

# The Significance of Ceramic Assemblages in Chalcolithic Burial Contexts in Israel and Neighboring Regions in the Southern Levant

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*See editorial note*

*The article explores the nature of Chalcolithic burial practices, in particular by a detailed consideration of the offerings which accompanied the dead. The vessels placed in the tombs are shown to be divided into two groups, some specifically identified as votive, while others belong in the context of daily life. Chalcolithic burial rites and beliefs thus revealed by archaeology are related to ethnographic records.*

## 1. Introduction

During the past few decades different approaches have been developed by American, British and French scholars in an attempt to understand prehistoric funerary ceremonies, based on investigations of, and analogies to, ethnological burial practices among tribal societies. Special importance was attached to implications arising from the orientation of tombs and bodies in graves, forms of tombs, evidence for differential treatment between males and females, evidence for preferential behavior in funeral rites for individuals of various age groups within this gender-based division, the social position of the deceased, etc. (Carr 1995).

While the above considerations cannot be applied to Chalcolithic mortuary practices, since by and large burials were not individual, and bones were not found in articulation, there are several avenues of investigation still to be studied that help throw light on some of the mortuary customs of this far-off, prehistoric period. This paper concentrates on a specific aspect of contemporary burial rites, that of tomb furniture and appurtenances, with a view to distinguishing between ritual vessels and those that have the same function within a tomb context, as in everyday usage.

One of the distinctive features of the Chalcolithic period of the southern Levant is the great importance attached to the burial of the dead and the accompanying mortuary rites. In contradistinction to the preceding Neolithic period (Gopher and

Orrelle 1995), the great majority of burials were no longer on-site within the settlement area, but in a specially prepared venue beyond its confines which was often hidden and difficult of access. Natural, adapted and specially prepared caves were widely, but not exclusively, used.

At the same time, secondary burial, which was the norm, may well have been prompted by the desire to preserve uncontaminated (after decomposition of the flesh), token remains of the dead. For the most part, collected residual bones were placed in symbolically decorated ossuaries accompanied by a wide range of grave goods. These included offerings that differed both in regard to the material used in their making and their function in the tomb; pottery objects far outnumbering those of stone or metal. A careful examination of the ceramic artifacts placed with the burials reveals a duality of purpose, since some are clearly votive in character, while others are daily-use vessels such as are commonly found in contemporary houses. The indications are that the latter fulfilled the same function in burial as in domestic contexts, as storage vessels and receptacles for comestibles.

With this in mind, the specific role of ceramic assemblages deposited with burials is reviewed. For this facet of contemporary funerary practice cannot be seen as stemming from a belief in some form of afterlife in preparation for which the dead were thought to have the same basic needs as the living.

The last few decades have seen the discovery of a series of Chalcolithic burial sites,<sup>1</sup> the investigations

of which have both enriched our knowledge of the period as a whole, and contributed towards a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary funerary rites. Outstanding among them is the Peqi'in cave (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a; 1997b; 1999) that has widened perspectives and emphasized shared elements in cultic beliefs and mortuary practices as revealed in different parts of the country (Epstein 1982). In the light of results from these recent excavations it will repay us to review the evidence by taking into consideration the new information together with that obtained over the years.

From the very beginning of research into the Chalcolithic period interest was focused on different forms of ossuaries and the wealth of their ornamentation. In this respect also, the ossuaries from the Peqi'in cave have broadened researchers' horizons, not only insofar as methods of ossuary construction are concerned, but also by the discovery of hitherto unknown elements of decoration, especially portrayal of naturalistic, sculpted and painted human faces (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997b, 147–8; 1999). Up till now, however, owing to preoccupation with attempts to evaluate the ever-widening range and significance of ossuaries, far less attention has been paid to the nature and function of the accompanying ceramic assemblages.

## 2. Ossuary caves

The first ossuary burials were excavated more than seventy years ago by Sukenik (1937) at Hadera, where he found the remains of some dozen of these ceramic bone repositories (Fig. 1). The site had been much disturbed by quarrying and as a result, little of the original context and only some of the accompanying grave goods were still extant (Sukenik 1937, pl. I). Pottery artifacts found together with the ossuaries included V-shaped bowls (Sukenik 1937, 23, fig. 6: a, b, and pl. IV: 4, 6) as well as several fenestrated footed bowls (Sukenik 1937, fig. 7, pl. IV: 1–3) or cult stands (Amiran 1992, 148\*). There were likewise fragments of a spouted vessel (Sukenik 1937, 24, fig. 8), a deep bowl and a small jar with four lug handles (Sukenik 1937, fig. 6: c, d and pl. IV: 5), the latter, perhaps, having originally been fitted with a lid (Tadmor 1992).

Two categories of vessels can be distinguished in this small assemblage, those used for offerings, and those that had a practical use in daily life. The first category includes fenestrated footed bowls and V-shaped bowls. As regards the former, it is generally

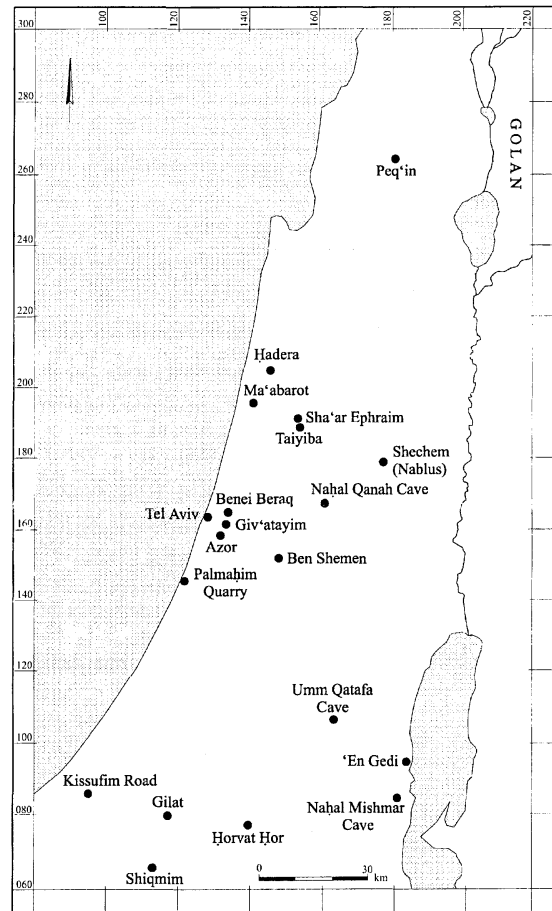


Figure 1. Chalcolithic burial sites referred to in the text.

