

BAQA EL-GHARBIYA AREA: THE GLASS VESSELS FROM ḤORBAT KOSIT (EAST)

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The glass vessels discussed in this report were found during a salvage excavation conducted in Area B1 at Ḥorbat Kosit (east), west of Baqa el-Gharbiya (see Gorzalczany, this volume).¹ The excavation yielded 371 fragments, 150 of which were diagnostic. One vessel was found intact (Fig. 1:1), while the others were fragmentary. Thirty-two representative types were chosen for discussion, including shallow and deep bowls, beakers, plain and decorated bottles and a bracelet (Figs. 1–4). The material is distinguished by the unity of its fabric, generally of various hues of bluish-green and greenish; a few fragments have a yellowish tinge. Most of the vessels are unadorned; one bottle is decorated with a mold-blown design of vertical ribs (Fig. 4:23), and several vessels exhibit trail patterns, often in turquoise glass (Figs. 3:17; 4:21, 24, 25).

Several vessels were found in architectural context, e.g., in burial structures (L324, Fig. 1:2; L231, Fig. 4:26) or in rock-hewn installations, possibly used as tombs (e.g., Figs. 1:1, 3–6; 2:5; 3:18; 4:20, 25); the rest were recovered from accumulations. As a whole, the assemblage comprises two groups: small cosmetic bottles, dated to the late first–early third centuries CE (Fig. 1) and table and cosmetic ware, dated to the fourth–early fifth centuries CE (Figs. 2–4). The first, smaller group, may be attributed to Stratum II of the excavation, i.e., the Roman-period necropolis, while the second group relates to Stratum I, i.e., a Late Roman/early Byzantine settlement.

The repertoire is simple, comprising mostly plain vessels of fairly local types. Similar

vessels were found at various sites in Israel, including the Sharon plain, Samaria and Judea. Some types are similar to those produced in the late fourth-century glass factory at Jalame (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988), while others resemble vessels dating from the fourth–early fifth centuries CE, found at Khirbat el-Ni‘ana, south of Ramla, where another large, local glass workshop might have operated (Gorin-Rosen and Katsnelson 2007). However, the style of workmanship of the vessels from Ḥorbat Kosit, and especially the predominance of the ridged bowls (Figs. 2:1–5; 3:10–14), along with the unity in their fabric, imply that these vessels could have been produced locally.

THE ROMAN PERIOD (Fig. 1)

This small, homogeneous group of vessels consists of six cosmetic bottles. They are characterized by their small size, thin walls and lack of pontil mark on their bottom. Miniature piriform Bottle No. 1 was preserved intact. Its body is bulbous, while the bodies of the other bottles vary in shape, and are either conical (No. 3) or pear-shaped (No. 4). Rim fragment No. 2 can be ascribed to any such bottle. It was found at the entrance of Tomb 324 together with two other similar rims (not illustrated). Fragment No. 6 is exceptional in exhibiting the remains of a handle attached to its rim. It belongs to an *aryballos*, a flask with two suspended handles and a globular body.

Such bottles are prominent finds in tombs throughout the Roman Empire, especially in the Syro-Palestinian region, e.g., in the central

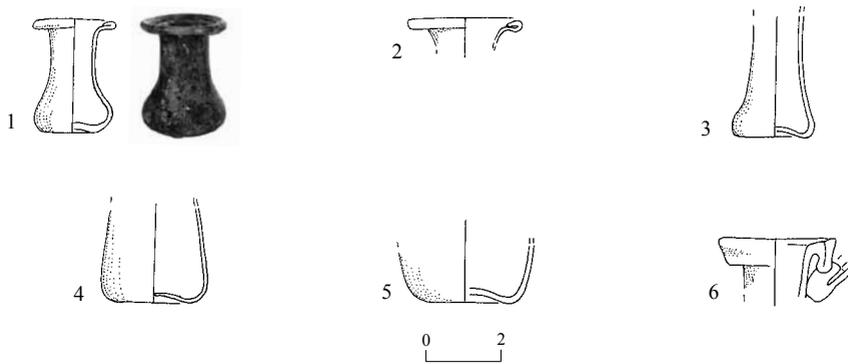


Fig. 1.

hills, in the north of Israel and in Transjordan. This group of vessels dates from the mid-first century up to the mid-third century CE.

