Only one or two courses were preserved in most of the walls. Medium sized lime stones, a number of column drums as well as column capitals of Ionic and Corinthian orders were used in the construction.

The Abbasid architectural remains of the first phase of occupation (Fig. 2) were constructed either by using the ancient architectural remains or by building other walls that are based mainly on soil. Floors could be seen in some places, they are either compact earthen soil or (most probably reused) mosaic floors.

It seems clear that the Abbasid period architecture were constructed after the 749 earthquake (Tsafrir and Foertser, 1992). While the ancient walls destruction (fallen-stones layers) were visible in many squares underneath the Abbasid layers, especially in Squares F5 and F6.

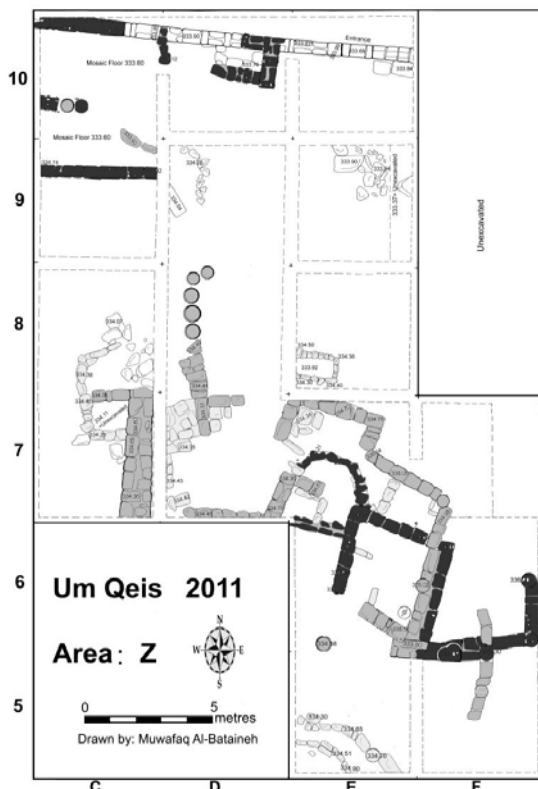


Figure 2: The first and the second phases of occupation in the Abbasid Period, the second phase is shown in light grey, the first phase is shown in dark grey.

The reuse of ancient architectural remains in this phase was visible in the north-western corner of the excavated area. Along the colonnaded street a wall, running east-west, built of regular lime-stone blocks in header and stretcher technique was excavated. Traces of rebuilding the top rows of the wall were visible. The wall is running through squares C10, D10, and E10, however it extends in both ends to the unexcavated area. The wall originally had more than one entrance, a main wide entrance, appeared in squares C10 and D10 and a second smaller entrance at the northern side, appeared in Square E10. This wall was part of a large ancient construction that was reused in the Byzantine, Umayyad and Abbasid periods.

At the north-west corner of the excavated area, this wall was forming the northern border of a room that has a mosaic floor (Fig. 3), measures approximately (6.5 x 5 m). At the center of this room there were two basalt column-drums, one of which is located over a square basalt base, and the other drum was situated next to it. These columns were part of a wall, running east-west. The wall (Locus 13 in Square C10) served as a partition wall, dividing the mosaic-floor room into northern and southern sections. Traces of the rest of this wall was seen clearly in the western baulk of square C10, it was built of one row of medium-sized dressed lime stones, 3 courses are still visible. The southern wall of the room can be seen in Square C9, it was built of dressed lime stones, of similar construction manner to the earlier period, a header and stretcher technique, as seen in the northern wall of the room, but of a poorer quality. The wall has been built over the mosaic floor, which indicates that the floor was constructed earlier than this wall.

