

JERUSALEM, HA-NEVI'IM STREET: THE GLASS FINDS

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The 2007 and 2008 excavations on 25 Ha-Nevi'im Street in Jerusalem yielded several hundred glass fragments (see Sulimani 2020).¹ The earliest finds from the site are a cast bowl from the late Hellenistic–Early Roman periods (Fig. 1:1), and several specimens typical of the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods (Fig. 1:2–4). However, most of the glass finds date from the Byzantine period (Figs. 2–6). Additionally, a few pieces are characteristic of the Mamluk period (Fig. 7:1–3), and many are attributed to the late Ottoman and modern-day periods (Fig. 7:4–9).

The Late Hellenistic–Early Roman Periods

The earliest glass find from the site is a rim fragment of a cast grooved bowl (Fig. 1:1). This bowl belongs to a large group of cast bowls with interior horizontal grooves, associated with the late Hellenistic–Early Roman periods. Variants differ in shape (shallow or deep bowl), as well as in number and location of the interior grooves; however, as the fragment preserved at the site is quite small, it is unclear whether it had additional grooves farther down the wall.

Bowls of this type were widespread in Syria-Palestine, and numerous examples, with a varying number of grooves, were documented in the region, for example, in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City (Gorin-Rosen 2003b; 2006a).

The Late Roman–Early Byzantine Periods

The vessels under this category include a base (Fig. 1:2) of a 'beaker with a solid base', typical of the fourth century CE, as well as a base with tooled 'toes' (Fig. 1:3), and bases with an applied wound trail (Fig. 1:4; and another from L139, not illustrated); the latter two types are characteristic of the fourth–fifth centuries CE.

Vessels resembling these three types were discovered, for example, at Khirbat el-Ni'ana, in an assemblage ascribed to the fourth–early fifth centuries CE (Gorin-Rosen and Katsnelson 2007:88–93, 108, Figs. 7; 8:3–9; 15:3; 31, and see therein discussions and additional examples).

¹ This paper was completed in September 2016 and revised in June 2020. The glass finds were restored by Adrienne Ganor, drawn by Carmen Hersch and photographed by Clara Amit. The article was edited by Dafnah Strauss.

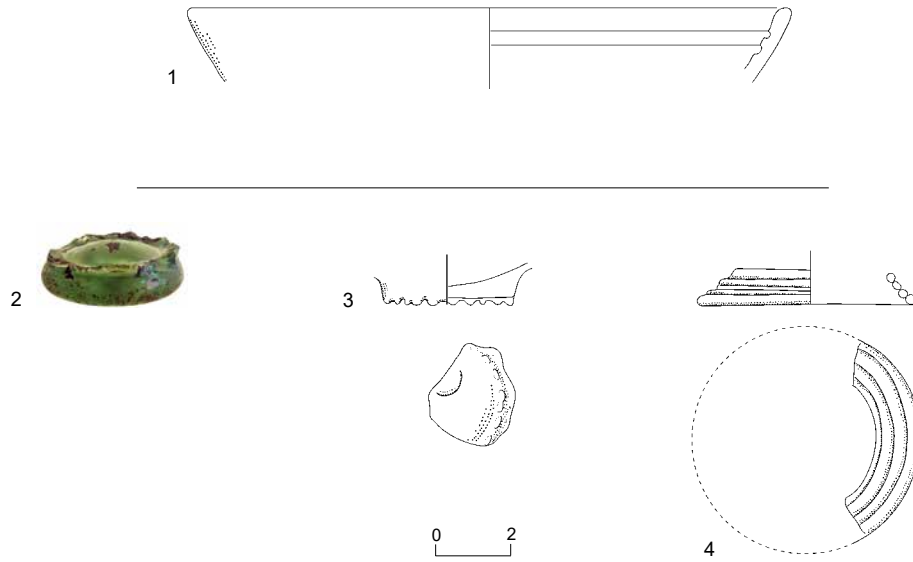


Fig. 1. Glass finds from the late Hellenistic–Early Roman periods, and the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods from Areas A and B.

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	A	150	1145	Thick-walled cast bowl with a flattened rim (D 150–160 mm). On the interior are two horizontal grooves, the top one situated 7 mm below the rim. Light olive green. Iridescence. Very small fragment
2	A	107	1024	Solid base (D 38 mm) with a pontil scar on the base underside. Green. Weathering; iridescence
3	A	153	1169	Base (D 35–40 mm) with irregular tooled toes, six of which are partially intact. Possibly a pontil scar on the base underside. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence; pitting
4	B	309	2030	Base (broken) with a trail wound at least four times around its perimeter (D 60 mm). Light green. Iridescence

Bases and upper parts of beakers with a solid bases (as illustrated in Fig. 1:2) were discovered in Jerusalem and its environs, for example, on the City of David spur (Ariel 1990:152, 161, Fig. 32: GL76; Gutreich 2013: Fig. 12.4:67–70), in Tomb 483 at the Dominus Flevit compound on the Mount of Olives (Bagatti and Milik 1958:146, Fig. 34:20, 21), at Khirbat Ka'kul (Gorin-Rosen 2006b:108, Fig. 1:3), at Ras Abu Ma'aruf (Gorin-Rosen 1999:207, Fig. 1:4–6), at Khirbat Ṭabaliya (Gorin-Rosen 2000:83*, Fig. 2:7) and at Beit Šafafa (Gorin-Rosen 2003a:227, Fig. 28:1, 2).

