

## THE GLASS FINDS FROM THE ROMAN AND CRUSADER PERIODS ON RABBI YEHUDA ME-RAGUZA STREET, YAFO (JAFFA)

BRIGITTE OUAHNOUNA

### INTRODUCTION

During the salvage excavations conducted on Rabbi Yehuda Me-Raguza Street, Yafo (see Arbel and Rauchberger, this volume), approximately 95 glass vessel fragments, including 25 unidentified body shards, were recovered.<sup>1</sup> The finds comprise two principal groups: the first (Fig. 1) includes three intact bottles and fragments thereof, found in a Roman grave, and the second (Fig. 2) comprises four Crusader-period vessel fragments found in association with Crusader potsherds (see Stern, this volume) under a sand layer that separated them from the higher Ottoman levels. A few body fragments dating from the late Ottoman period were also recovered (not illustrated), as well as some chunks of raw glass (Fig. 3).

### THE FINDS

#### THE ROMAN PERIOD (Fig. 1)

Three intact bottles and one fragmentary bottle were recovered from L112, one of several cist graves found near topsoil level in Area A, within the bounds of the ancient southern burial ground of Yafo, close to Andromeda Hill. The bottles were found near the deceased's legs without other associated finds.

Bottle Nos. 1–3 are of the candlestick type, known also as unguentaria or balsamaria; they were probably used for scented oils, cosmetics, pigments, salves or medicines. This bottle type was made in a wide range of sizes. It was the simplest shape to blow as it necessitated very little tooling; the glassblower could make a spherical, piriform or tubular bottle without touching the glass, and the rim could be finished by reheating, as the simple action of rotation caused the rim to flare outward and the edge to fold over (Stern 2001:43).

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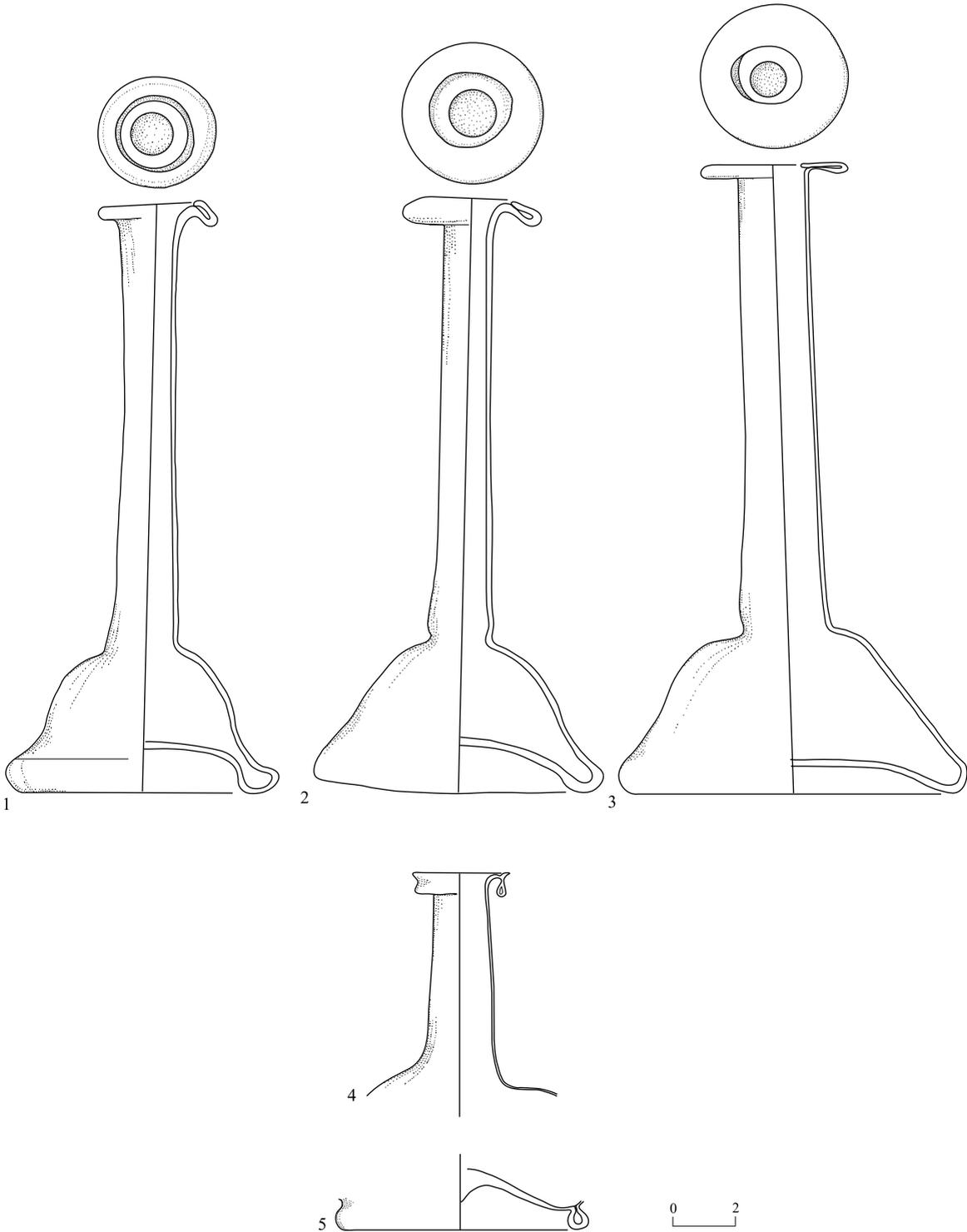


Fig. 1. Roman-period glass vessels.