The basalt column that has a square base in the middle of the mosaic-floor room seems to be in its original position of the ancient building, the mosaic was paved at the same level of the top surface of the column base, it indicated that the column is constructed earlier than the mosaic floor. The pottery shreds that were found above

the mosaic floor were typical of the 8th and 9th centuries. The most impressive is a jug made of thin light buff ware, with a knob on the top of its handle, a typical Abbasid type that was found in different sites in Palestine and Jordan.



Figure 3: The Mosaic floor in Squares C9 and C10, Umayyad and first Abbasid Phase of occupation.

The other Abbasid architectural remains were excavated in squares E6, E7, F6 and D7 (Figure 4). These are a number of rooms, which were used for living and daily activities. Unfortunately, not enough part of the building survived to provide an overall plan of a complete housing complex. However, it was clear that these rooms had experienced two phases of occupation, as shown in the top plan (Figure 2).

The rooms were built roughly based on the soil by using different kinds of stones and basalt column drums. This area of excavation in particular seems to have been experienced several changes during the Abbasid period and maybe later. The fill in most layers contains a great mixture of mostly Byzantine, Umayyad and Abbasid pottery. However differentiating between the layers was not easy, even the floors were dramatically destroyed; some rooms have compact earthen floors that are hardly distinguished in some spots. It is however clear that the area was used for dwelling purposes and reused during different phas-

es in the Abbasid and the Umayyad periods.



Figure 4: Top view of the Abbasid constructions in squares E6, E7, F6 and F7, older constructions are also shown in the picture.

The rooms were built of different medium-sized lime stones and basalt column drums. Two or three courses are still preserved, walls are built either of one row or of two rows, and some has small entrances or doorways. Basalt column-capitals of ionic order were among the building stones. The column capitals are in secondary use, and were forming parts of the ancient structure in the area.

The most impressive is the room in square E6 (Figure 5), it has a compact earthen floor, over which and a rectangular installation and many fragments of a large pithos (ca. 72 cm height) (Figure 6) were found. Underneath this layer just beside the pithos place, a pit filled with mosaic tesserae and fragments of a tabun were found (Figure 6). The pithos is most probably a reused Late Byzantine-Umayyad, a similar pithos is dated in Pella to the Late 6th-early 7th century AD (Smith, McNicoll, and Watson 1992, Pl. 113:9; Smith and Day 1989, Pl. 50:23), as such, this pithos maybe made in the Late 6th-early 7th century and reused in the second half of the 8th century. The dump of the mosaic tesserae is an evidence shows that the badly affected mosaic floors were removed and cleaned out. It is also evident that the place was paved previously by mosaic, perhaps in the Late Byzantine and Umayyad periods. This kind of mosaic tesserae are common in the

Umayyad period, and the same kind that was used in the mosaic floor of the room in squares C9 and C10 (Figure 3).



Figure 5: Square E6, Abb. room, compact floor, rectangular installation and part of a large pithos in the south-east corner of the room, grey fabric, 2nd Abbasid phase.



Figure 6: Square E6 (S-E corner), showing a pit lined by fragments of a (tabun or a silo) filled with mosaic tesserae, 2nd Abbasid phase.

A second room was excavated in Square E7, it is L-shaped, located north of the first room (in Square E6), and shares the southern wall with it (Figure 2). The room has small installations; it seems to have been used for storage during the second phase of the Abbasid occupation. The first installation is semi-circular (210 cm inner diameter), built of 4 courses (70 cm height) of lime fieldstones in one row. The eastern side of the room is divided from the other part of the room by a row of medium sized well-cut stones, running north-south. The entrance of this L-shaped room is in the western wall. It opens to a room located in Square D7 (Figure 2). This might be a courtyard that was paved by stones. Part of

a pavement is still visible along the western wall, made of well-cut lime stones, but badly damaged, the pavement stones seem to be reused in constructing some walls in later phases.

The Abbasid remains were also visible in Square F7, where a compact-soil floor could be detected in, over which an Abbasid ostrakon pottery sherd was found (Figure 7b, Figure 11.7).



