

AN EARLY BYZANTINE-PERIOD BURIAL CAVE AT KABUL

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A burial cave was excavated at Kabul in the western Galilee (map ref. NIG 2205/7524, OIG 1705/2524) following its chance discovery during the digging of a cistern (Fig. 1; Vitto 1974).¹ All the finds—glass vessels, jewelry and a coin—are datable to the second half of the fourth–early fifth centuries CE, with the exception of a scarab, attributed to the New Kingdom, which had obviously been reused as part of a necklace.

The cave was excavated through a breach made in the ceiling at the time of its discovery (Fig. 2) and its entrance could not be exposed from the exterior for lack of time. Some earth and rocks had penetrated the central chamber and a few of the burial troughs. The blocking slab of the entrance to the cave was *in situ*.

None of the burial troughs was covered with slabs; as no slabs were found in the debris, the troughs were probably not originally sealed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CAVE (Plan 1)

Entrance to the cave is in the southern wall of Chamber A through a rectangular opening (0.65 m wide, 0.8 m high), sealed by a limestone slab (0.65 × 0.75 m, 0.25 m thick), and followed by a narrow passage (0.65–0.75 m wide, 1 m long, 1.05 m high). A hewn step (0.25 m high) descends from the entrance to the level of the shelves of Chamber A (Fig. 3). Chamber A is rectangular (3.55–4.00 × 4.45–4.65 m, 1.85 m high from ceiling to shelves), with a flat ceiling and a rectangular central pit hewn into

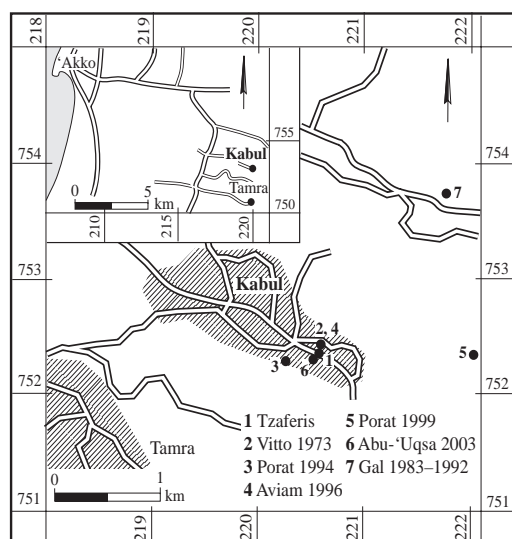
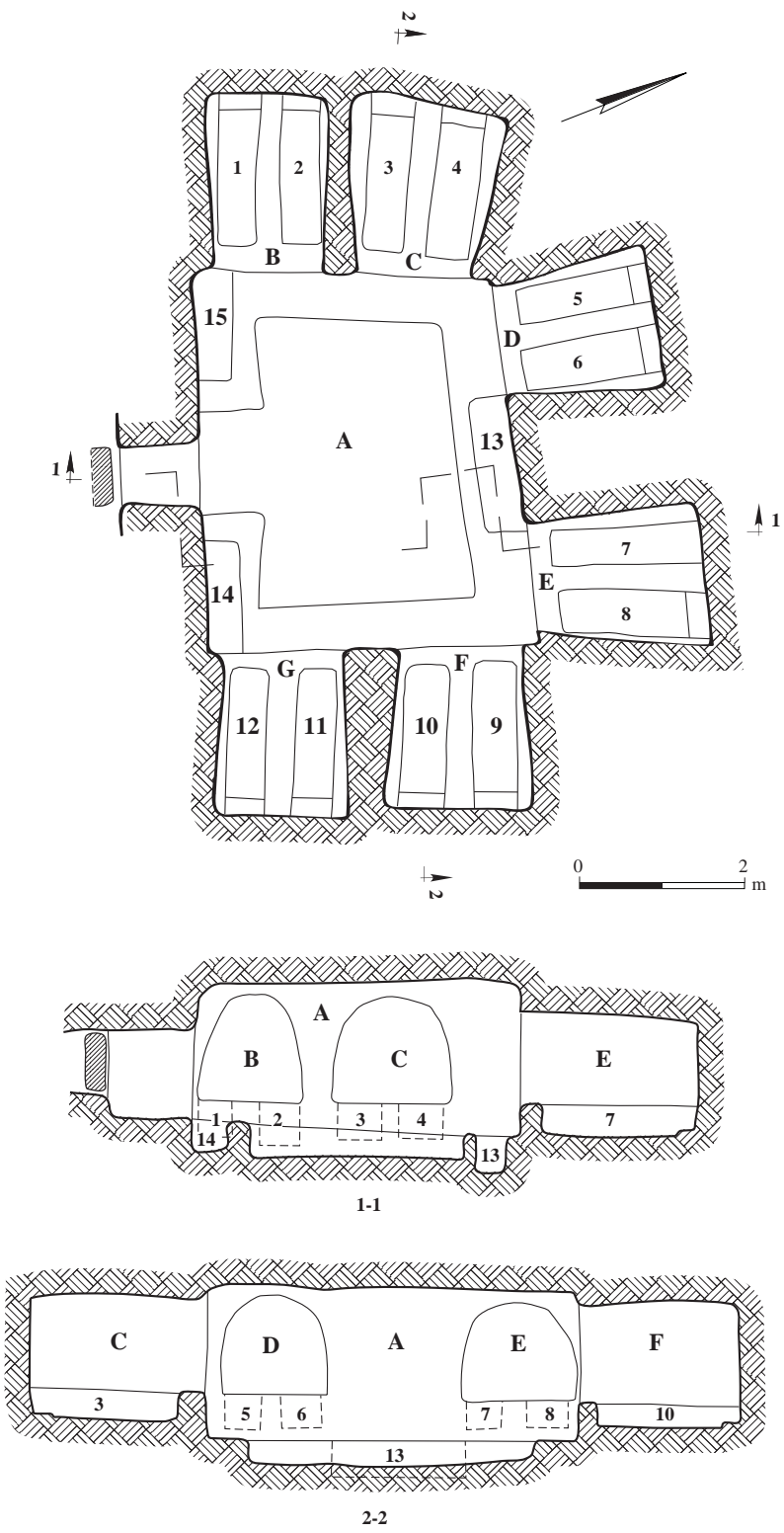


Fig. 1. Location map.



Fig. 2. Breach in the ceiling of the cave made at the time of discovery.



Plan 1. Plan and sections of the burial cave.

its floor ($3.4\text{--}3.5 \times 2.2\text{--}2.6$ m, $0.3\text{--}0.4$ m deep), which creates shelves $0.5\text{--}0.7$ m wide on four sides. Chamber A is surrounded by six vaulted



Fig. 3. Cave entrance with slab *in situ* and, on either side, Troughs 14 and 15, looking south.

chambers (B–G) perpendicularly hewn into the western, northern and eastern walls (Table 1; Figs. 4–7). Two burial troughs, separated by a partition wall $0.30\text{--}0.35$ m wide (Fig. 8), are hewn into the floor of each vaulted chamber (Troughs 1–12). Each trough has a headrest (7 cm high and 0.2 m wide) hewn at its far extremity. Three additional troughs (13–15), two of them relatively short (14, 15), are hewn into the southern and northern shelves (Figs. 3, 5, 7, 9).

The floor of most troughs was covered with a thin layer (10–15 cm) of light brown earth, containing one skeleton in a fairly disarticulated state. Very few artifacts were found near the skeletons. Trough 10 was an exception. It contained the remains of several disarticulated skeletons (exact number unknown) and a large quantity of jewelry items (seven bracelets, five rings). A few complete glass vessels and

Table 1. Dimensions of Burial Chambers and Troughs (m)

Chamber	Trough	L	W	H	Depth
A	13	1.64	0.44–0.47		0.45
	14	1.40	0.40		0.40
	15	1.36	0.45–0.48		0.45
B		2.15	1.35–1.50	1.30	
	1	1.83	0.45–0.50		0.45
	2	1.80	0.45		0.50
C		2.10	1.40–1.90	1.25	
	3	1.83	0.50		0.45
	4	1.80	0.50–0.54		0.40
D		2.10	1.35–1.70	1.20	
	5	1.80	0.48		0.45
	6	1.80	0.50–0.55		0.40
E		2.00–2.10	1.30–1.70	1.20	
	7	1.80	0.45–0.50		0.35
	8	1.80	0.50–0.55		0.35
F		1.90–2.00	1.50–1.80	1.15	
	9	1.80	0.50		0.35
	10	1.70	0.55		0.30
G		1.95–2.00	1.45–1.60	1.20	
	11	1.25	0.48		0.35
	12	1.25	0.48		0.35

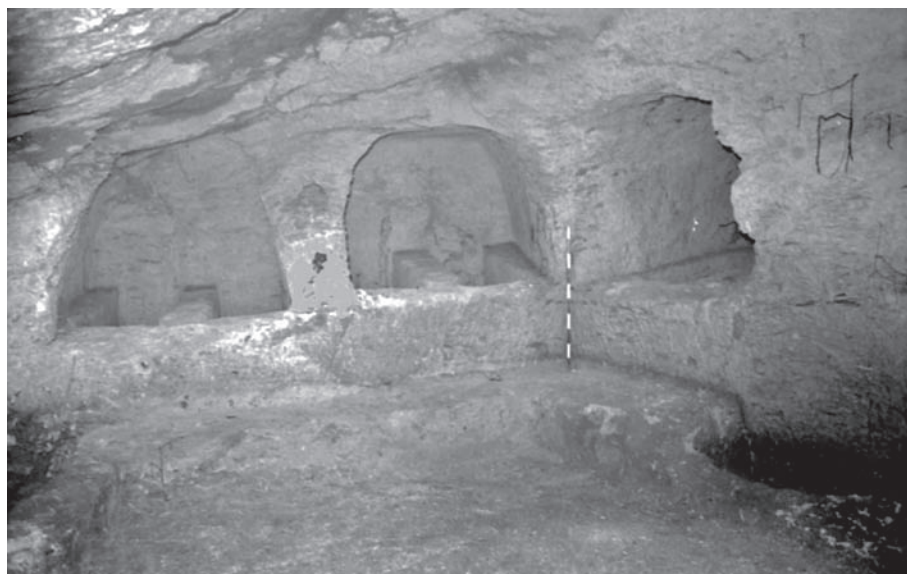


Fig. 4. Chambers B and C (Troughs 1–4), looking west.