The three specimens under discussion are very similar, with an infolded rim, a long neck, a triangular-shaped body and a concave flattened base. They are made of colorless glass with a yellowish tinge covered with silver weathering and iridescence. This type was very common throughout Israel during the Roman period, mostly in funerary contexts, and dates to the late first–mid-third centuries CE. Similar examples were found in Roman tombs at Caesarea dated to the second–third centuries CE, among a large group of candlestick bottles (Mazar 1992:106–107, Fig. 5:4, 5) and in the Akeldama tombs in Jerusalem (Winter 1996:98, Fig. 5.4:1, and see further references therein).

Bottle No. 4, a complete rim and neck, probably belongs to a globular bottle having a double-folded rim with a flattened edge and an asymmetrical conical neck, slightly widening toward the shoulder. A complete vessel of this type was recovered from Hurfeish Burial Cave D, dated to the third century CE (Gorin-Rosen 2002:161, Fig. 12:55, and see further references therein).

Fragment No. 5 is a tubular ring base made of purple glass. It could belong to a deep or shallow bowl, or a beaker, both very common during the Roman period. The purple color of this vessel is rare during this period; however, it clearly differs from the purple glass typical of the Crusader period.

1. L112, B1097. Candlestick bottle. Complete. Colorless glass with yellowish tinge covered with silver weathering, iridescence and pitting. Triangular-shaped body with concave flattened base, long neck and uneven infolded rim. Base D 8.5 cm, H 18 cm.
2. L112, B1098. Candlestick bottle. Complete. Colorless glass with yellowish tinge covered with silver weathering, iridescence and pitting. Triangular-shaped body with concave flattened base, long neck and regular infolded rim. Base D 9 cm, H 18.5 cm.
3. L112, B1096. Candlestick bottle. Complete. Colorless glass with yellowish tinge covered with silver weathering, iridescence and pitting. Triangular-shaped body with concave flattened base, long neck and infolded flattened rim. Base D 11 cm, H 19.5 cm.
4. L112, B1093/1. Globular bottle. Rim and neck. Colorless glass with very light, yellow tinge covered with patches of black crust, silver weathering, iridescence and severe pitting. Double-folded rim flattened at top; cylindrical neck slightly widening toward body; beginning of thin wall. Delicate workmanship. Rim D 3 cm.
5. L112, B1093/2. Bowl or beaker. Base fragment, mended. Purple glass covered with silver weathering and iridescence. Pushed-in base with thickened concavity in its center and low hollow ring base. Large pontil scar with traces of glass. Base D 8 cm.

## THE CRUSADER PERIOD (Fig. 2)

Glass from the Crusader period has been found at several sites in Israel, including an important assemblage recovered from the Qishle Compound in Yafo, where it was well-dated by the stratigraphic context: on or below Crusader-period floors and inside Crusader-period pits (Gorin-Rosen, in press). Another well-dated group is from Apollonia-Arsuf, which was destroyed in 1265 CE (Jackson-Tal and Tal 2013). The glass vessels presented here are similar to contemporary material from the Courthouse Site at ‘Akko, in the Crusader tower (Area TA) (Gorin-Rosen 1997).

Four vessel fragments, all free blown, are presented here, mostly of colorless glass with a pale yellowish or bluish tinge. The vessels are of inferior quality, made of bubbly glass with black impurities and severely pitted. All are known types. Number 1, a beaker with applied prunt decoration, is the most characteristic among Crusader-period glass vessels in Israel. Such beakers usually have a flaring rounded rim and a wide, open mouth with an applied horizontal trail at the connection between the mouth and the body. The cylindrical body, be it short and squat or tall and narrow, is decorated with rows of usually uneven protruding prunts that vary in size and shape—some are rounded, others are pointed or carelessly shaped. The bases were mainly formed by an applied trail, wounded around a pushed-in bottom. Fragments of such