accepted that this was a vessel made primarily for use in cultic rites and ceremonies (Alon and Levy 1989, 198; Amiran 1992, 75). The fenestrated footed bowl has been found in shrine and sanctuary contexts at 'En Gedi (Ussishkin 1980, 37, figs 7: 1–9, 8: 1–8), Teleilat Ghassul (Hennessy 1986, Nos 70, 71, Bourke 1996, 41–42), Gilat (Alon and Levy 1989, 198–200) and Shiqmim (Levy *et al.* 1991, 402, fig. 9); and its frequent occurrence in burials is widely attested (see below). On the other hand, comparatively few pottery fenestrated footed bowls have been found in everyday contexts, where they may likewise have been connected with domestic cult practices. This is well illustrated at sites in the Golan, since the specific character of those found in the houses is made abundantly clear by the appliqué emblems symbolizing fertility that were added to the bowl segment, thereby associating the vessel with herded animals and the pastoral side of the economy (Epstein 1998, 167 and pl. XXII: 2, 4–10, 23).

As for the V-shaped bowl, this is a vessel occurring widely in both domestic and cultic contexts.<sup>2</sup> When found in a shrine or sanctuary, it cannot but be interpreted as a receptacle for offerings. Such were the V-shaped bowls found in the 'En Gedi sanctuary, leading Ussishkin (1980, 38) to the conclusion that together with the fenestrated footed bowl, it was used for cult by the living as well as in mortuary cult contexts. V-shaped bowls, as well as a fenestrated footed bowl, were found associated with an open-air altar at Shiqmim (Levy and Alon 1989, 116 and pl. 15A; 1990, 227). By the same token the large numbers found in burial contexts make it abundantly clear that the type was used extensively in mortuary rites for offerings and libations.<sup>3</sup> The second category, that of daily-use vessels, is well illustrated by the contents of House 409 at Bir Safadi (Perrot 1990, fig. 7; Commenge-Pellerin 1990, 163). The assemblage comprised several different types of storage jars (with and without handles), hole-mouth jars, basins, various-sized bowls (including small V-shaped examples), a spouted jar, small jars (including some with multiple handles) and a churn. Allowing for local and individual predilections, the repertoire can be regarded as typical of the ceramic equipment of a contemporary household<sup>4</sup> and as such, can serve as a yardstick with which to differentiate daily-use from cultic vessels in funerary contexts. At Ḥadera, the daily-use vessels are represented by a deep bowl, a small jar and by a spouted vessel (Sukenik 1937, figs 6: c, d, 8), the latter used for liquids, possibly oil (Epstein 1993).

Once a dual nature of grave goods is recognized, it is seen to be characteristic of assemblages in most burial contexts. Yet, although the inventories of tombs were carefully recorded, the specific functions of the various accompanying artifacts have hardly been addressed by scholars. Perrot and Ladiray (1980, 53), outstanding exceptions to the rule, divided ceramic assemblages found with the burials at Azor and Ben Shemen into groups of open and closed forms, differentiating between common and specifically funerary vessels (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 117) and thereby taking a first step towards functional classification. The indications are, that while votive artifacts placed with the burials were used in rites pertaining to final interment, the function of the great majority of ordinary household vessels remained unchanged. Thus, when deposited alongside the skeletal remains they would not have been empty of contents, since they were intended to serve the deceased in the same way as they served the living. The fact that different types of daily-use vessels were also used in lieu of ossuaries, in no way invalidates the assumption that, by and large their

function in the tomb was to provide for the needs of the dead and that the same kinds of vessels commonly used in domestic contexts as containers for dry goods and liquids were similarly used in mortuary contexts.

Years after Sukenik's discoveries at Ḥadera, ossuary burial caves also came to light at Benei Beraq (Ory 1946; Kaplan 1963). Here, too, the ceramic assemblages fall into the above two categories of ritual and common-use vessels. Reviewing the material obtained from the site, the following vessels can be classified as cultic: fenestrated footed bowls (Ory 1946, pl. XVI: 7; Kaplan 1963, fig.9: 10) and many of the V-shaped bowls (Ory 1946, fig. 2: 3-4; 1963, 11-13). Functional vessels from the same context include: hole-mouth jars (Ory 1946, 49, fig.2: 1-2; 1963, 311 and fig. 9: 3-5), many larger bowls and a small jar with four lug handles (Kaplan 1963, 311, fig.9: 9), all of which can be matched by vessel types found in House 409 at Bir Safadi (Commuge-Pellerin 1990, 163). In Ory's excavations quantities of stacked pottery were found in what he interpreted as a primitive kiln, pointing to the possibility of a transitory settlement site nearby. By and large, the vessel types found in the kiln correspond to those found in association with the burials (Ory 1946, 49-50 and fig. 3) and it would not be stretching a point to suggest that they were intended for eventual tomb use, both as receptacles for funerary offerings and for food supplies. Considered as an *ensemble*, the vessels are seen to belong to two distinct categories, those used in funerary rites and those that held provisions in domestic contexts, the latter in all probability being similarly used in the burials.

In ossuary caves cleared at Giv'atayim there were relatively few ceramic vessels (Sussman and Ben-Arieh 1966, 4\*). The repertoire included a fenestrated footed bowl, small V-shaped bowls, a large bowl, and a scraper and a sickle blade among several flint tools (Sussmann and Ben-Arieh 1966, fig. 6) representing two distinct types of artifacts. Subsequently, additional ossuary caves were cleared at the site (Kaplan 1993), in which much of the original Chalcolithic material had been displaced and broken as the result of later reuse. Among the accompanying vessels were two fenestrated footed bowls and a bottle (Kaplan 1993, 521), once again indicating the dual character of the assemblage. A clay donkey figurine laden with baskets was also found. It is linked to the utilitarian group, since for all its original cultic connotation to promote fertility in the fields (Epstein 1985, 59 and fig. 9), it represents an important aspect of daily life closely connected with agriculture and food production.

