THE ROLE OF HELLENISTIC TELL ES-SWEYHAT: CULTURAL VARIATION BETWEEN THE CORE AND FRINGE WITHIN THE SELEUCID UPPER EUPHRATES

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HELLENISTIC COLONIALISM ON THE FRINGE:
THE ROLE OF TELL ES-SWEYHAT AND CULTURAL
INTEGRATION WITHIN THE SELEUCID WORLD

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Cultural interaction and diffusion is a multi-faceted phenomenon, which occurs varyingly in different contexts. The site of Tell es-Sweyhat, located in modern Syria, off the east bank of the Euphrates River, was occupied over many time periods. In the Hellenistic period, this site was under the administration of the Seleucid Empire (312 B.C. – 63 B.C.). Tell es-Sweyhat presents an opportunity to examine adaptations and consistencies in a fringe site in the Seleucid world, which has been interpreted as a military outpost. An analysis of the archaeological pottery assemblage at Tell es-Sweyhat, when compared with the proximate and more prominent site of Jebel Khalid, provides one means of evincing the extent of cultural / technological differences between core and fringe sites in the Seleucid world.

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INTRODUCTION

The practice of colonialism has existed for millennia, and it would not be far-fetched to assume its existence, in some form, since the earliest days of complex human societies. The nature of colonization has transformed dramatically over time and space, and has ranged from small-scale and localized, to macro-scale and intercontinental. The conduct of colonial administration, over time, has varied in several ways. The impetus provoking colonization, the extent of colonial influence, and the relationship between colonizers and colonized, are a few examples of variable factors, among many others (Stein 1998). Here, one considers Hellenistic colonialism. In this discussion it is imperative to delineate between the colonialism most familiar to the majority of individuals, and that which was practiced in the Hellenistic world. In a consideration of colonialism, the form most ubiquitous in the modern mind is that which was carried out by contemporary counties like France, Spain, Great Britain, and the United States, from approximately the A.D. 1400s to the A.D. 1900s. In those examples, technologically 'advanced' countries exploited the peoples and resources of distant lands, primarily to the economic and political benefit of their own home-nations. Here, one seeks to examine the nature of Hellenistic colonialism in the area of modern north eastern Syria. More specifically, one examines the extent of Hellenistic cultural interaction, with local cultural traditions in a borderlands area of a Hellenistic territory. The governing body of this area, during the period in question, was the Seleucid Empire (Figure 1). The type of colonial rule employed by the Seleucid Empire

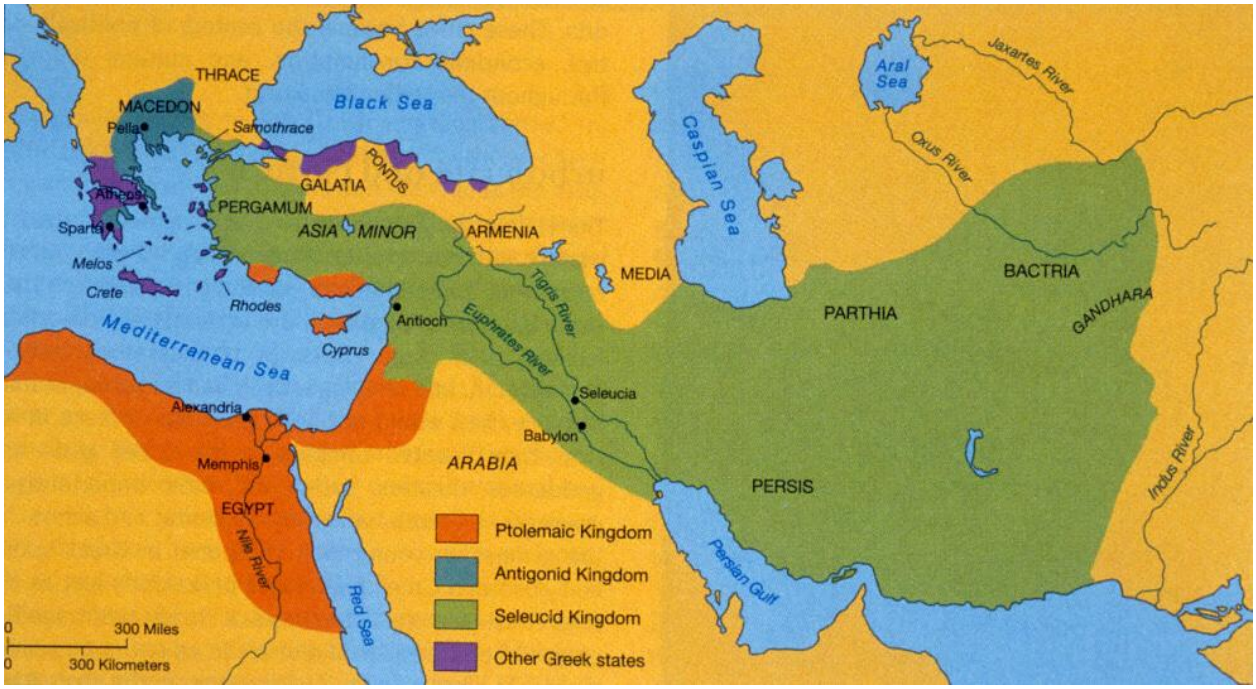

Figure 1 Seleucid Empire (Damen 2009).

varies considerably from the modern form previously mentioned. In this situation, the colonizers inhabit the territory adjacent to, and within direct colonial administration.

Through an examination of, and comparison to, the ceramic material record available from the fringe site of Tell es-Sweyhat (Holland 2006a, 2006b; Wilkinson 2006), and a more prominent and proximate core site in the region, Jebel Khalid (Holland 2006a, 2006b; Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011; Wilkinson 2006), one will evince the potential nature of Seleucid administration, the variance between fringe and core sites. Tell es-Swehat provides a particularly interesting angle from which to examine this topic, for, as a small Hellenistic military outpost, it can be considered within the fringe of the Seleucid world/society; however, on the other hand, Tell es-Sweyhat is located approximately only 15 miles away from the core Jebel Khalid site.

In the final interpretation of the results derived from this analysis, one will seek to incorporate current anthropological theory surrounding the practices of colonialism and the core / fringe relationship.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF THE UPPER EUPHRATES

Cultural traditions vary greatly over time and space, and adapt due to myriad internal and external pressures. The territory of northern Syria, the location of Tell es-Sweyhat (and the comparison site of Jebel Khalid) (Figure 2), has been administered by innumerable empires, states, and city-states throughout the ages (Glubb 1967; Holland 2006a; Wilkinson 2006). By

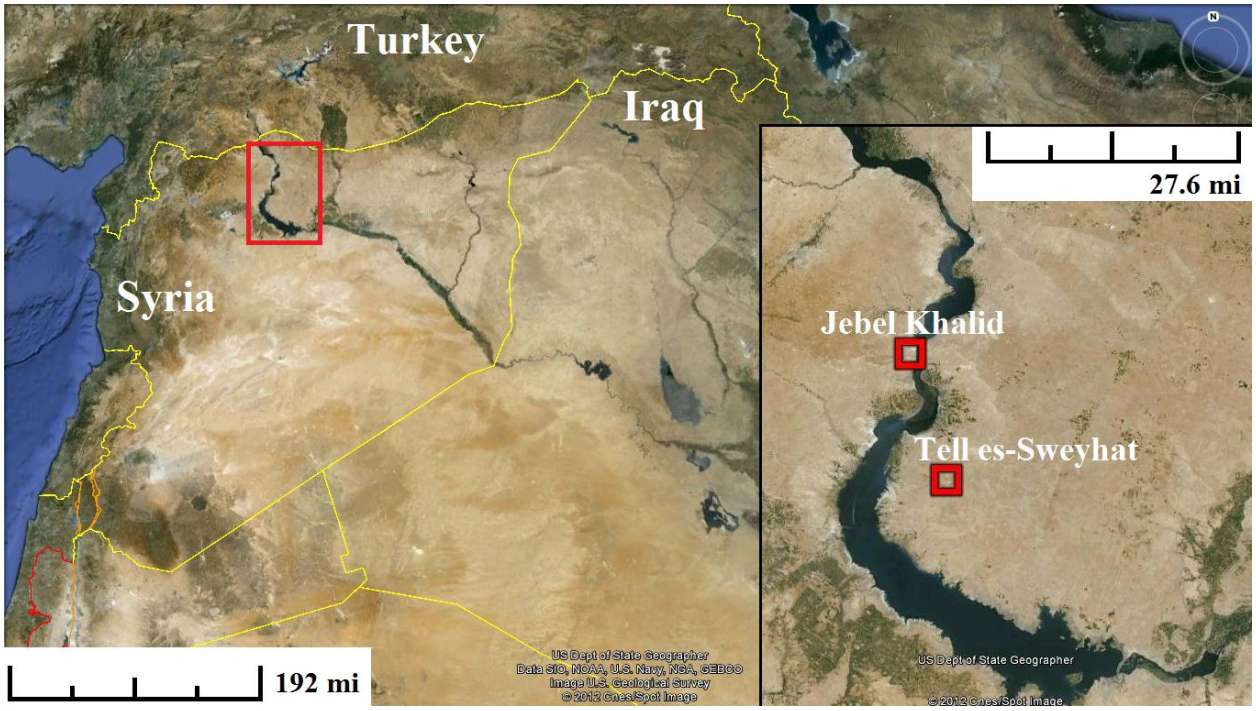

Figure 2 Regional location of Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid with superimposed local geographic map (Google Maps 2012).

gaining an understanding of the regional historical context, within which Tell es-Sweyhat resides, one can hope to better understand the forces that helped shaped the cultural practices of its residents. The site is positioned in a borderlands location between three major areas: Anatolia, the Levant and Mesopotamia, which compounds factors influencing the cultural diversity found there (Wilkinson 2006). Cultural practices are not spontaneously generated, but are in a constant state of modification. Moreover, the ways in which cultural identity is articulated, and the manner with which groups self-identify culturally is equally dynamic, uncertain, and not necessarily conscious (Hall 1996). In a region filled with shifting power and administration, exploring the ceramic remains from the fringe site of Tell es-Sweyhat and the core site of Jebel Khalid provides a means for an interpretation of variation between fringe and core sites in this particular Hellenistic context.