Cosmetic Bottles (Fig. 1)

1. Miniature bottle. L295, B2312. Intact. Rim folded inward unevenly and flattened at top. Cylindrical neck. Short bulbous body. Flattened base, slightly concave in center. Greenish blue with greenish strikes on rim. Crust of blackish rusty and silver weathering, severe pitting. H: 3 cm, rim diam.: 2.2 cm, base diam.: 1.5 cm.

This bottle is distinguished by its small dimensions. Although its body and neck proportions are almost equal, it may be ascribed to the family of short candlestick bottles, dated generally to the mid-first–mid-third centuries CE (Winter 1996:98, Fig. 5.5:1–4). Bottles similar to No. 1 were found in a Nabatean tomb at ‘Amman, dated to the mid-first century CE (Harding 1946: Pl. 20:11; Barag 1970:84) and in a Late Roman tomb at Meron Stratum IV (Meyers, Strange and Meyers 1981:110, Fig. 7.6:1). Other bottles, with slight variations in shape, are known mainly from the north of Israel, e.g., Mt. Gilbo‘a (Gorin-Rosen 1999a:63*, Fig. 7:1, and see references therein to Naẓerat and Bet She’an).

2. Bottle with a flaring rim. L324, B2480. Small rim and mouth fragment. Thin-walled. Flared rim, folded inward. Beginning of cylindrical neck. Bluish

green with yellow strikes. Black and silver patches, iridescent film, pitting. Rim diam.: 3 cm.

Such rims are typical of many types of Roman bottles, and could belong to any of the vessels discussed in this group (Nos. 2–5).

3. Conical bottle. L295, B2324. Lower body and part of neck. Almost colorless with bluish green tinge. Patches of blackish and silver weathering, iridescence film, severe pitting. Long vertical bubble at neck. Cylindrical neck tapering downward, uneven narrow body. Flattened base, concave in center. Base diam.: 2 cm.

Bottle No. 3 has an unevenly tapering body. A few small bottles (height 4.5–5.5 cm) with similar bodies were found in a Roman tomb at Khirbat Farwa (northwest of Nablus) dated to the second–early third centuries CE (Reich 1991: Photo 7:1, 4, 5, 6).

4. Pear-shaped bottle. L234, B2280. Base and lower body fragment. Pear-shaped body. Flattened base, concave in center. Colorless with greenish tinge. Small patches of silver and black weathering, iridescent film, severe pitting, sand deposits. Base diam.: 2.5 cm.

This fragment probably belongs to one of the earliest types of cosmetic bottles, characteristic of the first century CE. Their rims are folded inward or rounded, and their necks are cylindrical, often constricted at the junction with the piriform body. A small bottle from the “Caiaphas” tomb presents one

possible reconstruction of its shape (Greenhut 1992:68–69, Fig. 9). Such bottles are abundantly found in ‘Akko, Netanya, Samaria and Jerusalem (Israeli 2003:207, No. 241, see discussion and further references therein), as well as in ‘Amman (Harding 1946: Pl. 20:10, 13).

5. Small bottle. L264, B2209. Lower body and base fragment. Piriform body. Concave base. Bluish green. Iridescent film, sand deposits, bubbly. Base diam.: 2.5 cm, body diam.: c. 4 cm.

This bottle differs from No. 4 in its more open shape. Its low concave base, lacking a pontil mark, might indicate that it belongs to one of the various types of Early Roman-period piriform cosmetic bottles.

6. Aryballos. L234, B2280. Rim (partly missing), fragment of neck and small remains of handle (only one preserved). Rim folded downward, upward, inward and flattened at top. Cylindrical neck. Small remains of strap handle adjusted with fold to neck below the rim. Greenish blue. Black and silver crust, pitting, sand deposits. Rim diam.: 3.2 cm.

Only a very small portion of the upper part of this vessel was preserved. A narrow collar-rim, as well as two short strap handles starting at the shoulder and ending in a fold just beneath the rim, are characteristic of this vessel type. Such bottles, with a globular body, date to the late first–second centuries CE. They were used as oil containers, mainly in bathhouses, like the one found at ‘En Gedi (Jackson-Tal 2007:477, Pl. 2:4, Fig. 4, and see references therein to Kh. al-Karak, ‘Ain ez-Zara and tombs in ‘Amman). Other contemporary parallels include Samaria (Reisner, Fisher and Lyon 1924: Fig. 203:6), Khirbat Badd ‘Isa—Qiryat Sefer (Magen, Tzionit and Sirkis 2004: Pl. 9:29) and Shu‘afat (Katsnelson 2009:165, Fig. 5:1, and see references therein to Jerusalem). In many cases, the bottoms of these bottles are decorated with a linear-cut design, e.g., on an *aryballos* found in Tomb 54 at Pella, dated to the late first–early second centuries CE (Smith and McNicoll 1992:128–129, Pl. 87:20).

