

APPENDIX: THE GLASS FINDS FROM RAMLA, THE ORTHODOX SCHOOL

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The salvage excavation near the Orthodox School in Ramla yielded some 30 fragments of glass finds, most of which were recovered from the refuse pit (L102, L109). The earliest vessel is a bottle adorned with a blue trail wound around its neck, typical of the sixth–seventh centuries CE (Fig. 1:1).

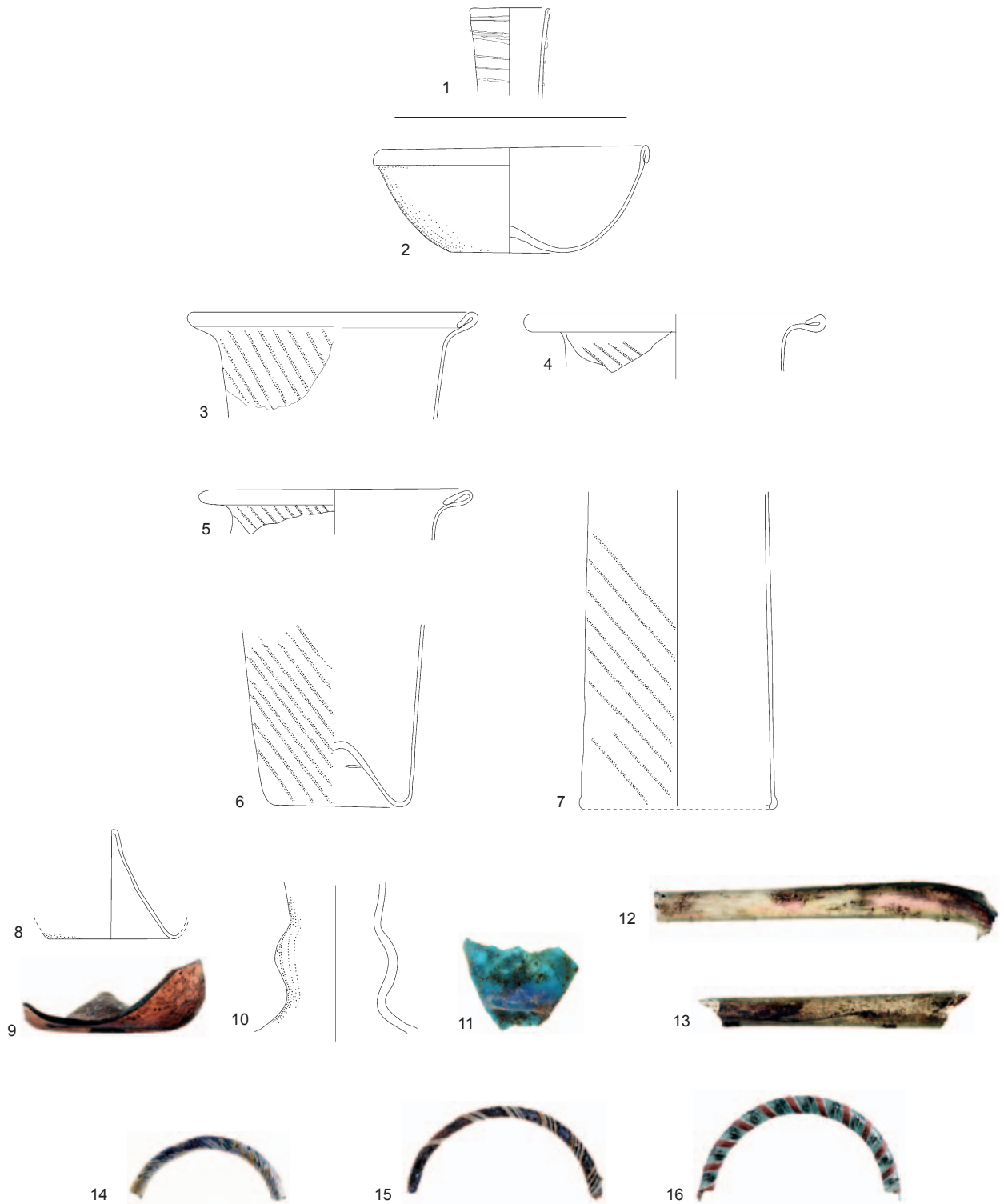
Nearly all the finds from the excavation are characteristic of the Mamluk period; they are made of low-quality glass and include bowls, beakers, bottles and bracelets. A small bowl has an outfolded rim (Fig. 1:2); no published analogous examples have been found. However, small plain bowls of another type were uncovered in a yet-unpublished Mamluk-period assemblage from Zafed (Permit No. A-4210).