Fig. 5. Chambers D and E (Troughs 5–8) and Trough 13, looking north.



Fig. 6. Chambers F and G (Troughs 9-12), looking east.



Fig. 7. Chambers F and G (Troughs 9-12) and Trough 14, looking south.



Fig. 8. Chamber F (Troughs 9, 10), looking east.



Fig. 9. Chamber A (Trough 14), looking east.

several jewelry items were discovered in the southeastern corner of the central pit of Chamber A, beneath the collapse of the ceiling, suggesting that some disturbance had occurred in antiquity.

THE FINDS (Table 2)

The finds consist of glass vessels, jewelry items and one coin. No oil lamps or pottery vessels were discovered.

Glass Vessels (Figs. 10, 11)

All the glass vessels were discovered in Chamber A, except for a few very small glass fragments found in the burial troughs. They consist of kohl containers, juglets and bottles, typical of the western Galilee in the early Byzantine period. Worth noting is the total absence of beakers and open vessels, such as deep and shallow bowls. On the whole, the Kabul repertoire resembles those of Kisra (Stern 1997) and Kh. el-Shubeika (Gorin-Rosen 2002) rather than those of Ḥanita (Barag 1978) or Iqrit (Vitto 2010), thus indicating that the tomb was used after the mid-fourth century CE and that the repertoire is Western Galilean rather than Phoenician (Stern and Getzov 2006; Vitto 2010).

Kohl Containers.— One complete kohl container (Fig. 10:1), basket handle mended, and a small fragment of another (not illustrated; Reg. No. 28) were found in Chamber A. The complete container is made of a single cylindrical tube with a rim folded inward and a flattened base with a pontil mark. A single thin trail of the same color is wound spirally around the mid-part of the tube, approximately seven times. Four thick trails are applied vertically to the body, each dropped at 4 cm from the base and drawn vertically up to the rim in three loops. A fifth thick trail, dropped onto the edge of one upper loop, drawn up and down and attached to the edge of the opposed upper loop, forms a triangular basket-handle with a rounded apex angle.

Glass vessels consisting of one, usually two, and occasionally four, tubes are widespread in early Byzantine tombs of Palaestina Prima and Secunda. Their use as cosmetic containers is suggested by the analysis of the residue found

Table 2. Contents of the Burial Cave

Locus	Osteological Remains (see n. 2)	Glass Vessels	Jewelry	Coins	Other	Remarks
Chamber A	A few bones in the southwestern corner of the central pit, on floor	1 double kohl container (Fig. 10:1) 1 juglet with oval indentations (Fig. 11:1) and a fragment of another (not ill.: Reg. No. 26) 2 juglets with funnel-shaped mouth and trail decoration (Fig. 11:2, 3) and fragments of two more (not ill.: Reg. Nos. 21, 22) 1 juglet base (Fig. 11:4) 1 globular bottle with constricted neck (Fig. 11:5)	4 glass bracelets: 2 twisted, 2 ribbed (Fig. 12:3–6) 1 iron armband bracelet decorated with bronze leaf patterns (Fig. 13:3)		3 bronze applicators in kohl tube (Fig. 10:2; not ill.: Reg. Nos. 14–15) 1 lead mirror frame (Fig. 15)	On floor of central pit, a layer of light brown earth (Th 5 cm); on it, rocks and earth from the collapse of the ceiling at the time of discovery; all the finds were in the southeastern corner of the central pit, on the floor
Chamber B, Trough 1	A few bones on floor	Small fragment of bottle with pinched ribs (not ill.: Reg. No. 7)	1 bronze ring (Fig. 14:4)			Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor
Chamber B, Trough 2	A few bones on floor					Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor
Chamber C, Trough 3	Large bones of one(?) skeleton scattered on floor	Small fragments (not ill.: Reg. No. 2)			1 small bronze bell (Fig. 14:10)	Layer of light brown earth (Th 15 cm) on floor
Chamber C, Trough 4	Large bones of one(?) skeleton scattered on floor					Layer of light brown earth (Th 20 cm) on floor
Chamber D, Trough 5	Large bones of one(?) skeleton scattered on floor	1 juglet handle (not ill.: Reg. No. 65)				Layer of light brown earth (Th 5 cm) on floor
Chamber D, Trough 6	A few bones on floor	Body fragments of a bottle/juglet (not ill.: Reg. No. 9)	1 bronze ring (Fig. 14:1)			Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor
Chamber E, Trough 7	Bones of one(?) skeleton on floor		1 glass crumb-decorated bead strung on a thin bronze thread (Fig. 17:3)		2 small bronze bells (Fig. 14:11, 12)	Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor

Table 2. (cont.)

Locus	Osteological Remains (see n. 2)	Glass Vessels	Jewelry	Coins	Other	Remarks
Chamber E, Trough 8	Bones on floor	Very small body fragment (not ill.: Reg. No. 61)				Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor
Chamber F, Trough 9	Bones on floor	2 very small body fragments (not ill.: Reg. No. 59)				Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor
Chamber F, Trough 10	Bones of several disarticulated skeletons, on floor		3 glass bracelets: 2 twisted, 1 ribbed (Fig. 2:1, 2, 7) 2 bronze bracelets (Fig. 13:1, 2) 2 iron bracelets: 1 armband, 1 plain (Fig. 13:4, 5) 1 silver earring? (Fig. 14:9) 3 plain bronze rings (Fig. 14:2, 3, 5) 2 iron rings (Fig. 14:6, 7) 1 iron buckle (Fig. 14:8) Portion of bronze chain with four glass beads strung on it (Fig. 17:1) 63 glass, amber, resin and ivory beads (Fig. 17:2, 4–17)	1 Æ coin, 4th c. CE (Reg. No. 43)	1 New Kingdom scarab (Fig. 16)	Layer of light brown earth (Th 10–15 cm) on floor
Chamber G, Trough 11	Bones on floor					Chamber filled to ceiling with dark brown earth, which had penetrated over the years through a breach in the ceiling
Chamber G, Trough 12	Bones on floor	Fragment of a juglet with oval indentations (not ill.: Reg. No. 66)				Entirely filled with light brown and dark brown earth
Chamber A, Trough 13	A few small broken bones					Entirely filled with light brown and dark brown earth
Chamber A, Trough 14						Entirely filled with light brown and dark brown earth
Chamber A, Trough 15						Entirely filled with dark brown earth

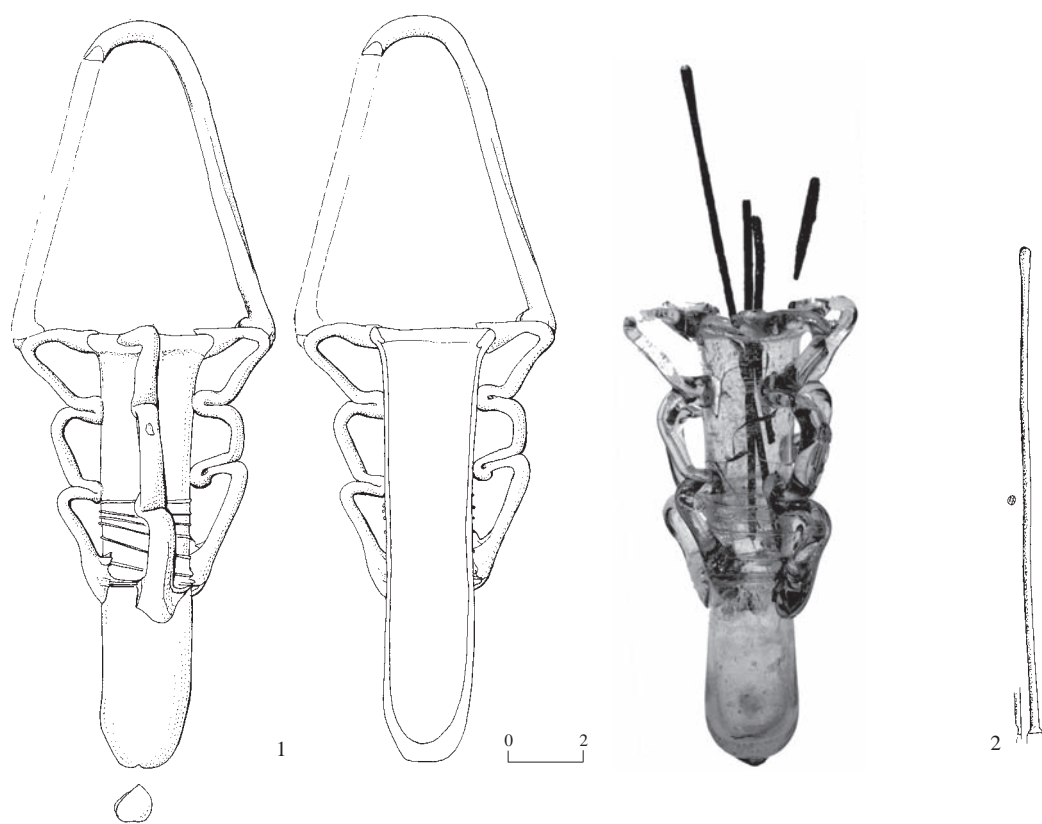


Fig. 10. Glass kohl container and bronze applicators.

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	12	Chamber A	Kohl container	Complete; light greenish blue glass	H 11, D rim 3.2
2	13	Chamber A	Spatula probe	Bronze	Pres. L 12.8, section 0.2

in some of them, which proved to be *galena*—a lead sulphide—the basic material used in the manufacture of *kohl* (Brosh 1993:293–294), e.g., in Jerusalem (Kogan-Zehavi 2006:65*). Such use is also suggested by the discovery, in or near the vessel, of a bronze probe or spatula, which would have served as applicator for the cosmetics (Stern 1977:118–119), e.g., at ‘Aṭara (Taha 2003:97) and Khirbat el-Ni‘ana (Gorin-Rosen and Katsnelson 2007: Fig. 17:3). At Kabul, three fragmentary bronze applicators were found in the complete kohl container (Fig. 10:2; see below).