At Azor a burial cave was excavated containing a wealth of material, both ossuaries and artifactual deposits (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 41–50). The repertoire included a wide range of fenestrated footed bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 70 see especially no. 14, with a pronounced emphasis on offerings) in deposits associated with votive rites. Scores of V-shaped bowls were also found (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 53, fig. 69: 1–20, 25), sometimes upside down or stacked one on top of the other (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 46 and note 3 below); many were no doubt used for offerings and libations. There were also two small churns (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 71: 1, 3) perhaps used for milk libations (Epstein 1985, 55, fig. 6). The repertoire contained vessel types occurring widely in daily use: a) small V-shaped bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 69: 1–20, 25); b) several small rounded bowls, some with everted rim (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 75: 11–15); c) various forms of larger bowls and basins (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 69: 21–24, 26–32); d) large wide-mouthed jars, some with spouts (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs 71: 10, 11 and 73: 4, 18, 19); e) several large pithoi (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 73: 1–3, 8); f) medium-sized storage jars (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 73: 9, 16) including examples without handles (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 76: 20, 21); g) small ovoid jars (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 73: 14, 15); h) a bottle (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 71: 2); and i) a related form with neck strainer and two pairs of lug handles (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 71: 4–9). In addition to the ceramic contents, a fragment of the base of a basalt bowl and a small quern were recovered (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 77: 1, 3).

Despite the greater variety of the tomb contents, by and large the range of the utilitarian vessels resembles that of House 409 at Bir Safadi (Commence-Pellerin 1990, 163). Many of these types were commonly used as containers, probably for dry goods (variously-sized storage jars, large bowls and basins), while spouted jars and bottles were clearly used for liquids and the basalt bowl and quern for food preparation. Several years later another ossuary tomb came to light at Azor. Among the finds was a small pottery figurine of a laden donkey (Druks and Tzaferis 1970, pl. 40: B; Epstein 1985, 59 and fig. 10),<sup>7</sup> exactly comparable to that from Giv'atayim (see above).

In a cemetery at the site of Palmahim Quarry, ossuaries and accompanying grave goods were excavated in burial caves partly re-used in Early Bronze I (Gophna 1968; Gophna and Lifshitz 1980). In addition to ossuaries (including some of stone), these caves contained large numbers of pottery ves-

sels, more than 80 small bowls as well as a handleless jar, a hole-mouth jar with four lug handles, a large V-shaped bowl, a small spouted krater, a Cream Ware vessel, two bottles and a small necked jar (Gophna 1968; Gophna and Lifshitz 1980, fig. 4). Also recovered were limestone and shell pendants, a palette, a scatter of flint tools, including a sickle blade, and a copper fish hook. Outstanding in the assemblage are two bird-shaped pedestal vases which were surely cultic in function (Gophna and Lifshitz 1980, 8, figs 5–6, pl. II) as also were a copper standard (Gophna and Lifshitz 1980, pl. I: 5), an incised basalt bowl (Gophna and Lifshitz 1980, fig. 4: 10) and remains of ceramic fenestrated footed bowls (Gophna and Lifshitz 1980, 4).

Reviewing the above finds, the contrasting functions of the grave goods placed in the tombs together with the ossuaries can surely only be interpreted, on the one hand, as votive in nature and on the other, as utilitarian. For in addition to clearly cultic equipment, the caves contained a variety of daily-use vessels that in domestic contexts (such as House 409 at Bir Safadi), functioned as receptacles for food and drink, while the fish hook and sickle blade were both useful in obtaining food.

At a burial site near Ben Shemen six burial caves were investigated (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 59–76), in which, besides large numbers of various types of ossuaries, there was a wide range of artifacts. These included fenestrated footed bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 124: 1–12, 14–15) and many V-shaped bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs 122 and 123: 1–4) in quantities so large, they point to use both in cultic and utilitarian contexts (including those found upside down; Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 63, note 3). There was also a fragment of a small churn (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 124: 13) that may well have been used for milk libations (see above: small churns found at Azor). Many daily-use vessels were present in greater or smaller numbers in different tombs. These included: a) various types of pithoi, some without handles (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs 126: 8 and 127: 1, 3); b) one with four lug handles on its shoulder (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 126: 4); c) the lower half of two others with small horizontal handles (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 129: 8, 9); d) medium-sized storage jars (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs 126: 1 and 127: 2); e) several deep basins (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 126: 5, 7, 9, 10); f) large spouted kraters (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs 128: 1, 2 and 129: 4); g) various-sized large bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs 123: 18–24 and 128: 3); h) small V-shaped and globular bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, figs. 122 and 123: 10–17); i) hole-mouth jars (Perrot and Ladiray

1980, fig. 127: 9–12); j) and two small globular-ovoid jars (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 129: 6, 7). In addition, a number of ground stone artifacts was also found, including a hoe and the remains of a large rounded bowl (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 127: 17, 18) with the following flint tools: a polished axe, a sickle blade and two adzes (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, fig. 134: 3, 4, 7, 8). Here, as elsewhere, in addition to the ossuaries and the skeletal remains, the burial caves contained artifacts that were both cultic and domestic in character. Among the latter were diverse forms of container vessels commonly used in daily life for provisions (see the contents of House 409 at Bir Safadi; Commenge-Pellerin 1990, 163), as well as equipment for procuring and processing food.

Remains of ossuaries were also found in a funerary cave near Shechem (Nablus) that had been repeatedly used for burials from the Chalcolithic to the Roman period (Klamer 1977; 1981). As a result, the Chalcolithic remains, both the skeletal and ceramic material, were in an extremely poor state of preservation. Nevertheless, the bones of some seven individuals and fragments of some five decorated ossuaries of this period, as well as V-shaped bowls and one or two flint tools, including a fan-scraper (Klamer 1981, 31–32) were recorded. No details of additional pottery types have been published, thus precluding the functional identification of other vessels which may well have been deposited together with the burials, while the V-shaped bowls could have been either cultic or utilitarian in function, or both.

Some years later, an ossuary burial cave came to light near Ma'abarot (Paley and Porath 1979, 238–239; Porath forthcoming). This man-made cavity consisted of two chambers separated by part of the original rock face. Burials, introduced during two successive phases, had been sealed by a layer of roof collapse that left the contents undisturbed. The skeletal remains, representing more than 60 individuals, had been placed in house- and box-shaped ossuaries (Porath forthcoming, figs 11, 12 and 15), in deep basins and spouted kraters (Porath forthcoming, fig. 8), or collected in carefully-arranged bone piles. The accompanying grave goods, all of pottery save for a single, broken flint tool, were associated for the most part with the earlier use of the cave. Although limited in range of types, they belong, as in other contemporary burial contexts, to two distinct categories, vessels used for votive offerings and daily-use vessels. To the first group belong fenestrated footed bowls (Porath forthcoming, fig. 5: 11–13) as well as a tall, composite, two-storied vessel equipped with three additional side bowls, implying their use as receptacles for offerings

(Porath forthcoming, fig. 5: 14), and more than 25 V-shaped bowls (Porath forthcoming, fig. 6: 1). In the second group are medium and small sized V-shaped bowls, a rounded bowl, bottles, a small handled jar and a squat amphoriskos with both horizontal and vertical lug handles (Porath forthcoming, fig. 5: 1–10, 15–20). Although there are no large storage jars in the assemblage, the above, daily-use vessels tie in well with those found in other ossuary caves, as well as in contemporary house contexts (see note 4 below).