Bases with tooled 'toes' (as illustrated in Fig. 1:3) appeared from the second century CE through the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods, and probably supported bowls, beakers, bottles and jugs. A complete beaker with a similar 'toe base' was retrieved from a cave in Nahariya, which was in use from the late second to the mid-fourth centuries CE (Barag 1968:398–400, Photo No. 9). A base with tooled 'toes', dated from the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods, was unearthed on the City of David spur (Gutreich 2013: Fig. 12.4:65). Similar bases were discovered in Late Roman-period contexts in other parts of the country, for example, at 'Akko (Avshalom-Gorni 1999: Fig. 22:3), at

Jalame (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988:59–60, Fig. 4-22:161), in the hippodrome at Shekhem-Nablus (Magen 2005: Pl. 41:15) and in Areas CC and KK at Caesarea Maritima (Israeli 2008:378–379, 404, Nos. 100–102).

Bases with an applied wound trail (as illustrated in Fig. 1:4) probably supported bowls and jugs, as evident from documented complete vessels (e.g., Crowfoot 1957: Fig. 94:13; Fleming 1999:95, Fig. E.44). Only few bases with an applied wound trail are known from the Jerusalem area; these include examples discovered in a dwelling cave at Et-Ṭur on the Mount of Olives (Winter 2000: Fig. 10:4), in the Old City's Jewish Quarter (Gorin-Rosen 2003b: Pl. 15.9: G104) and in the cemetery on Sallah ed-Din Street (Winter 2015:89, Fig. 3:4).

The Byzantine Period

The lion's share of the glass finds from Areas A, B and D date from the Byzantine period. These finds comprise vessels and artifacts of types characteristic of the fifth/sixth–seventh centuries CE (Figs. 2–4). The vessels include bowls and bottles adorned with a blue or turquoise-color trail, wound horizontally once or several times around and/or below the rim (Fig. 2:1–9); wineglasses with a hollow ring base, some with a single-bead stem (Fig. 2:10); plain bottles with a rounded or an infolded rim; bowl-shaped lamps, some with handles (Fig. 3:1) or with a wick tube installed at the floor center (Fig. 3:2); and stemmed lamps with a hollow stem (Fig. 3:3, 4) or a solid one (Fig. 3:5). The artifacts include windowpanes (Fig. 3:6–8), tesserae and tiles (Figs. 4–6).

Examples of many of the vessels and artifacts mentioned under this category have been published extensively from excavations in Jerusalem and its environs (e.g., Gorin-Rosen 1999; 2000; 2005; Winter 2013; 2014; 2017; 2019), and therefore only the less common specimens are highlighted below.

Vessel Adorned with Pinched Trails.— A small body fragment is adorned with turquoise-colored pinched trails (Fig. 2:11), creating a 'bifurcated' or 'spectacles' pattern. This decoration was widespread in Syria-Palestine during the seventh–eighth centuries CE, particularly on bottles (Winter 2019:45, Type BTpt). Examples from the Jerusalem area include a complete bottle from a tomb at Bethany, adorned with both a pinched-trail decoration on its body and a thin trail wound on the neck (Harden 1965:52–53, Fig. 11: top left). Small, curved wall-fragments adorned with pinched-trail decoration were discovered, for example, in a complex north of Damascus Gate (Winter 2013: Fig. 21:6), at Khirbat Ṭabaliya (Gorin-Rosen 2000:87*–88*, Fig. 2:22) and at Khirbat 'Adasa (Gorin-Rosen 2008:126–127, Fig. 2:14).

Lamp with a Solid Multi-Bead Stem.— The solid multi-bead stem (Fig. 3:5) belonged to a stemmed lamp. Solid beaded stems were much scarcer than the hollow and partly-solid variants. Examples were excavated, for example, at the Teddy Kollek Park compound, southwest of Jerusalem's Jaffa Gate (Winter 2019:128, Fig. 5.3.3:28) and in various contexts at Bet She'an (Zori 1967: Fig. 11:2; Hadad 1998: Fig. 2:18–20).