Figure 7: Abbasid cream ware (called previously al-Mafjar ware), a restored jug and ostrakon (photographed by Hussein Diebajah).

5. THE ABBASID POTTERY

The Abbasid pottery was numerous and found almost in all the excavated squares, mixed in most cases with Byzantine and Umayyad pottery; this, due in part, to the nature of the occupation of the site of Umm Qais, from Byzantine to Umayyad and Abbasid eras, and from another side it could be affected by the earthquake of 749 A.D.

The potteries in question are here divided into a number of groups, defined by their technology, which are in turn divided into types as on the following:

1- The cream ware jugs (Figure 7, Figure 10.1, Figure 11.7) made of thin pale cream or buff-colored ware, some fragments are decorated with impressed circles with a central dot, grouped as rosettes. One sherd

is an ostrakon (F7b, Figure 11.7) bi-lingual Arabic and undefined letters. This type of Abbasid ware was common in Tiberias from soon after the 749 earthquake and continued until 850-900 AD (Stacey 2004: 92), then they were replaced by the glazed bowls. Undecorated forms continue to appear in Tiberias in the 10th – early 11th centuries (Stacey 2004: 92-93). In Pella these vessels appeared after the 749 earthquake too (both plain and incised jugs) (Walmsley 1993, Fig. 23.8-9). At Shikun Giorah in Ramla, both plain and incised wares were dated to the 8th century, second half of the 8th century for the plain types and later date for the molded types (Rosen-Ayalon and Eitan 1969:4). The stamped and plain types were dated in Kh. Al- Mafjar to the 12th - 13th century but re-dated by Whitcomb to ca. 900-1000 (Baramki 1944: 74; Whitcomb 1988, Fig. 1). At Yoqna'am the buff ware was known during the Umayyad period, but the mass production of the jugs postdates that period (Avisar 1996: 155-156). Such wares are usually shaped in the form of large jars; other jars are present but there are no examples of red painted jars or juglets. Rather, juglets and bowls occur most often in a thin, "hard, metallic" red ware and also in buff and cream wares. In terms of stratigraphy there is some suggestion that plain wares are antecedent to the painted varieties. One jar has also been found, (Figure 10.3) it's ware is coarse red and not white cream, but it's light and similar to the thin cream jugs; therefore it has been placed in the group of jugs (see Figure 10.3).

2- Polychrome and Monochrome Glazed bowls (Figures 8, 10.6, and 11.1-6) were common at the site of Umm Qais, they are made of pink, light brown, reddish yellow, or pale yellow ware. This group is glazed in the inside surface of the vessel, in some cases the glaze splatters over parts of the outer surface. The glaze was put over a white paint. Yellow or green glaze was used. Some bowls especially with yellow glaze were also decorated either with Arabic scripts (as in Figure 11.4) or with geometric designs. The designs were painted with

brown, sometimes the outlines are made with black paint in fine brush. The brown decorations are of poor quality, or at least not as good as the glazed objects, they are in most pieces worn, and when they are worn the underneath coat (white paint) is visible. It is worth to be mentioned here that the polychrome technique developed and achieved by the time the tiles are sent to Qairawan mosque and this might be pre-862 A.D. Also, Monochrome yellow supersedes polychrome lustre after the Caliphal occupation of Samarra which was post-892 A.D (Bobin et al. 2003: 352-353); it is obviously natural that this technology – polychrome and monochrome glazed pottery in implementing the colours on the Abbasid pottery production has been spread in various sites in Jordan.

After this polychrome phase, it seems that the potters settled on a monochrome palette, at first using a dark brown pigment with occasional addition of a manganese-derived purple lustre (such as on the Qairawan tiles), however they soon replaced this with the standard monochrome yellow (deriving from silver oxide) which – together with the polychrome wares – form the bulk of Abbasid lustre production as we know it today (Bobin et al. 2003: 353-354); perhaps this applies to the bowls that were found at the site of Umm Qais in spite of the difference between the colours, but the use of yellow pigment seems clear.