Several fragments belonged to at least three cylindrical beakers with a flaring infolded rim and a pushed-in bottom, adorned with mold-blown shallow diagonal ribbing (Fig. 1:3–7). These vessels were generally used as lamps, as some specimens were discovered with a wick tube installed at the floor center. Similar beakers were recovered in another excavation at Ramla (Gorin-Rosen 2009: Fig. 13:9), in Jerusalem's Old City (Gorin-Rosen 2003: Fig. G96), in a yet-unpublished assemblage from Zafed (Permit No. A-4210) and at Ḥama in Syria, where they were dated to the second half of the thirteenth century CE (Riis 1957:49–50, Figs. 122–124).

Other Mamluk-period glass fragments from the refuse pit include pushed-in beaker bottoms (Fig. 1:8, 9), one of which is made of purple glass, a hue characteristic of the period, as well as a thick-walled bottle with a bulged neck (Fig. 1:10).

A small turquoise-colored fragment, adorned with a pinch, probably belonged to a closed vessel (Fig. 1:11). The decoration of vessels with horizontal and vertical pinches was widespread during the seventh–eighth centuries CE, and resurfaced in the Mamluk period. Turquoise-colored vessels adorned with vertical pinches, excavated in Area T in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, were associated with the glass production in the city during the Mamluk period (Brosh 2005:187–188, Fig. 3). Mamluk-period vessels adorned with pinches were also discovered, for example, at Khirbat Ka'kul, north of Jerusalem (Gorin-Rosen 2006:110, Fig. 2:10, 11). A similarly decorated, opaque turquoise-colored fragment was discovered at Ḥama (Riis 1957:47–48, Fig. 114).

Two colorless thin-walled tubes (Fig. 1:12, 13), one of which is curved at one end, may have belonged to spoon-shaped objects, an example of which has been unearthed in a yet-unpublished assemblage from Jerusalem's Old City (Permit No. A-5013). Alternatively, these tubes may be the debris of a blowing process or associated with alchemy.



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Fig. 1. Glass finds.

◀ Fig. 1

No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket	No.	Vessel	Locus	Basket
1	Bottle	109	1022	9	Beaker	102	1008
2	Bowl	109	1022	10	Bottle	102	1008
3	Beaker	102	1008	11	Closed vessel	109	1022
4	Beaker	109	1020	12	Tube	102	1008
5	Beaker	102	1008	13	Tube	102	1008
6	Beaker	109	1022	14	Bracelet	109	1022
7	Beaker	109	1022	15	Bracelet	109	1022
8	Beaker	109	1020	16	Bracelet	110	1019

The excavation also yielded three bracelet fragments: a translucent, deep blue, twisted bracelet (Fig. 1:14); a translucent purple bracelet adorned with an opaque-white spirally-twisted trail (Fig. 1:15); and a translucent colorless bracelet adorned with opaque-white and opaque-red spirally-twisted trails (Fig. 1:16). Similar bracelets, unearthed in the site of Mary's Well at Nazareth, were associated with the Mamluk period (Alexandre 2012:101–103, Fig. 4.10).

Research of Mamluk-period glass has often focused on large, high-quality, luxuriously decorated vessels, such as marvered, gilded and enameled specimens, while plain, low-quality vessels have been generally ignored or neglected. However, this minor glass assemblage from a refuse pit in Ramla presents a significant supplement to our knowledge of plain, locally produced vessels, which are either unadorned (as Fig. 1:2) or only modestly decorated (as Fig. 1:3–7).

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