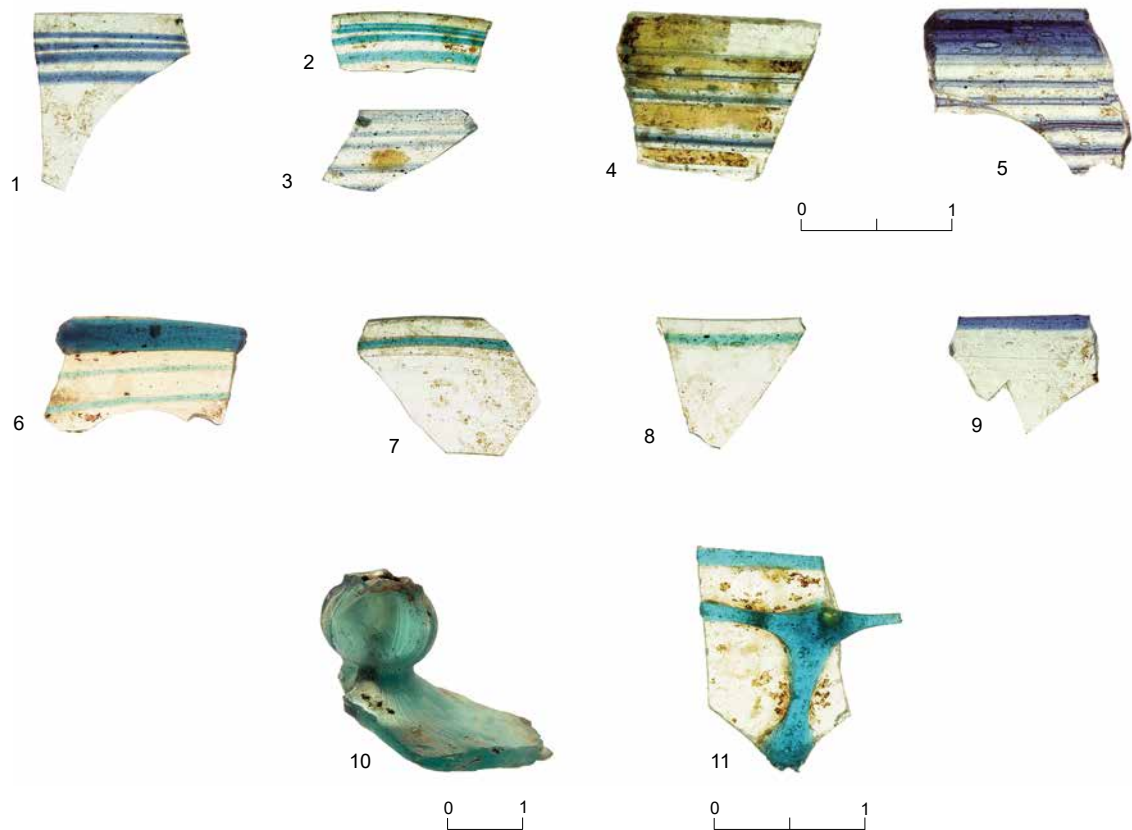


Fig. 2. Glass finds from the Byzantine period from Areas A, B and D.

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	D	707	4037	Rounded rim (D 100 mm) adorned with a thin blue trail wound four times and fused-in below the rim. Colorless. Weathering
2	A	112	1041	Rounded rim (D 80 mm) adorned with a turquoise-color trail wound several times and fused-in on and below the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence
3	A	138	1136	Rounded rim (D 80 mm) adorned with a thin blue trail wound and fused-in on and below the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence
4	D	708	4033	Rounded rim adorned with a blue trail fused-in below the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence. Tiny fragment
5	D	708	4033	Rounded rim adorned with a blue trail fused-in on and below the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence. Tiny fragment
6	B	329	2093	Rounded rim (D 70 mm) adorned with a turquoise-color trail wound on and below the rim. Colorless with a greenish tinge. Weathering; iridescence
7	A	112	1041	Rounded, slightly incurved rim (D 90–100 mm) adorned with a turquoise-color trail wound once and fused-in below the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence
8	A	112	1041	Rounded, slightly out-splayed rim (D 80 mm) adorned with a turquoise-color trail wound once and fused-in below the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence
9	D	708	4033	Rounded rim (D 70 mm) adorned with a blue trail wound once and fused-in on the rim. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence
10	B	328	2086	Wineglass with a hollow ring base (broken) and a single-bead stem. Greenish blue. Weathering; iridescence
11	A	127	1088	Tiny body fragment adorned with turquoise-colored pinched trails. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence

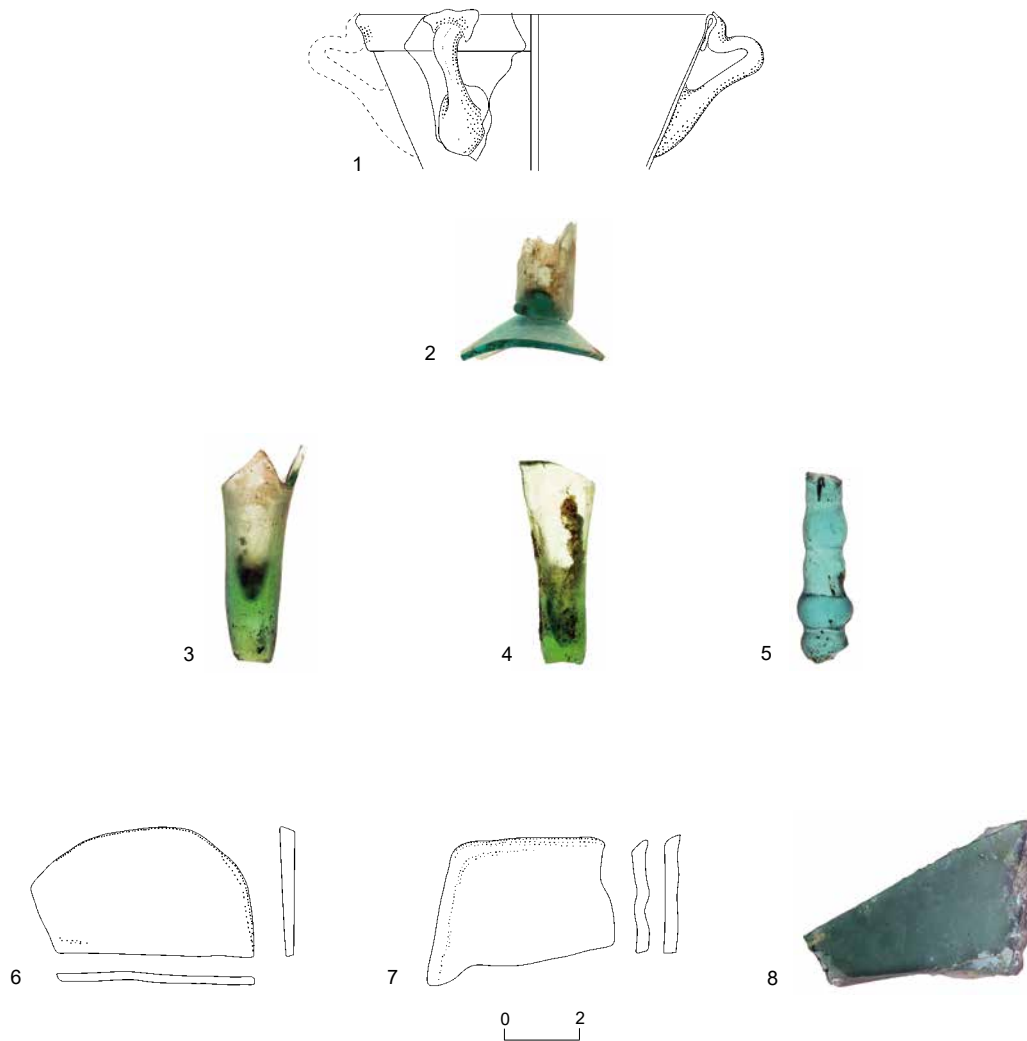


Fig. 3. Glass lamps and windowpanes from the Byzantine period from Areas A and B.

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	B	332	2099	Thin-walled bowl-shaped lamp with a small part of its hollow outfolded rim (D c. 100 mm) with one handle (of three) intact. Greenish blue. Weathering; iridescence
2	B	329	2092	Bowl-shaped lamp with a wick tube installed at the floor center. Greenish blue. Weathering; iridescence
3	B	329	2092	Lamp with a hollow conical stem, cut-off diagonally at its bottom. Green. Weathering; iridescence
4	A	152	1146	Lamp with a hollow conical stem, cut-off diagonally at its bottom. Olive green. Weathering; iridescence
5	B	323	2075	Lamp with a solid multi-bead stem broken on both ends. Greenish blue. Weathering; iridescence
6	A	146	1148	Windowpane fragment (Th. 1–4 mm) with a rounded wavy edge. Greenish blue. Weathering; iridescence
7	A	146	1148	Windowpane fragment (Th. 2–4 mm) with one rounded wavy edge, and a chipped-off edge. Greenish blue. Weathering; iridescence
8	A	146	1148	Windowpane fragment (Th. 3–5 mm) with a chipped-off edge. Greenish blue; bubbly. Weathering; iridescence

Glass Tesserae.— The excavation yielded an exceptionally large amount of glass tesserae (Figs. 4–6:1, 2). Some 700 cubes were scattered in numerous contexts, 450 of which originated in Area A, 230 in Area D and the rest in Areas B and E.

The tesserae were made of opaque and translucent glass of numerous hues. Most of the tesserae are opaque, mostly of various shades of green, yellow and blue. Large quantities of nearly-exclusively opaque green and turquoise-color tesserae were recovered in L709 (Fig. 4:2, 3). The translucent specimens are mostly colorless, blue, greenish blue, green, olive green and light brown (e.g., Fig. 5:2, 5), and a few are red (Fig. 4:4). Most of the tesserae were shaped as cubes, yet some were irregularly cut, displaying a triangular cross-section or a curved edge (Fig. 4:6–8).

A large proportion of the tesserae are of the gold-glass type, comprising a thin gold foil flanked by two layers of light-colored translucent glass, mostly light brown or olive green (Figs. 5:3, 6; 6:1, 2). On some specimens the gold leaf has separated from the cube, and on others the weathering of the gold leaf has created a pattern of a quadrangular frame (Fig. 6:2).

Colorful glass tesserae and gold-glass cubes were discovered in several sites in the Jerusalem area, for example, at the compound of the Jerusalem International Convention Center, particularly in Areas B1 and B2, where the tesserae probably adorned a church or a chapel (Gorin-Rosen 2005:208). Remains of a geometric panel from a wall mosaic, with colorful and gold-glass tesserae still embedded in the plaster layer, were uncovered in one of the churches at Bethany (Saller 1957:42–43, 326–327).