THE LATE ROMAN–EARLY BYZANTINE PERIODS (Figs. 2–4)

Several common Syro-Palestinian types, including bowls, bottles and a jar, comprise this group, dating mainly to the fourth century CE. A small fragment of a ribbed bracelet of a Late Roman type is also discussed (Fig. 4:26).

Bowls with Horizontal Ridges (Figs. 2; 3:10–14) Seven versions of such bowls are reported. All are characterized by a horizontal ridge below the rounded rim. The rims are often polished on the exterior. Figure 2 represents shallow bowls, while Fig. 3:10–14 demonstrates deeper bowls. Tubular ring bases exhibiting low (Figs. 2:2, 6, 7; 3:12) and high, pushed-in (Fig. 2:8, 9) variations, probably belonged to bowls of this type. The irregular shapes of the latter indicate careless workmanship of vessels manufactured in large series.

Ridged bowls were popular especially in Galilee, probably produced in the late fourth-century CE glass factory at Jalame (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:45–47, Fig. 4-6:49–65). A regional workshop at Khirbat el-Ni‘ana is another possible manufacture place, where such bowls, particularly those with a delicate ridge (e.g., Fig. 3:10, 11, 13), were produced during the fourth–early fifth centuries CE (Gorin-Rosen and Katsnelson 2007:78–79, Fig. 1:6–9, and see further references therein).

1. Shallow bowl. L309, B2393. Small rim and body fragment. Thin-walled. Upward rounded rim. Prominent ridge just below rim. Slanting walls. Marks of exterior polishing on rim. Greenish blue, patches of black weathering, iridescent film, severe pitting. Rim. diam.: c. 20 cm.

2. Base and body fragment. L309, B2393. Probably the same bowl as No. 1. Thin-walled. Tubular ring-base with small hollow, slightly curving inward. Part of curving upward walls. Greenish blue, patches of black weathering, iridescent film, severe pitting. Base diam.: 8.5 cm.

