

THE GLASS FINDS FROM ḤORBAT 'OFRAT

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The 2013 excavation at Ḥorbat 'Ofrat yielded 140 glass fragments, 90 of which were diagnostic (see Alexandre, this volume).¹ Most of the fragments were small and poorly preserved. Nine representative vessels were drawn and are discussed below; others are mentioned without illustrations.

Glass finds from the 2008 excavations at the site range in date from the Early Roman to the late Ottoman period, with the majority dated from the Late Roman to the late Byzantine period (Winter 2018:69). The glass finds from the 2013 season represent the Late Roman and late Byzantine periods, and include a few Crusader and Mamluk objects as well. The dating of the glass finds was based mainly on their shape, fabric and color, as well as on comparisons with other glass corpora in the vicinity of Ḥorbat 'Ofrat (Winter 2018:70) or from a wider distribution when necessary.

THE GLASS FINDS

The Late Roman and Early Byzantine Periods

Several bowl fragments with out-folded hollow rims were found, similar to those published from the previous excavation at the site (Winter 2018:71–72, Fig. 2:1, 2), as well as fragments of a small bowl with a 'folded collar' rim, dated to the fourth and early fifth centuries CE (L106, B1006; not illustrated). This type was identified among the glass vessels found in the debris of the glass workshop at Jalame, dated to the second half of the fourth century CE (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:47–49, Fig. 4.7), and in dwellings at Ḥorbat 'Uza (Gorin-Rosen 2009:82–83, Fig. 2.50:12, with further references therein, including burial contexts from Ḥorbat Sugar, Kisra and Khirbat esh-Shubeika).

Figure 1:1 is a bowl rim made of yellowish green glass covered with milky white enamel-like weathering and iridescence on both sides. The rim is incurving with a pointed edge and very delicately worked. Due to its color and fabric, this vessel was assigned a Late Roman or early Byzantine date. This bowl is rather unique; no exact parallels were found. Shallow

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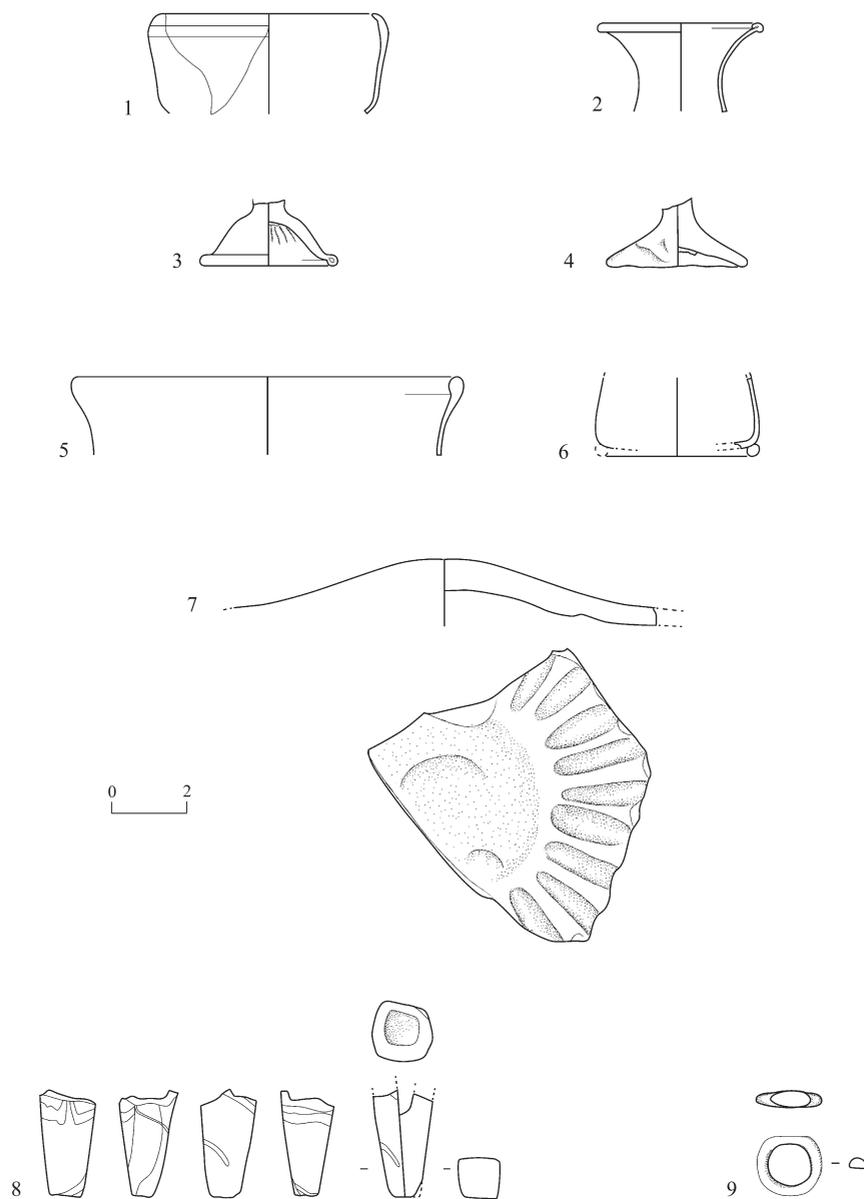


Fig. 1. Glass vessels.