Glass cubes in an assortment of colors, as well as gold-glass tesserae, served mostly to adorn wall mosaics, and have been discovered in many sites in the eastern Mediterranean basin, particularly ecclesiastical structures dated to the fifth–eighth centuries CE. Rich wall mosaics adorned opulent edifices, and with their abundance of gold-glass tesserae played a major role in the experience of church and mosque worshippers (Winter 2019:88–89, Types TESgl, TESgg).

The tessera corpus from Ha-Nevi'im Street, particularly from Area A, is remarkable both in its abundance and in the assortment of colors and shapes it displays. Also extraordinary is the proportionally large number of gold-glass cubes. These finds are probably the remains of a large wall

Fig. 4 ▶

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	D	709	4031	69 tesserae of opaque and translucent glass, mostly green and yellow, some triangular-sectioned. Weathering
2	D	709	4041	84 Tesserae of opaque glass, mostly of green and yellow hues. Weathering
3	D	709	4039	75 Tesserae of opaque glass in green and yellow hues, some triangular-sectioned. Weathering
4	A	127	1068	25 tesserae of opaque and translucent glass in various colors; one is triangular-sectioned. Weathering
5	A	162	1175	50 tesserae of opaque and translucent glass in various colors; a few are curved on one side (see Fig. 4:6) or triangular-sectioned. Weathering
6	A	162	1175	Opaque tesserae with curved edge. Weathering
7	D	709	4039	Opaque, triangular-sectioned tesserae. Weathering
8	D	709	4031	Opaque, triangular-sectioned tesserae. Weathering

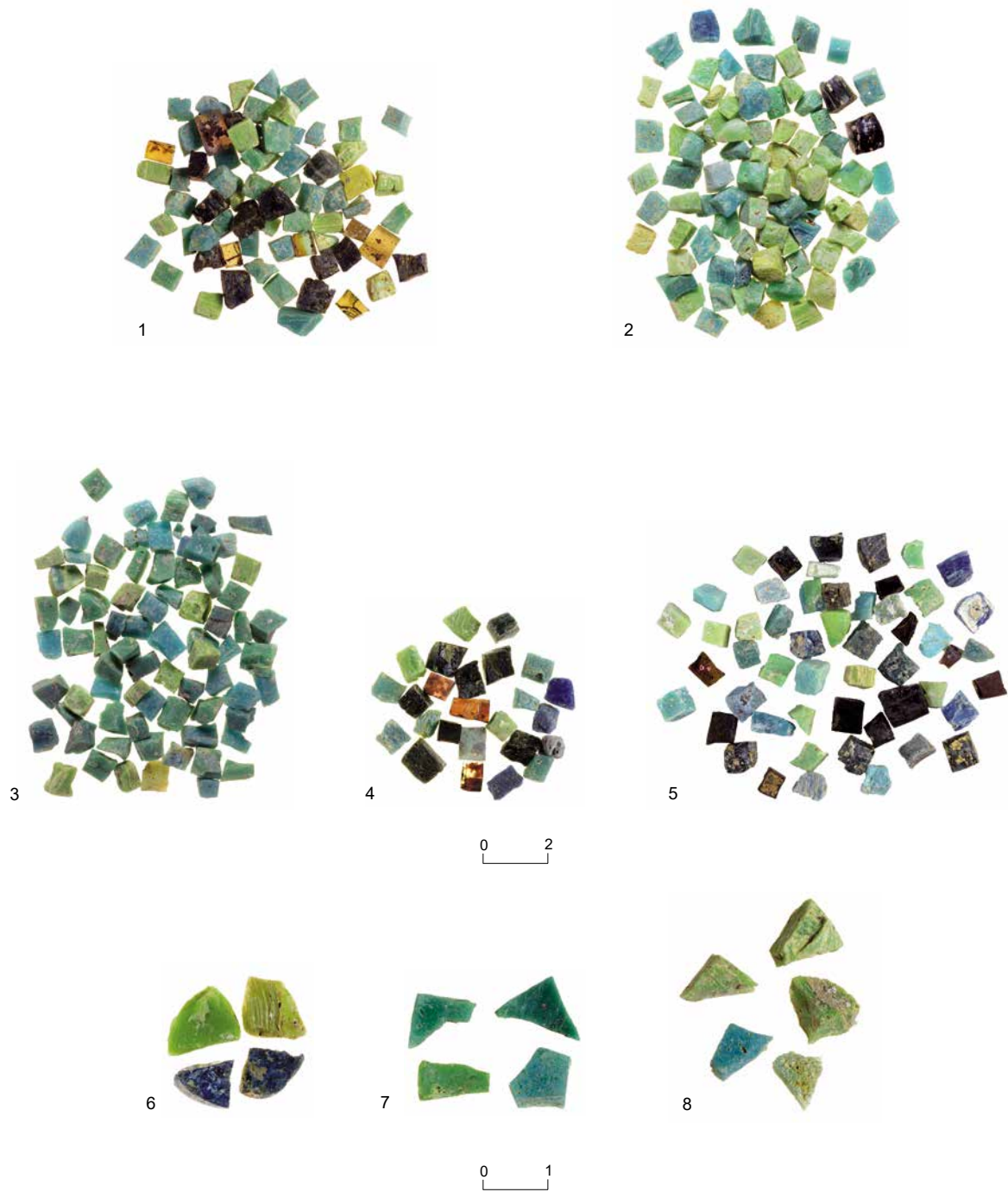


Fig. 4. Glass tesserae from Areas A and D.