The type of kohl container discovered at Kabul, with its combination of a baseless single tube with four looped trails along the sides and a triangular basket handle, is unusual. A single tube with four looped trails in the collections of the Bostra Museum (Coscarella 1994:401–402, Pl. Ve; Dussart 1998:174–175, Type BXIII.222, Pls. 58:3; 73 top left) differs from the Kabul example by its absence of a basket handle, the color of the glass (dark green) and the shape of the bottom (squarish). Additional single tubes with four looped trails, an arched basket handle, but standing on a pushed-in

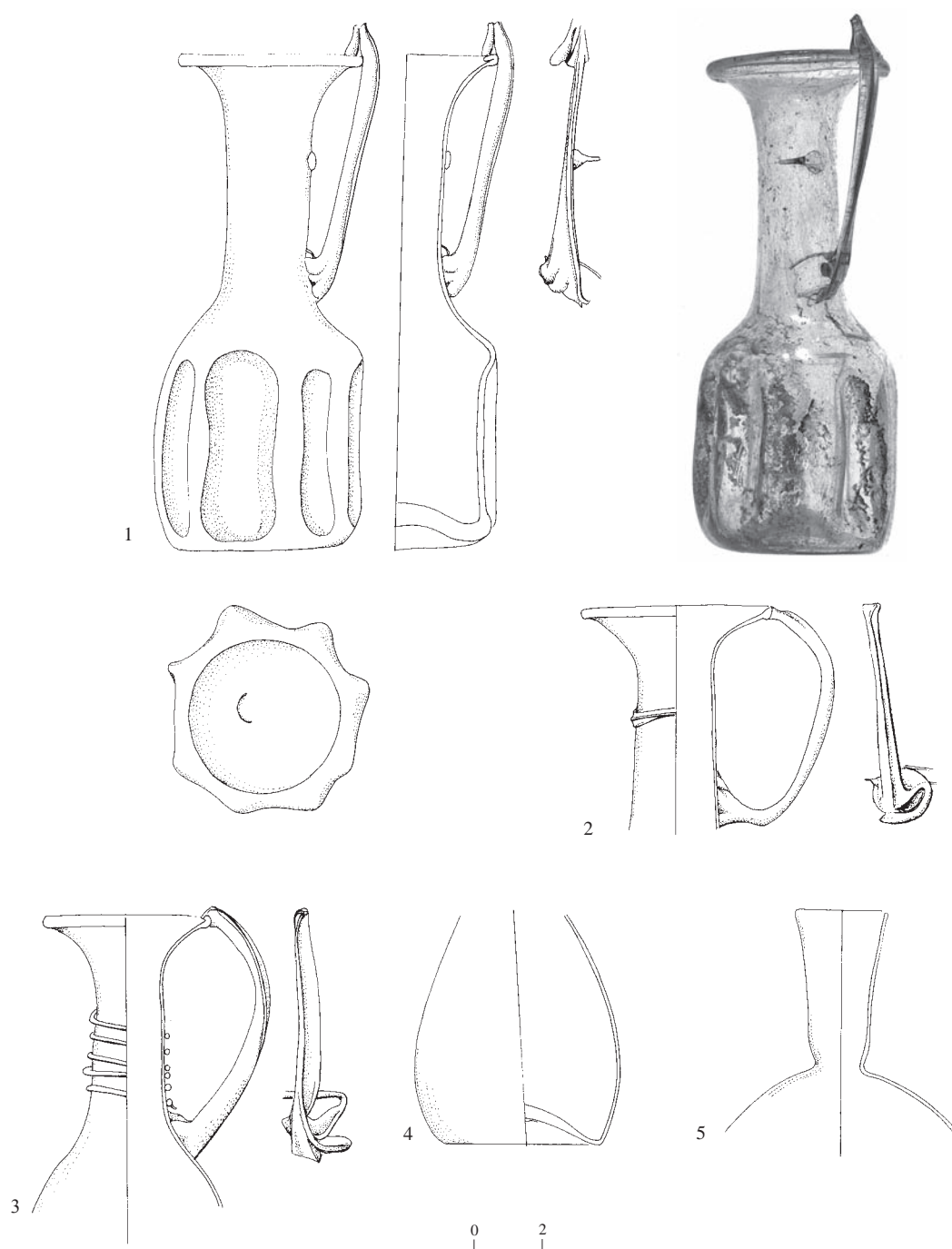


Fig. 11. Glass vessels.

base, are in the Kunstmuseum in Luzern (*3000 Jahre Glaskunst* 1981:115, No. 465) and in the Ernesto Wolf Collection in Stuttgart (Stern

2001:318, No. 180). Vessels with four looped trails applied on a quadruple tube are in the Royal Ontario Museum (Hayes 1975:117–118,

◀ Fig. 11

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	11	Chamber A	Juglet	Complete; colorless glass with light bluish tinge; oval indentations	H 14, D rim 5.5, D max. body 7.3
2	19	Chamber A	Juglet	Light greenish glass; funnel-shaped mouth and trail decoration	D rim 5.2
3	34	Chamber A	Juglet	Colorless glass with light bluish tinge; funnel-shaped mouth and trail decoration	D rim 5
4	24	Chamber A	Juglet base	Colorless glass with light bluish tinge	-
5	20	Chamber A	Globular bottle	Colorless glass with light bluish tinge; constricted neck	D rim 2.5

Pl. 29:457) and in the National Museum of Damascus (Zouhdi 1960: Pl. 5:11, second from left), and on a double-tube from a burial cave at Gush Ḥalav (Makhoully 1939: Pl. 32:2c) and in the Corning Museum of Glass in New York (Whitehouse 2001:196, No. 748)—all with a thin trail wound around the body. Close parallels, in terms of glass fabric, workmanship and geographical region, seem to be double-tube vessels made of a light greenish glass with two looped trails applied vertically on the body and a triangular basket handle with a rounded apex angle, especially those found in burial caves at Ḥorbat Qaṣṣra (Gorin-Rosen 1998:30, T16, 2nd from right with a trail wound around the body; *Castra* 1999:59, T10, without a trail) and Qiryat Ata (Vitto 2008b:146, Fig. 11:2, without a trail). Another example, with a trail wound around the body, is in the Royal Ontario Museum (Hayes 1975:117, Pl. 29:456, who dates it to the fourth–fifth centuries CE). The dating of the burial containing the kohl container at Qiryat Ata (second half of the fourth century CE) and the general dating of the Kabul cave (second half of the fourth to early fifth centuries CE, see Conclusions) indicate that kohl containers with a triangular basket handle, looped trails applied on the sides and a thin trail wound around the body started to appear in the second half of the fourth century CE (and not in the sixth–early seventh centuries CE as suggested by Barag 1970:177 and Matheson 1980:122–123).

Juglets with Oval Indentations (Fig. 11:1).— One complete juglet and fragments of at least another one (not illustrated; Reg. No. 26) were found in Chamber A. It has an everted neck and a rim folded inward, a cylindrical body decorated with eight vertical oval indentations, a circular concave base (appearing octagonal due to the indentations) with a pontil mark and a thick trail handle, circular in section, attached from the lower part of the neck to the rim with a loop upward. This juglet can be paralleled with other juglets decorated with indentations, e.g., at Kisra Cave 3 (Stern 1997:117–119, Fig. 8:33, 34) and Kh. el-Shubeika Caves 1 and 2 (Gorin-Rosen 2002:309–312, Fig. 4A). Suggested date: second half of fourth–early fifth centuries CE.

Jugs with Funnel-Shaped Mouth and Trail Decoration (Fig. 11:2–4).— At least five fragmentary examples were found, all in Chamber A, of a juglet with a cylindrical neck, a funnel-shaped mouth and a rim folded inward, an elongated oval body, a concave base and strap handles attached from shoulder to rim. A thin trail of glass of the same color is wound spirally around the neck. Variants of this juglet were found at Kisra, Cave 3 (Stern 1997:112–114, Fig. 5, with a wider strap handle) and at Kh. el-Shubeika, Caves 1 and 2 (Gorin-Rosen 2002:309–312, Fig. 4A). Suggested date: second half of fourth–early fifth centuries CE.

Globular Bottle with Constricted Neck (Fig. 11:5).— The upper part of a thin bottle was found in Chamber A. It has a plain rim, a slightly tapering long neck with a small constriction at the junction with a globular body, and belongs to the type of bottle discovered at Helez (Rahmani 1961:154, Fig. 3) and Bet She‘arim (Barag 1976:199, 201, Fig. 97: 17; there, it has a thickened rim and a cylindrical neck), both dated to the late third–fourth centuries CE. See also Gorin-Rosen (2002:306–307) on the development of this type. Suggested date: fourth century CE.

Glass Bottle with Pinched Decoration (not illustrated; Reg. No. 7).— A small thin fragment of pale bluish glass, decorated with two horizontal pinched ribs, was found in Trough 1. It is part of a bottle, perhaps similar to the bell-shaped bottle dated by Weinberg and Goldstein (1988:82, 84, Fig. 4-43: top left) to the second half of the fourth century CE or to the globular bottle found in Tomb 4 at Bet Yerah (Delougaz and Haines 1960: Pl. 50:9).

Bronze Applicators

Three fragmentary bronze probes were found *in situ* in the glass kohl container discovered in Chamber A (Fig. 10:1). One example (Fig. 10:2) has one rounded tip and the other end, partly broken, formed a spatula, probably convex. For parallels, see at Asherat (Smithline 1997:54–55, Fig. 12:4) and Iqrit (Vitto 2010: Fig. 14:1, with further references therein). The second example (not illustrated; Reg. No. 14) has one rounded end, the other tip is missing. The third one (not illustrated; Reg. No. 15) has one slightly pointed tip; the other end is broken. All three belong to the type of bronze probes often identified as medical or pharmaceutical instruments (Rimon 1996:64*–65*, Figs. 2–4). The discovery at Kabul of these probes in a kohl container suggests that the person with whom they were buried—most likely a woman—used them to apply a cosmetic powder rather than as medical instruments. Several examples of kohl

containers with bronze applicators have been found in tombs, although usually there is only one per tube, each tube containing a different powder (but see at Gezer: Macalister 1912, I: 364; III: Pl. 108:7, with five applicators).