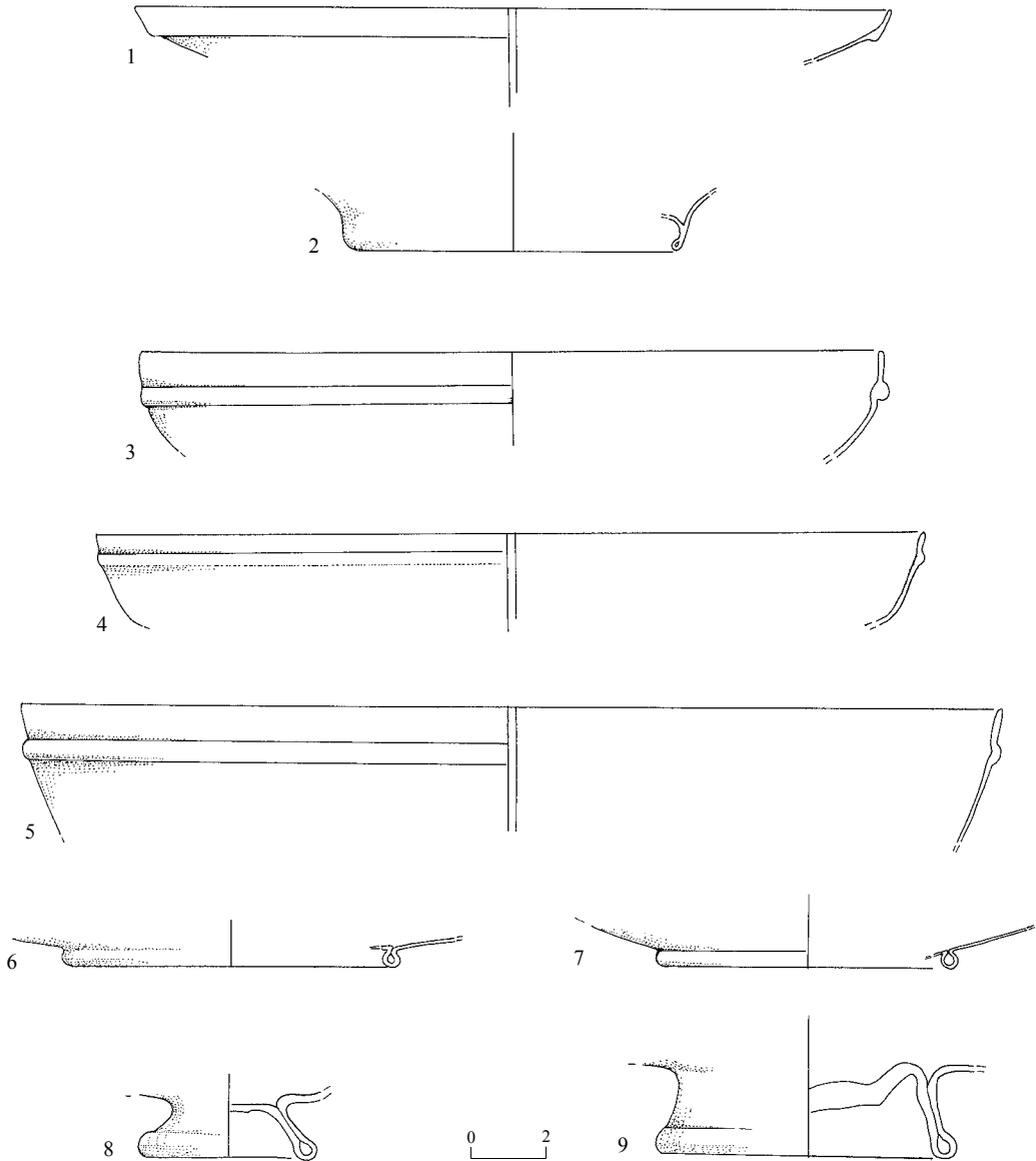


Fig. 2.

3. Shallow bowl. L212, B2036. Rim and body fragment. Upward rounded rim. Prominent ridge, 0.8 cm below rim. Convex curving walls. Bluish green, patches of silver rusty weathering, iridescent film. Small horizontally elongated bubbles. Marks of exterior polishing at rim. Rim diam.: 19.5 cm.

4. Shallow bowl. L212, B2036. Small rim and body fragment. Upward rounded rim. Shallow ridge, 0.5 cm below rim. Convex curving walls. Greenish,

iridescence. Marks of exterior polishing on rim. Rim diam.: c. 22 cm.

5. Shallow bowl. L234, B2259. Rim and body fragment. Upward rounded rim. Prominent ridge, 1 cm below rim. Straight walls. Bluish green, patches of silver weathering, sand deposits, iridescent film. Severe pitting. Bubbly. Marks of exterior polishing on rim and ridge. Rim diam.: c. 26 cm.

6. Base and body fragment. L204, B2019. Possibly a shallow bowl. Straight, low tubular ring base. Walls almost horizontally splaying outward from the base. Greenish, iridescent film. Small sand deposits. Base diam.: 9 cm.

7. Base and body fragment. L283, B2281. Possibly a shallow bowl. Low tubular ring base. Wall splaying outward. Greenish blue, iridescent film, blackish patches of weathering. Bubbly. Base diam.: 8 cm.

8. Base and body fragment. L213, B2508. Possibly a small bowl. High, uneven, tubular ring base, splaying outward. Beginning of walls. Greenish, iridescent film. Sand deposits. Round and oval bubbles. Pontil mark diam.: 15 mm. Base diam.: 4.5 cm.

9. Base and body fragment. L213, B2508. Possibly a large bowl. Thick-walled. High uneven, tubular ring base, thickened in the center. Beginning of splaying walls. Greenish with yellow strikes on floor, iridescent film. Silverish crust with sand deposits. Round and oval bubbles. Large pontil mark with scar, diam. 1.8 cm. Base diam.: 8 cm.

10. Deep bowl. L283, B2281. Fragment of rim and wall. Upward rounded rim. Broad shallow rounded ridge, just below rim. Vertical walls. Greenish blue, iridescent film, severe pitting. Marks of exterior polishing at rim and ridge. Rim diam.: 14 cm.