Historical Background of the Region

The Pre-Hellenistic Ages

The first human inhabitation available in the archaeological record, for the region surrounding Tell es-Sweyhat, dates to the Upper Paleolithic (10,000 B.C. – 8,300 B.C.) (Wilkinson 2006). Habitation at the site of Tell es-Sweyhat, however, does not begin until approximately 3,000 B.C. (Wilkinson 2006). Following the trend of other proximate sites in the regions surrounding Tell es-Sweyhat, the site experienced a dramatic increase in occupation in the Early Bronze Age. Again, following the regional trend, Tell es-Sweyhat experienced "major decline in sedentary population... at the end of Middle Bronze Age and the beginning of the Late Bronze Age," (Wilkinson 2006:9).

Control of the Tell es-Sweyhat region fluctuated over time, and was controlled by several kingdoms throughout the Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Age (Wilkinson 2006:10). In the Late Bronze Age, Tell es-Sweyhat lied within the region once controlled by the state of Mitanni; however, during this period, the Hittite Empire vanquished Mitanni, and gained control of the area which would become the province of Aṣḫtata. The Hittites established the regional administrative capitol at Meskene-Emar, which lay upriver on the Euphrates River from Tell es-Sweyhat. Although Tell es-Sweyhat lied on the east bank of the Euphrates River, and the Assyrian sphere of influence likely extended into this region, Wilkinson postulates that the presence of Hittite fortifications at nearby locations indicates their administration over the Tell es-Sweyhat site location (Wilkinson 2006:9). Eventually, Tell es-Sweyhat likely fell within the area controlled by the Middle Assyrian Empire, and likely continued to be administered either by the Assyrians, or a polity subservient to Assyria. As previously mentioned, the end Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age had a relative lack of sedentary populations (a trend which continued into the Iron Age), which accounts for the exceedingly sparse archaeological remains present from those periods. therefore little can be said with any sort of significance, in regards to Tell es-Sweyhat, until the advent of Hellenistic occupation.

The Hellenistic Period / The Seleucid Empire

The Hellenistic period commenced with the expansion of the Macedonian Empire, under the leadership of Alexander the Great. Alexander began his expansion eastward by crossing his army into Anatolia in 334 B.C. (Cartledge 2004:136). Just eleven years later, on 10 June 323 B.C., after the successful conquest of Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Levant, and a failed campaign into western India, Alexander died at age 32 (Cartledge 2004). The newly conquered empire split into many small satrapies (kingdoms), ruled by Alexander's generals. Gradually,

these satrapies were consolidated into larger empires: the Seleucid Empire, the Ptolemaic Empire, the Antigonid (Macedonian) Empire, and other major Hellenistic States (e.g. Epirus) (Figure 1), to name only the most prominent (Cartledge 2004; Glubb 1967). Tell es-Sweyhat originally fell within the very distant margins of the Seleucid Empire, which was centered in Babylon; however, Seleucid western expansion eventually gained administration over most of the adjacent territories between 333 – 364 B.C. (Wilkinson, 2006). The Seleucid Empire reigned over northern Syria, and the small bend in the northern Euphrates where Tell es-Sweyhat is located. The Parthian Empire contested control over the region throughout the mid-100s B.C., which resulted in a fluctuation of regional control between the Seleucid and Parthian empires, and the eventual expulsion of Seleucid administration (Glubb 1967; Sherwin-White and Kuhrt 1993).

The Archaeological History of Tell es-Sweyhat

History of Excavations and Survey Work

Interest in the archaeology of this region grew significantly when Syria and the Soviet Union began negotiating the terms for a development project, which sought to construct a dam down river from the Tell es-Sweyhat survey area on the Euphrates (El-Khatib, 1995; Wilkinson, 2006). First considered by the French in the 1930s, the possible construction of a dam in this region was not an unfamiliar prospect. On 18 December 1966, the governments of the Soviet Union and Syria agreed to a contract, in which the Soviet Union would provide 120,000,000 rubles for the dam's construction, which Syria was to repay, with interest, over the course of 12 years (El-Khatib, 1995).

The creation of Lake Assad led to concern over rising water levels, which threatened to forever submerge the archaeological information which would be required for a better

understanding of the region's past, from pre-history to recently modern events. In response, a slew of archaeological investigations began across the region, many of which have contributed greatly to our knowledge of various cultures from the region's past (Thompson, 2006a; Margueron, 1995).

Prior to the survey work of Dr. Donald Whitcomb and Dr. Thomas Holland, only minimal survey work had been done in this particular region (Holland 2006a). Whitcomb and Holland conducted their first exploratory survey of sites in the northern half of the Tabqa Dam salvage area in 1972, and it is during this initial investigation that the Tell es-Sweyhat region and site were first recognized (Figure 3). The actual Sweyhat Survey began in 1974, and was further

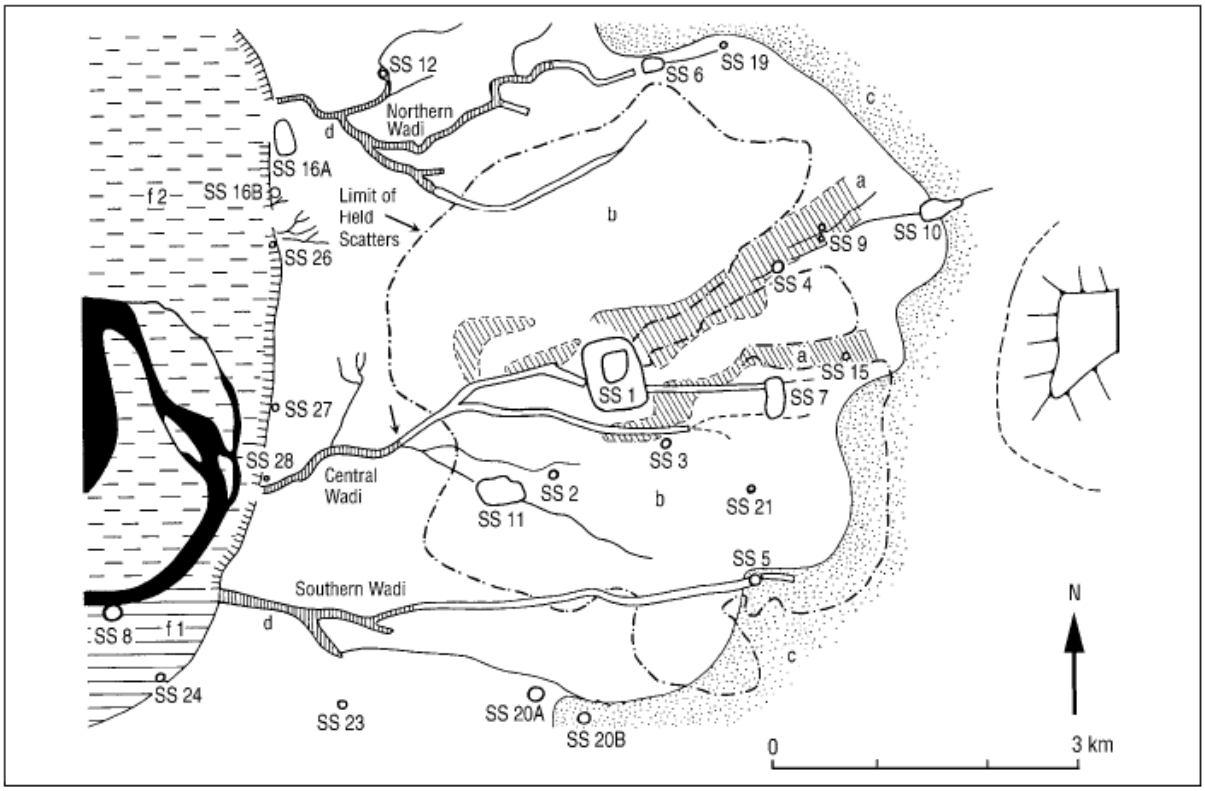

Figure 3 Sites within Sweyhat Survey, on the Tell es-Sweyhat plain
(Wilkinson 2006: Figure 2.7 modified by Maximilian Pschorr)

elaborated in the early 1990s (Wilkinson 2006). The first excavations took place in 1973, 1974, and 1975, and were facilitated by several British universities and museums (Holland 2006a). Since water levels in Lake Assad did not rise to initially projected levels, the sites examined in the 1970s did not become submerged and inaccessible. In light of this, new excavations took place in the 1990s to address some of the questions raised by the materials recovered in the 1970s excavations. Dr. Thomas Holland, of the University of Chicago, and Dr. Richard Zettler, of the University of Pennsylvania, led these three excavation seasons in 1989, 1991, and 1992 (Holland 2006a).

Hellenistic Remains

Initially, the excavators sought to examine the extensive Bronze Age occupations at the site; however, upon discovering the Hellenistic presence at Tell es-Sweyhat, these materials were incorporated into the excavation process, subsequent analyses, and publications. The entire comparative endeavor presented here is due to this serendipitous discovery.