Jewelry (Figs. 12–17)

A large number of jewelry items were found in the cave, mostly in the burial troughs, including glass, bronze and iron bracelets, bronze and iron rings, a silver earring and numerous beads. In addition, several objects (small bronze bells, a scarab and a small lead mirror-frame), discovered in the troughs containing the jewelry items, were probably strung on necklaces as pendants.

Glass Bracelets (Fig. 12)

The glass bracelets fall into two types, both typical of the Eastern Mediterranean:

Monochrome Twisted Bracelets (Fig. 12: 1–4).— Four examples of spirally twisted bracelets were found in Trough 10 and Chamber A, three made of brown glass (Fig. 12:1, 3, 4) and one of dark blue glass (Fig. 12:2). They have a circular cross-section (diam. 0.6–0.9 cm), are flattened at the seam into a plain bezel and have an internal diameter ranging between 5.8 and 7.5 cm. Similar bracelets were found in burial caves at el-Bassa, dated by Iliffe (1934b:89, Pl. 24:1) to the end of the fourth century CE (but see Barag 1978:55, n. 126, who suggests a date from the second half of the fourth to the mid-eighth centuries CE); Gush Ḥalav, dated by Makhoul (1939: Pl. 32:2d, e) to the fourth–fifth centuries CE, with a reuse in the sixth–seventh centuries CE. For discussion and parallels, see Spaer 2001:201, Pl. 35:461–465 and Spaer 1988:59, n. 23 (with further references therein), who suggests dating this type to the “fourth century CE and later”.

Monochrome Horizontally Ribbed Bracelets (Fig. 12:5–7).— Three examples of horizontally ribbed bracelets, made of brown glass, were

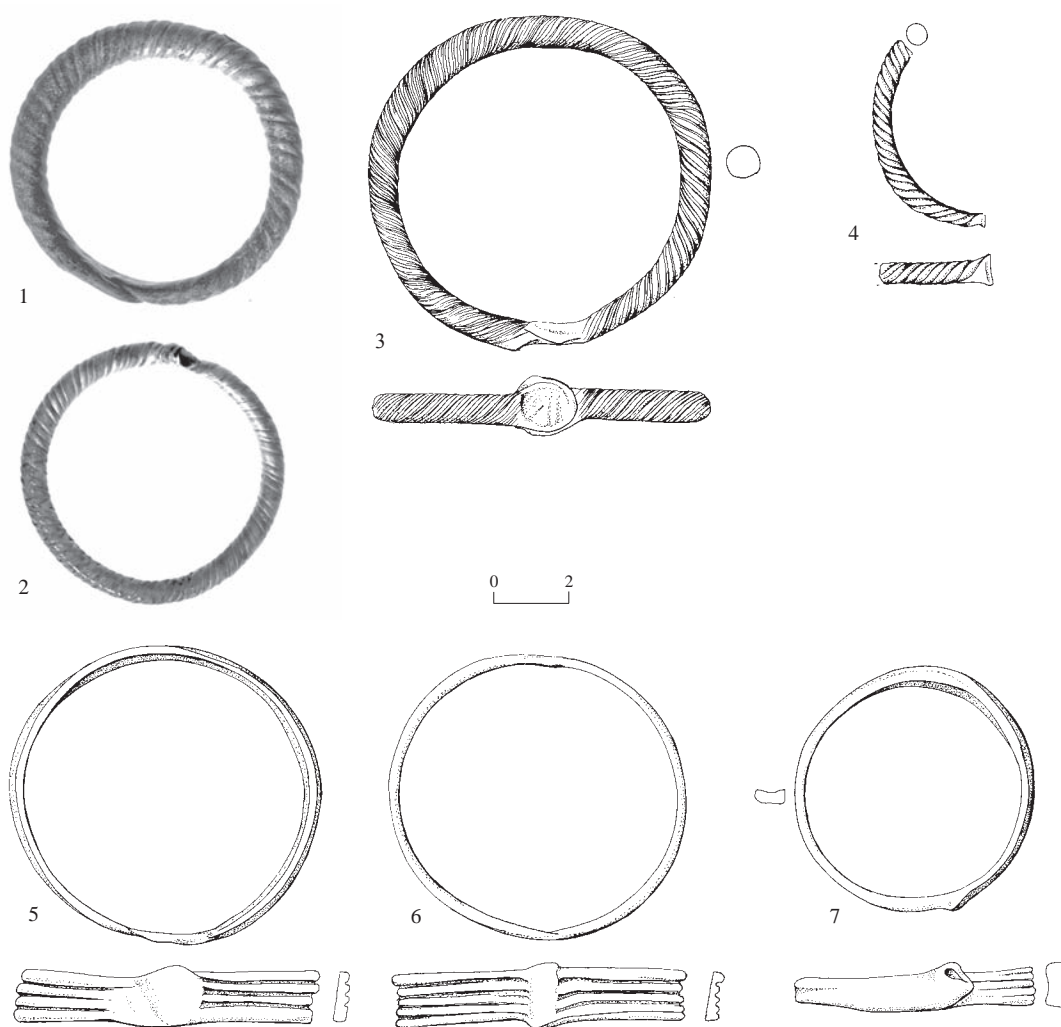


Fig. 12. Glass bracelets.

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	36	Trough 10	Monochrome, twisted	Brown glass	Int. D 5.8, section 0.7
2	35	Trough 10	Monochrome, twisted	Dark blue glass	Int. D 5.5, section 0.9
3	16	Chamber A	Monochrome, twisted	Brown glass	Int. D 7.5, section 0.8
4	3	Chamber A	Monochrome, twisted	Brown glass	Int. D 5.8, section 0.6
5	18	Chamber A	Monochrome, horizontally ribbed	Brown glass	Int. D 7.5, section 1.5
6	17	Chamber A	Monochrome, horizontally ribbed	Brown glass	Int. D 7.3, section 1.3
7	37	Trough 10	Monochrome, horizontally ribbed	Brown glass	Int. D 5.7, section 0.7–1.2

found in Chamber A and Trough 10. They have a flat cross-section with a grooved surface (1.2–1.5 cm wide) with four horizontal ribs, flattened at the seam into a plain bezel (internal diam. 5.7–7.5 cm). This type of bracelet with

horizontal ribbing (varying between four and five ribs) is less common than the twisted type. For discussion and parallels, see Spaer (1988:57, n. 20 with further references therein; 2001:199, Pl. 35:449), who suggests dating this

type to the “fifth–seventh centuries CE”. In the Kabul tomb, the bracelets with four horizontal ribs were used together with the monochrome twisted glass bracelets, and both types seem to have appeared in the second half of the fourth or early fifth century CE.

Bronze Bracelets (Fig. 13:1, 2)

Two bronze bracelets were found in Trough 10, falling into two types: (1) Fig. 13:1 is a plain bracelet with a semicircular section (0.4 cm; internal diam. 5.8 cm); (2) Fig. 13:2 has a flat section (0.6 cm; internal diam. 6 cm) and is

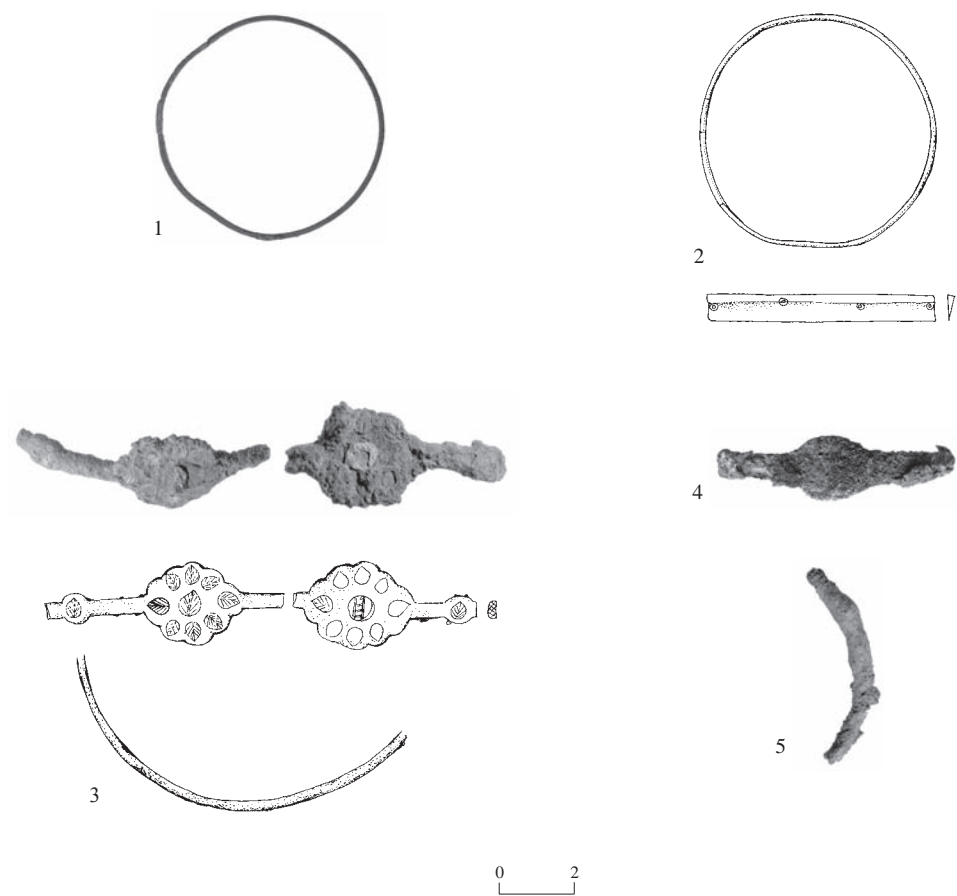


Fig. 13. Bronze and iron bracelets.

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	39	Trough 10	Plain	Bronze	Int. D 5.8, semicircular section 0.4
2	38	Trough 10	Flat	Bronze	Int. D 6, flat section 0.6
3	31	Chamber A	Armband	Iron, with bronze decoration; decorated with leaf-pattern	Flat section 0.5
4	41	Trough 10	Armband	Iron	Flat section 0.7
5	40	Trough 10	Plain	Iron	Circular section 0.4

decorated with incised small circles enclosing a dot c. 2 cm apart. Similar bracelets were found at Gush Halav (Makhoul 1939: Pl. 32:1d) and Kisra (Stern 1997: Fig. 12:47).