11. Deep bowl. L283, B2258. Fragment of rim and wall. Upward rounded rim. Triangular ridge, 0.6 cm below rim. Walls slightly tapering downward. Greenish blue, patches of blackish rusty weathering, iridescent film, severe pitting. Small bubbles. Marks of exterior polishing on rim and ridge. Rim diam.: c. 12.5 cm.

12. Base and body fragment. L283, B2258. Possibly a small bowl. Straight, low ring base with a very small hollow, thickened in center. Greenish blue, patches of blackish rusty weathering, iridescent film, severe pitting. Pontil mark diam.: 0.5 cm, Base diam.: 4.4 cm.

13. Deep bowl. L212, B2036. Small rim and wall fragment. Upward rounded rim. Narrow rounded

ridge, 0.3 cm below rim. Vertical walls. Greenish yellow, silver iridescence. Rim diam.: c. 20 cm.

14. Deep bowl. L229, B2105. Small rim and body fragment. Thick-walled. Rounded rim, pointed at edge with open ridge pulled outward. Thick walls tapering downward. Deep bluish green, iridescent film, pitting. Bubbly. Rim diam.: c. 12 cm.

This form differs from the bowls discussed above in its open-fold ridge and rather thick walls. No parallels were found to match it.

Deep Bowl with Double-Fold (Fig. 3:15)

15. Deep bowl. L229, B2105. Rim and wall fragment. Upward rounded and thickened rim, slightly flaring at the edge. Horizontal double-fold, 1.7 cm below rim. Tapering walls. Bluish green, small black and silver patches, iridescent film. Rim diam.: 14 cm.

This fragment belongs to a deep bowl. The type was produced at Jalame (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:53–54, Fig. 4-15:109). Similar fragments were found also at Khirbat Badd ‘Isa—Qiryat Sefer (Magen, Tzionit and Sirkis 2004: Pl. 9:8, 9).

Beaker with Cut-Off Rim (Fig. 3:16)

16. Beaker with cut-off rim. L212, B2036. Small rim and body fragment. Flaring rim, cut-off and slightly polished. Vertical walls, slightly curving downward. Colorless, iridescent film. Bubbly. Rim diam.: c. 9 cm.

This fragment belongs to a beaker or a bowl, a close parallel of which was registered from the production dump at Jalame (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:94–96, Fig. 4-49:481). Such vessels with cut-off rims, with a plain or grooved body, were very common during the Late Roman period, especially in the late fourth century CE (Gorin-Rosen 2002:292, Fig. 2:13).

Solid-Base Beakers (Fig. 3:17–19)

17. Solid-base beaker. L213, B2059. Small rim and body fragment. Upward rim, rounded and thickened. Cylindrical body. Applied horizontal trail in turquoise 2 cm below rim. Greenish, silver iridescence, pitting. Patches of yellow weathering on interior. Rim diam.: 9 cm.