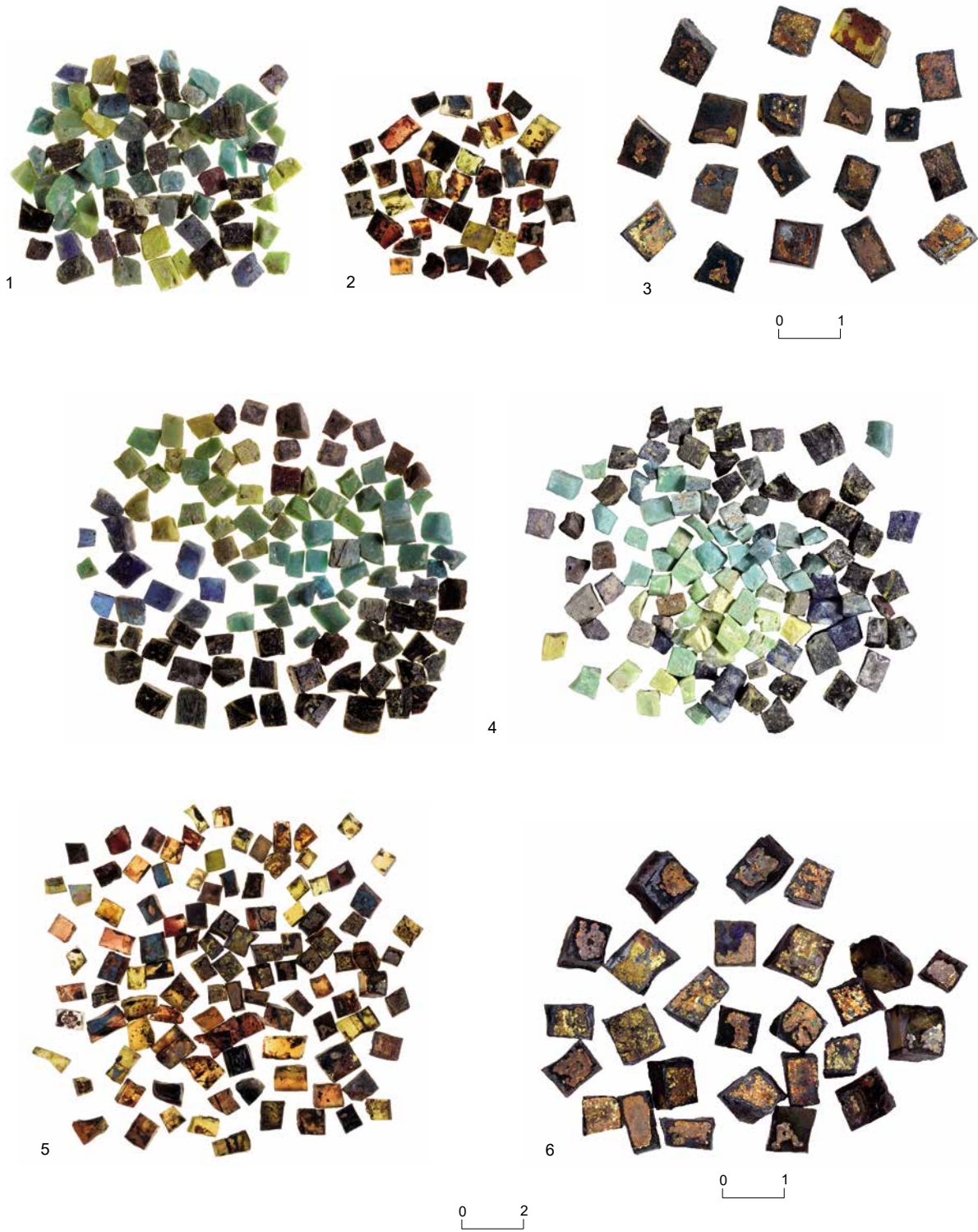


Fig. 5. Glass tesserae from Area A.

