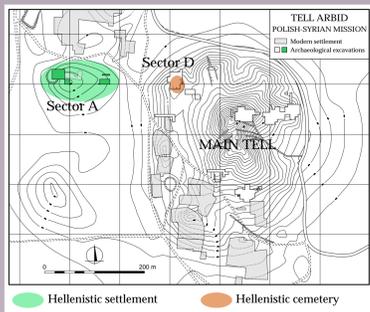


HELLENISTIC POTTERY FROM TELL ARBID (SECTOR A)



Tell Arbid is a vast (over 38 ha) site in north-eastern Syria. It consists of a main tell and three low hills to the west of it. A Hellenistic settlement was located on the middle one (Sector A). It was oval in plan and less than 2 ha in size. The western and eastern parts of the sector have been archaeologically investigated.

A stratigraphic analysis confirmed the presence of five phases of Hellenistic settlement at Tell Arbid. They lasted from the 3rd century BC (as attested by finds of black-gloss pottery) to 2nd/1st(?) century BC (green-glazed pottery).

In the western part of the sector the most densely built-over area of the Hellenistic settlement was encountered, attributed to phase 3. It is made up of the fragments of two large rectangular houses and a fragment of a courtyard. A coin of Demetrius II Nicator (145-126 BC) found on one of the courtyard's floors provides a *terminus post quem* of this phase.

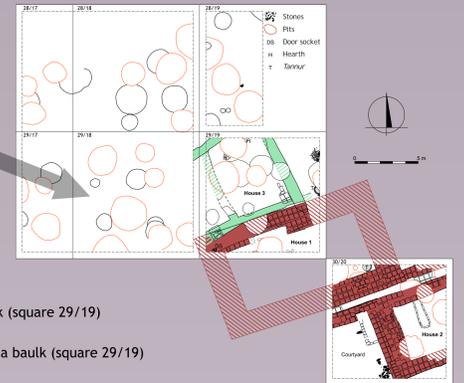
A feature characteristic for the Hellenistic settlements both at Tell Arbid and on other sites in the Syrian Jazirah is the abundance of bell-shaped storage pits. They can be up to 2 meters deep and reach 2 meters in diameter at the bottom. The pits are usually found secondarily filled with ashes and numerous potsherds, mostly of a Hellenistic date. Modern damage to the site hampers the pits' attribution to separate settlement phases. However those attributable to phase 5 contained numerous fragments of black-slipped tableware.

A Hellenistic cemetery was located approximately 100 meters east of the settlement, on the north-western part of the main tell (Sector D). Six graves have been excavated there so far. All were inhumations with different sets of grave goods - from a single coin in the deceased's mouth to a set for wine consumption.



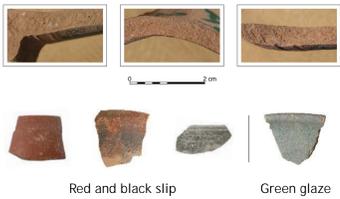
Hellenistic settlement remains in the western part of Sector A:

- Phase 1. House 3 (green)
- Phase 2. Traces of a usage level visible in a baulk (square 29/19)
- Phase 3. House 1, 2 and courtyard (brown)
- Phase 4. Fragments of a wall and floor visible in a baulk (square 29/19)
- Phase 5. Pits (orange)



SLIPPED TABLEWARE

FABRICS AND SURFACE OF TABLEWARE



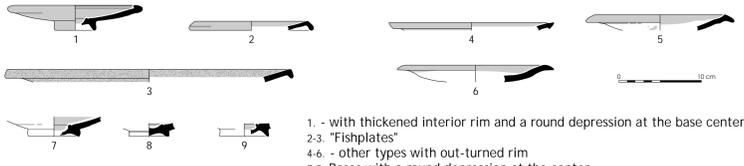
Slipped tableware was present in all phases. It was made of a very fine clay with a small lime admixture. The surface of the vessels was covered - partly or whole - with red (hues from orange to brown) or black slip.

Open forms are most popular, representing two pottery traditions:

w forms deriving from a western tradition, common throughout all of the Hellenistic world: bowls with incurving rim and bowls with out-turned rim, fishplates and plates with a deep round depression at the center of the base. Judging by the quality of their manufacture, especially of the slip, the vessels were local imitations of Eastern Sigillata.