Figure 8: Fragments of Abbasid glazed bowls (photographed by Hussein Diebajah).

The transition from a polychrome to a monochrome yellow may have come about because of several reasons – applying polychrome decoration was more laborious; acquiring ingredients for a variety of pigments was more costly than acquiring them for one pigment; combining different metallic oxides, with their different properties and levels of volatility, made a successful outcome less certain; the yellow pigment had a greater dependability in the firing and, perhaps most importantly, it resembled gold. However, achieving a high quality yellow-gold lustre is difficult, as well as expensive due to the silver oxides required; this pigment is susceptible both to under- and over- firing, i.e. the lustre will not develop properly unless the firing conditions are exactly right. Perhaps, then, these questions of technology and economics suggest that the adoption of monochrome yellow marks the potters' achievement of mastery over the lustre technique (Bobin et al. 2003: 352-359). Though this shift in the use of pigments and production of monochrome pottery does not necessarily mean the demise of the use of the polychrome technique; but that this transformation and decline may be due to the reduction of the cost of pottery production, and one can suggest that the site of Umm Qais continued production of both types, and cannot determine whether the potters has focused on producing the monochrome type or the polychrome one; and we can say that the upcoming seasons of excavations will clarify that.

3- Other type of buff ware objects, are of thick walls (Example is Figure 10.2), very light, some with decorations applied around the body; which were very commonly produced during the Umayyad and Abbasid eras.

4- A number of typical Abbasid lamps, mostly decorated with geometric designs in high relief on either sides of the filling hole (Figure 9, Figure 10.4-5, Figure 11.8-11). The Abbasid lamps (Form IB in Tiberias) (Figures 10.5, and 11.11) found in Late 8th - early 9th c contexts was popular in Jund Al-Urdunn districts, which according to the

geography of Ibn Khurrdabih includes Jadar (Umm Qais) among other places such as Tabariya (Tiberias); al-Samira (Samaria); Baysan (Beth-shean); Fihl (Pella); Jarash (Jerash); Bayt Ras (Beit Ras); Abil (Abila); Safriya (Sephoris); and Akka (Akko) (Ibn Khurrdabih, 1889: 81). Suggested date of this type at Tiberias is 725-875 AD (Stacey 2004: 150), a lamp with an arcade of three or more adjoining semi-circles or arcs in high relief on either sides of the filling hole. At Pella was the most popular variety of lamp up to the end of the 9th c (Walmsley 1991:8, fig. 7:4, 8:4; 1993, fig. 26:3, 4, 6). At Hammat Gader dated to the early Islamic period (Uzziqelli 1997, fig 13, pl. IX:1), at Yoqne'am dated to no earlier than the 9th c (Avissar 1996, fig. XV.16, no. 16), at Capernaum dated to 850-1050 AD (Peleg 1989, fig. 70:7, 10). F7.8.1. The Abbasid lamps (Form IC Tiberias) (Figure 11.8-10) of a suggested date 750-900 AD are decorated with triangles on either side of the filling hole and conical handle (Stacey 2004: 153). Examples appeared at Hammat Gader (Uzziqelli 1997, fig 13, pls. VIII:2, IX: 3), at Capernaum dated to the early Abbasid period (Peleg 1989, fig. 70:8, 9), at Hammat Tiberias (Johnson 2000, lamps 10, 20, 21), and at Kursi dated to the Abbasid period (Tzaferis 1983: Fig. 8:28). In addition, no moulds have been found or recovered from the site of Umm Qeis - till now- for the manufacture of both relief-moulded pottery and typical Abbasid slipper lamps. So, there is no direct evidence that it was manufactured at the site.



Sq. f7
Loc. 008

Figure 9: Abbasid pottery lamp F7.8.1 (restored)
(photographed by Hussein Diebajah).