Iron Bracelets (Fig. 13:3–5)

Three iron bracelets were found in Chamber A and Trough 10, two of the armband type with oval medallions (one decorated with bronze leaves) and one plain hoop with a circular section.

Armband Type (Fig. 13:3, 4).— Figure 13:3 was found broken into several pieces in Chamber A. It consists of a flat, ribbon-like band (0.5 cm wide) with lobated oval medallions (2.5 × 3.0 cm) every 3.5 cm—apparently four in total—onto which are applied small, thin-layered decorative bronze plaques. In the center of each medallion is a small circular plaque (diam. 0.7 cm) with an unclear decor, apparently a leaf, and around it, eight small pear-shaped plaques (0.3 × 0.4 cm) decorated with a stylized leaf pattern. In between the oval medallions are small round medallions (diam. 0.7 cm), onto which is also applied a thin bronze plaque decorated with a leaf. Figure 13:4 shows a fragment of another iron bracelet, found in Trough 10, consisting of a ribbon-like band (0.7 cm wide) with oval medallions (slightly smaller and not lobated), but no decoration is extant on this one.

The shape of these iron armbands with oval medallions recalls silver armbands consisting of a flat ribbon-like band with four oval medallions decorated with the Holy Rider, New Testament scenes and Greek inscriptions (Mango 1986:266–267, No. 94, with further references therein). A fragment of a bronze armband with one extant medallion was discovered at Caesarea (Israeli 2000:160, 223). It depicts the Holy Rider on one side of the medallion and a Samaritan inscription on the other. These bracelets, which were produced in the Eastern Mediterranean, are usually connected with the pilgrim trade of the fifth–

sixth centuries CE and were believed to have had amuletic power.

Examples of iron armbands with medallions, mostly badly damaged, were discovered in a few Near Eastern burial caves, where they were dated to the sixth century CE, mainly by comparison with the silver armbands mentioned above. The discovery of a fairly well-preserved example at Kabul and a re-examination of the other examples suggests an earlier date for the beginning of use of the iron armbands with medallions. A fragmentary iron armband with medallions (no extant decoration) was found at Iqrit, in a burial attributed to the late third–early fourth century CE (Vitto 2010:82, Fig. 16:10). An example very similar to the Kabul bracelet, but with oval medallions too worn to distinguish any decoration, was found in a burial cave near Bet Natṭif. Barag (1974:84–85, Fig. 3:3) suggested dating the use of the cave from the mid-fifth to the early seventh centuries CE, although several glass vessels found in this cave belong to types already in use in the fourth century CE. Another such armband, also with worn medallions, was discovered at Kisra, in a burial cave in use, according to Stern (1997:122–123, Fig. 12:48, with further references therein), from the fourth to the early fifth centuries CE—all the identified coins date from this period—with a few finds attributed to the sixth century CE. Both Barag and Stern suggest attributing these iron bracelets with medallions to the last use of the cave in the sixth century CE. The example from Iqrit and the two examples from Kabul suggest that iron armbands with medallions had already appeared in the fourth century CE, at least those decorated with plant motifs.

Plain Bracelet (Fig. 13:5).— This is a fragment of an iron bracelet, consisting of a hoop with a circular section (0.4 cm). For parallels, see in a burial cave at Beit Fajjār, dated by Husseinī (1935:176, Pl. 86:5) to the fourth century CE and ‘Ain Yabrud, dated by Husseinī (1938: Pl. 6:4, 5) to the fourth century CE.

Bronze Rings (Fig. 14:1–5)

Five bronze rings were found in Troughs 1, 6 and 10. They fall into two types: Fig. 14:1–3 are plain rings with a circular section (0.15–0.25 cm) and an internal diameter ranging between 1.4 and 1.9 cm; Fig. 14:4, 5 are plain rings with a flat section (0.15–0.25 cm wide) and an internal diameter of 2.2 cm.

Iron Rings (Fig. 14:6, 7)

Two iron rings were found in Trough 10, each of a different type. Figure 14:6 is a ring with a circular section (0.2 cm; internal diam. 1.8 cm), with a small raised bezel. No decoration is visible. Figure 14:7 is a plain ring (deformed) with a circular section and an internal diameter of c. 2 cm.

Iron Buckle (Fig. 14:8)

Corroded buckle of unclear function.

Silver Earring? (Fig. 14:9)

Small fragment, probably of a plain silver earring.

Miscellaneous

Small Bronze Bells (Fig. 14:10–12).— Three small bells were found in the cave: one in Trough 3 and two in Trough 7. They fall into two types. Figure 14:10 is hemispherical, suspension ring and clapper missing. Figure 14:11, 12 are conical, with a hexagonal suspension ring pierced by a large circular hole, and a long iron clapper. Small bronze bells are

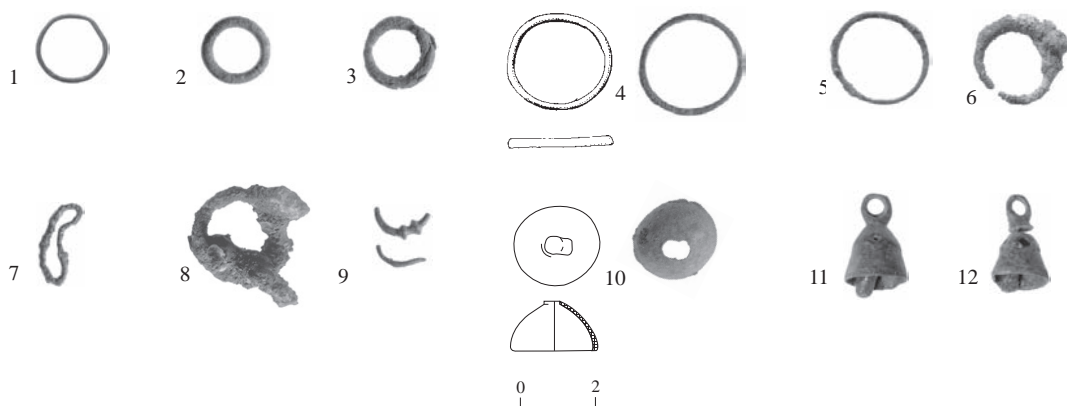


Fig. 14. Rings, earring and bells.

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	8	Trough 6	Ring	Bronze	Int. D 1.9, circ. section 0.15
2	47	Trough 10	Ring	Bronze	Int. D 1.4, circ. section 0.25
3	48	Trough 10	Ring	Bronze	Int. D 1.4, circ. section 0.25
4	6	Trough 1	Ring	Bronze	Int. D 2.2, flat section 0.15 × 0.25
5	46	Trough 10	Ring	Bronze	Int. D 2.2, flat section 0.10 × 0.15
6	49	Trough 10	Ring	Iron	Int. D 1.8, circ. section 0.2
7	56	Trough 10	Ring	Iron	Int. D c. 2, circ. section 0.1 × 0.2
8	42	Trough 10	Buckle	Iron	D ring 1.5
9	50	Trough 10	Earring?	Silver	Int. D c. 1.2, circ. section 0.15
10	1	Trough 3	Small bell	Bronze	D 2.4, H 1.4
11	62	Trough 7	Small bell	Bronze, iron clapper	H 2.7, D 1.7
12	63	Trough 7	Small bell	Bronze, iron clapper	H 2.7, D 1.7

frequently found in tombs of the Late Roman period. For parallels of the first type, see, e.g., in Jerusalem (Hamilton and Hussein 1935: Pl. 81:8, 18), Gush Ḥalav (Makhoul 1939:45–46, Pl. 31:6), ‘Amman (Harding 1950: Pl. 28:266, 279), Metulla (Tzaferis 1982: Pl. 7:4), Tyre (Chéhab 1986: Pl. 48:2–4) and Ḥurfeish (Abu ‘Uqsa 2002:138*–139*, Fig. 2:20); and for the second type, at Tarshiḥa (Iliffe 1934a: Pl. 8:12, 13), Gush Ḥalav (Makhoul 1939:45–46, Pl. 31:14), Tyre (Chéhab 1986: Pl. 50:2, 3), Kh. esh-Shubeika (Tatcher 2002:274, Fig. 11:2, 4, 8) and Elqosh (Vitto 2008a:123, Fig. 2:9).

In antiquity, bells were considered apotropaic and small bells were often threaded onto various items of jewelry, including necklaces, bracelets (e.g., in Tomb E 220 in Samaria: Crowfoot 1957:429–439, Fig. 100:22, and in a tomb at Colchester, England: Crummy 1983:38–39, Fig. 41:1610), clothing (e.g., a bell with a remnant of cloth adhering to it in a shaft tomb on Nablus Road, Jerusalem: Hamilton and Hussein 1935:172, Pl. 81:8:) and even earrings (Espérandieu 1917:342).

Lead Mirror-Frame (Fig. 15).— Found in Chamber A, this lead frame consists of a flat ring (external diam. 4 cm, internal diam. 2.5 cm), decorated in relief with a herringbone pattern interrupted by four circles enclosing a



Fig. 15. Lead mirror-frame.

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	32	Chamber A	Mirror frame	Lead	Total H 6, ext. D 4; int. D 2.5, Th. 0.1

dot. The ring is surrounded by ten small discs (one broken) enclosing a dot. At the top of the frame is a large circular buckle (external diam. 2.3 cm, internal diam. 1.9 cm), which served for suspension, and at the bottom, a trapezoidal plaque decorated with a crisscross pattern, which may have served as a short handle. On the back side is a small clip between the first and the second discs, to the right of the trapezoidal plaque. Remains of additional clips are visible between the fourth and fifth, sixth and seventh and ninth and tenth discs.