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket
1	Bowl rim	139	1078/1
2	Bottle rim	162	1115/3
3	Wineglass base	180	1155
4	Wineglass base	119	1046
5	Beaker rim	133	1057/1
6	Beaker base	133	1057/2
7	Base	118	1045
8	Bottle base	111	1043
9	Ring	133	1059

bowls with upright incurving rims are also known in the Abbasid period, but they vary from Fig. 1:1 in fabric and workmanship.

Figure 1:2 is a rim belonging to a bottle or a jug, dated to either the Late Roman–early Byzantine period or to the late Byzantine–Early Islamic period. The vessel has an unevenly infolded rim and a short neck. The glass is a light blue hue, clean of weathering and iridescence, and is very bubbly with some impurities. The quality of the fabric indicates that it was a local production. A similar bottle, found in the debris of the glass workshop at Jalame, was dated to the second half of the fourth century CE (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:72, Fig. 4-33:286). A complete small bottle with a funnel mouth and infolded rim, a short cylindrical neck and a slightly uneven globular body was found at Ḥorbat 'Uza within an assemblage dated to the Late Roman–early Byzantine period (Gorin-Rosen 2009:92–93, Fig. 2.54:1). The Ḥorbat 'Uza bottle slightly differs from Bottle No. 2 as it has two constrictions: between the mouth and the neck, and between the neck and shoulder. The fabric of Bottle No. 2 resembles the typical Umayyad glass, and its shape also appears in bottles and jars of that period.

The Byzantine and Late Byzantine Period

Most of the vessels are dated to the Byzantine period, including some vessels dated more specifically to the late Byzantine period. This assemblage has the most common types of wineglasses, bottles and oil lamps.

Wineglasses of two major subtypes were found: wineglasses with a tubular ring base, either plain (not illustrated) or decorated (Fig. 1:3), and wineglasses with a solid base (Fig. 1:4). Wineglasses with tubular ring bases represent the most common type of Byzantine wineglass bases (L109, B1010; not illustrated); for example, sixteen bases of this type were found in the 2008 excavation at Ḥorbat 'Ofrat (Winter 2018:76–78, Fig. 3:3, with further discussion and references therein).

An uneven carinated tubular ring base with a ribbed pattern on the bottom was discovered (Fig. 1:3). This pattern could have been made by using a sharp tool, or a simple mold. Tooling marks are common on wineglasses with solid bases like Fig. 1:4, but are less frequent on tubular bases. This pattern of markings might be an indication of a specific glass workshop. Three bases of this type were found at Ḥorbat 'Amud in the western Galilee, excavated by Hagit Tahan-Rosen (near Kibbutz Kabri; unpublished). A base with a similar mold-blown pattern on the upper part was found in Beirut within a group of vessels dated to the early Byzantine period (Jennings and Abdallah 2001–2002: Fig. 13:11). A wineglass with remains of mold-blown ribs on the base, foot and the upper part was found in a glass workshop in Beirut dated to the Umayyad period (Foy 2000: Figs. 14:1; 15).

Figure 1:4 represents wineglasses with solid bases, which were made by attaching a piece of molten glass, and tooled into the shape of a foot and a base; the tooling marks are often visible. The base from Ḥorbat 'Ofrat was made of light bluish glass covered with sand deposits. This complete base is rather small and the cylindrical foot is somewhat thin compared to others of its type. A pontil scar is visible in the center of the base. A second base

of this type of a relatively small wineglass was also found (L114, B1019; not illustrated). These bases are dated to the late Byzantine and early Umayyad periods. Two bases of this type were found at Moshav Zippori (Gorin-Rosen 2010: Fig. 16:6, 7), while many others were unearthed at the site of Zippori. Such wineglasses were also found at 'Akko, for example in the Courthouse Site (Katsnelson 2016:84, Fig. 3.9:58).

Fragments of oil lamps were also retrieved, including a bowl-shaped oil lamp with a solid beaded stem made of olive green glass (L102, B1002; not illustrated) and a similar solid and crude lamp (L114, B1025; not illustrated); both dated to the late Byzantine and Early Islamic periods. Such lamp bases were found in the 2008 excavations at Horbat 'Ofrat and were dated to the Byzantine and early Umayyad periods (Winter 2018:77–78, Fig. 3:5, 6, with further references therein).