This study focuses solely on the Hellenistic material remains recovered from the main Tell es-Sweyhat site (Sweyhat Survey 1, or SS1) (Figure 3). Although Hellenistic remains are present in other excavated loci in the immediate vicinity, they are sparse, and not convincingly relevant to the pursued comparison. The Hellenistic occupation at SS1 has been interpreted as a Hellenistic "watch post" (Holland 2006a: 67. 165, 387), and therefore the artifacts present are representative of a militaristic context.

Jebel Khalid: Information Pertinent to a Comparative Consideration

As Jebel Khalid serves in the capacity of a comparative site, an elucidation of the background surrounding the site seems less imperative than for Tell es-Sweyhat; however, any type of

relevant comparison does necessitate at least basic information pertaining to the site's excavation and interpretation.

Archaeological Background

Jebel Khalid has been divided into two primary temporal phases: phase A, and phase B. As phase A is the older of the two phases, large sections have not been excavated, for the excavation team chose to leave the floor of phase B intact for further examination. This poses a problem in a temporal comparison within the site, as one cannot be sure whether the un-excavated portions of the site were inhabited to the same degree, or in the same manner. Other less context secure phases have been designated (B/A, Fill L, Fill U, and B+) (Table 1)

, and they have yielded archaeological materials; however, the uncertainty surrounding their formation and deposition, and consequently their temporal context, obscures the extent to which one might confidently conjecture about their meaning/significance. With the exception of phase B/A, which I have conjoined with phase B, these phases have not been considered.

Table 1 Temporal phase delineation at Jebel Khalid.

Phase	**Character**	**Date range BC**
A	Floor near bedrock or on bedrock, sealed by floor B above.	*c*.280-150
B/A	Floor re-used both phases. Artefacts likely to be latest deposit but possibility of eariler material retained in the floor.	225-70
Fill L	Fill below B floor, contemporary with beginning of Phase B.	post-150
B	Floor associated with Phase B structures.	150-70
Fill U	Upper fill. Material from collapsed walls and possible upper storey. Usually stone tumble, resting on or just above highest floor. May include material from post-abandonment activity.	Disturbed

METHODOLOGY

In the following section I address: the specific topics of research which will be analyzed; the means by which that analysis will be completed; and the potential issues involved in conclusions based on said analysis.

The Research Objective

Statistical analysis of the archaeological assemblage of Tell es-Sweyhat will evince differences between the life ways of Seleucid individuals at Tell es-Sweyhat and those of individuals in the core Jebel Khalid. In addition, it will illustrate the possible extent of incorporation of local (non-Seleucid) technology, and consequently, cultural practices in both core and fringe sites.

Analysis Tactics: Primary Research Objective

In order to examine the nature of relations and cultural similarities and differences between core and fringe Hellenistic populations, in the upper Euphrates region, one has interpreted the ceramic archaeological assemblage excavated from fringe site of Tell es-Sweyhat, and drawn a comparison to the core site of Jebel Khalid. The primary means of interpretation relies on conducting a statistical analysis on the ceramic artifacts from the site (bowl/cup, plate, deep bowl, jar, jug, and cooking pot forms). In order to address this question, this study considers three primary aspects: change over time in the intensity of site occupation, ceramic form frequencies at the sites, and surface treatment frequencies among different ceramic forms.

Each of these aspect will be considered from a comparative standpoint between the Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid ceramic assemblages. The use of differing ceramic classification systems necessitates the re-classification of ceramic forms from one site, into the corresponding category in the other system (Table 2). The ‘form’ classification technique employed at Tell es-

Sweyhat has the advantage of being more detailed, and as such, ceramics are classified into very specific categories; however, the 'type' classification technique from Jebel Khalid, which lumps ceramics into broader categories, serves as a better system when attempting this type of cross-

Table 2 Tell es-Sweyhat ceramic forms within their appropriate Jebel Khalid ceramic type classifications.

Jebel Khalid Type System	Tell es-Sweyhat Form System	Jebel Khalid Type System	Tell es-Sweyhat Form System	Jebel Khalid Type System	Tell es-Sweyhat Form System
1	H.BR.A.I.b	4	H.BR.C.II.a	10	H.BGB.A.I.a
	H.BR.C.II.b		H.BR.C.II.e		H.BGB.B.I.d
	H.BGB.B.I.d		H.RSB.A.I.d		H.RSB.B.II.c
	H.RSB.D.I.a		H.RSB.A.II.C		H.RSB.D.II.a
	H.RSB.D.I.b	5	H.BR.A.II.b		H.RSB.D.II.c
	H.RSB.D.II.a		H.BR.A.III.b		H.RSB.D.II.d
	H.RSB.D.		H.BR.A.III.c	13	H.BR.B.II.a
	H.RSB.D.II.c		H.BR.A.III.d		H.RSB.A.I.a
	H.RSB.D.II.d		H.BR.A.IV.b	14	H.BR.A.V.c
	H.RSB.D.II.e		H.BR.A.IV.c		H.BR.C.I.b
2	H.BR.B.III.n		H.BR.B.I.b		H.BR.C.II.d
	H.BR.B.IV.a		H.BR.B.I.c	15	H.RSB.A.I.b
	H.BR.B.IV.a		H.BR.B.II.b		H.RSB.B.I.a
	H.RSB.B.II.b		H.BR.B.III.j		H.RSB.B.I.b
	H.RSB.B.II.c		H.BR.B.III.l		H.RSB.B.II.a
	H.RSB.B.II.d		H.BR.B.III.m	20	H.BR.B.I.g
	H.RSB.C.I.a		H.BR.C.II.c		H.BR.B.III.d
	H.RSB.C.II.a		H.BR.C.II.f		H.BR.B.III.e
	H.RSB.C.II.b	6	H.BR.A.II.a		H.BR.B.III.f
	H.RSB.C.II.c		H.BR.A.III.a		H.BR.B.III.h
3	H.BR.A.III.e		H.BR.A.V.a		H.BR.B.III.i
	H.BGB.A.I.b		H.RSB.A.II.a		H.BR.B.III.j
	H.RSB.E.I.a	7	H.BR.A.I.a		H.BR.B.V.c
			H.BR.A.V.b		H.RSB.E.II.c
			H.BR.B.I.d	22	H.RSB.E.I.b
			H.BR.B.I.f		H.RSB.E.II.b

referencing. This will provide the data necessary for a confident statement on whether or not the location of Tell es-Sweyhat in a fringe area led to deviance from a traditional Seleucid core site, and what similarities/differences existed in technology/customs in the two areas.

The core site of Jebel Khalid, to which a comparison will be made from Tell es-Sweyhat, was a completely Hellenistic constructed site, created during the Seleucid Empire, and served as a regional center in the Seleucid Empire (Holland 2006a; Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011; Wilkinson 2006). Therefore, it is assumed that its archaeological record will reflect an assemblage more "traditionally" Seleucid.

From a statistical standpoint, vessel forms will be examined in several different manners. The first will be to include a broad count of all considered ceramic forms. The second will focus on the relative frequency of vessel forms based upon function, and subsequently upon potential prestige value. While a statistical analysis of these factors will provide the most concrete, testable conclusions, a more qualitative consideration of the relative importance of different vessel forms might operate in a fashion lending credence to any potential statistical significance.

Jebel Khalid as a Comparison Site

In addition, Jebel Khalid poses a few issues as a comparison site: discrepancy of correlating ceramic types, discrepancy of sample sizes, mismatched contexts, and lack of specific temporal correlation. First, it is a much larger settlement of greater importance in the Seleucid Empire, and many ceramic forms present have no correlates at Tell es-Sweyhat. Second, the statistical significance of the comparison between sites is hindered by the vastly disparate sample size of materials recovered from each excavation. Third, the contexts from which comparative materials have been drawn are not parallel. While Jebel Khalid does have extensive fortifications, which would provide materials from a military context, the ceramic assemblage from those excavations

has not yet been published. There are two contexts from which the ceramic assemblage has been published: the cemetery, and the Housing Insula (Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011). The materials from the cemetery would not provide an accurate comparison, as a mortuary context would demonstrate deliberately deposited goods to a much greater degree than those from a previously systemic context. This leaves one option: the Housing Insula. This comparison is not ideal, and will render any conclusions about the differences between fringe and core sites susceptible to contamination from nonparallel contexts. Fourth, the two sites do not use a parallel sequencing for temporal phases, absolute dating is sparse, Jebel Khalid is not divided into many discrete temporal phases, and one lacks a breakdown by phase for some ceramic types at Jebel Khalid. Therefore, any comparative interpretation of temporal changes must be quite general, and relating temporal change to external chronologies is awkward.

With so many uncertainties, one might wonder about the appropriateness of Jebel Khalid as a comparative site, and whether such a comparison has the potential to lead to telic statements. Jebel Khalid serves as a pertinent comparison site due to its exceedingly close proximity to Tell es-Sweyha – approximately 15 miles separates the two (Figure 2). Due to the impressive proximity of the sites to one another, as well as to the Euphrates River, the preservation conditions at the two sites are likely to be quite similar. In addition, other factors related to regional differences, which might influence features of the archaeological record, can be assumed to be less prevalent.

As the two excavation teams classified ceramics with different terminology, the two systems were cross-referenced, allowing Tell es-Sweyhat ceramics to be reclassified into the Jebel Khalid terminology. The decision to reclassify in this manner stems from the broader scope of the Jebel Khalid “types”, which allows for greater categorical inclusiveness, for the more

particular Tell es-Sweyhat "forms," (Table 1). This contributed to easing the process, and is more successful in mitigating the potential for error involved with reclassification.