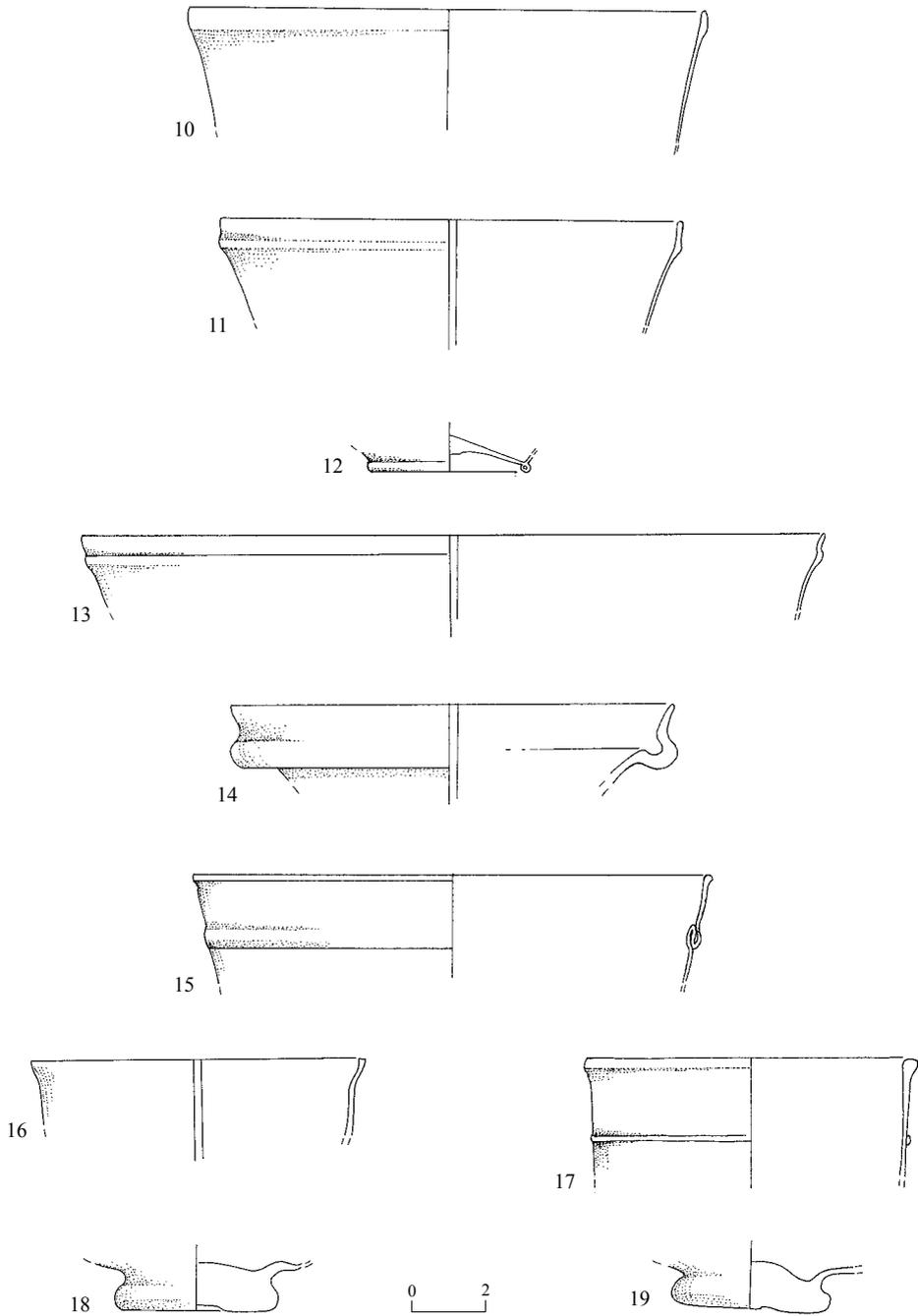


Fig. 3.

18. Solid-base beaker. L234, B2085. Base and fragment body. Massive disc base, with dome-shaped floor. Beginning of wall, splaying outward pontil mark, diam. 1.5 cm. Bluish green, silver patches of weathering, iridescent film, pitting, sand deposits. Base diam. 4.5 cm.

19. Solid-base beaker. L213, B2508. Base and body fragment. Massive disc base with dome-shaped floor. Beginning of wall, splaying outward. Pontil mark, diam. 1.5 cm. Greenish, crust of black and silver weathering, iridescence, pitting. Base diam.: 4.2 cm.

