

(Un)usual? Glass finds from the site of the Hatshepsut Temple in Deir el-Bahari



Abstract: A group of glass shards recovered from the fill of shaft tombs from the Third Intermediate Period on the Upper Terrace of the Temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari consists for the most part of non-diagnostic body vessel fragments. At least 17 different vessels are attested in this assemblage, assigned to the 4th century AD, with only two pieces dated to the 1st–3rd centuries AD. In addition to the vessels, a few windowpanes from the 6th–8th century AD were also found. This small group of glass finds is the first ever to be published from the Temple of Hatshepsut.

Keywords: Roman glass, Deir el-Bahari, Temple of Hatshepsut, monastery of St Phoibammon

Several shaft tombs from the Third Intermediate Period, discovered already in the 19th century on the Upper Terrace of the Temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari, were identified and once again explored between 2000–2010 in the course of restoration work, carried out by the Polish–Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Expedition from the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw (for the results of the exploration of the tombs see Barwik 2003; Szafrński 2005: 226–230; 2007: 246–251; 2008: 274–280;

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2010: 255–264; 2011; 2013: 135–141; 2015). The mixed fill of the tombs yielded a wide range of finds assigned to different historical periods: from the Pharaonic era to the Coptic period.

The Pharaonic assemblage was particularly rich. Over a thousand painted fragments were collected: coffins and cartonnages, inscribed burial shrouds, bandages, numerous small blue-glazed ushebti figurines, wooden openwork elements, stone Canopic jars and pieces of textiles (Szafrński 2001: 196–199; 2007: 245–251; Stupko 2008; Szafrński 2008: 276, 278–280; 2015: 185–189; Makowska

2015; Payraudeau 2018). The second, much smaller group, contained material from the 6th–8th centuries AD, such as tableware and kitchen vessels, and amphorae. Also recorded were objects of daily use: lamps, clothing, mats, textiles, cordage, baskets and leather objects. Other finds include wooden furniture parts, elements of doors and altar screens, wooden stoppers from St Menas ampullas, stamped amphora clay-stoppers, fragments of wall painting, ostraca and numerous papyri (Sankiewicz 2008; Szafrński 2008: 276–277; 2010: 256–259; Czyżewska 2011).

GLASS FINDS

Glass makes up a small percentage of the finds from the tombs. Eighty small fragments were recorded, 65 of these from vessels. Most of the shards are plain, non-diagnostic fragments. The diagnostics, several rims attached to small sections of body walls and a few bases, account for at least 17 different vessels. Almost all of the vessels were free-blown, except for one made by casting. Secure dating on stratigraphic grounds was impossible because of the extensive disturbance of the area and the robbing of the graves. Typology: the shape and fabric, decoration and parallels with dated material from other sites in Egypt were instrumental in dating the pieces.

Three separate chronological groups were distinguished. The first, a very small group, is made up of an aryballos and a pillar-molded bowl, both pieces dated to the 1st–3rd centuries AD. The bulk of the fragments forming the second group, assigned to the 4th century AD, represent

mostly open forms; they clearly dominate the repertoire. There is a prevalence of simply fashioned, everyday tableware, encompassing dishes and bowls of various shapes, sizes and rim profiles. Some fragments are identified as belonging to conical lamps or beakers, others to handleless flasks and bottles, and there is one beaker with a solid base. Very few show applied decoration of contrasting colors. The glass is bluish-green with a few pieces showing green and yellowish-green glass; colorless and purple glass fragments are few and far between. The third group is made up of just 14 small windowpane shards from the 6th–8th centuries AD. Some of the non-diagnostic shards could well belong to vessels from this period, but their identification is far from certain. The glass reveals spherical and elongated bubbles, occasionally blowing spirals and black impurities. In some cases the surfaces are weathered, resulting in a faint iridescence and enamel-like white coat-

ing. All of the vessels and windowpanes, except for the pillar-molded bowl and beaker with solid base, are probably of Egyptian origin.

