

THE GLASS FINDS

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The salvage excavation yielded 96 fragmentary glass pieces, the majority dating to the eighth–tenth centuries CE. The finds are mainly bottles, as well as a number of bowls and oil lamps. A small fragment of a typical Ottoman decorated bracelet was found on the surface and meager remains of glass production activities were revealed. Most of the fragments are simple vessels of bright greenish-blue, greenish or colorless glass. Some of the fragments are deformed, and many are of low quality fabric. Beside common vessel types, resembling Early Islamic examples from previous excavations at Ramla (Gorin-Rosen 2008, 2010a, 2010b), two fragments (Fig. 1:1, 9) are particularly noteworthy.

“*Trick*” *Bottle* (Fig 1:1) is a simple version of the so-called *Kuttrolf* class. Unlike similar bottles, usually with multiple tubes, this piece has only two vertical tubes. The tubes were pinched out on both sides of the body by pressing the walls until they joined to form an oval arrangement in the middle. The function of such vessels is unclear; the tubes might have been used for amusement or decoration. A closest complete parallel, with four tubes and two handles at the top, is found in the Israel Museum and is attributed to the third–fourth centuries CE (Israeli 2003: Cat. No. 388). Meager examples from local excavations, including a four-tube handleless bottle from Ramla (Gorin-Rosen 2008:47, Pl. 1:5), derive from contexts dated not later than the eighth century CE. This may indicate that the bottle from the Israel Museum, as well as another example discussed therein are of similar date.

The incised bowl or large beaker illustrated in Fig. 1:9 shows intricate linear design on its thin walls, below the rounded rim. Vessels thus decorated do not often occur at Ramla, and it is possible that it was not a local production. A large group of colorless thin-walled beakers with a similar style of decoration is from the early eleventh century CE Serçe Limani shipwreck (Kitson-Mimmack 2009:41–64). A few parallels from Israel include the tenth–eleventh century CE beaker from Yoqne‘am, possibly originating from the Syro-Egyptian region (Lester 1996:211, Fig. XVII.10:6).

The bottle repertoire from the site is typical of the eighth–tenth centuries CE in Ramla. Moreover, several fragments date no later than the mid-eighth century CE. Four small bottles with in-folded rims, short-ridged or plain necks and a concave base (Fig. 1:2–5) display fabric and workmanship characteristic of the ‘Umayyad period. A similar date may be suggested for a bottle with a small triangular body and high-kicked base (Fig. 1:6), found alongside the single coin unearthed in the excavation, dating to 710–720 CE.



Fig. 1. Glass finds.

◀ Fig. 1

No.	Locus	Basket	Description
1	162	2084	Bottle with two tubes; bright greenish-blue; mended; milky-silver weathering
2	146	1191	Small bottle with in-folded rim and horizontally ridged neck; colorless with greenish-blue tinge; crust of silver weathering on interior
3	137	1194	Small bottle with in-folded rim and horizontally ridged neck; colorless with greenish-blue tinge; crust of silver weathering on interior
4	153, 147, 137, 146	1218, 1220, 1134, 1191	Group of small bottles with in-folded rim and plain or ridged neck; colorless with greenish or greenish-blue tinge (left to right)
5	146	1191	Small bottle with concave base thickened in the center; colorless with greenish-blue tinge; crust of silver weathering on interior
6	141	1190	Small bottle with triangular body and high-kicked base; almost colorless with bluish tinge; crust of silver weathering
7	607	2069	Small indented tube; colorless with bluish tinge; crust of milky weathering
8	116	1069	Bowl with rounded flaring rim and ridged body; colorless with bluish tinge; iridescence
9	607	2058	Bowl or beaker with rounded rim and incised linear design on body; colorless with bluish tinge; iridescence
10	121	1055	Bowl or beaker with vertical walls and thickened flattened base; bright greenish blue; patches of silver weathering; iridescent film
11	139	1155	Bowl with vertical walls and thickened flattened base; light greenish; iridescent film; bubbly; mended; base D: 12 cm
12	607	2058	Bottle with upward rounded rim; colorless(?); mended; crust of black and silver weathering
13	604	2083	Bottle with bulged neck; pale greenish; crust of black and silver weathering
14	601	2011	Two small chunks of raw glass; greenish-blue
15	603	2040	Stone with glass layer; bright greenish-blue glass L 7.2 cm, W 4.5 cm, Th 2 cm

A small indented tube (Fig. 1:7) resembles the eighth-century CE parallel from Ramla (Pollak 2007:128–129, Fig. 11:74), but may be of later, Abbasid, date. Additional fragments characteristic of the Abbasid period includes a delicate bowl with slanting walls and a horizontal ridge on its body (Fig. 1:8) and two bowls of different sizes with cylindrical walls and flattened bases thickened at the bottoms' edges (Fig. 1:10, 11). Both shapes are well known from eighth–tenth century CE levels at Ramla (Gorin-Rosen 2010a: Fig. 22:1, 2; Gorin-Rosen 2010b: Fig. 22:1, 4; Jackson-Tal 2008: Figs. 6.109:9–14, 6.111:1–8).

A bottle with an upward rounded rim and a black-silver weathering crust may be a late Abbasid version of this type (Fig. 1:12). It was found together with the incised bowl/beaker (above, Fig. 1:9) from the tenth–early eleventh centuries CE. A small fragment of a vessel with a bulged neck and wide, spread out shoulder (Fig. 1:13) may belong to a globular bottle of the same date.

Most of the bottles and bowls recovered at the site were probably produced in one of the local workshops. A stone piece coated with a flat layer of raw glass (Fig. 1:15), as well as two small chunks (Fig. 1:14), might have been debris from a glass-working furnace, that operated somewhere in the area. As they were found in the same

contexts as the latest vessels in the corpus (Fig 1:9, 12, 13), they may be connected to glass activities dating to the latest phases of the ‘Abbasid–beginning of the Faṭimid periods.

Despite the small number of diagnostic fragments, this group comprises an important contribution to our data on glass from Early Islamic Ramla, particularly in regard to the presence of Umayyad-period vessels within the context of the city.

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