THE CERAMIC ASSEMBLAGES

Before a comparison can be made between the archaeological assemblages present at Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid, one must first consider Tell es-Sweyhat in its own right. In the following section, information is provided about the locations pertinent to the study, and the distribution of Hellenistic artifacts within those areas, as classified by the Tell es-Sweyhat excavation team. Following this, the Tell es-Sweyhat assemblage is presented in comparison to Jebel Khalid, with the Tell es-Sweyhat materials having been transposed into the Jebel Khalid classification system (Table 1).

Tell es-Sweyhat Excavation Area II: Trenches IIA and IIB

Several investigated locations within the Tell es-Sweyhat survey area have shown signs of Hellenistic occupation. Many of these locations are periphery to the main site (SS 1), and contain only sparse Hellenistic remains (e.g. SS4, SS6 (A-E), SS7, SS10, SS11, SS12, SS15, SS16A, SS16B, SS16C, SS17, SS18, SS26, SS28, and SS29) (Figure 4) (Holland, 2006a). Only those

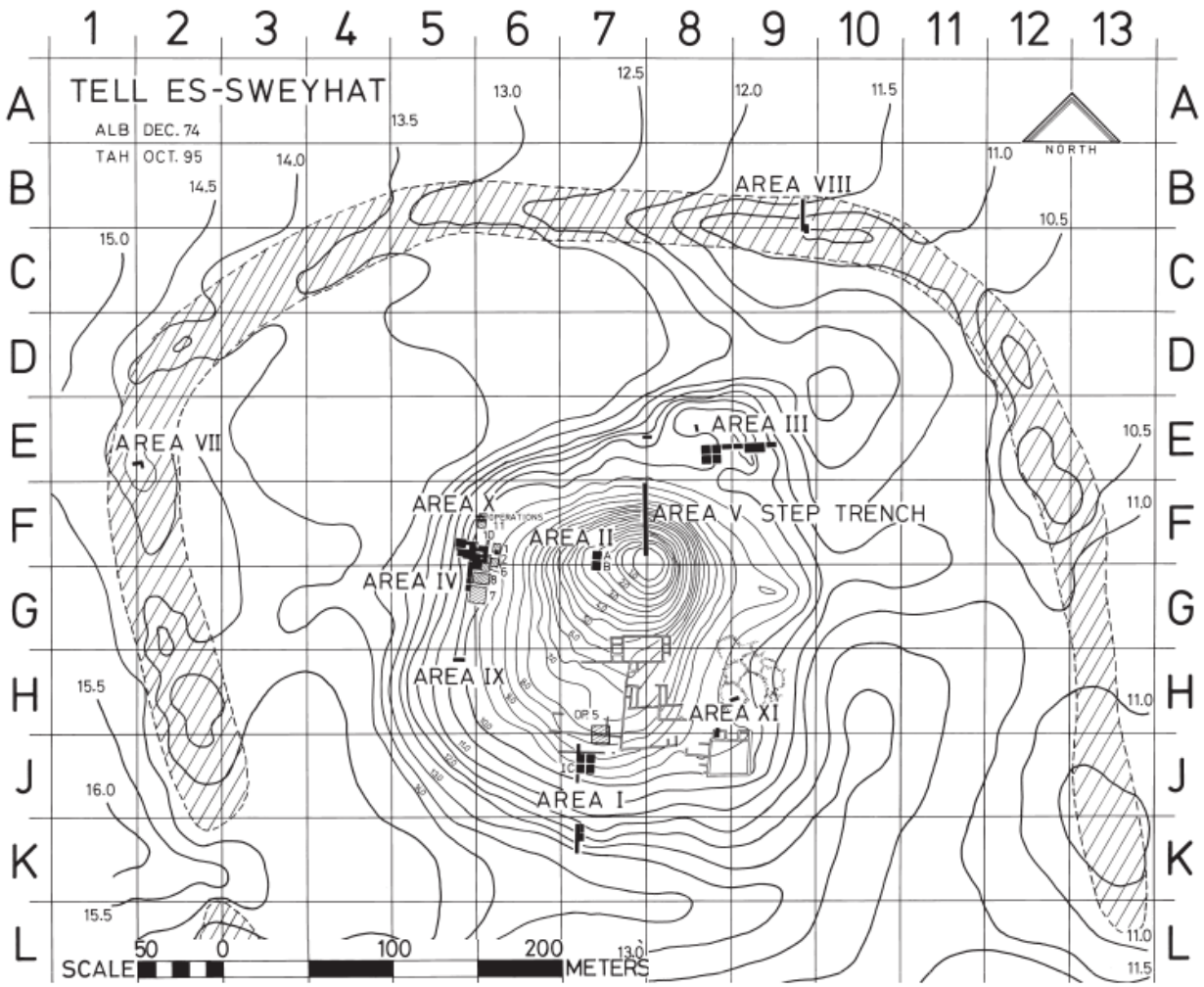

Figure 4Tell es-Sweyhat contour map illustrating Area II
(Holland 2006b: Figure 4 modified by Maximilian Pschorr).

Hellenistic remains recovered from the region designated 'Area II' on "the summit of the main mound," (Holland 2006:165) at SS 1 will be considered. Within Area II, two trenches, IIA and IIB (Figure 3), have been excavated, which contain significant Hellenistic materials. As the primary objective in the excavation of Tell es-Sweyhat lied in recovering remains from the periods pre-dating Hellenistic occupation of the region, these excavations became a serendipitous by-product, necessary in order to reach buried Bronze Age materials (Wilkinson, 2006, Holland 2006a).

Phases and Periods of Occupation

Volume One (Wilkinson 2006) and Volume Two (Holland 2006a) of the excavation reports from Tell es-Sweyhat differ slightly in their delineation of phases; however, Volume Two provides a key translating the different systems. As one seeks only to analyze trenches IIA and IIB, the provision of a phase chronology specific to those trenches enables further certainty about the stratigraphic sequence (Table 3). Only one fully calibrated radio-carbon sample provided a date

Table 3 phases of Occupation for Trench IIA at Tell es-Sweyhat
(Holland 2006a:17 modified by Maximilian Pschor).

Phases of Occupation in Trench IIA

Holland 1976 Phase	*Final Phase*	*Final Tell es-Sweyhat Period*	*Near East Period*
Phase G	Phases 9–15	Period C	Hellenistic Period
Phase F	Phases 7–8	Period G	Early Bronze Age III
Phase E	Phase 6	Period G	Early Bronze Age III
Phase D	Phase 5	Period H	Early Bronze Age II
Phase C	Phases 3–4	Periods J, H	Early Bronze Age I–II
Phase B	Phases 2–3	Period J	Early Bronze Age I
Phase A	Phases 1–2	Period J	Early Bronze Age I

pertinent to this investigation. The sample came from phase 10 in trench IIA, SSI, and its calibrated date lies between 369 - 271 B.C. and 269 - 111 B.C.

In a few instances, intrusive Bronze Age period ceramic artifacts were present within otherwise Hellenistic contexts. The total of 84 artifacts designated thus, using the terms "derived Early (Middle, or Late) Bronze Age," were omitted from this analysis (Holland 2006a:48).

The Ceramics from Tell es-Sweyhat: Trenches IIA & IIB

Bowls, burnished grey ware bowls, cooking pots, jars, jugs, red slip bowls, red slip jars, small bowls, and storage jars, as classified by the Tell es-Sweyhat excavators, are the ceramic forms considered from Trenches IIA and IIB (Table 2). Many ceramic forms were well represented by the excavations in these two trenches: bowls, small bowls, cooking pots, jars, jugs and storage jars. Burnished grey ware bowls, and small bowls are not as well represented (4, 3, and 15 total artifacts, respectively, have been excavated from trenches IIA and IIB), but when reclassified despite their scarcity, they represent a higher level of prestige, thus warranting their consideration (Holland 2006a). In addition, their consideration allows for a statistical comparison based on surface treatment, in reference to the site of Jebel Khalid. Figures 5 & 6 illustrate the total quantities of each form, within the two trenches and as a whole. At Tell es-Sweyhat, of all the ceramic categories considered, the total count of all diagnostic rim sherds is 523. Of the rim sherds attributed to each of these categories, nine bowl rims, six jar rims, two red slip bowl rims, two small bowl rims, and one storage jar rims were not considered due either to lack of the information needed to reclassify the sherds, or an insecure context within Hellenistic periods.

