

GLASS VESSELS FROM YAFO (JAFFA), YEHUDA HA-YAMMIT STREET

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During the salvage excavation conducted on Yehuda Ha-Yammit Street, Yafo (see Haddad and Rauchberger, this volume), 150 glass vessels and fragments thereof were found, about 100 of which are small body fragments. The diagnostic vessels dated mainly to the Medieval and modern eras. Very few fragments are from the Byzantine or Early Islamic periods. Presented below are some representative fragments from the Medieval Age (Fig. 1) and from modern times (Fig. 2).¹

MEDIEVAL AGE (Fig. 1)

A few vessels can be attributed to the Medieval Age, probably to the Crusader period. They are similar to contemporary vessels from the Crusader tower at 'Akko (Area TA in the courthouse site; Gorin-Rosen 1997), from Apollonia-Arsuf (Jackson-Tal and Tal 2013) and from other excavations in Yafo, e.g., the Qishle compound, Ha-Zorfim Street and Roslan Street.²

Bowl with Flaring Rounded Rim Decorated with Fused-In Trail (Fig. 1:1).— Bowl No. 1 is a rim fragment with a fused-in light blue trail. It might belong to a bowl or a beaker. Bowls are rare in Crusader assemblages, while drinking vessels, such as beakers, are more frequent; therefore, it may be a drinking bowl or a long-stemmed goblet. Only one such bowl was found in 'Akko, in the Hospitaller Compound (Gorin-Rosen, forthcoming). Beakers with an applied wound trail of a different color on the rim's edge are frequent, and many were found in excavations of Crusader dwellings in 'Akko (Gorin-Rosen, forthcoming).

¹ Thanks are due to Yael Gorin-Rosen, for her help in the preparation of this paper, as well as to Adrienne Ganor, for the glass restoration, Carmen Hersch, for the preparation of the drawings, and Clara Amit, for the photography.

² The finds from the Qishle compound will be published by Yael Gorin-Rosen (Permit No. A-5037), and those from Yafo, Ha-Zorfim Street (Permit Nos. A-5378, A-5577) and Roslan Street (Permit Nos. A-5883, A-6115), will be published by the author.

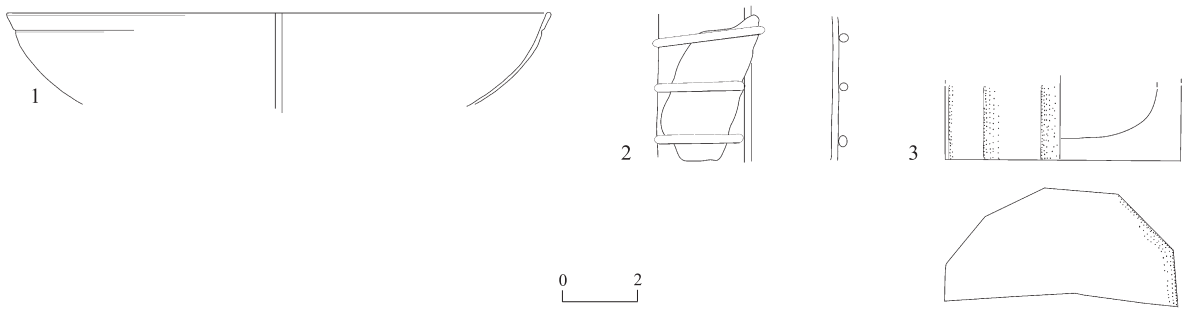


Fig. 1. Medieval glass finds.

A beaker rim with a trail decoration was found in the Crusader fortress at Monfort (Dean 1927:40, Fig. 56:F, reconstructed as a prunted beaker).

1. L209, B2367. Bowl. Rim fragment. Colorless glass. Silver weathering, iridescence and pitting. Many elongated and rounded bubbles. Low quality fabric. Rim D 14.5 cm.

Bottle with Applied Trails Decoration (Fig. 1:2).— Fragment No. 2 probably belongs to a bottle or a jug with an out-splayed rim, pinched at one side, with a long cylindrical neck decorated with applied trails. The bottles are mainly of poor-quality glass fabric and manufacture, and were probably made locally to supply newcomers with drinking vessels. The drinking habits of the Crusaders are well-documented in written sources and wall paintings of the period; this type of vessel could have been used as a carafe.