A little over a decade later, a stalactite cave that had been used in the Pottery Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Early Bronze I periods was discovered in Naḥal Qanah in the Samaria hills (Gopher and Tzuc 1996). Despite difficulty of access and movement within the cave, it became clear when it was excavated, that the most intensive use had been for secondary burials (some in ossuaries) during the Chalcolithic period. The related artifact assemblage, either associated with interments or offerings, included prestigious and specifically votive artifacts as well as a number of everyday small tools and characteristic vessel types commonly used in domestic contexts (see House 409 at Bir Safadi, Commenge-Pellerin 1990, 163).

Outstanding among them are, without doubt, eight gold and electrum rings (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.24) the excavators suggest were ingots placed in the cave as burial gifts or votive offerings (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, 167, 169, 236). Additional objects in this category include: a) copper objects (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, figs 4.19 and 4.22); b) a number of haematite maceheads (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.17); c) a perforated flint flake tool with flat base (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.13); d) close on a score of worked bone and ivory pieces (including a perforated plaque (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.26); e) fenestrated footed bowls in ceramics (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.2: 3, 4, 6–9); f) four and five-legged examples of this type in basalt (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, figs 4.14: 10, 11, fig. 4.16); g) small bowls, the majority V-shaped (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.1: 1–9); and h) fragments of basalt bowls with incised decorated rims, some of which may belong to the fenestrated, footed examples (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.14: 1,3).

The second category, daily-use artifacts, comprised the following types: a) medium-sized storage jars (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, figs 4.4: 1, 2, 4 and 4.5: 1, 2, 6); b) necked jars (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.4: 3–16); c) large and medium-sized bowls (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, fig. 4.1: 23–27); d) a spouted krater and additional spouts (Gopher and Tzuc 1996, figs 4.6: 16 and 4.10: 11, 12); e) kraters

(Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.6: 1, 3, 4); f) small globular/ovoid jars, including some with a small handle or spout (Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.2: 10–15); g) hole-mouth jars (Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.6: 5–8, 11, 12); h) squat Cream Ware jars (Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.10: 1–4); i) a fragmentary bottle (Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.4: 17); j) churns (Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.7: 1–5) and; k) small tools (i.e. bone points and spatulae; Gopher and Tzuk 1996, fig. 4.28). As summarized by the excavators, the everyday vessels included bowls, cups, kraters, cooking-pots, jars and churns (Gopher and Tzuk 1996, 130).

At Taiyiba, an ossuary cave was discovered which had been partially robbed and was in a state of some disorder (Porath 1989–1990). The cave had been used for secondary burials in ossuaries as well as in large kraters. Grave goods, of which more than half were bowls, were found both on, and near ossuaries. The tomb contained cultic vessels, chalices, cornets and V-shaped bowls, and daily-use vessels including various-sized bowls and jugs commonly found in household assemblages.

Recently Oren and Scheftelowitz (1998) discovered a burial niche within a cave at Sha'ar Ephraim, 2.75 km. north-west of Taiyiba. In it were the remains of at least six ossuaries and scattered human bones. Accompanying grave goods comprised both cultic and daily-use vessels. To the first category can be assigned many, if not most of some 50 small, V-shaped bowls (Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998, 80, fig. 27: 1–2), a fragmentary fenestrated footed bowl (Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998, fig. 28: 3), a globular bowl and goblet, a cylindrical goblet, and a cornet (Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998, fig. 27: 11–14). Daily-use objects included a variety of large bowls, among them V-shaped and red-decorated examples (Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998, fig. 27: 3, 4–10), as well as several plain and decorated storage jars and kraters, some with lug handles on their shoulders (Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998, fig. 28: 1,2). Here, too, vessels deposited with burials are characterized by the same duality of function as has been noted at site after site; on the one hand votive types, on the other everyday household wares as in House 409 at Bir Safadi.

At the time of this writing, only preliminary reports have been published giving an overview of a large stalagmite cave in Upper Galilee at Peqi'in, extensively used for burial in the Chalcolithic period. The unusually large and variegated assemblage of some 250–300 associated ceramic and basalt vessels (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 1997b, 1999) are still being studied and some time will elapse before detailed reports on the different

types of artifacts are completed. Among them are many forms and types not previously encountered. On the basis of the information published, several diagnostic comparisons can be made.

Insofar as grave goods are concerned, the same two categories of votive and utilitarian vessels deposited in other ossuary caves are represented here, but with an even wider range of types. A considerable number of larger and smaller types of footed bowls were found, both with and without fenestration. Some are unusually tall and many are decorated in red with geometrical patterns (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 23; 1997b, 150, fig. 6). Others have additional small bowls attached, while some examples are fashioned with a human face on the bowl portion; the nose and nostrils rendered plastically, the eyes and eyelashes expressed in paint (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1999, fig. 12). The exceptionally large numbers of footed bowls, equal to that of the ossuaries, makes it abundantly clear that they played a central role in funerary rites held at the site (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 23; 1997b, 150). This is further emphasized by the presence of similarly-shaped basalt vessels (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 24).

In addition to the fenestrated footed bowls, some storage jars have a high pedestal base with apertures and these, too, may have served in cultic rites (below). Also recorded were cornet-based beakers and large numbers of small V-shaped bowls, many having no doubt been used for offerings. Copper items, including two standards and two chisels (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997b, 151, fig. 7) and more than 20 unused, perforated flint tools (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997b, fig. 8; Noy 1998, 282, n.18), all of which can be interpreted as votive, are included in this assemblage.

While some storage jars were used in lieu of ossuaries (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997b, 149), the majority of the many pithoi and storage jars recovered (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, colour pl. I) can, as elsewhere, be assigned to a utilitarian group not intended as burial repositories. Some of these bear a plastically-rendered nose, or breasts on their shoulders, emblems added to ensure increase and fertility,<sup>6</sup> as were horn handles on storage jars in the Golan (Epstein 1998, 170–171 and pl. XXII: 1, 2, 5). Others are ornamented with an all-over design of bands of impressed rope pattern, a common element in Chalcolithic pottery of the Golan (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997b, fig. 5; Epstein 1998, pls I, II). Still others are decorated with painted motifs (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1999, figs 10 and 11), while many are equipped with lug handles on their shoulders.