Similar circular lead frames with a slightly different decor were found at Gezer (Macalister 1912: I:365, 383; III: Pls. 113:21, 118:27, in Tombs 158 and 219, the former with a coin of Constantius); Tarshiḥa (Iliffe 1934a:12, No. 18, Pl. 8:15, a badly damaged frame in a burial cave dated by Iliffe to the late fourth century CE; a date revised by Barag 1970:65 to the end of the third/beginning of the fourth–end of the fourth/beginning of the fifth centuries CE); ‘Amman (Ibrahim and Gordon 1987:28, 59, Pl. 20:2, in Grave 66 dated to the third–early fourth centuries CE); Meron (Meyers, Strange and Meyers 1991: Pl. 9.3:14, a badly damaged example [internal diam. 2.5 cm], found in an *insula* of the lower city, Stratum IV dated 250–365 CE) and Ḥorbat Sugar (Aviam and Stern 1997a:98–99, Fig. 6:8, a circular frame [external diam. 6 cm, internal diam. 3.5 cm] surrounded by triangles instead of discs found in Cave 2, dated to the fourth century CE). Several examples of lead frames with various decorations were found at Caesarea in tombs which Patrich and Rafael (2008:425–426, 430–431) attribute to the Crusader period. It should, however, be noted that Caesarea’s No. 73 is identical to the Kabul frame; Caesarea’s Nos. 74 and 76 resemble, respectively, Pl. 118:27 from Tomb 219 and Pl. 113:21 from Tomb 158 at Gezer, and No. 78 is, apparently, similar to the badly damaged example from Tarshiḥa, thus suggesting that the dating of the Caesarea tombs might need to be re-examined.

The use of these lead frames as mirror-frames is supported by three examples in

the Benaki Museum in Athens (Clairmont 1977:34, Pl. VI:101a–c), all decorated with a herringbone pattern and surrounded by small decorative discs, but with a different motif on the trapezoidal plaque: four circles enclosing dots on one frame and a stylized tree flanked by birds on the two others. One frame still encloses a slightly convex circular plaque of colorless glass (diam. 4.1 cm), with four clips at the back serving to hold the mirror in place. In light of the Benaki Museum example, we may suggest that the small (c. 3.5 cm in diameter) circular plaque made of colorless glass, slightly convex, discovered at ‘Ar‘ara, in a burial cave dated to the Late Roman period (third–fourth centuries CE), may have also belonged to a lead mirror-frame, itself not found (Jackson-Tal 2008:48*–49*, Fig. 1:17). These miniature mirrors had, most likely, no practical use, but could have been either votive or, especially those found in tombs, apotropaic, used against the evil eye, like the mirrors set in pottery frames dating to the Byzantine period (Rahmani 1964; Fischer and Saar 2007, with further references therein).

Date and Origin: Clairmont wrote that the lead frames of the Benaki Museum were “presumably found in Nubia, Egypt” and dated them to the fifth–sixth centuries CE. The relatively large number of examples discovered *in situ* in Israel and Jordan would rather point to an East Mediterranean origin for these mirrors. An oriental origin was suggested early on by Nowotny (1910), who published a few similar lead mirrors found in the Roman legionary camps of Carnuntum and Lauriacum (today’s Austria) and in the Roman city of Aquileia (North Italy) because, he wrote, of “the affinity in style and technique with the Syro-Phoenician lead coffins”. The context of the Kabul cave and those of other examples mentioned above indicate that they were used in the third and fourth centuries CE, a date which would fit the period of production of the East Mediterranean lead coffins (Rahmani 1999:4–7). It is therefore possible that the mirror-frames were either made in a center manufacturing lead coffins—

Caesarea and ‘Akko, two such centers, are close to most of the sites where mirror-frames were found—or they were recast from scrap metal by itinerant artisans.³

Scarab (Fig. 16).— Found in Trough 10, the scarab (length 14 mm, width 10 mm, height 7 mm) is slightly damaged (part of back missing). It is made of a semi-precious, light greenish stone (feldspar?),⁴ longitudinally pierced, with a shallow linear engraving and some hatching.

Back: Protothorax separated from the elytra by a single incision. One incised line divides the elytra. Lunate head with ‘hourglass’ clypeus.

Side: Fore and hind legs indicated by oblique grooves.

Base: Frameless. Falcon-headed wingless griffin couchant right, tail raised, holding scepter(?) between front legs. Solar disc above head and *mn* above body. Remains of uraeus to the left of the tail. *Imn-r* (the sun-god Amun-Re).

Discussion: The scarab belongs to the category of “scarabs bearing names and figures of gods” (Newberry 1906: Pl. 41). Apparently of Egyptian origin, it should be attributed to

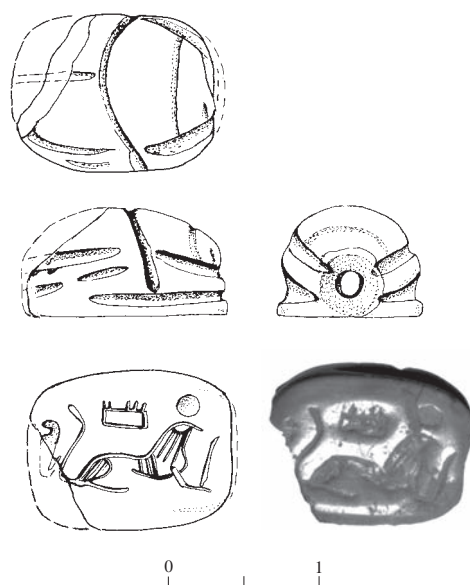


Fig. 16. Scarab (Reg. No. 58).

the New Kingdom, mainly on account of the name Amun-Re which does not appear before Dynasty XVIII (Keel 1995:242, §642) and the probable scepter, which is very seldom depicted before that Dynasty (Vodoz 1978:126; Magnarini 2004:258).

This scarab is, therefore, much earlier than the use of the tomb. It was probably discovered by chance by the individual buried in Trough 10, who may have worn it as part of a necklace, strung together with the other beads found in this trough (see Fig. 17:2). Examples of scarabs and cylinder seals discovered in later period tombs are relatively frequent, e.g., in Jerusalem, on the grounds of the Rockefeller Museum/Karm al-Shaikh (a Middle Bronze Age scarab in a Late Roman cist-tomb, Grave 14: Baramki 1931: Pl. V:1), at Ha-Gosherim (several scarabs found in a Byzantine burial cave: Foerster 1965), Tīrat Zēvi (a ‘Hyksos’

scarab in a fourth–fifth-century CE cist tomb: Foerster 1977), Tel Hai (an MB II cylinder seal in a third–fourth-century CE burial cave: Barag 1977; Mazar 1978:8), ‘Amman (a ‘Hyksos’ scarab and an MB II ‘proto-Arabic seal’ in Late Roman cist tombs, Graves 75, 20: Ibrahim and Gordon 1987:22–23, 46–47), Abila (a scarab in a second century CE burial cave, H11: Smith 1989:26–28); Shiqmona (a seal attributed to the Neo-Babylonian Kingdom in a Byzantine tomb: Elgavish 1994:152, Fig. 138); Moza ‘Illit (a ‘Hyksos’ scarab and a Syrian cylinder seal, both from the Middle Bronze Age, in a Late Roman burial cave: Brandl 1996), Hesban (a Dynasty XIX or XX scarab in an early Roman burial cave, Tomb F.31, Loculus 1: Waterhouse 1998:39, 40, 185); and Ḥorbat ‘Eitayim (a Dynasty XXII scarab in a second–third-century CE chamber tomb: Ben-Tor 2007:77, Fig. 10).

Fig. 17 ▶

No.	Reg. No.	Locus	Type	Description	Dimensions (cm)
1	45	Trough 10	Bronze chain with four beads	Bronze	
2	44	Trough 10	Necklace of 63 beads (reconstructed arbitrarily)		
3	64	Trough 7	Crumb-decorated bead	Dark blue glass appearing black	H 1.0, D 1.6
4	44-8	Trough 10	Bead	Resin	L 0.4, D 1.2
5	44-2	Trough 10	Bead	Amber	L 1.0, D 1.0
6	44-10	Trough 10	Bead	Blue glass	L 0.7, D 1.0
7	44-4	Trough 10	Bead	Black glass	L 1.1, D 0.9
8	44-6	Trough 10	Bead	Light brownish glass	L 1.1, D 0.3–0.5
9	44-9	Trough 10	Bead	Resin	L 1.0–1.2, D 0.6 × 0.9
10	44-5	Trough 10	Crumb-decorated bead	Light blue glass	L 0.7, D 0.7 × 0.9
11	44-7	Trough 10	Bead	Amber	L 1.2, D 0.6 × 1.0
12	44-12	Trough 10	Bead	Blue glass	L 1.4, D 0.3 × 1.0
13	44-11	Trough 10	Bead	White glass	L 0.7, D 0.7
14	44-13	Trough 10	Bead	Green glass	L 1.0, D 0.6
15	44-14	Trough 10	Bead	Glass appears gray brownish	L 0.5, D 0.4
16	44-3	Trough 10	Bead-pendant	Light blue glass with white crumbs	H 1.6 D max. 0.7?
17	44-1	Trough 10	Bead	Ivory	L 1.5, Th. 0.3



Fig. 17. Necklaces and beads.