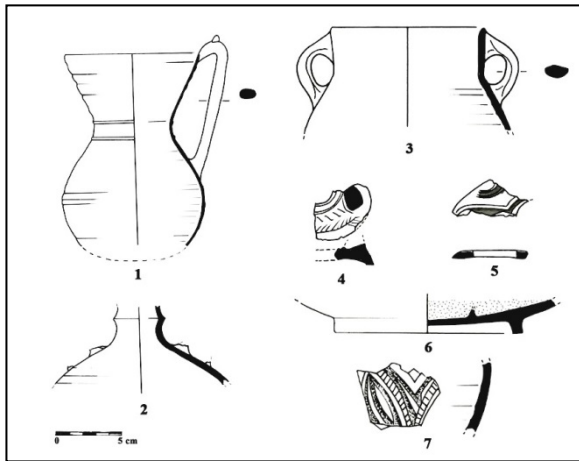


Figure 10: Abbasid Pottery vessels, over the mosaic floor in Square C9, Loci 9 and 10, Square C10, Locus 10, and Square F6, Loci 7 and 11.

5- The cut-ware or Kerbschnitt handmade bowls, they are very few at the site, only one fragment has been found (Figure 10.7); this type of handmade bowls do not appear until after the Umayyad period in Pella (Stacey 2004: 93-94).

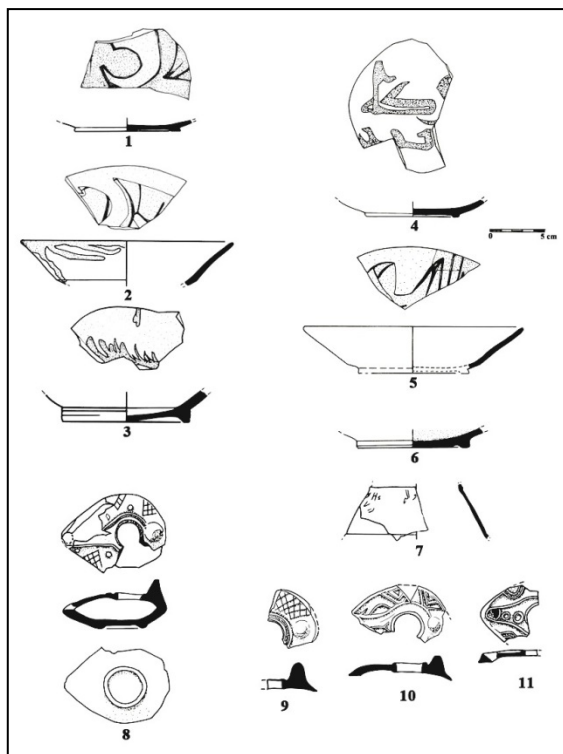


Figure 11: Abbasid Vessels, Polychrome glazed bowls, pottery lamps, jug with ostracon, from Square F7, Loci 3, 6 and 8.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The historic site of Umm Qais as a whole represents a variety of landscape elements

from a number of historic periods: Roman, Byzantine and Islamic. Therefore, the site itself witnessed a continuing element of growth, modification, and development. This assures the fact that the landscape components in Umm Qais region have changed over time. Accordingly, it tends to increase its significance as a historical setting.

A review of the archaeological evidence indicates that the early Islamic Umayyad and Abbasid periods witnessed a great deal of activity in Umm Qais northern Jordan rural lands. This activity, much of which was concentrated in formerly Byzantine-Umayyad areas throughout the Bilad al-Sham, included agriculture, pilgrimage, and trade. The development of the whole area in the early Islamic period can best be understood in relation to the pilgrimage and trade routes, which were the center of this economic activity.