Indications that storage jars were used as containers for offerings, when placed in burial caves are several lids, including one with a large grasp handle in its centre, but it is uncertain to which vessels they belong. Another daily-use vessel, probably associated with food preparation, is a two-tiered jar equipped with an internal sieve at mid-body (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 23). Churn fragments were also found, indicating milk and milk products. In addition, the assemblage contained a large number of different types of smaller jars and decorated jugs with high handle, similar vessels from domestic contexts in the Golan (Epstein 1998, pl. XXI: 1, 3–6).

Particularly indicative of the practical use of storage jars are lids, some fired as a single unit with the vessel and string-cut while leather-hard (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 23; 1997b, 149).<sup>7</sup> They were held in position by a cord passed through two sets of lug handles placed one above the other on lid and vessel shoulder; a similar method being used to secure the cover on box-type ossuaries that in this context constitute the majority of vessels. The inference is clear: close-fitting lids of this kind on container-jars were necessary in order to conserve and secure contents during transport to the burial site.<sup>8</sup>

The close connection between pot and lid is exemplified by a unique storage jar (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, colour pl. I: c) with double-pierced, vertical handles at its sides and two additional lug handles (front and back) on its upper shoulder. Decorated at the neck in red paint, and on the body in broad zigzag bands creating a net pattern, the vessel bears two small plastic discs representing breasts on its shoulder. The base is in the form of a low pedestal pierced by five small square apertures; the matching tambourine-like lid, that fits closely over the rim, has four lug handles placed immediately above those on the vessel shoulder. Although no residual organic material was found in the jar, it can be assumed from the close-fitting lid held firmly in place, that the vessel was full when deposited in the burial cave. In view of the cultic connotation of the 'fenestrated' pedestal base, it may, perhaps, have held corn-offerings for use in funerary rites. If this be so, the same would apply to other storage jars with a fenestrated or pierced, pedestal base, although no lids were found associated directly with them.

The presently published reports of the contents of the Peqi'in cave give only a hint of the wealth and variety of the total material retrieved. Nevertheless the dual character of the different types of grave goods is immediately apparent, some having been used in what may well have been elaborate mortuary rites, others, as in daily life, as containers for provi-

sions such as were found in smaller numbers in the houses of the time.

### 3. Burials not in caves

Turning now to multiple, secondary Chalcolithic burials other than in a tomb-cave, several examples are considered here. A different, if related, form of funerary procedure was revealed at Shiqmim, in cemetery complexes adjoining the settlement (Levy and Alon 1982, 1985; 1987; Levy *et al.* 1991). There, burial was neither in a cave nor, with one or two possible exceptions, in an ossuary,<sup>9</sup> but rather in circular, stone-based graves, possibly with mud-brick superstructures (Levy and Alon 1985, 123; 1987, fig. 13. 2). The cemeteries had been robbed and greatly disturbed and the contents of many of the grave circles were no longer *in situ* when investigated. Burials were secondary, consisting of disarticulated bones, often arranged in piles, or stacked in pottery basins and occasionally in V-shaped bowls (Levy *et al.* 1991, 409), while one or two bone piles were found on ossuary fragments (Levy and Alon 1982, 53, fig. 11).

In addition, there is evidence of what may well have been a place of initial treatment of a corpse in preparation for eventual, final interment. In close proximity to the grave circles were oval, stone-built cists, many of them paved, in which no skeletal remains were found, but in each of which there was at least one V-shaped bowl (Levy and Alon 1985, figs 5–6; Levy and Alon 1987, 337), pointing to the likelihood that they were used in ceremonies held before burial. It is suggested that the deceased were first placed in the cists where eventual disintegration of the bodies took place. Afterwards, skeletal remains were transferred to a final resting place within the grave circles (Levy and Alon 1987, 335). Secondary burials found in these circles were, in most cases, accompanied by pottery vessels (Levy and Alon 1982, 46) that, as those found in ossuary tomb caves, were both votive and utilitarian in character.

The great majority were V-shaped bowls (Levy and Alon 1982, fig. 9: 5, 6; 1985, 132; Levy and Alon 1987, fig. 13.15), many of them having no doubt been used as cultic vessels. These, together with a goblet and a low cult stand (Levy and Alon 1987, fig. 13.16: 8, 10) constituted votive artifacts (note in this instance the absence of the commonly-found fenestrated footed bowl). Daily-use vessels included: a) remains of storage jars (Levy and Alon 1982, fig. 9: 3); b) large decorated and plain bowls and basins (Levy and Alon 1982, fig. 9: 1; 1987, fig. 13.16: 9); c) small hole-mouth jars (Levy and





Alon 1982, fig. 9: 2; Levy and Alon 1987, fig. 13.16: 1, 4, 5, 6); d) small handled jars (Levy and Alon 1987, fig. 13.16: 7); e) a globular/ovoid jar (Levy and Alon 1982, fig. 9: 4); f) small globular pots (Levy and Alon 1987, fig. 13.16: 2, 3) and g) a stone quern (Levy and Alon 1987, pl. 13.6), so necessary in food preparation.

Near Kissufim in the Negev a Chalcolithic burial site came to light (Goren and Fabian 1993), again as the result of development. Although these deposits were neither in a natural nor a man-made cave, the funerary practices have much in common with those described above, including secondary burial in pottery and stone ossuaries accompanied by grave goods. In one locus, the skeletal remains of at least ten individuals had been placed in a pit, both in and around an ossuary set on stone slabs, together with V-shaped bowls, a churn (Goren and Fabian 1993, front cover) and fragments of other pottery vessels, on some of which bone piles had been placed. In another locus, a rectangular brick structure (inner measurements: *c.* 2 x 4 m.) had been erected in a pit and covered with stone slabs, probably underpinned by wooden beams, perhaps with the intention of creating a *milieu* resembling that of a cave. Here, both house-shaped and decorated, jar-shaped ossuaries had been set in shallow cavities in and on the floor and in a wall niche. Skeletal remains were in a basin-shaped ossuary and a krater.

Accompanying grave goods included fenestrated footed bowls, pedestal-based globular bowls with basket handles (Goren and Fabian 1993, front cover), both of which can be regarded as votive in function. In addition, there were numerous V-shaped bowls, among them examples used for offerings with residual organic materials observed. Pottery vessels included several bottles (Goren and Fabian 1993, back cover), a medium-sized, necked storage jar (Goren and Fabian 1993, front cover) and churn fragments, all of which belong to the category of daily-use containers. In the vicinity of the structure additional burials were found in pits, together with simpler-type pottery vessels, possibly indicating a difference in the status of those interred. Notwithstanding that secondary burials were placed in an ambience other than a cave, the accompanying grave goods are seen to be, as elsewhere, both votive and utilitarian in character.