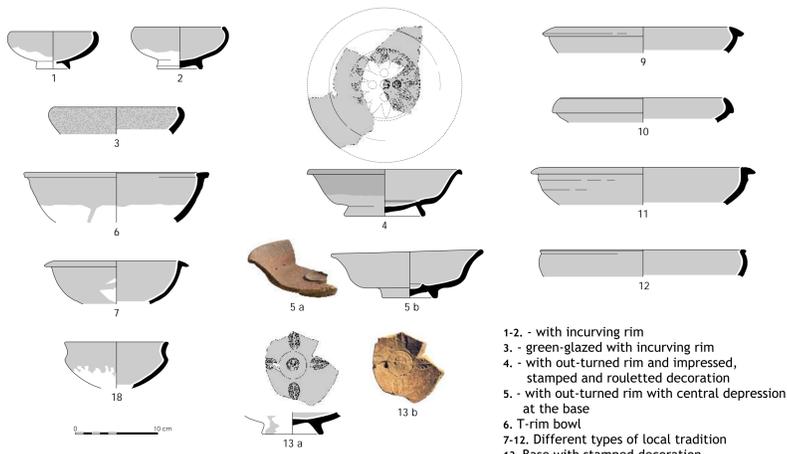
w forms originating in a Mesopotamian tradition (e.g. post-Assyrian goblets) but identical in technological aspects with the imitations of Eastern Sigillata.

PLATES



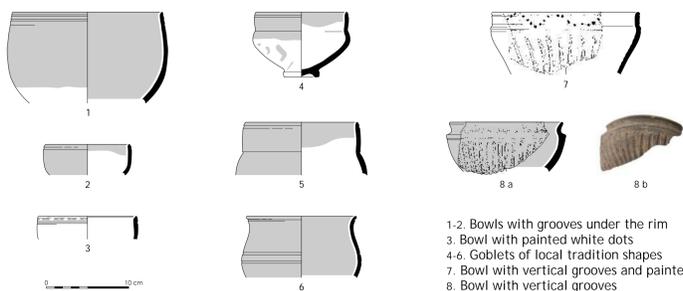
1. - with thickened interior rim and a round depression at the base center
- 2-3. "Fishplates"
- 4-6. - other types with out-turned rim
- 7-9. Bases with a round depression at the center

BOWLS



- 1-2. - with incurving rim
3. - green-glazed with incurving rim
4. - with out-turned rim and impressed, stamped and rouletted decoration
5. - with out-turned rim with central depression at the base
6. T-rim bowl
- 7-12. Different types of local tradition
13. Base with stamped decoration

DEEP BOWLS AND GOBLETS



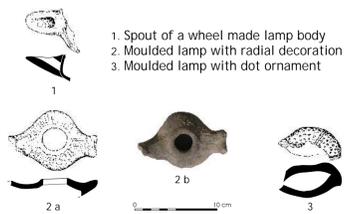
- 1-2. Bowls with grooves under the rim
3. Bowl with painted white dots
- 4-6. Goblets of local tradition shapes
7. Bowl with vertical grooves and painted dots
8. Bowl with vertical grooves

IMPORTED BLACK-GLOSS WARE



1. Vessel base

OIL LAMPS



1. Spout of a wheel made lamp body
2. Moulded lamp with radial decoration
3. Moulded lamp with dot ornament

COMMON WARE

FABRICS OF COMMON WARE

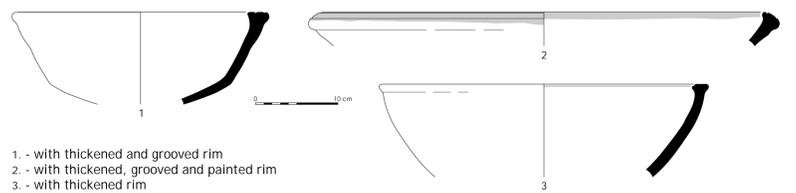


The forms, decoration and technology of common ware attest to a continuation of local traditions going back to the Neo-Babylonian period. Closed forms are most popular: jars of all sorts, including jars with rolled-over rim and storage vessels. The only open form is amply represented by big bowls with thickened and grooved rim.

A characteristic decoration of closed shapes, distinctive for Northern Mesopotamia, are triangles impressed in a single row round a vessel's shoulders or neck (so-called "impressed dog-tooth"). Other forms of decoration include stamped almonds, spirals and rosettes, as well as painted decoration.