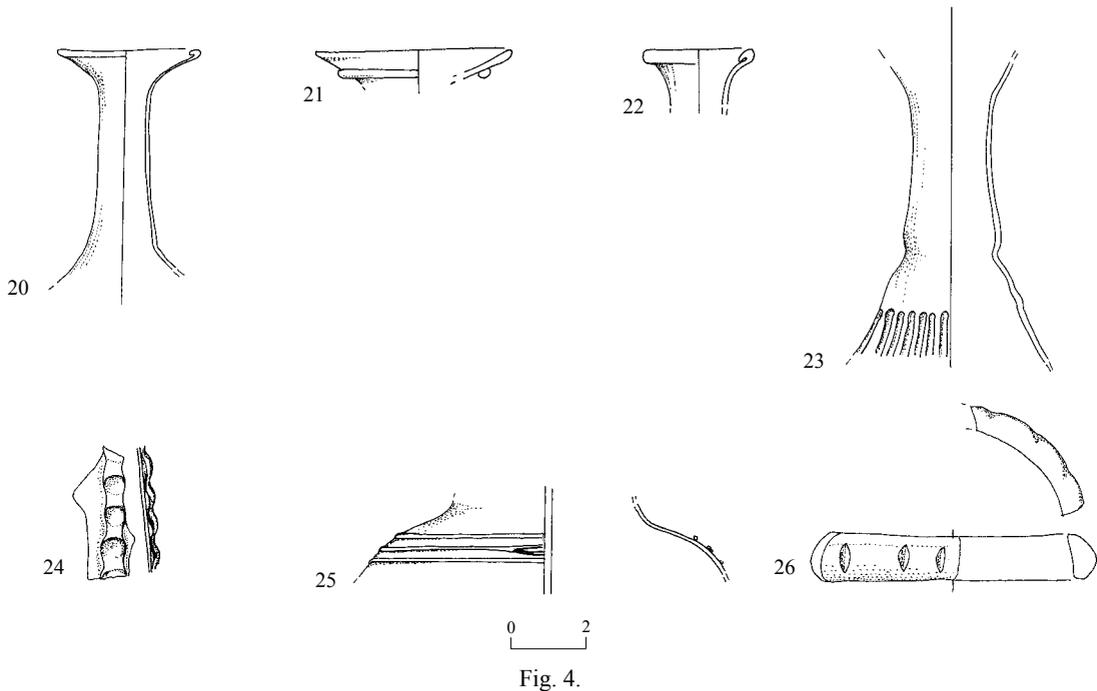


Fig. 4.

This type is characterized by its massive base (see, e.g., Nos. 18, 19) and its contrastingly more delicate, often trailed body (see, e.g., No. 17). Fragment Nos. 17 and 19 plausibly belong to the same vessel. Examples of similar complete beakers are known from Samaria (Crowfoot 1957: Figs. 94:14; 95:20) and Khirbat Badd 'Isa—Qiryat Sefer (Magen, Tzionit and Sirkis 2004: Pl. 9:19, 20). This type, attributed mainly to the late fourth century CE, is well documented. It was largely found at Khirbat el-Ni'ana—possibly a local production site for such beakers (Gorin-Rosen and Katsnelson 2007:93, Fig. 8:3–9, and see discussion and further references therein).

Bottles/Juglets with Short Funnel Mouth and Tall Cylindrical Neck (Fig. 4:20–23)

20. Bottle/juglet. L234, B2259. Upper part. Missing part of rim and mouth. Vertical crack at neck. Flaring rim, folded inward with almost no hollow. Tall cylindrical neck. Beginning of shoulder. Greenish blue, silver rusty patches, iridescent film, pitting. Rim diam.: 3.8 cm.

21. Bottle/juglet. L252, B2208. Small rim and mouth fragment. Rounded rim. Single thin trail below rim.

Colorless with purple tinge, patches of black and silver weathering, iridescent film. Rim diam.: 5.2 cm.

22. Bottle/juglet. L252, B2208. Small rim and neck fragment. Thick-walled. Rim folded outward and inward, unevenly flattened at top. Cylindrical narrow neck. Greenish, silver iridescence. Rim diam.: 3 cm.

23. Bottle/juglet. L240, B2131. Five fragments of mouth, neck and upper body. Mended. Funnel mouth, tall cylindrical neck. Pronounced uneven constriction at junction between neck and body. Diagonally tapering shoulders. Body decorated with mold-blown vertical ribbing, closely set. Greenish, iridescent film. Bubbly (small elongated diagonal bubbles at neck's base).

Bottles of this shape were especially popular in the fourth–fifth centuries CE. Their rims are commonly folded or rounded, often trailed (e.g., No. 21). Another common form of decoration is a mold-blown ribbing on the body (e.g., No. 23). Fragment No. 21 is distinguished by its more delicate, colorless fabric, while No. 22 is quite rudely shaped and is too small for a proper reconstruction.

Published parallels to plain type No. 20 are not plentiful. They include several fragments from the factory dump at Jalame (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:72, Fig. 4-33:284, 285, 287). Trailed type No. 21 is more common. Similar bottles and jugs, with one trail at a short funnel rim are found all over the country and attributed to the fourth–fifth centuries CE, e.g., Bet She’an (Gorin-Rosen 1999b:62*–64*, Fig. 1:10, 11). Several close parallels come also from Khirbat Badd ‘Isa—Qiryat Sefer (Magen, Tzionit and Sirkis 2004: Pl. 9:31–33), Samaria (Crowfoot 1957: Fig. 95:12) and Jerusalem (Bagatti and Milik 1958: Fig. 33:12, 24). It is interesting to note that many identical fragments from the Jalame factory are colorless, as is fragment No. 21 (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:69–70, Fig. 4-31:262–264).