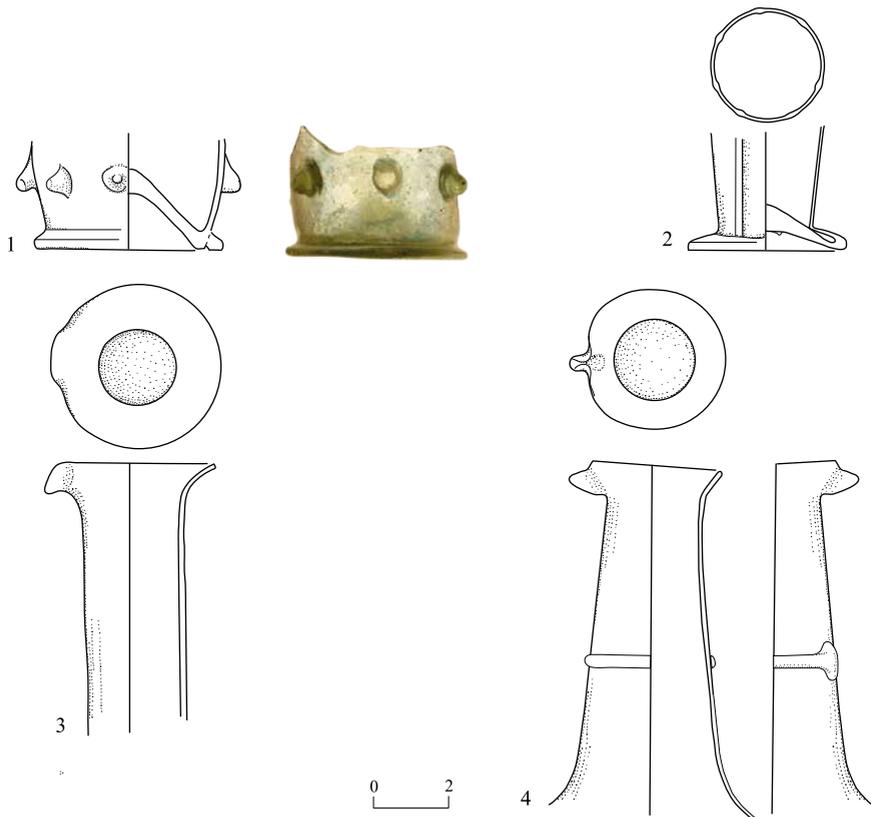


Fig. 2. Crusader-period glass vessels.

beakers were found in the Crusader tower at the Courthouse Site in 'Akko (Gorin-Rosen 1997:82–84, Fig. 2:20–26, and see further discussion and references therein).

Number 2 is a complete ring base and wall fragment of a beaker. The body has six mold-blown facets.

Numbers 3 and 4 are of the Bottle with Pinched Rim type, featuring an out-splayed rim, pinched at one side for pouring, and a long wide cylindrical neck, very common in Crusader assemblages from Yafo in the Qishle Compound (Gorin-Rosen, in press), as well as 'Akko (Gorin-Rosen 1997:76, Fig. 1:1) and Appolonia-Arsuf (Jackson-Tal and Tal 2013: Fig. 11:3). The pinched rim suggests a pitcher. Based on contemporary written sources and wall paintings, describing the drinking habits of the Crusaders, it could have been used as a carafe. Bottles of this type were found in the Souk excavations in Beirut, with thirteenth-century CE pottery (Jennings 2006:231–232, Figs. 10.11:1, 2; 10.12). Often, the bottles were decorated with applied trails, similar in color to that of the vessel, or of a different, usually darker color than that of the vessel. The necks have thick walls and the trails are thick, uneven and usually carelessly applied. In some cases, only the 'negatives' of the trails showed where they had been placed before falling or breaking off.

1. L387, B3272. Beaker. Base and wall fragment. Colorless glass with light yellowish tinge, covered with milky weathering, iridescence and pitting. High pushed-in base, wall decorated with protruding prunts, three preserved. Base D 5 cm.

2. L448, B4125. Beaker. Base and beginning of body. Colorless glass with yellowish tinge covered with silver weathering and iridescence. Ring base, slightly concave bottom with pontil scar. Six mold-blown facets on body. Base D 4 cm.

3. L118, B1046. Bottle. Rim and neck fragment. Bluish glass covered with milky weathering, iridescence and severe pitting. Inferior glass with many bubbles and black impurities. Out-splayed rim, unevenly pinched on one side to create a funnel, cylindrical neck. Careless workmanship. Rim D 4.5 cm.

4. L426, B4097 + L435, B4095. Bottle. Rim and neck fragment, mended from two baskets. Light bluish glass covered with weathering, iridescence and severe pitting. Low quality glass with black impurities. Out-splayed rim, unevenly pinched on one side to create a very small funnel, almost closed and cylindrical neck, tapering toward the body. Rim D 4 cm.

### RAW GLASS CHUNKS (Fig. 3)

Three raw glass chunks were found on Me-Raguza Street, all in L429, which is related to the foundation bed of a late Ottoman-period road. All are of light greenish glass of clear fabric and have a triangular section. They are free of debris and meant for melting in a glassmaker's furnace. Raw glass chunks were found in larger quantities in previous excavations in Yafo, for



Fig. 3. Glass chunks.

example on Ruslan Street (Ouahnouna, forthcoming). The chunks found at the site and those discovered on Ruslan Street indicate the existence of a glass industry in this part of Yafo.

### CONCLUSIONS

While modest in size, this glass assemblage contributes important information regarding the function of this part of Yafo during the Roman and Crusader periods and provides additional evidence for glass production in the vicinity.

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