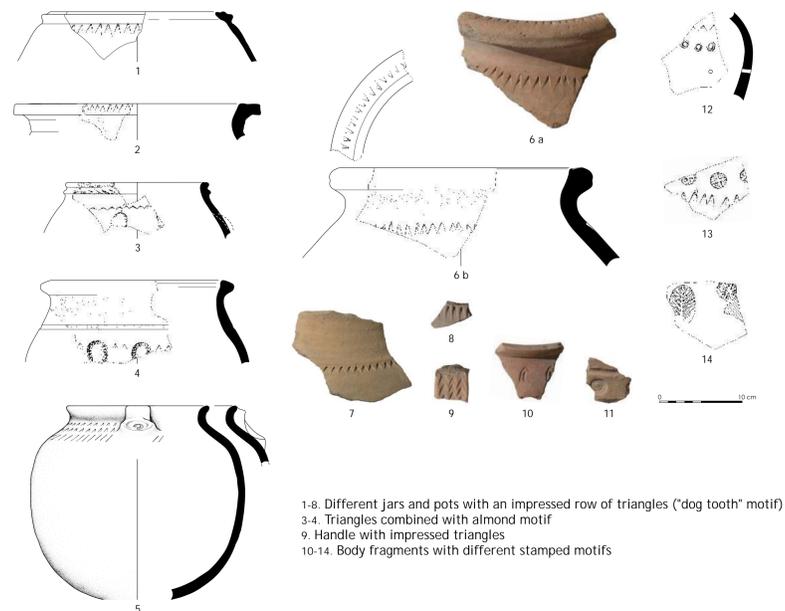
Double tag handles and handles with finger impressions at the base are a characteristic feature of common ware vessels.

LARGE BOWLS



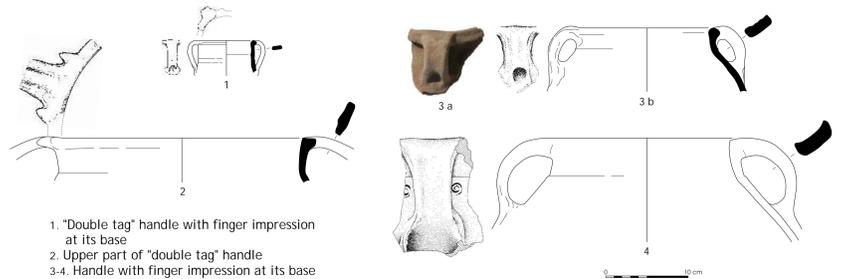
1. - with thickened and grooved rim
2. - with thickened, grooved and painted rim
3. - with thickened rim

COMMON WARE DECORATION



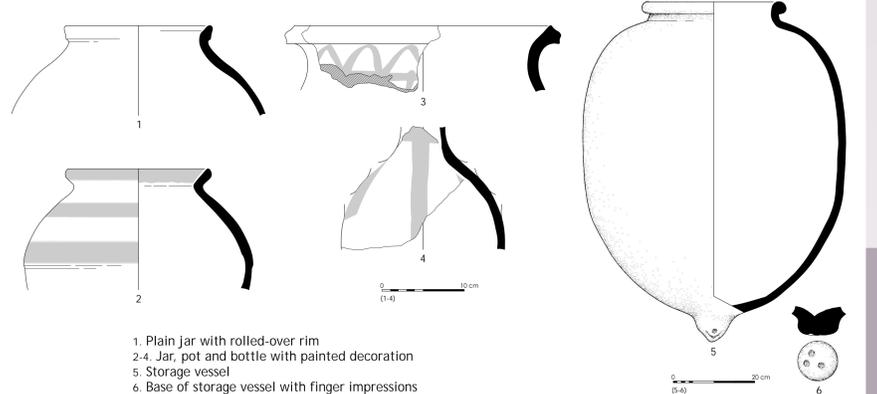
- 1-8. Different jars and pots with an impressed row of triangles ("dog tooth" motif)
- 3-4. Triangles combined with almond motif
9. Handle with impressed triangles
- 10-14. Body fragments with different stamped motifs

HANDLES



1. "Double tag" handle with finger impression at its base
2. Upper part of "double tag" handle
- 3-4. Handle with finger impression at its base

CLOSED SHAPES



1. Plain jar with rolled-over rim
- 2-4. Jar, pot and bottle with painted decoration
5. Storage vessel
6. Base of storage vessel with finger impressions