The quantity of ceramic remains by forms in trenches IIA & IIB (Figure 5 & 6) clearly illustrates an increase in the presence of many ceramic forms in the assemblage. Further the total quantity of ceramic artifacts present, regardless of form, increases over time. The trend of

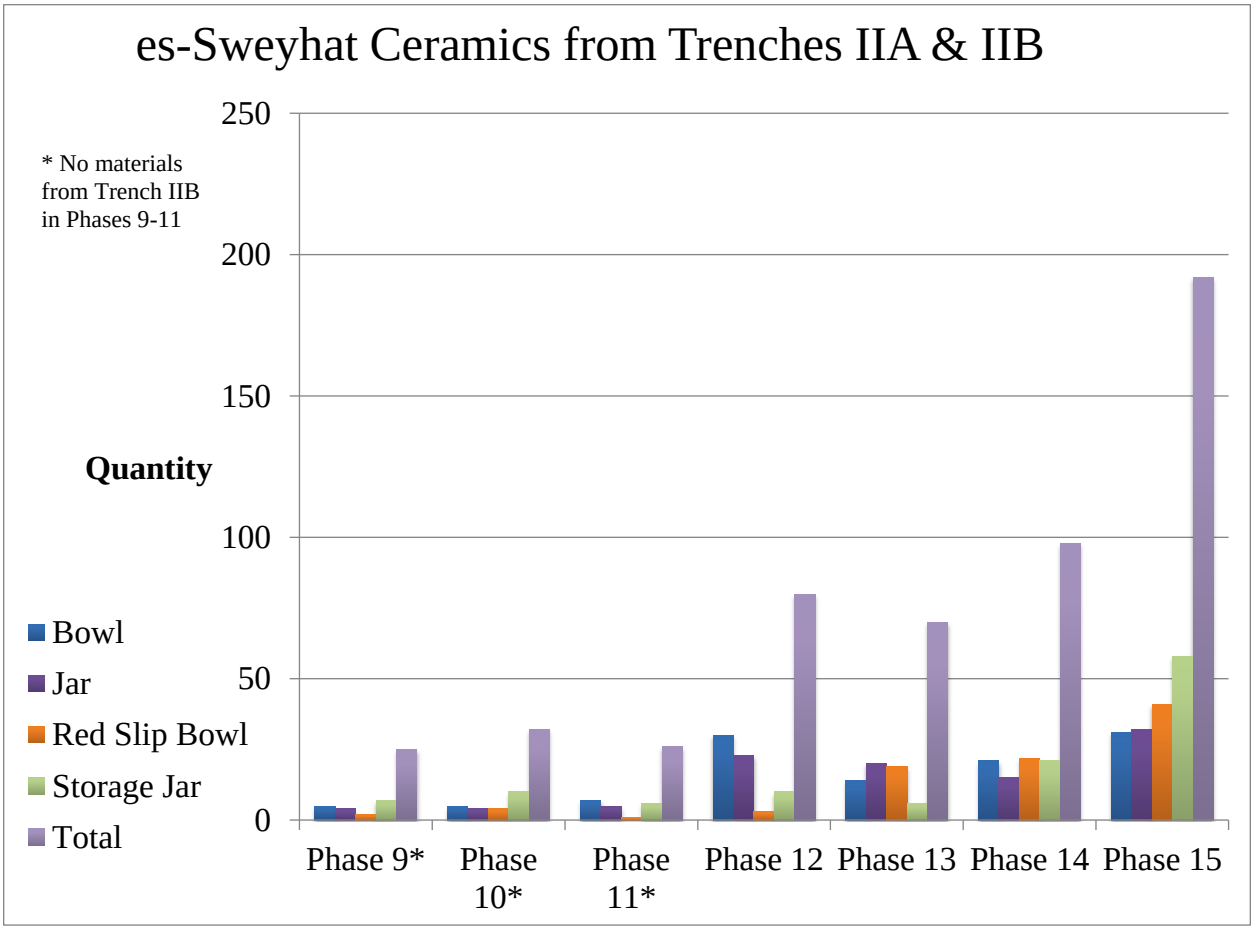

Figure 5 Quantity of ceramic forms by phase at Tell es-Sweyhat.

increased artifact concentration over time is readily apparent for most forms; however, burnished gray ware, small bowls, and bowls do not seem to follow this trend. Certainly with burnished grey ware and small bowls, this may say more about the sample sizes than anything else. Of the all the forms represented at Tell es-Sweyhat, the excavators considered two surface treatments separately: burnished grey ware, and red slip. These appear in much lower quantities than other ceramic treatment. Other categories of surface treatment include: pinkish buff slip, creamy-buff slip, buff slip, etc. (Holland 2006a); however, little is made of these forms, at Tell es-Sweyhat or Jebel Khalid, as they are quite common throughout Hellenistic pottery assemblages (Holland 2006a; Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011). A self-slip (a process in which the exterior of a vessel is

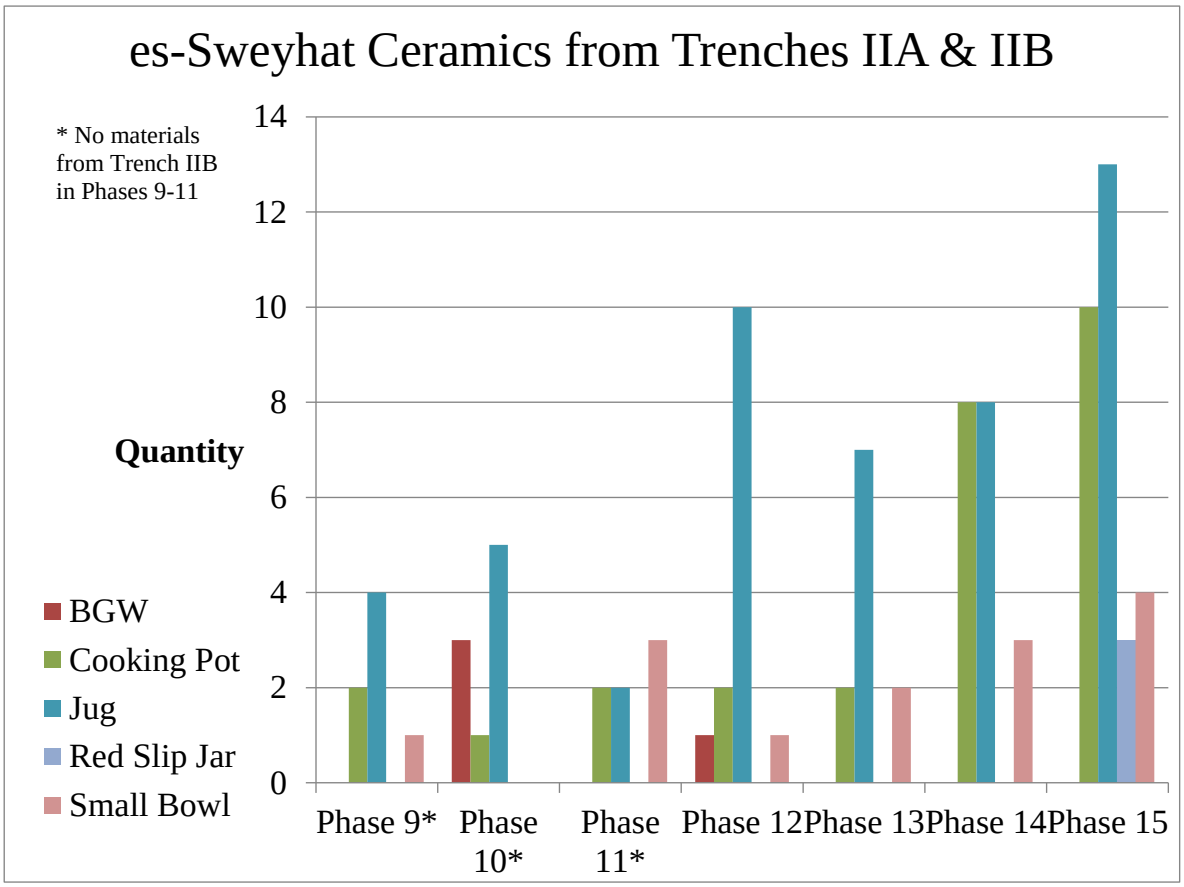

Figure 6 Percentage of each ceramic type present in Phases A and B at Jebel Khalid.

rubbed by a soft material, producing a smooth surface, and sometimes a lighter color) is also present on a large percentage of otherwise un-surface treated ceramics (Holland 2006a; Rotroff 2006).

The Ceramics from Jebel Khalid: The Housing Insula

The classification system employed at Jebel Khalid follows a broader set type classification. The only types considered, from a statistical standpoint, are those which can be directly compared with examples from the Tell es-Sweyhat assemblage (Table 3). In addition to those specific types considered, jug and jar forms are looked at in their broad categories, as classified by the excavators from each site. Unlike extensive temporal delineation at Tell es-Sweyhat (Table 2),

Table 4 Jebel Khalid ceramic types appropriat for statistical comparison between Jebel Khalid and Tell es-Sweyhat, classified into their respective broad category.

1	Bowl with Incurved Rim	7	Small Dish or Saucer
2	Open Bowl/Cup w/ Simple Vert. Rim	10	Plate with Simple, Flaring Rim
3	Bowl/Cup with Beaded Rim	13	Plate with Overhanging, Grooved Rim
4	Bowl/Cup with Interior Rim Modelled	14	Plate with Up-Turned Rim
5	Bowl with Thickened Exterior Rim	15	Deep Bowl with Projecting, Grooved Rim
6	Bowl with Everted Rim	20	Deep Bowl with Double Projecting Rim
COOKING POT		22	Deep Bowl with Projecting, Rounded Rim
DEEP BOWL		38	Neckless Cooking Pot with Rolled Rim
PLATE/SAUCER		39	Cooking Pot with Flaring Collared Rim
SMALL BOWL/CUP		40	Cooking Pot w/ Short Neck and Thickened Everted Lip

the archaeological assemblage recovered from Jebel Khalid consists of only two main temporal phases, and one inter-range phase: phase A and phase B, and phase B/A (Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011: 2-3). To simplify the comparative aspect, phase B/A has been included with phase B. The situation is further complicated by the fact that approximately 50% less of phase A was excavated than phase B. These two compounding factors reduce the significance any possibly distinguishable temporal change; however, one can still see definitively (Figure 7) that ceramic