◀ Fig. 5

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	A	162	1174	80 tesserae of opaque glass in various colors. Weathering
2	A	162	1174	39 tesserae of translucent glass in various colors. Weathering
3	A	162	1174	18 translucent gold-glass tesserae. Weathering
4	A	115	1037	107 opaque tesserae of various colors. Weathering
5	A	115	1037	109 translucent tesserae, of which 74 are gold-glass cubes (see Fig. 5:6). Weathering
6	A	115	1037	74 Gold-glass tesserae. Weathering

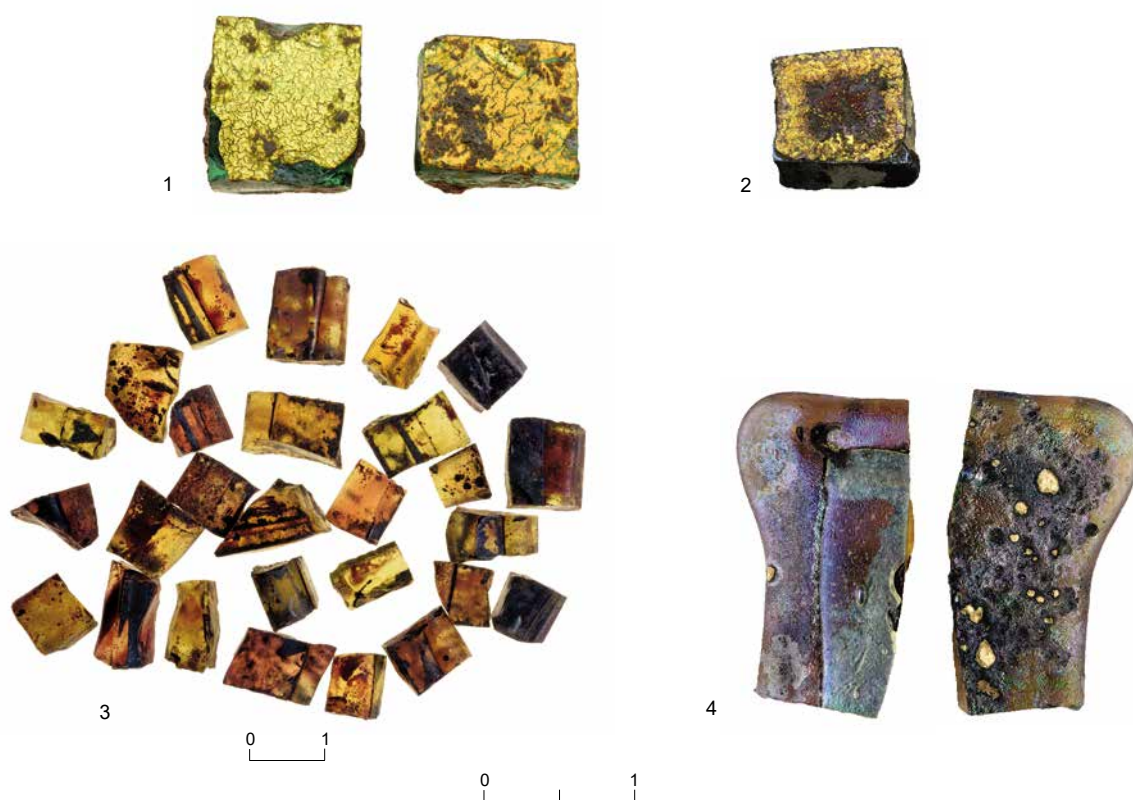


Fig. 6. Glass tesserae and tiles from Areas A, D and E.

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	E	900	5001	Two translucent green gold-glass tesserae, with the gold foil well-preserved. Weathering; iridescence
2	D	708	4030	Gold-glass tessera. The weathering of the gold leaf created a pattern of a quadrangle frame. Weathering; iridescence
3	A	115	1037	Glass tile fragments with a rounded edge and a groove. Translucent light brown. Weathering; iridescence
4	D	707	4029	Glass tile fragment (front and back) with a pinched corner. Translucent light brown. Weathering; iridescence

mosaic, possibly of a religious nature suggested by the numerous gold-glass cubes, which adorned a public, possibly ecclesiastical, building.

Tiles.— Fragments of translucent light brown tiles (Fig. 6:3), which possibly bore a gold-leaf pattern, were either used as is or cut into cubes. Some tiles have their edges intact, and others have a pinched corner, evidence of their handling with a sharp tool (Fig. 6:4).

Gold-glass tiles may have been installed as borders of a framed wall decoration or set in furniture and in architectural elements (e.g., altars and tables) in ecclesiastical structures (Gorin-Rosen 2015:104–110; Winter 2019:89–90, Type GGT). Very few gold-glass tiles have been discovered to date in the Jerusalem area; one was unearthed at Umm Ṭuba, about 5 km south of the city, among remains associated with a built complex, probably a monastery, dated to the sixth–seventh centuries CE (Winter 2014: Fig. 16:12).

The Mamluk Period

The glass finds under this category comprise several vessels made of translucent purple glass, including two rim fragments from Area B (Fig. 7:1, 2) and a base from Area E (Fig. 7:3).

Purple Vessels Adorned with Marvered Patterns.— The two rim fragments of translucent purple glass are adorned with a thin opaque-white trail wound and marvered on and below the rim (Fig. 7:1, 2). The two fragments, probably of the same vessel, belonged to a bowl(s) characteristic of the Mamluk period.