The Crusader and Mamluk Periods

This group of vessels is of major importance as it was not found during the previous excavation season at the site. The vessels date to the medieval period, and might present a Crusader occupation of the site below the Mamluk phase.

Figure 1:5 is an incurving thickened rim of a beaker made of colorless glass with a grayish purple tinge. The shape of the rim and the glass' fabric resembles Crusader beakers, which are sometimes adorned with enamel and gilded patterns. An additional small base fragment (Fig. 1:6), with an applied thin trail around its pushed-in bottom, was found in the same basket. The center of this base is broken, and the vessel is made of colorless, dull glass covered with sand deposits. This type of base usually belongs to beakers such as Fig. 1:5. Similar rims and bases were found in Crusader contexts at 'Akko (Katsnelson 2016:85, Fig. 3.10:64) and Yafo (Jaffa; Gorin-Rosen 2017:144, 146, Fig. 2:3, with further references to 'Akko and Beirut), and continue to appear during the Mamluk period with only minor differences. Such bases have also been found in Jerusalem: one in Area X-2, dated to the thirteenth century CE, with parallels at 'Atlit and Fustat; and one in a Mamluk-period context dating to the fifteenth century CE (Brosh 2012: Pls. 15.1:G6; 15.5:G75). Both the rim and the base (Fig. 1:5, 6) were found in L133, which was identified as an accumulation within the Mamluk building. However, based on some of the pottery and glass found there, the excavator suggested that the building might have been erected in the Crusader period (see Alexandre, this volume).

A few vessels are assigned to the Mamluk period, including the largest glass fragment found in the excavation (Fig. 1:7). This fragment is part of a base decorated with radiating ribs created from a deep mold, and has a crude pontil scar in the middle. The glass is a dark color, probably purple, covered with a thick rusty brown layer, and is severely pitted with thick sand deposits. The fabric and pattern are characteristic of Mamluk glass, and the size indicates a relatively large vessel, like a jar or a deep bowl, similar to the plain vessel with a handle found in Jerusalem that was identified as a chamber pot (Brosh 2005:188–189, Fig. 6).

The glass vessels most characteristic of the Mamluk period are decorated with marvered trails, usually white, on a darker colored vessel, such as purple, green, blue or brown (for a general discussion of the group and examples from Jerusalem, see Brosh 2016).

Among the most common Mamluk glass vessels are cosmetic bottles with elongated pyramidal bodies decorated with marvered white trails. A base of a purple bottle with these white trails was found at Ḥorbat 'Ofrat (Fig 1:8). Such bottles were discovered at many sites, e.g. Mary's Well, Nazareth (Alexandre 2012:97–98, Fig. 4.6:6, and see further references therein to Bet She'an, Banias, Jerusalem, Ḥama in Syria, Fustat in Egypt and Quseir al-Qadim in Nubia).

Two additional fragments of marvered vessels were not illustrated: one was clear dark glass with white trails (L102, B1002), and the other was purple glass with white trails (L112, B1024).

Aside from the vessels, a number of glass bracelets and a glass ring were also discovered. The bracelets include both monochrome twisted bracelets and bichrome or triple-colored twisted bracelets. One such bracelet made of green glass with yellow and red twisted trails was found (L109, B1010; not illustrated), another had red and white trails on a greenish background (L113, B1033; not illustrated), and a third was deformed (L103, B1003; not illustrated). A large quantity of twisted bracelets was found at Mary's Well, Nazareth (Alexandre 2012:103–105, Fig. 4.10:5). Such bracelets were also found in a Mamluk context in the al-Waṭa Quarter, Zefat (Katsnelson 2014:155–156, Fig. 1:11–13).

A glass ring (Fig. 1:9) was made from opaque grayish green glass covered with silverish weathering and had a pitted surface. The ring is a simple design of a glass thread flattened to create the bezel, and has no decoration or special workmanship. Such rings are known in Mamluk- and Ottoman-period contexts. One such ring was discovered with a Mamluk coin dated to the fourteenth century at Kafr Jinnis, next to Ben Gurion Airport (Zelinger 2005: Fig. 3:8).

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The glass finds retrieved during the 2013 season at Ḥorbat 'Ofrat were discovered in all excavation areas. Despite their poor preservation, they were identified and dated, and contribute to our understanding of the history of the site. There were two earlier stages that correspond to the lion's share of the glass finds from the 2008 excavations (Winter 2018:80): the Late Roman–early Byzantine, namely the fourth–early fifth centuries CE, and the late Byzantine and early Umayyad, namely the sixth–seventh centuries CE. However, the third group of Crusader and Mamluk glass is new evidence for another occupation phase that was not identified during the earlier 2008 season. The glass from the 2013 season confirmed the modest domestic nature of the settlement.

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