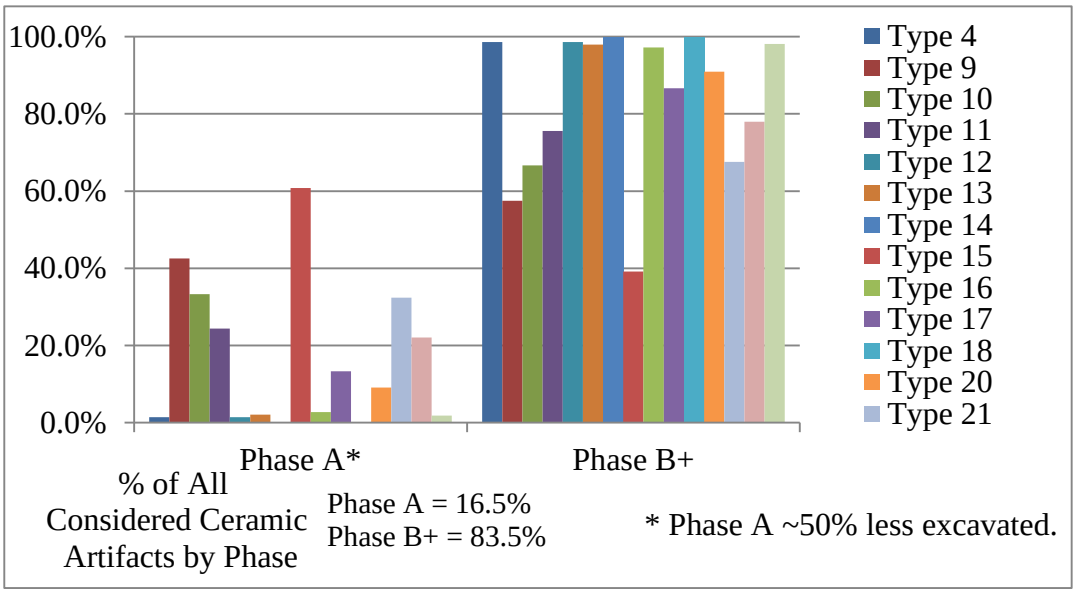

Figure 7 Ceramic types at Jebel Khalid looking at the percentage distribution of individual types by phase.

Table 5 Totals and percentage of considered assemblage for broad categories for both Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid.

	Sweyhat		Jebel Khalid	
Broad Forms	Broad Form Total	% Assemblage	Broad Form Total	% Assemblage
Bowl/Plate	223	42.6%	7489	58.2%
Cooking Pot	27	5.2%	314	2.4%
Jar	224	42.8%	2459	19.1%
Jug	49	9.4%	2604	20.2%
Total	523		12866	

artifacts increased in concentration, to a degree, in the later phase. While it makes sense that phase B would have a higher percentage of most ceramic types, when one regards the percentage of the overall ceramic assemblage for which each phase accounts, one sees that phase B artifacts are approximately five times as numerous.

The Ceramics from Jebel Khalid: The Housing Insula

The ceramic assemblage recovered from the Housing Insula has been divided into two sections and analyzed separately: the Common Wares, and the Imported Fine Wares. It is important to note, for this comparison, only those materials classified into types contained within the common wares correlate with the Tell es-Sweyhat assemblage. As previously mentioned, small bowl/cup, plate, deep bowl, and cooking pot types account account for the only forms b and it is these wares which are statistically considered. Jackson defines the common wares as "in common use… [and] carries the notion of 'locally available,'" while stressing the fact that the term 'common' is not an indication of poor craftsmanship or lack of decoration (Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011:1). Table 4 provides definitions of the ceramic types considered from Jebel Khalid (small bowl/cup, plate, deep bowl, and cooking pot types). Figure 8 displays the percentage total quantity of diagnostic rim sherds for the various considered types, within broader categories classifications. As for jugs and jars, a plethora of categories exists, many of

which are not consolidated into specific types. In addition, for several categories, no definitive total is given. With this in mind, jugs and jars have been considered only for their total quantity within a broad category classification, and the relative frequency of that category within the assemblage of considered ceramics (Table 4). At Jebel Khalid, of all the ceramic types considered, the total count of all diagnostic rim sherds is 12866.

TELL ES-SWEYHAT AND JEBEL KHALID: A COMPARATIVE APPRAISAL

The following section is broken into three parts: relative frequency of types between sites and broad category frequencies, change over time with respect to broad category frequencies and "type diversity" (i.e. the presence of different types), and frequency surface treatments within broad categories. In situations where data for particular a ceramic type is not given (e.g. in figures, tables etc.), the information required for that interpretation is either not available, not explicitly stated, or the interpretation and presentation of such data would be exceedingly convoluted. Jar and jug types from Jebel Khalid, in particular, present complexities which prevent them from being examined in depth. With jar and jug types there are often not count totals, they have often not been broken into specific types, and many of the formal types classified at Jebel Khalid are absent completely in the Tell es-Sweyhat ceramic assemblage.

Relative Frequency of Ceramic Types

This section considers the relative frequencies of ceramic types within broad category classification, as well as the relative frequency of broad category classifications (Figure 8). The most immediately striking thing apparent through Figure 8 is the apparent identical utilization of

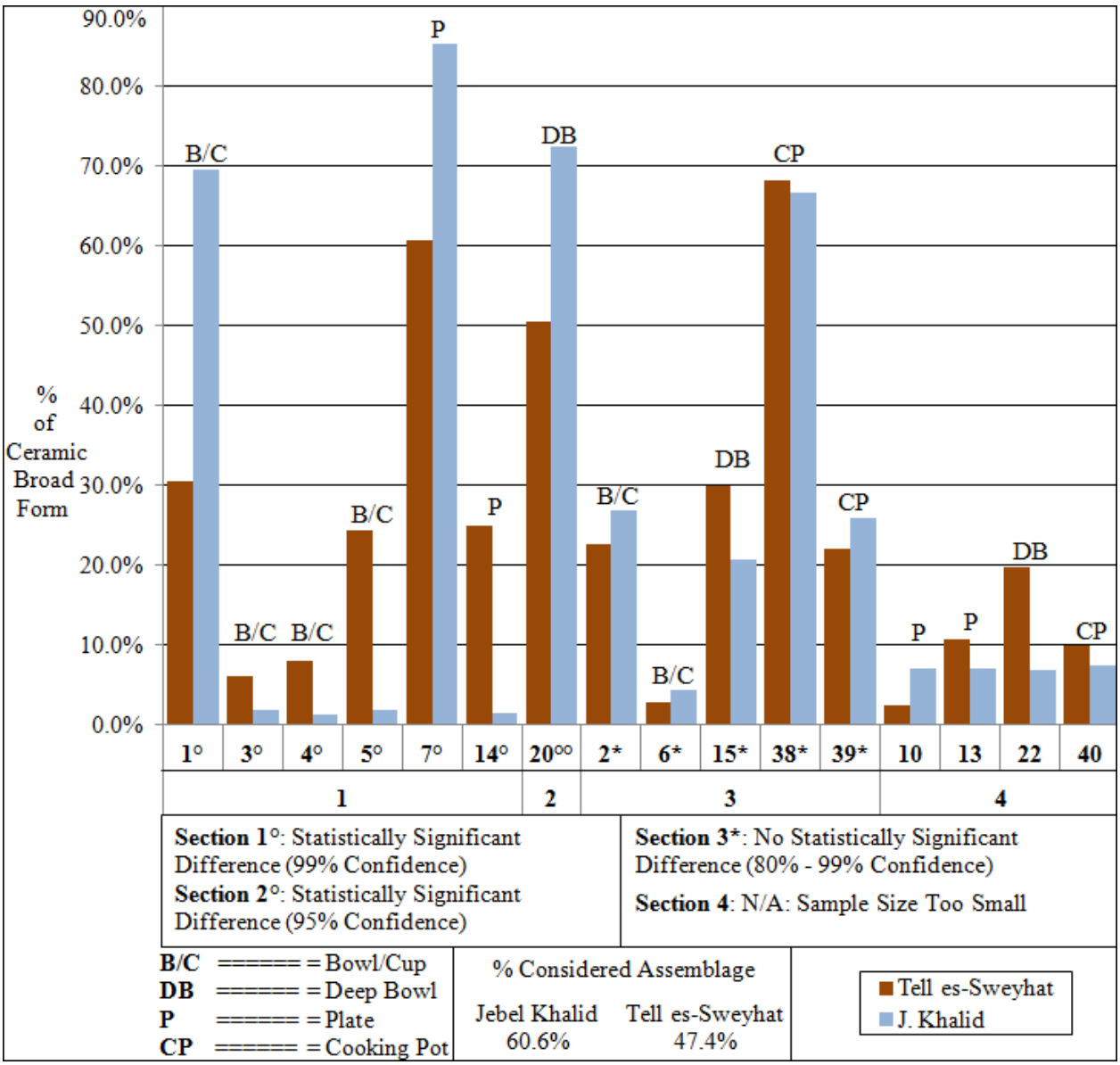

Figure 8 Site comparison of ceramic type percentages within broad category classifications. Further depiction of which differences in percentage reflect a statistically significant difference, those which do not, and those with too small a sample size.

cooking pot forms. Interestingly, one can see that while Jebel Khalid has much higher percentages of certain forms, Tell es-Sweyhat seems to have a slightly more equal distribution of ceramic types.