Necklaces and Beads (Fig. 17).— In addition to the various items described above, which might have been threaded on necklaces (lead mirror-frame, scarab, bronze bells), a total of

68 beads were found, all in Trough 10, except for one in Trough 7 (Table 3). Four glass beads were still strung on a bronze chain ending in a slip-ring (Fig. 17:1). The others were loose and

Table 3. Types of Beads

Bead Types (see Beck 1927)	Trough 7 (N = 1)	10 (N = 67; Fig. 17:1, 2)
Short oblate bead with circular section (Type I.B.1.a)	1 dark blue glass appearing black with medium-sized dark red and light brown crumbs (Fig. 17:3; Reg. No. 44-64)	
Short barrel-shaped bead with circular section (Type I.B.1.b)		3 resin (Fig. 17:4) 3 blue glass (not ill.; Reg. Nos. 44-15, 16, 17) 11 whitish glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-18–28) 8 brownish glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-29–36)
Spherical bead with circular section (Type I.C.1.a)		1 amber (Fig. 17:5) 1 blue glass (Fig. 17:6) 6 black glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-37) 1 brownish glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-38)
Convex bicone bead with circular section (Type I.C.1.e)		1 light brownish glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-39)
Ellipsoid bead with circular section (Type I.D.1.a)		2 black glass (Fig. 17:7; not ill.; Reg. No. 44-40)
Long pear-shaped bead with circular section (Type I.D.1.g)		4 light brown-grayish glass (Fig. 17:8; not ill.; Reg. Nos. 44-41–43)
Ellipsoid bead with concave ends and circular section (Type I.D.5.b.f)		1 white-greenish glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-44)
Ellipsoid bead with elliptical section (Type II.D.1.a)		5 resin (Fig. 17:9; not ill.; Reg. Nos. 44-45–49)
Cylinder bead with elliptical section (Type II.D.2.b)		1 light blue glass with white crumbs (Fig. 17:10)
Long barrel bead with lenticular section (Type IV.D.1.b)		1 amber (Fig. 17:11)
Long flat cylinder bead with lenticular section (Type IV.D.2.b)		1 blue glass (Fig. 17:12)
Standard cylinder bead with square section (Type IX.C.2.b)		5 white glass (Fig. 17:13; not ill.; Reg. Nos. 44-50–53) 1 dark blue glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-54) 1 brownish glass (not ill.; Reg. No. 44-55)
Long cylinder bead with hexagonal section (Type XIII.D.2.b)		1 green glass (Fig. 17:14)
Small segmented bead—2 spheroid segments (Type XVII.A.1.a)		3 gray-brownish appearance glass (Fig. 17:15; not ill.; 44-56–57)
Rounded pendant (Spaer 2001:164, Nos. 297–298, Pl. 24:297–298)		1 light blue glass (Fig. 17:16)
Carved pendant		1 carved ivory (Fig. 17:17)

were arbitrarily restrung (Fig. 17:2). The great majority (53) of the beads are made of glass, 8 are of resin, 2 of amber and 1 of ivory. Most are standard glass beads, but a few deserve special mention. Figure 17:16 is a perforated monochrome pendant made of a light blue glass, with a more or less straight top broadening toward the rounded bottom. For parallels, see Spaer 2001:164, Nos. 297–298, Pl. 24:297–298. Two are crumb-decorated beads (Fig. 17:3, 10). Crumb-decorated beads are made by rolling the bead while still hot over glass crumbs of different colors, a technique used from the second millennium BCE throughout most later periods, and was quite common in the Near East and Egypt, especially in the third–fifth centuries CE (see Spaer 2001:127–129, Pl. 18:226–227, with further parallels therein; for the technique, see p. 53, Fig. 23).

Coin

One coin was discovered:

Reg. No. 43, on floor of Trough 10, IAA 75815.
Fourth century CE.

Obv: Obliterated.

Rev: Obliterated.

Æ, 15 mm.

CONCLUSIONS

The Date

This type of chamber tomb, with vaulted chambers containing burial troughs, is fairly common in the western Galilee in the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods, e.g., at Ḥanita (Barag 1978:4, Fig. 2), Kisra (Stern 1997) and Ḥorbat Belaya (Lederman and Aviam 1997:140–141). The absence of open glass vessels, such as bowls and beakers, suggests that burial in the cave did not start before the mid-fourth century CE. Most of the finds have parallels in the second half of the fourth–early fifth centuries CE. The size of the cave, the quantity of bones and the repertoire of artifacts suggest that the cave was used for family burial for one or two generations. Therefore, the end

of the use of the cave should not be later than the beginning of the fifth century CE.

The Religion of the Deceased

None of the finds allows us to infer the religion of the deceased. The presence of a unique, obliterated, coin is insufficient to deduce the existence of the pagan belief of paying the ferryman Charon for crossing the River Styx to the netherworld (Rahmani 1993; Syon 2006; Vitto 2010). It should, however, be added that the practice of placing coins in tombs was waning in the second half of the fourth century CE, as suggested at other sites, e.g., Ḥanita—only 2 coins out of 45 date to the end of the fourth century (Barag 1978:46–54), and Qiryat Ata, in a cave used for burial from the late third to the end of the fourth centuries CE—3 coins from the late third century CE were found and none from the fourth century CE despite a rich assemblage of glass vessels and oil lamps from the second half of this century (Vitto 2008b:159–160). Archaeological evidence and the numerous written sources that attest to the Jewish character of Kabul, at least until the third century CE (see below), may suggest that this tomb contained Jewish burials; the relatively large quantity of jewelry items discovered in Trough 10 are, however, surprising for Jewish burials, although little is still known about Jewish burial practices in Byzantine Galilee. No find is suggestive of a Christian burial and the identification with Kabul as a bishopric at the time of the Council of Nicea in 325 CE is very dubious (see below). Only further excavations may indicate if there were Christians at Kabul in the early Byzantine period.

Identification of the Site

The name Kabul (כבול) is mentioned twice in the Bible, once as a place located on the eastern boundary of Asher (Joshua 19:27), and another time as the “Land of Kabul”, the area given in the tenth century BCE by Solomon to Hiram, King of Tyre, for his assistance in the building of the Temple of Jerusalem (I Kings 9:13). Surveys and excavations within Kabul,

the Arab village located 14 km southeast of 'Akko, which has preserved the biblical name to this day, did not reveal any Iron Age remains. However, excavations at Rosh Zayit (see Fig. 1:7) have shown that the Iron Age site of Kabul was apparently situated some 1.5 km northeast of the village of Kabul (Gal 1985; Gal and Alexandre 2000:196–201). As the final phase excavated at Rosh Zayit dates to the end of the eighth century BCE, when it was destroyed by the Assyrian campaign of Tiglath Pileser III in 733/732 BCE (Gal and Alexandre 2000:201), and no later remains were found at the site, we may assume that in the Roman period, the place-name Kabul moved to the location of the present Arab village.

In the Roman period, Kabul is mentioned in several sources. Josephus names a place in the Galilee Chabulon (Χαβουλών; *Jewish War* 2:503; 3:38; *Apion* 1:110), Chabalon (Χαβαλόν; *Jewish Antiquities* 7:142), Chabolo (Χαβωλώ; *Life* 213, 227, 234) and, in some *codices* of Josephus, Zabulon (Ζαβουλών), most likely all the same place. As is usual in Josephus (Safrai 1989:308, 320; Strange, Groh and Longstaff 1994:222–225), the place is called variously a city (*polis*), a town (*astu*) or a village (*kōmē*). According to *Jewish War* 2:503, the Roman governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, marched (in 66 CE) with part of his troops against Chabulon, “a fortified city (πόλις κατὰ) of Galilee, on the frontier of Ptolemais and Jewish territory. He found it deserted by its inhabitants, who had all fled up into the hills, but [the place was] stocked with goods of all kinds, which he allowed his soldiers to pillage. Although he admired the beauty of the town (ἄστυ), with its houses built in the style of those at Tyre, Sidon and Berytus, he set [it] on fire”. In *Life* 213, 227, 234, Josephus writes that in 67 CE, he established for a time his headquarters in the Galilee at Chabolo, “a village (κώμη) on the frontier of Ptolemais”. Kabul (כבול) is the place where the priestly family Shecaniah is said to have dwelt after the destruction of the Second Temple (Klein 1939:163; Levine 1989:171–172, n. 153 with further references

therein). According to rabbinic literature, a number of *tannaim* were connected in one way or another with Kabul. Rabbi Ḥanina (a late first–second centuries CE *tanna*, who probably died at Beitar in 133 CE), son of R. Gamaliel II, is said to have gone to Kabul and as the reader of the congregation was reading Genesis 35:22 alluding to Reuben’s adultery “he said to the translator: Translate only the latter part of the verse” (Tosefta Megila 4:35; BT Megilla 25b). This suggests the existence of a synagogue at Kabul in the early second century CE (Hüttenmeister and Reeg 1977:254–256). Rabbi Zakkai (a second-century *tanna* who seems to have lived to a ripe old age into the early third century CE) is said to be from Kabul (רבי זכאי דכבול; JT Megilla 4:8; Tractate Semahot 8:4; Zlotnick 1966:58). In the early third century CE, the sons of R. Gamaliel III, Hillel and Judah, paid a visit to R. Zakkai at Kabul where “the people of the city (עיר) ran pipes flowing with wine and with oil before them” (Tosefta Sabbath 7:17; Tractate Semahot 8:4; Zlotnick 1966:58), an illustration of the prosperity of the place. While the two brothers were at Kabul, they went to “bathe together, and the whole region criticized them, saying, ‘We have never seen such [a thing] in [all] our days;’ whereupon Hillel slipped away and went to the outer chamber [of the baths]” (Tosefta Moed Katan 2:15; JT Pesahim 4:1; BT Pesahim 51a). The economic prosperity of Kabul was reflected by the important taxes the city was reputedly paying: “The taxes of three cities, Kabul, Shikhim and Magdala [were so heavy] that they had to be carried to Jerusalem in a wagon” (JT Ta’anit 4:8; Lamentations Rabbah to 2:2, par. 4). The text goes on to explain that Kabul was destroyed “because of internal disputes”. Yeivin (1952:89–93) suggested attributing this destruction to the Bar Kokhba Revolt, but most scholars (Schäfer 1981:113, 186–87; Strange, Groh and Longstaff 1994:225) are of the opinion that it refers to the First Jewish Revolt, during which a destruction by fire is mentioned by Josephus in *Jewish War* 2:503 (see above).

In Eusebius' *Onomasticon* 174:13 (probably written between 313 and 325 CE), a place-name Chobal (Χωβάλ) in Greek and Chabol in Jerome's translation into Latin (c. 390 CE), is mentioned, only with reference to I Kings 9:13 and a note that it is on the border of Asher, without any details on the place which might suggest contemporary observations. At the Council of Nicea held in 325 CE (*Patr. Nicaen. Nom.* Pp. 12: No. 33; 62: No. 34) the signature of a bishop appears, named in the Greek version Ἡλιόδωρος Ζαβουλών and in the Latin version Heliodoros Zabulon/Zabulonites (some codices have Diabulonites or Diaboliternites). Because the name of the bishopric is identical with the name of Kabul found in some *codices* of Josephus (Zabulon), a few scholars have assumed that Heliodorus was from Kabul (Le Quien, *Oriens Christianus* 3:673–674; Abel 1938:198; Tsafrir, Di Segni and Green 1994:102). Thomsen (1907:63), however, considers this see unknown. Puzzled by the fact that this bishopric is only mentioned at the Council of Nicea and not in the lists of the later councils, Abel (1938:200–201) decided not to include the see of Zabulon in his list of bishoprics of Palestine in the Byzantine period. Devreesse (1940:217) left it in the list of the Nicene Council, but noted its absence in the other councils, while Bagatti (2001:118) proposed two possible explanations: either “the village ceased to exist...owing to some war or, this was due to religious controversy...the place being inhabited [in Bagatti's opinion] by a majority of Jewish-Christians”. It might be added that neither the Bordeaux Pilgrim (333 CE), nor Egeria (381–384 CE), nor any other Christian pilgrim who visited the Holy Land during the Byzantine period mention a place that could be identified with Kabul. From the above, it clearly appears that Kabul was a Jewish town in the Roman period until at least the third century CE.