#### 4. Cave-related burials

At Umm Qatafa, near Bethlehem, a cave that had been used for habitation in the Chalcolithic period, and an adjoining external shelter, were investigated

many years ago by Neuville and Mallon (1931; Perrot 1992). Material from these two contexts forms a coherent assemblage (Perrot 1992, 100\*). A fragment of a common form of ossuary came to light in the external shelter (Perrot 1992, ill. 4: 1), probably pointing to a burial in the immediate vicinity (within the cave?),<sup>10</sup> although no skeletal remains were found. Since there is uncertainty regarding the precise original provenance of the artifacts retrieved (whether a domestic or mortuary context), very little can be deduced in pursuance of the comparisons which are the subject of this study. Suffice it to say that insofar as the ceramic assemblage is concerned, it consisted of: a) bowls of different sizes (including V-shaped and deep or basin types; Neuville and Mallon 1931, fig. 6; Perrot 1992, ill. 3: 1–9); b) necked and hole-mouth jars (Neuville and Mallon 1931, figs 4 and 7; Perrot 1992, ill. 3: 10–14); c) churn fragments (Neuville and Mallon 1931, pl. XVIII: 1); d) fragments of a cornet (Neuville and Mallon 1931, fig. 5: 1) and; e) a fenestrated footed bowl (Neuville and Mallon 1931, fig. 5: 2). While their original context could have been either domestic or funerary, it is reasonable to suggest that the cave was first occupied and that only after it had ceased to be used for living purposes was it used for burial.

Such was the train of events at Horvat Hor in the Negev (Govrin 1987; Smith and Sabari 1995; Govrin 1987, pl. 2), where a natural cave had been structurally adapted in the Chalcolithic period to serve as a dwelling place. Following a collapse of the ceiling that resulted in a partial filling up of the cave, a remaining niche was sealed off by a wall built of flint blocks entered through a narrow aperture flanked on either side by pillars, recalling *mašševot*-like stones at the Kissufim site (Goren and Fabian 1993, 90). Within the niche a heap of bones belonging to seven individuals was found, pointing to the possibility of secondary burial (Le Mort and Rabinovitch 1994, 95). Much sherd material found together with the bones consisted of fragmentary V-shaped bowls probably used for both cultic and everyday purposes. A complete V-shaped bowl found near one of the flanking pillars (Govrin 1987, 124\*) may well have been votive.

Details of additional pottery vessels placed in or near the burial niche have not been published. Although there is little that can throw light on the details of the funerary customs practiced, the closing of a natural niche in the cave in order to create a suitable burial place for skeletal remains (possibly from secondary burials) reflects a desire to provide a special, final resting place for the dead. Furthermore, the presence of relatively large numbers of V-

shaped bowls ties in well with what is known of their use in ossuary caves and other forms of burial, as described above.

## 5. Discussion

The results of the above review are summarized in Table 1. This shows the most commonly found artifact associated with secondary burials is the small V-shaped bowl. Its presence in mortuary contexts at all the sites discussed (frequently in comparatively large numbers)<sup>11</sup> gives added weight to the likelihood that, in addition to its use in domestic contexts, it was widely employed in rites held when disarticulated bones of the deceased were put in their final resting place.

The second most commonly-found vessel, fulfilling an important role in funerary ceremonies, is the fenestrated footed bowl. Simple or elaborate in form, in some contexts its place was taken by various types of pedestal vases, goblets and chalices. Occasionally cornets, or cornet-beakers, formed part of the votive equipment.

As for daily-use vessels placed with secondary burials, the commonest types were large deep bowls or basins, various forms of amphoriskoi and small jars, with and without handles. These were followed by storage jars of various shapes and sizes, hole-mouth jars, and (for liquids) bottles, spouted kraters, churns and all kinds of small bowls. Tools and equipment widely used for procuring food and its preparation were also placed with the burials.

In the light of the above, it emerges that following disarticulation of skeletal remains and their secondary burial in various types of ossuaries and other containers, as well as in carefully arranged bone piles, a spirit – or *anima* – was believed to continue to exist and to be in need of the same basic requirements as in life. These were first and foremost, sustenance and, to a lesser degree, the means for its preparation. Such an approach cannot but be interpreted as concomitant to a belief in some form of afterlife that may well have given rise to elaborate burial practices and mortuary rites, so outstanding a feature of the archaeological record of the Chalcolithic period. Following on his work at Hadera, Sukenik suggested that secondary burial in house-shaped ‘coffins’ was prompted by a belief “that death is not an end of life, but merely a transformation, so that many of the accessories of life had to be buried with the dead for a continuation of their existence after the transformation” (Sukenik 1937, 27). A like conclusion was reached by Bar-Adon (1962, 223) on the strength of his work at

Nahal Mishmar: “The concern of the living for the dead and the special care taken over their burial... found expression in the provision of food, gifts and articles for both use and ornament”. In another passage he noted: “Judging from the form of the burials and the funerary offerings, they seemed to have believed in a life after death” (Bar-Adon 1993, 826). Calloway (1963, 80), who saw the Chalcolithic house-shaped ossuaries as an expression of desire to provide the dead with a house, was of the opinion that: “the pottery bowls and churns probably held food and drink for the dead person”. Although not placed in caves, the *énéolithique ancien* burials at Byblos (many in storage jars in which an opening had been specially contrived to receive them) evoked a very similar interpretation (Dunand 1973, 188), translated thus: “The care given to the burials, the vessels placed near them, the beads and pendants sometimes associated with them... all point to the concept of a life beyond the grave, or a new life to which to look forward”. In earlier burials of the *néolithique ancien* period at Byblos, pottery vessels were placed beside the dead, including those used for supplies and provisions for use beyond the tomb (Dunand 1973, 30–31 and pl. XXXVII: 2).