Change Over Time

Increased frequency of ceramic artifacts, at both Tell es-Sweyhat (Figures 5 & 6) and Jebel Khalid (Figure 7), is a strong indication of an increase in the extent and/or intensity of occupation at both sites. While an individual examination can illustrate the possible extent to which occupation may have increased at both sites, over time, one must attempt to cross-reference the temporal phases at each site in order to make any sort of telic comparative statement. The temporal delineation employed at the two sites relate to each other in a manner reflective of their respective ceramic classification systems. Jebel Khalid contains two confidently identifiable temporal phases (phase A and B), and each encompasses a broad scope of time. A confident understanding of the occupation history at Jebel Khalid is facilitated by the fact that it was a freshly created, completely Hellenistic settlement, which mitigates the potential for artifact intrusion from a non-Hellenistic archaeological context. Tell es-Sweyhat is delineated into nine phases attributed to Hellenistic occupation (Table 3), with each phase presumably more limited in temporal scope. Further, the occupation of Tell es-Sweyhat persisted, to varying degrees, for millennia prior to the Hellenistic period. The shared characteristics with the site' ceramic classification system render the Jebel Khalid process of phase delineation the more conducive phasing system with which to work in the process of temporal cross-referencing. Unfortunately, information regarding the percentage of ceramic types present in each phase is a less than desirable; however, an examination of total ceramic artifacts between phases, one can still speak to a general comparison (Figure 9). Establishing a perfect temporal cross reference

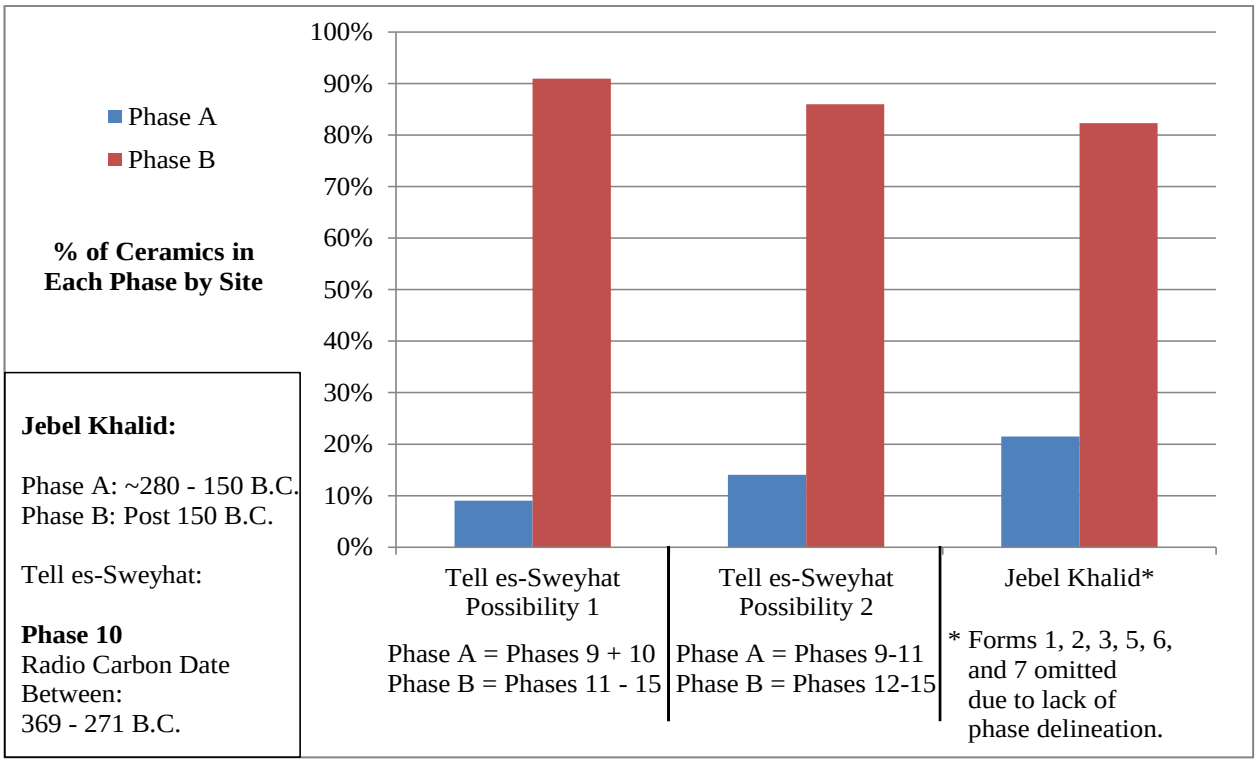

Figure 9 Total ceramic assemblages divided into Jebel Khalid like phase structure. Two possible options for Tell es-Sweyhat.

which could compare the two sites at precisely the exact periods of time (debatably a logistical impossibility under any circumstances) is certainly not possible/plausible. Instead, Tell es-Sweyhat's seven Hellenistic phases have been divided in a manner which provides the two most likely possible divisions.

In general, it would appear that most types were used to approximately as ubiquitous and used to about the same extent at both Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid, notable exceptions being types 1, 5 and 7. Complication in interpreting these discrepancies and similarities is exacerbated by the potential for in correct cross-referencing between the two site's classification systems. As only one example of each Tell es-Sweyhat form was considered for comparison, which determined the placement of all artifacts within that category, there is potential for missed subtleties. It is difficult to say confidently what these discrepancies and similarities mean in

terms of their cultural significance, or in terms of the possible functional differences at the site. On the other hand, in looking at the broad category frequencies (Table 4 and Figure 10), one can

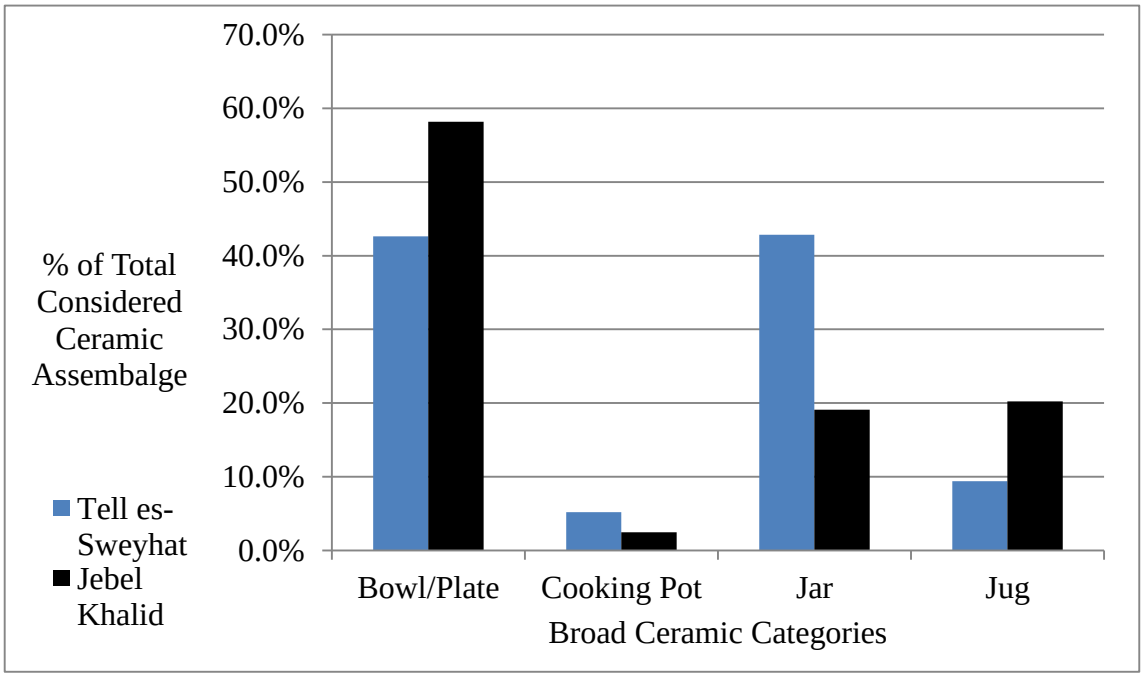

Figure 10 Percentage of considered assemblage made up by each broad category (Holland 2006b; Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011).

be much more certain of accurate cross referencing between sites; therefore, while it is the broadest in significance, it is also the comparative technique which provides the conclusions about which one can be most confident.

Plates make up a far greater percentage of the assemblage from Jebel Khalid, and their forms are more diverse. This indicates the greater variety of forms available, and may be an indication of greater uniformity amongst the population at Tell es-Sweyhat. This correlates with the interpretation of Tell es-Sweyhat as a military "watch post." Utilitarian objects, such as cooking pots and jars are also more prevalent at Tell es-Sweyhat. This, in tandem with the

smaller percentage of small bowl/cup, plate forms, indicates that less diversity existed among non-essential items associated with the preparation and consumption of food. Jugs and jars are both forms which likely would have been used for storage purposes. At Jebel Khalid, most of the jugs, which were considerably larger than jars, were interpreted to have stayed in the same spot within the context of their use, most likely due to their size (Jackson and Tidmarsh 2011). As it was more distant from locations at which goods could be acquired, the increased prevalence of smaller storage vessels may be due to the requirement of transporting materials over longer distances. At Jebel Khalid, access to goods acquisition would have been much more proximate, and therefore, it would have been easier to transport goods to larger storage capacity jugs through the use of objects/containers which do not preserve as well in the archaeological record.

Surface Treatments Frequencies in Ceramic Types

It is first important to note a striking difference between the ways in which surface treatment of ceramics influenced their categorization within the two classification systems. The Tell es-Sweyhat system delineated ceramic artifacts into forms based primarily based on interpreted function (bowl, jug, jar etc.); however, those artifacts which displayed prestigious surface treatment received their own category (red slip jar, burnished gray ware, red slip bowl etc). In the Jebel Khalid system, with respect to "common ware," the classification of ceramic artifacts relied on vessel form as the means by which an artifact was categorized. Other aspects, such as surface treatment, accounted for secondary considerations. Further, in order to determine the frequency of different surface treatments, one relied on enunciation of such attributes within the text of the site report.