The development and fate of the rural sites was intimately connected with the trade routes. It is therefore not surprising that, like Umm Qais, these sites flourished from at least the 7th to the 10th or 11th centuries. In fact, the settlement pattern in the vicinity of Umm Qais presents a strikingly different picture in the Roman-Byzantine and early Islamic periods. Most of our evidence for Byzantine Umm Qais comes from historical sources, and the architectural remains of the site, which provide evidence for diverse and intensive economic activity. This included large-scale agriculture using sophisticated irrigation systems and the introduction of new crops, and the development of a road network used by merchants and pilgrims. The population engaged in these activities lived in villages along Jordan. It is true that changes occurred in settlement patterns in Jordan at or near the end of the Umayyad period, and that many of the major Roman-Byzantine cities declined or were abandoned.

However, these changes have created the false impression that Jordan was desolate during the Abbasid period; especially after shifting of the Caliphal centre from

Damascus to Kufa and then to Baghdad during the beginning of the Abbasid era. In addition, Abbasid sites or levels have often not been identified because of the misdating of Abbasid ceramic types to the Umayyad period, while Umayyad types were misdated to the Byzantine period; therefore we hope to reveal more information con-

cerning the Abbasid occupation and structural remains of Umm Qais on the upcoming seasons of excavation. We also hope that the excavations at Umm Qais will shed a great deal of light on the history and archaeology of Jordan, especially in the north side during the Abbasid period.

Table 1: Description of Abbasid pottery of Figures 10 & 11

Drawing No.	Reg. No.	Type	Description	Measurement	Date	Parallels
Fig.10 (1)	C10.10.4	Jug	Almost complete except the base, restored, wide simple rim, funnel neck, very thin walls, light ribbings on neck and body, two grooves on the lower part of the neck, loop handle extends from top of the rim to the middle part of the body, handle has a small knob on top. Made of fine white 2.5Y (8/2) ware, well levigated, well-fired. Light weight.	10 cm rim d., 15.5 cm H.	Abb, mid 9 th c.	
Fig.10 (2)	C10.10.10	Jar	Part of neck and shoulders, made of coarse white 10YR (8/2) ware, well-levigated, small white grits, well-fired.	3.5-4 cm neck d.	9 th c.	at Tiberias, 9 th century (Oren 1971: 276), at Yoqne'am, Type 4 (Avisar 1996: 157-158, Fig. XIII.30)
Fig.10 (3)	C9.9.3	Jar	Part of neck and shoulders, 2 handles extend from rim to shoulder, made of coarse red 2.5YR (4/6) ware, not well-levigated, small white and black grits included, well-fired.	12 cm neck d.		
Fig.10 (4)	C9.9.2	Lamp	Fragment of the upper part of a lamp, made of well levigated fine pink 5YR (7/4) ware, small white grits included. Floral decorations, circular grooves around the filling hole. Well-fired.			
Fig.10 (5)	C9.10.1	Lamp	Fragment of the upper part of a lamp, channel nozzle, circular groove around filling hole, made of fine pink 5YR (7/4) ware, well-levigated, well fired, decorated with geometric motifs, fire traces at nozzle.	6 cm L.	Late 8 th - Early 9 th c.	Tiberias, Form IB, 750-875