Organic remains are not often mentioned in ossuary tomb reports, but there are some exceptions. They include charred wild olive pits on the floor of a cave at Bnei Beraq (Kaplan 1963, 302), organic material in V-shaped bowls at the Kissufim site (Goren and Fabian 1993, 91) and possibly the charred residue found in a number of fenestrated footed bowls in the Peqi'in cave (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a, 23). Additional information suggests the presence of two hole-mouth cooking-pots “blackened from smoke” at Bene Beraq (Ory 1946, 49), while a hole-mouth cooking-pot covered with charred material was among the vessels in the Nahal Qanah cave (Gopher and Tsuk 1996, fig. 4.6: 11).<sup>12</sup> The presence of these features at these sites points to the provision of cooked food (meat ?) brought for those buried in the cave.<sup>13</sup> While it might be maintained that cooked food or meat introduced into the place of burial was consumed by mourners during the course of a funeral feast, this is an unlikely assumption in view of the general absence throughout the ossuary caves of signs either of the preparation or of the remains of meals. The above instances only serve to endorse the premise put forward here, that many of the vessels found in Chalcolithic mortuary contexts originally contained sustenance for the dead, to be consumed during the period following final burial when they were thought to continue to exist, albeit in a transmuted form.

Beliefs in an afterlife were current long before the Chalcolithic period and were not confined to any particular region, and, as is so often the case with cultic beliefs, they continued in one form or another to evoke men's credence down through the centuries. Pertinent to this theme is Mellaart's (1967, 208) description of secondary intramural burials below platforms of houses and shrines at Neolithic Çatal Hüyük: "Wooden cups and boxes, as well as baskets and food, berries, peas, lentils, grain, eggs or a joint of meat are found with the dead, irrespective of sex". At sixth millennium Köşk Höyük, intramural burials contained, in addition to weapons and personal ornaments, both ceramic receptacles and tools which were interpreted as expressing a belief in a life beyond the tomb (Silistreli 1991, 5). In graves dating to the first half of the fifth millennium at Arpachiyah and Tepe Gawra, pottery and stone vessels were found that had perhaps contained food for the deceased, either in reality or in a symbolic manner for the hereafter (Akkermans 1989, 84). Referring to vessels placed in the above mentioned Tepe Gawra graves, Forest (1983, 59) suggested they were purely utilitarian and were intended to hold food. In one sense grave goods placed with burials formed a concrete link with the world of the living, since the funerary objects were the very same as those used in daily life, preserving in the tomb their ordinary everyday function (Forest 1983, 145).

Beliefs concerning some form of afterlife and the nether-world are still widely held in different parts of the world today (Carr 1995, 176–178). In some societies mortuary practices echo those of the Chalcolithic period, while secondary burial is customary. The first funerary rites usually take place close to the time of death, before decomposition of the flesh; subsequently, after disarticulation, a second and final interment takes place at a traditional tribal location. Elaborate mortuary rites are observed on both occasions (e.g. Hertz 1960; Huntingdon and Metcalf 1980). In certain Toradja communities in the Celebes it is customary to store a corpse after death in a rough hut outside a settlement; later (at the second funeral), collected bones of the individual, wrapped in a cloth, are brought back to his village and placed in a small wooden box that is finally stored in a cave together with bones of his kinsmen (Downs 1956, 78–96; Huntingdon and Metcalf 1980, 83–84).

Among the Bara of Madagascar, it is customary for a widely-attended funerary procession to accompany a coffin to a temporary place of burial in a mountain cave, the entrance to which is closed by rocks. At a much later date the skeleton, from which the flesh has decayed, is exhumed and reburied in a

cave-tomb containing communal caskets, in each of which there may be the bones of as many as ten persons (Huntingdon and Metcalf 1980, 102–107). It is also widely believed that until final burial has taken place, the corpse is in need of sustenance.

The Ma'ayan of Indonesia bring the deceased food and drink twice daily (Hertz 1960, 36) for as long as three years, unless secondary treatment occurs first (Huntingdon and Metcalf 1980, 83). For some tribes in New Guinea it is customary to bring food and drink to the first place of burial until bones are completely denuded (Hertz 1960, 45–6). In Madagascar the Malagasy treat the deceased during the first burial period as if he were still alive and food is brought by relatives and friends who keep him company and speak to him (Hertz 1960, 48). In Borneo, the funeral rites of certain Berawan communities include a provision of cooked food (rice) and tobacco for the interred in the period immediately following death (Huntingdon and Metcalf 1980, 74–5 and pl. 2). Whereas in the above instances the deceased is thought to be in need of food during the first stage of burial, in the Chalcolithic context it is suggested that it was in the period subsequent to final burial that the deceased were in need of sustenance. These are but different facets of an expression of deep concern by the living for the dead.

Reviewing the above, it is seen that among different groups living in different regions in vastly separated time-spans, there are common elements in approaches to death and ensuing mortuary rituals, among them a practice of secondary burial and provision for the needs of the dead in an afterlife.

## Conclusions

Despite differences in the nature of the final stage of burial, there is seen to be a single underlying common denominator in Chalcolithic funerary practices. In the case of secondary burial, this required that after disarticulation skeletal remains be placed in an accepted form of receptacle and venue. For the most part, disarticulated bones were collected in an ossuary and placed in a tomb cave, often on a specially prepared platform or shelf, as at Beni Beraq (Kaplan 1963), Azor (Perrot and Ladiray 1980), Taiyiba (Porath 1989–90), Nahal Qanah (Gopher and Tzuk 1996) and Peqi'in (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997b). In other instances they were deposited in carefully-arranged piles in a circular structure of stone and mudbrick, as at Shiqmim (Levy and Alon 1987, fig. 13.2), in pits and in a rectangular brick construction, as at Kissufim (Goren

and Fabian 1993), or in a special niche, as at Ḥorvat Ḥor and Sha'ar Ephraim (Govrin 1987; Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998).

Irrespective of the manner of final interment, there is good reason to believe that when carefully-prepared secondary remains were placed in a tomb, cultic rites and ceremonies were held and offerings introduced. Together with personal ornaments and variegated prestige items, disarticulated bones of the dead were accompanied by grave goods that were both votive and utilitarian in function, at one and the same time. Utilitarian vessels provided the deceased with the wherewithal for an afterlife, mainly food and drink in the same kinds of vessels as were used in domestic contexts by the living, large and medium-sized storage jars, spouted kraters, deep bowls, various-sized jars, medium and small-sized bowls, bottles, churns and small globular amphoriskoi. These were receptacles commonly used for grain and dry goods, oil, milk and milk products, pulses and fruit. In addition, items used for procuring and preparing food were sometimes placed with them, including agricultural tools (such as hoes and sickle-blades), a fish hook and the like, querns, and an occasional stone bowl in which raw materials could be crushed and pounded.