As previously stated, the surface treatment of many ceramic types was not presented in an explicit manner for much of the Jebel Khalid ceramic assemblage. As such, jars, jugs, and cooking pots are not considered for their surface treatments in any way.

Broad category ceramics were considered in lieu of individual ceramic types, as they have a greater potential to illustrate observable trends (Figures 11, 12, 13). Out of all the types

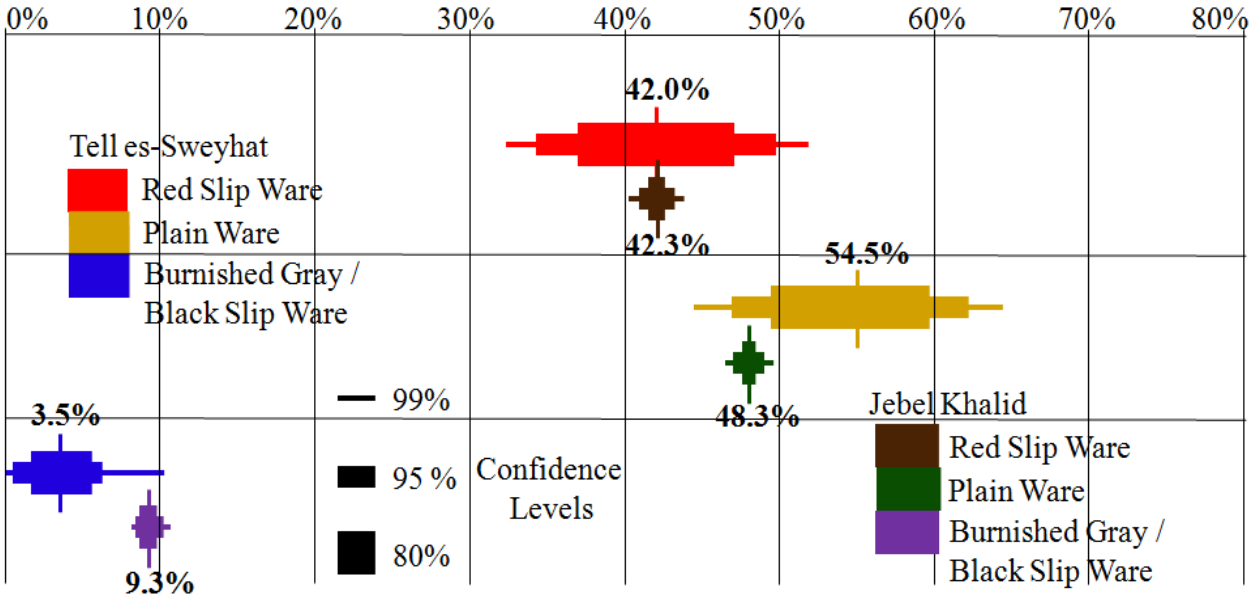

Figure 12 Comparison of ceramic surface treatment of small bowl/cup type vessels between Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid.

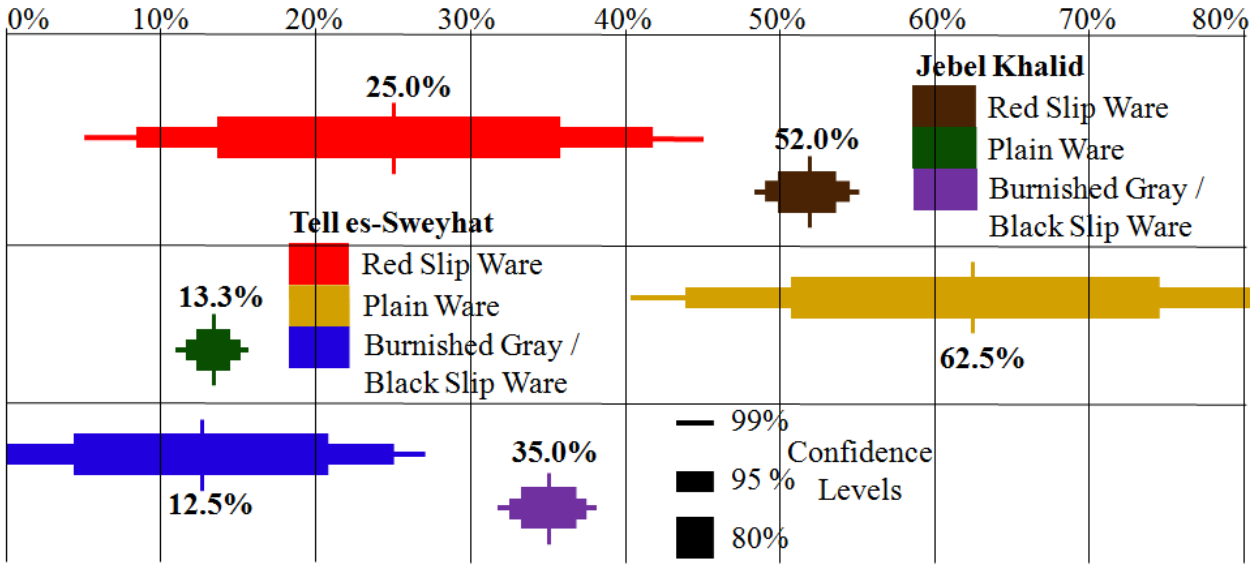

Figure 11 Comparison of ceramic surface treatment of plate type vessels between Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid.

considered for surface treatment, small bowl/cup types express by far the highest correlation between sites. Red slip small bowl/cups have almost identical means, and fall well within the range required to suggest a high probability of similarity. The proportion of plain ware surface treatment techniques amongst small bowl/cups, does not exhibit quit as high of a probability;

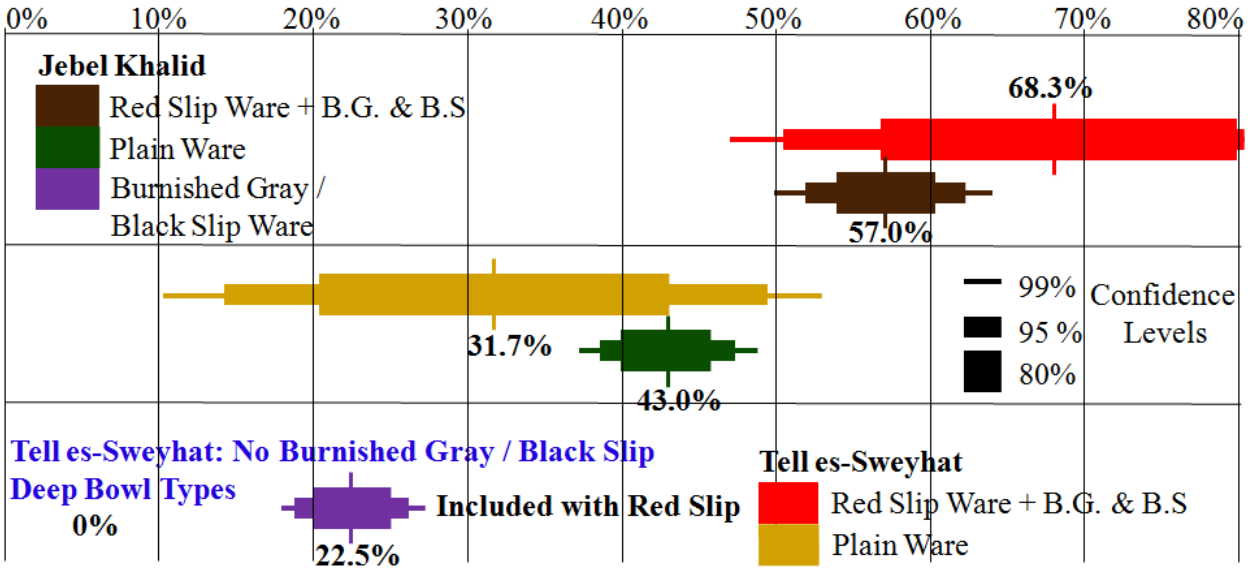

Figure 13 Comparison of ceramic surface treatment of deep bowl type vessels between Tell es-Sweyhat and Jebel Khalid. Burnished gray ware is illustrated to show the its prevalence within Jebel Khalid, however it has been incorporated into the red slip category for a comparison of all vessels with prestigious surface treatments, among deep bowls.

however, it is more similar than almost any other type/surface treatment combination considered. Plate forms show no similarity in any considered surface treatment, which is likely due to the extremely small population of ceramics which became reclassified into Jebel Khalid plate types. The proportion of surface treatments appear to be lightly similar for plain ware, and the lumped category of "prestigious surface treatment," created specifically for the deep bowl broad category. While it might be tempting to think that this is an indication that proportions of these goods were similar between the two sites, the ridiculously small sample size of these types from Tell es-Sweyhat should cause hesitation in any sort of declaration on that matter.

In total, Tell es-Sweyhat exhibits many similar trends to Jebel Khalid in terms of its increased occupation through time, and the increase in variability among ceramic types. While individuals living at Tell es-Sweyhat would have had access to a certain degree of prestigious ceramic forms, it would not have been on par with what was available in the core setting at Jebel Khalid.

When seeking to make a statement about the relationship between core and fringe peoples/locations, one must recall that several other major influences impact the differences and similarities exhibited in these ceramic assemblages. Major portions of the total ceramic assemblages could not be analyzed, including those fine ware types from Jebel Khalid, which indicate much a higher access to foreign goods, and specialty pottery production.

Further, as the contexts between the two artifact assemblages reflect a militaristic setting (Tell es-Sweyhat/Fringe) and a domestic setting (Jebel Khalid/Core), one should question whether these differences were due to distance from cultural centers, or from participation in practices associated with a lifestyle in a military setting.

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