The presence of a Christian community in the town in the fourth century CE is dubious. The next mention of Kabul is only to be found by the end of the tenth century (985 CE), when the

Jerusalem-born Arab geographer Muqaddasi (Gildemeister 1884:155; Le Strange 1890:467; Marmadji 1951:170) writes that Kabul “has fields of canes, and they make there excellent sugar, better than in all rest of Syria”. In Crusader times, a *casal* called Cabor/Cabur/Chabor, which is mentioned in documents dating between 1175 and 1262 (Delaville Leroulx 1894–1906, I:330, No. 480; 392–393, No. 579; II:529, No. 2199; III:30–31, No. 3028), is usually identified with Kabul (Rey 1883:475–476; Beyer 1945:202, 203, 208, 241, 244; Prawer and Benvenisti 1970)—perhaps the “citadel” in the territory of Kabul described in 1467 by Sahîr ad-Dahiri (Marmadji 1951:117) as “now in ruins.” Interestingly, from the Crusader period onward, Kabul becomes associated with tombs of biblical figures and of Jewish personages. In 1173, ‘Ali ben al-Husayn al-Harawi, born in Herat in Persia, wrote a book on the places of pilgrimages he visited in Islamic countries including Palestine, and he mentions Kabul as “a village where they say are buried two of the sons of Jacob, namely Rûmin (Reuben) and Simeon” (Le Strange 1890:467). In 1561, a certain Jacob, son of Naftali ha-Khohen de Gazolo, purportedly produced a work entitled *Jichus Ha-Tsadikim* or ‘Sepulchres of the Just’ (apparently based on an account of the twelfth century, *Qivrei Avoth* or ‘Tombs of the Ancestors’: Prawer 1988:176–178), in which “Khabul” is said to contain the sepulchres of three great Spanish authors of the twelfth century CE: Abraham son of Esra, Rabbi Jehuda Halevi and Rabbi Salomon ha-Katon. Although this information is likely to be wrong, as *Jichus ha-Tsadikim* is full of errors and nowhere else are their tombs located at Kabul, the mention of biblical and Jewish tombs at Kabul in Crusader times is interesting, as it may be connected with the renewal, during this period, of pilgrimage and resettlement in the Holy Land of Jews from Europe, especially from Spain (Prawer 1988). Evidence that Jews lived in Kabul in medieval times is found in the early Ottoman tax registers (*daftar-i mufaşşal*) of 1596/1597 (Hütteroth and Abdulfatah

1977:193), where Kabul is listed as a village in which 14 Jewish families live alongside 40 Muslim families. However, in 1886, when Schumacher (1887:176) took a census of the Līvā of 'Akka on behalf of the government in Constantinople, all the 415 inhabitants he counted at Kabul were Muslim.

History of the Excavations

The modern village of Kabul is built on an ancient site. This was already noticed by nineteenth-century travelers, such as Robinson (Robinson and Smith 1857:88), who went to Kabul on April 17, 1852; Guérin (1880:422–424), who visited the village on August 3, 1875; and by Conder and Kitchener (1881:271, 308). Guérin describes rock-cut cisterns, ancient masonry reused in houses of the village, sarcophagi adorned with discs and garlands, fragments of monolithic columns from a destroyed building and vestiges of a surrounding wall. In 1927, Saarisalo (1929:40) collected at Kabul a few pottery sherds, which he attributed to the “Middle Bronze, Roman, Byzantine and Arabic periods”. On October 2, 1928, Alt (1929:43) noticed significant debris from an ancient site at Kabul.

Five excavations have been conducted by the IAA (formerly IDAM) within the present village of Kabul, revealing four Roman–early Byzantine burial caves and building remains attributed to the early Roman period. In addition, an excavation conducted c. 1.5 km east of the village revealed remains dating to the Mamluk period. In 1971, Tzaferis (1971; 2001; Aviam and Stern 1997b:154; see Fig. 1:1) excavated a rock-cut chamber tomb with six *kokhim*, where he found evidence of two burial periods: first–early second centuries CE (one limestone ossuary, one discus lamp) and fourth–fifth centuries CE (seven pottery coffins, glass vessels, a small candlestick-type oil lamp and a lead ‘cameo’). In November 1973, the burial cave described in this article was excavated (see Fig. 1:2). In 1994, Porat (1997; Aviam and Stern 1997b:154, Fig. 4; see Fig. 1:3) excavated a badly damaged burial cave with *kokhim*, one

of which contained a pottery coffin. In 1996, Aviam (2000; 2002) excavated a burial cave (see Fig. 1:4) consisting of two burial chambers without *kokhim*, which contained two pottery ossuaries, two limestone ossuaries, one pottery coffin, four late first–second centuries CE oil lamps (two with a broken discus and two northern variants of the ‘Darom’ type) and five glass beads. Aviam suggested that the tomb had been in use for Jewish burial during a short period, the late first–second centuries CE, and that the pottery coffin and the ossuaries were contemporaneous. In 1999, Porat (2002) excavated remains of a building, in which she noted two construction phases, both attributed to the Mamluk period, c. 1.5 km east of the village of Kabul (see Fig. 1:5). In 2003, Abu ‘Uqsa (2007) excavated a rock-cut installation (see Fig. 1:6), probably used for pressing liquids, as well as a built structure containing plaster fragments decorated with polychrome floral and geometric motifs, cooking pots, jars and a lamp, dating to the Early Roman period.

Context of the Remains

The remains discovered at Kabul belong to the main periods mentioned in the written sources. The Early Roman remains with polychrome plaster probably belonged to the beautiful houses admired by Cestius Gallus who, nevertheless, set them on fire in 66 CE. The two burial caves, containing ossuaries and discus lamps of the late first–second centuries CE, excavated by Tzaferis and Aviam, were, most likely, used by Jews who dwelt in Kabul after the destruction of the Second Temple and whose communities are mentioned in rabbinic sources. These two caves also contained pottery coffins. As no later finds were discovered in the cave he excavated, Aviam (2002:143) suggested that the pottery coffin is contemporary with the ossuaries and was also placed in the tomb by Jews in the second century CE. Tzaferis, however, who discovered a small candlestick-type pottery lamp and two glass vessels dating to the fourth–fifth centuries CE, suggested that these finds date the introduction of the seven

pottery coffins, which were, in his opinion, “intended for the burial of non-Jews”. Evidence from other burial caves, in particular from a cave excavated at Tiv’on (Vitto 2011), suggests that pottery coffins found in caves together with ossuaries are a later phase of the use of the cave, even when no or very few later finds are found. When pottery coffins are discovered in *kokhim* caves, they protrude from the openings of the *kokhim* because of their length. For this reason, the original sealing slabs of the *kokhim* were removed and found lying nearby, e.g., at Kabul (Porat 1997: Fig. 156), I’billin (Feig 1999) and Qiryat Ata (Vitto 2008b:133, 159). This clearly indicates that these caves had not been hewn with the original intention of accommodating pottery coffins and that these are a later addition. At Tiv’on, when the coffins were introduced, all the burial furniture in the cave was rearranged, but this was done with great care and respect for the earlier burials, suggesting that those who introduced the coffins were also Jewish. The scarcity of finds in both

caves excavated by Tzaferis and Aviam, and the absence of finds suggesting non-Jewish burials, might also indicate that the coffins were used for Jewish burials.

The burial cave described in this article is the only one excavated so far in Kabul that does not contain pottery coffins, nor shows a reuse of a late first–second-century CE burial cave. The reason is that this cave is not a *kokhim* cave and was apparently hewn at the time it was used for burial, i.e., in the second half of the fourth century CE. There is no written source about Kabul after the fourth century and, so far, no archaeological evidence for the late Byzantine period has been uncovered. However, too little of the site has been excavated to deduce that it ceased to be inhabited after the fourth century CE.

The Mamluk remains discovered 1.5 km east of the village may perhaps be a late phase of the Crusader *casal* mentioned in the sources, or be part of the settlement attested in the early Ottoman tax register.

NOTES

¹ Following the discovery of the cave by Subhi Mohammed Shuly during the digging of a cistern in his garden, a five-day rescue excavation (Permit No. A-444) was conducted in November 1973 on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums (today the IAA), under the direction of the author, with the help of Yehuda Ben Yosef, Regional Inspector of Antiquities and three workers from the Shuly family in Kabul. The plan was drawn by the author and prepared for publication by Natalia Zak. The glass vessels were restored by Marilyn Lenihan. Metal objects were cleaned by Nena Janeš, and the finds were photographed by Zeev Radovan and drawn by Boris Zieloni and Carmen Hersch. Gabriela Bijovsky identified the coin. Natalia Katsnelson gave advice on some of the glass vessels. To all, the author wishes to extend her deepest gratitude. This article was submitted in 2005; only limited updating of the bibliography was made after its submission.

² No study of the anthropological remains was carried out. The following remarks are based on notes taken on the site by the author. The bones were reburied after the excavation.

³ After this article was submitted, Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom (2005) published an article, “Lead Mirrors”, on two small circular lead mirrors decorated with an eagle on the back (one from Tel Dor and the other in the Hecht Museum), which she dates to the first or second century CE, and thus, they would be the precursors of the fourth-century CE mirrors. See also Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1999, in which she discusses the significance and the use of lead objects in antiquity. My thanks to her for drawing my attention to these articles.

⁴ My thanks to Baruch Brandl for suggesting the identification of the stone.

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