Once this aspect of Chalcolithic burial practices is appreciated, greater insight is obtained into beliefs underlying contemporary mortuary rites. While there is much that remains to be clarified, the discovery of each additional burial site brings us closer to a better understanding of concepts concerning life, death, birth and fertility, as expressed through ceremony and ritual, especially in regard to all that pertained to the preparation and final disposal of the dead.

### Editorial note

Claire Epstein passed away after a brief illness just prior to her 89th birthday, before she could completely modify an earlier draft of this paper. The final version, basically one revised by the author, was minimally edited by Eliot Braun for submission to *Levant* after her death, with the hope that it remains faithful to her wishes.

With the revision was a paragraph which may have been intended as an abstract, but appeared to be an introduction. This has been inserted as the first two paragraphs in the text by the editor, but readers should be aware that this may not have been the writer's intention. The editor is also responsible for the abstract. The editor is very grateful to Dr Eliot Braun, who has not only recovered and checked the

revised version of the manuscript and bibliography, in time for inclusion in this volume, but did so with great speed and goodwill despite other pressures on his time. In addition he has organized the production of Fig. 1, and the redrawing of Table 1 which only existed in draft form. He wishes to acknowledge the help of Moshe Hartal (Claire Epstein's scientific executor); Fanny Vitto (proof reading of the French bibliography); Natalia Zak (the map); Michal Druk (drawings in Table 1); Irina Berin and Elizabeth Belashov (Table 1). The editor also wishes to acknowledge the kind help of Mrs Barbara Barnet and Claire Epstein's family.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> During recent years several Chalcolithic burial sites have come to light, frequently as the result of development projects. Although most have been summarily reported, in many cases detailed information of the assemblages found has yet to be published. Thus, not every known ossuary site is dealt with here. For an informed list of these sites see: van den Brink 1998, 98.
- <sup>2</sup> Recent detailed technical analysis has highlighted the methods of production of V-shaped bowls at Abu Ḥamid (especially the smaller forms): the great majority were wheel-thrown at a time when other types of vessels were hand-made, from which it was deduced that even in domestic assemblages, they were intended for cultic rather than utilitarian use (Roux and Courty 1997, 40).
- <sup>3</sup> At Benei Beraq, Azor and Ben Shemen, some V-shaped bowls were found stacked upside-down, leading Perrot to conclude that they had been placed in the cave empty of contents (Ory 1946, 46; Kaplan 1963, 311; Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 46,76). However, the possibility should not be ruled out that in the first place they had contained libations which had been poured out in the course of funerary rites.
- <sup>4</sup> In addition to House 409 at Bir Safadi (Commengé-Pellerin 1990, 163), the ceramic contents of a house in Area D at Shiqmim may be cited. In Room 6 and the adjoining courtyard, the ceramic equipment included various-sized storage and hole-mouth jars, basins and bowls (Levy and Holl 1987, 389 and figs 15.8, 19–21). In the Golan, the ceramic equipment of House B at el-Majâmi<sup>2</sup> included several large storage jars, a hole-mouth jar, bowls of various shapes and sizes, several spouts and spindle whorls (Epstein 1998, 128, fig. 185).
- <sup>5</sup> The final report of the 1969 salvage excavation at Azor has never been published and there is uncertainty surrounding the precise context of the donkey figurine. It has been attributed both to the Chalcolithic and the Early Bronze I periods and could belong to either (V. Tzaferis, pers. comm.).
- <sup>6</sup> An alternative interpretation suggests that the representation of breasts on ossuary jars – as on ossuaries – indicates the feminine gender of the deceased (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1999, 12\*–13\*).

- <sup>7</sup> Carefully made lids of this kind have not been found elsewhere, though simple pot covers – one or two with a small central handle – are known from Teleilat Ghassul (Lee 1973, 114–115, C86). The Peqi'in lids should not be confused with mushroom-shaped stoppers from Teleilat Ghassul (Lee 1973, C85) and Nahal Qanah (Gopher and Tsuk 1996, Fig. 4.10:7), nor with the coarse unrefined clay stoppers reported from several sites (Mallon, Koeppel and Neuville 1934, pl. 53: 3; Lee 1973, C861; Bar-Adon 1980, 144, ill.12: 1, 2; Commenge-Pellerin 1987, 43 and pls IV: 6, V; 1990, 25 and fig. 54: 14–16) and on an *énéolithique* burial jar from Byblos (Dunand 1939, pl. CLXXXIX: 5692). In domestic contexts storage jars could easily have been covered by a skin, by a flat stone or by an inverted pot base, as is known from the Feinan region (Adams and Genz 1995, 10).
- <sup>8</sup> Tadmor suggests that lids were widely used on vessels for the protection of their contents not only during transportation, but also when in storage (Tadmor 1992, 149\*).
- <sup>9</sup> In Burial Circles 6 and 51 bones were found placed on ossuary fragments (Levy and Alon 1982, fig. 11; Levy *et al.* 1991, 409), while in Burial Circle 23 the remains of two ossuaries were found with bone splinters (Levy and Alon 1985, 127, fig. 9; 1987, figs 13.17 and 13.18). All the ossuaries were fragmentary and their precise contextual connection within the grave circles is unclear.
- <sup>10</sup> This is one of only two ossuary fragments known from the Judean Desert (Perrot 1992, 101\*). However, this information may be merely fortuitous, just as prior to the discovery of the Peqi'in cave (Gal, Smithline and Shalem 1997a; 1997b), no ossuaries were known from sites as far north as Galilee.
- <sup>11</sup> At Azor, some 100 such bowls were recorded (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 53). In Tombs 1, 2 and 9 at Palmaḥim Quarry some 90 bowls of various sizes were recorded, most of them V-shaped (Gophna 1968, 138; Gophna and Liphshitz 1980, 4). At Ma'abarot, there were more than 25 examples of these vessels, the majority being very small in size (Porath forthcoming, 3, Fig. 6). In Tomb 506 at Ben Shemen there were close on a score of V-shaped bowls (Perrot and Ladiray 1980, 64). In the Sha'ar Ephraim cave, some 50 V-shaped bowls were found (Oren and Scheftelowitz 1998).
- <sup>12</sup> In the opinion of the writer the hole-mouth jar can be regarded as the typical cooking-pot of the Chalcolithic period (Epstein 1998, 166).
- <sup>13</sup> Although not associated with a secondary burial, a jar with out-turned rim (rather than a hole-mouth), with soot marks both inside and out, was found with a primary Chalcolithic burial in Cave 3, Nahal Mishmar (Bar-Adon 1980, 137 and Ill.3: 2), pointing to the likelihood that it had contained cooked food for the deceased.
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