Fragment No. 23 presents a bottle, or possibly a juglet, characterized by its narrow body. Its complete form is uncertain; the decoration and shape demonstrate a careless manner of workmanship. Bottles with mold-blown vertical ribbing on the body have a broad range of dating, from the third to the sixth centuries CE; in many cases, only the rim or handle—both of which are missing here—may help determine the exact date. A similarly decorated cylindrical juglet from the Israel Museum is dated to the fourth–sixth centuries CE (Israeli 2003:184, No. 218, and see discussion and references therein to Tel Ḥalif, Rafidiya, Shekhem and Bet She‘arim); fragments of two others juglets, dated to the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods, were found at Khirbat el-Shubeika (Gorin-Rosen 2002:296, Fig. 4:25, 26, and see references therein to Ḥammāt Gader, Jalame and Tyre).

Decorated Fragments (Fig. 4:24, 25)

These fragments are too small for a proper reconstruction. Similar fragments, dated to the fourth–early fifth centuries CE, were found in a Byzantine burial cave at Bet She’an (Gorin-Rosen 1999b:64*–66*, Fig. 2:22, 23).

24. Notched trail. L229, B2105. Small body fragment. Colorless. Turquoise trail vertically applied on wall,

tooled with horizontal notches. Iridescence, pitting, black impurities in trail.

Fragment No. 24 may belong to a flask, whose elongated body has characteristic handles, running in notched trails downward the body. An intact flask of this type was excavated nearby at Naḥal Ḥadera (North) (Katsnelson, this volume: Fig. 5:15). Gorin-Rosen suggested the Carmel Coast as a possible production center for these flasks in Israel (Gorin-Rosen 1999b:66*, Fig. 2:22, and see further references therein to Naẓerat, Ḥorbat Qaṣṣra, Ṭirat Ha-Carmel, Pella and museum collections).

25. Trailed vessel. L234, B2259. Small body fragment and beginning of neck or mouth. Broad cylindrical neck. Probably globular body. Thin applied trail, horizontally wound around shoulders, with visible stem. Bluish green, trail of the same color, but darker. Iridescence, sand deposits, bubbly.

Fragment No. 25 is probably a trailed jar. Examples of such jars, often with short handles rising from shoulder to rim, are known from a fourth-century CE tomb at Megiddo (without a handle; Guy 1938: Pl. 175:6) and from Burial Cave 21 at Migdal Ha-‘Emeq, dated by coins to the fourth–fifth centuries CE (two handles; Getzov, Avshalom-Gorni and Muqari 1998:205–206, Fig. 9:1). An indented and pinched jar from the Israel Museum collections has three handles and a trailed pattern very similar to No. 25 (assigned to the fourth century CE; Israeli 2003:237, No. 302).

Bracelet (Fig. 4:26)

26. Bracelet. L231, B2256. Small fragment. Roughly semicircular in cross-section. Broad shallow ribs, sparsely spaced and tooled in an uneven shallow manner. Opaque, black in appearance, probably deep blue. Iridescence, pitting.

This type of crude monochrome bracelet, decorated with vertical ribbing, is one of the most locally common types during the third–fifth centuries CE (Spaer 1988:55–56, Type B2, and see references therein to Netanya, Mount of Olives, Samaria, el-Bassa, Gezer and Tell en-Nasbeh).

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the minute secure context and the fragmentary nature of the finds, the glass corpus from Horbat Kosit (East) provides interesting data regarding the distribution of glass vessels in the Naḥal Ḥadera area during the Roman and Byzantine periods (see Katsnelson, this volume). The assemblage consists of simple vessels for domestic use, some of which were

possibly produced in a local workshop. The glass finds present two assemblages, one dating to the late first–early third centuries CE (Fig. 1) and the other, to the fourth–early fifth centuries CE (Figs. 2–4). No characteristic types of the late third–fourth centuries CE were identified in this group of vessels, as opposed to finds from contemporary sites in the area (see Katsnelson, this volume).

NOTE

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restored by Olga Shorr, drawn by Carmen Hersh and photographed by Clara Amit.

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