Applied trails are the most common decoration of glass vessels from the early stages of glassblowing. A bottle with a similar rim and applied trails on the neck was found in the Crusader tower at ‘Akko, dated to the thirteenth century CE (Gorin-Rosen 1997:76–77, Fig. 1:1, and see therein for further references to the northeastern tower at Saranda Kolones, Paphos, Cyprus, dated to the thirteenth century CE, and another parallel from Hama, Syria). Bottles of this type were found in Apollonia-Arsuf (Jackson-Tal and Tal 2013: Fig. 11: 3), in the Souks excavations at Beirut, together with thirteenth-century CE pottery (Jennings 2006:231–232, Figs. 10.11:1, 2; 10.12), and in the Qishle Compound, Yafo (Yael Gorin-Rosen, pers. comm.) and in the Hospitaller Compound, ‘Akko (Gorin-Rosen, forthcoming).

2. L141, B1111. Bottle. Neck fragment. Light green glass covered with iridescence and pitting. Low quality glass with many elongated bubbles. Cylindrical neck decorated with applied trail, three windings partly remain. Careless workmanship. Rim D c. 4.5 cm.

Polygonal Bottle (Fig. 1:3).— Small- and medium-sized polygonal bottles were very common from the Early Islamic period onward, with slight variations. It is difficult to date

Bottle No. 3, and while it is included within the Medieval decorated vessels, it might just as well be earlier in date. This fragment was found in a fill that yielded mixed material from the Byzantine until the Medieval periods. A similar vessel found in the Qishle Compound in Yafo was attributed to the Crusader period (Yael Gorin-Rosen, pers. comm.).

3. L149, B1182. Bottle. Base and wall fragment. Light green glass, covered with silver weathering, iridescence and pitting. Polygonal bottle with thick wall. Polished sides. Flat base. Base D 6 cm.

MODERN ERA (Fig. 2)

Vessels from the modern era were found in large quantities and included many bottle fragments, window fragments and small fragments of bracelets. Objects dating from the twentieth century, called ‘antique’ or ‘vintage’, are today studied by archaeologists, for example at Kafr ‘Ana, a rural settlement in the Lod Valley (Taxel 2007:73–74, Fig. 4.5:1–3), at Horbat ‘Eleq, Ramat Ha-Nadiv (Boas 2000); in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem (Winter 2011); as well as on Ha-Zorfim Street and on Roslan Street in Yafo (see n. 2). Three bottles, complete or nearly complete (Fig. 2), are presented below.

Bottle No. 1 (L219, B2250/1; Fig. 2:1).— This old Bovril bottle is dated to the 1930s. Bovril is an English beef extract. The front and back have raised lettering, reading “2 oz. Bovril Limited,” with one side bearing an additional “317” under the Limited. The bottom has raised lettering, reading “Bottle made in England” around the edge, with “By FGC” in the center. The letters FGC stand for Forsters Glass Company Ltd., which was situated in Lancashire, England. The amber color of this bottle is common, as it provides the best protection from light wavelengths, which are responsible for most photochemical reactions.

Bottle No. 2 (L219, B2250/2; Fig. 2:2).— The bottle is nearly complete, just the rim is missing. It is of colorless glass, covered with iridescence and sand deposits. It was made in a two-part mold, the seam is clearly visible on the wall. There is no inscription on the plain cylindrical body.

Bottle No. 3 (L219, B2250/3; Fig. 2:3).— The bottle is nearly complete, its upper part missing. It is of granular colorless glass,³ covered with iridescence and sand deposits. It was made in a two-part mold, the seam clearly visible on the wall. It is ovoid in shape, with a

³ Over the centuries, colorless glass was a goal attempted by glass manufacturers. It was difficult to produce as it required virtually impurity-free materials. Improved chemistry and more efficient glassmaking methods in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries made clear colorless glass easier and much cheaper to produce, using various additives to the glass mixture. Bottles of colorless glass were relatively uncommon prior to the 1870s, but became quite frequent when automatic machines came into use in the second half of the first decade of the twentieth century (Fike 1987).



Fig. 2. Modern glass finds.

flat bottom. Partially preserved on the body is an inscription in Hebrew, רמת גן (i.e., Ramat Gan) and ש.פיש, as well as a small Star of David. Identical bottles were preserved in private collections, which allow for a full reconstruction of the inscription: פרוגרס ש. פיש את יקר רמת גן.⁴ This bottle is evidence of a local production, and was probably used as a container for selling carbonated beverages (*gazoz*).

⁴ Thanks to Lior Rauchberger for drawing my attention to comparable examples, which appeared in auction websites.

CONCLUSIONS

The importance of this modest repertoire of glass finds lies in the modern-era vessels, which represent an aspect of daily life in Palestine at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although far from being luxury or valuable items, these objects are nonetheless important since they were found in an archaeological context. Archaeological interest in discoveries from recent periods has just begun, and it is assumed that it will increase in the future.

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