Vessels bearing marvered decoration were widespread in the Near East during the Mamluk period and were abundant in Jerusalem. Purple vessels adorned with marvered white trails were discovered in Jerusalem and its vicinity, for example, in the Old City's Jewish Quarter (e.g., Katsnelson 2009: Fig. 5:2, 3; Brosh 2016; Ouahnouna 2016), and at Khirbat Ka'kul (Gorin-Rosen 2006b:109, Fig. 2:6, 7). Similarly decorated purple bowls were discovered in Mamluk-period glass assemblages in other parts of the country, for example, at Revadim (Katsnelson 2012: Fig. 12:3, 4), on Ha-Palmah Street in Ramla (Gorin-Rosen 2009: Fig. 13:1–3) and at Ḥorbat Z̄erifin, in Stratum VII, dated to the thirteenth–sixteenth centuries CE (Kohn-Tavor 2008: Fig. 5).

The Late Ottoman and Modern-Day Periods

The glass finds under this category include various vessels and colorful bracelets, characteristic of the late Ottoman and modern-day periods (Fig. 7:4–9).

Various Vessels.— The vessels under this category include a bead-stemmed goblet (Fig. 7:4), a large cylindrical bottle (Fig. 7:5), a six-side bottle (Fig. 7:6) and an oval stamp (Fig. 7:7). The stamp bears a partial inscription, which reads: “ARMAND ... & ... BORD...”. It may be attributed to the nineteenth–twentieth centuries CE, and it was most probably attached to a glass wine bottle from

one of the wineries in the Bordeaux region of France. Similar wine-bottle stamps were discovered in the past decade on Roslan Street and at the Greek Market in Jaffa (Arbel, Hater and Yechielov 2012; Arbel 2016).²



Fig. 7. Glass finds from the Mamluk, late Ottoman and modern-day periods from Areas A, B and E.

² The glass finds were studied by Brigitte Ouahnouna

◀ Fig. 7.

No.	Area	Locus	Basket	Description
1	B	304	2010	Bowl with a rounded rim (D 110 mm) adorned with a thin opaque-white trail wound and marvered on and below the rim. Purple. Weathering; iridescence
2	B	304	2028	Bowl with a rounded rim (D 100–110 mm) adorned with a thin opaque-white trail wound and marvered on and below the rim. Purple. Weathering; iridescence
3	E	903	5007	Hollow, pushed-in ring base (D 45 mm). Purple. Weathering; iridescence
4	E	902	5006	Goblet with a beaded stem and ribbed bowl. Light purple. Weathering; iridescence
5	E	904	5009	Large bottle with a seam evident along its length. Bluish green. Weathering; iridescence
6	A	116	1046	Six-side bottle with a cylindrical neck. Colorless. Weathering; iridescence
7	A	116	1048	Thick oval stamp bearing an inscription, reading: “ARMAND ... & ... BORD...”. Green
8	A	141	1141	Bracelet (D 50 mm) with a low D-shaped cross-section, and unevenly sized and shaped patches. Nearly opaque dark turquoise-color; colors of patches undiscernible due to weathering. Weathering; iridescence
9	B	302	2009	Bracelet (D 60 mm) with a pointed cross-section. The inner bezel is translucent greenish blue, the outer surface is opaque green and yellow with orange patches and a thin twisted black-and-white trail on top. Weathering

Bracelets.— The colorful bracelets recorded at the site (Fig. 7:8, 9) were probably produced in Hebron in the nineteenth century CE. Similar bracelets are kept in the collections of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem (Spaer 2001:204, Pl. 35:477, 481).

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The glass finds from the excavation on Ha-Nevi'im Street are associated mostly with the Late Roman and Byzantine periods (Stratum II) and the modern era (Stratum I). Additionally, Area A yielded a single fragment from the late Hellenistic–Early Roman periods, while Areas B and E yielded Mamluk-period specimens.

The glass finds from the Late Roman–early Byzantine periods, i.e., the fourth–fifth centuries CE, are characteristic of these periods. Nevertheless, the base with tooled ‘toes’ (Fig. 1:3) is noteworthy, as bases of this type scarcely appear in Jerusalem and its environs.

The glass finds from the Byzantine period, i.e., the fifth/sixth–seventh centuries CE, make up most of the assemblage from Ha-Nevi'im Street (Figs. 2–6). These finds include bowls, wineglasses, bottles, lamps, windowpanes, tesserae and tiles, and supplement the growing body of published material representing the local glass corpus of Jerusalem from this period. The large quantities of windowpanes and tesserae recovered at the site corroborate the excavator's supposition that the large structure in Area A dates from the Byzantine period, and that it served as a public, possibly ecclesiastical, building (see Sulimani 2020).

Many marvered vessels, as well as industrial waste of their production, have been discovered in Jerusalem over the years, suggesting that the city incorporated a center for their manufacture

during the Mamluk period (Hasson 1983:111–112; Carboni 2001a:291–293; 2001b:141–144; Brosh 2016:364–365). The bowl fragments from the site on Ha-Nevi'im Street (Fig. 7:1, 2) augment the growing data establishing the city as a major production center of purple vessels adorned with white trail marvering.

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