Drawing No.	Reg. No.	Type	Description	Measurement	Date	Parallels
Fig.10 (6)	F6.7.2	Bowl	Base fragment. Coarse pale yellow 5Y (8/4) ware, well levigated, well fired, intr: grayish green 5G (5/2), and bluish gray 5B (5/1) glazing. Small protruding on the inside base surface.	13 cm d.	Perhaps later than Abb.	
Fig.10 (7)	F6.11.8	Bowl	Cut ware (no description)	6 cm W.	E-Abb	
Fig.11 (1)	F7.3.11	bowl	Base fragment. Coarse light brown 7.5 YR (6/4) ware, well-levigated. small white grits included, well fired, inter: yellow glaze 5Y (8/8), and black paint 7.5YR (N/2). Traces of white paint. on the extr. surface: medium or small grits are visible.	10 cm d.		
Fig.11 (2)	F7.3.10	bowl	Part of rim and body. Coarse light brown 7.5 YR (6/4) ware, well-levigated. small white grits included, inter : yellow glaze 5Y (8/8), black paint 7.5YR (N/2). White paint, on the extr Surface: medium or small grits visible. and yellow glaze 5Y (8/8). well-fired.	20 cm rim d.	in Pella 9 th century	Compare to carinated bowl in Pella, yellow and green glazed with black or brown lines to separate the zones (Walmsley et al. 1993: 214-215, Fig. 24:4).
Fig.11 (3)	F7.3.19	bowl	Part of body and base. Coarse reddish yellow 5YR (7/6) ware, well-levigated. Small white and black grits included, well-fired, intr: yellow paint 5Y (8/8).	12 cm d.		
Fig.11 (4)	F7.3.18	bowl	Base and body fragment. Ring base, made of fine pink 5YR (7/4) ware, well-levigated, well fired, inter.: glazed with pale yellow 2.5Y (8/4) , and light olive brown 2.5Y (5/4), arabic script "(B)RKH ...HMD" (bless Hmd).	8 cm d.		
Fig.11 (5)	F7.3.7-8	bowl	Fragment of rim and body. Simple rim, uneven straight walls, fine reddish yellow 5YR (6/6) ware, well-levigated, white grits, well-fired, intr and extr: reddish brown slip 5YR (5/4).	9.5 cm d.		
Fig.11 (6)	F7.3.15	bowl	Coarse reddish yellow 5YR (7/6) ware, well-levigated. Small white and black grits included, well-fired. intr and extr: yellow paint 5Y (8/8).	10 cm d.		

Drawing No.	Reg. No.	Type	Description	Measurement	Date	Parallels
Fig.11 (7)	F7.6.1	Jar	Upper part of the body, made of fine white 10YR (8\2) ware, well-levigated, well-fired, decorated with scripts written with black ink (ostrakon), perhaps bi-lingual, Arabic scripts could be read as "WALH" meaning "and God", Latin scripts are "Hs V". Light weight.	Neck D. 5 cm, body d. 12+cm		
Fig.11 (8)	F7.8.1	Lamp	Almond shape lamp, broken side, ring base, channel nozzle, circular groove around the filling hole, made of rose lighbrownish gray 2.5Y (6/2) ware, well-levigated, small White grits, well-fired. Geometric motifs on the upper side, smoke traces at nozzle.	8 cm W, 9.5 cm L, 3.5 cm h.	E-Abb	Tiberias, Form 1C, 9 th c, most 750-900 AD
Fig.11 (9)	F7.3.2	Lamp	Fragment of the upper part of a lamp, knob handle protruding vertically, two grooves around the filling hole, made of fine light reddish brown 5YR (6/4) ware, well-fired, decorated with geometric design of grid shape.	5 cm L.	Late 8 th - Early 9 th c.	Form 1C, Tiberias 750-900 AD
Fig.11 (10)	F7.3.3	Lamp	Upper part of a lamp, broken sides, made of fine pink 5YR (8/4) ware, well-levigated, well fired. Decorated with geometric (mainly triangular) motifs, fire traces at upper part channel nozzle, circular groove around filling hole	8 cm W, 10+ cm L	Late 8 th - Early 9 th c.	Form 1C, Tiberias 750-900 AD
Fig.11 (11)	F7.3.1	Lamp	Almond shape lamp, fragment of the upper part, channel nozzle, circular groove around filling hole, made of fine light reddish brown 5YR (6/4) ware, well-levigated, small white grits included, well fired. decorated with geometric circular and semi-circular motifs, fire traces at nozzle, channel nozzle, circular groove around filling hole.	5 cm W., 6 cm L. (only fragment dimensions)	Late 8 th - Early 9 th c.	Form IB, Tiberias, late 8 th -early 9 th c.

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