The assemblage here presented comprises 17 of the best preserved diagnostic shards of vessels and three windowpanes. Nearly all of the fragments were collected from the shaft tombs in the Chapel of Hatshepsut (Tombs VIII, S.7A/82; IX, S.7B/82; X, S.7C/82; XI, S.1/04; XII, S.2/07; XVIII, L.4/08). A few pieces were recovered from the Southern Chapel of

Amun on the Upper Terrace (Tomb XIV, S.5/82), the trial trench in the South Wall of the Vestibule (S.1/06), and an unfinished tomb, revealed in the foundations of the south wall of the Chapel (S.2/06) (for localization of the burial shafts see Szafranski 2007: 246, Fig. 5; 2015: 184, Figs 1 and 3). Tomb VIII (S.7A/82) was certainly the most significant context to produce glass finds (32 fragments). In addition, several shards from broken modern bottles were also noted (S.3/11, No. 1595).

EARLY TO MID-ROMAN GLASS VESSELS

In the Ptolemaic period, the Chapel of Hatshepsut became a place of worship of Amenhotep son of Hapu and Imhotep. The shrine was famous for medical treatment and healing miracles, particularly in the late Ptolemaic–early Roman period (3rd century BC–2nd century AD; see Łajtar 2006: 36–37). The early to mid-Roman period glass should be associated with this cult. Only two pieces were represented but both noteworthy: a very well-known type of cast bowl, the so-called pillar-molded bowl, and an aryballos used as a bath flask.

The thick, light yellowish-green glass body fragment of a deep, hemispherical bowl preserves two prominent elongated ribs below a band with tooling marks, and two narrow wheel-cut horizontal grooves on the interior of the lower body [Fig. 1:1]. Although pillar-molded bowls originated in the Eastern Mediterranean, they became standard in the entire Roman Empire during the 1st century AD (for a discussion of pillar-molded bowls see Jennings 2006: 37–42). The most likely

source of the pillar-molded bowl from the tomb is the Syro-Palestinian region. Sites in Egypt have not produced much in the way of bowls of this kind despite a large-scale production. There are two exceptions to this rule: Berenike and Quseir al-Qadim. At Berenike, a visible concentration was observed (Kucharczyk 2011a: Figs 9-6:7, 9-17, 9-20:38, 9-28 and 9-30:62–64, and references to earlier publications) and the same can be said of Quseir al-Qadim (ancient Myos Hormos; see Meyer 1992: 17–18, Pls 1:1–22 and 2:23–25; Peacock 2011: 61, Fig. 7.4:37–43). Such a significant presence is connected with a strong overseas trade in a variety of commodities, including luxury goods like glass, between the Mediterranean and South Arabia, East Africa, and India (Kucharczyk 2017). Finds of pillar-molded bowls have been forthcoming from stations and small fortlets or *praesidia* in the Eastern Desert: Maximianon (modern Wakalat al-Zarqâ), Krokodilô (modern al-Muwayh), and Kainé Latomia (modern Umm Balad), as well as Didymoi

(modern Khashm el-Minayh, see Brun 2011: 215–216, Fig. 261:1–5). Several examples are also known from Karanis and Armant (Harden 1936: 99–101, 118–119, Pl. XIV:310), and Tell el-Balamun (Spencer 1996: 18, Pl. 87:20). Other pieces came to light at the Kom el-Dikka site in Alexandria (personal observation) and Marina el-Alamein on the Mediterranean coast (Kucharczyk 2005: 94–95, Fig. 1:7; 2010b: 115–116, 127, Figs 1:1, 9:1). At these two sites, pillar-molded bowls were found in very small quantities.

The second fragment in this assemblage, a pale bluish short neck with a thick rim, is undoubtedly part of a small globular flask, an aryballos [Fig. 1:2]. Flasks of this shape, used in the Classical world to carry perfumed oil to a public bath, were initially made of clay (Cook and Dupont 1998: 140–141) and only later imitated in glass; they were first produced in the core technique. These glass toilet containers became popular in the Flavian period, after which they were commonly used in many parts of the Roman world until the 3rd century AD (Isings 1957: Form 61; Goethert-Polaschek 1977: Type 135; De Tomasso 1990: Form 10). They retained the shape: a small globular body with a characteristic short, tubular neck, a horizontal infolded rim and round bottom as a rule. The glass is usually thick as befits their purpose. Another characteristic feature is a pair of opposing ‘dolphin’-shaped handles—a unique example found at Pompeii, now at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples (Inv. No. 133293) has four symmetrical handles with bronze chains and a device for hanging and closing the vessel. Aryballoi were often carried around

from place to place, hence the bronze suspension chains or cords, which were commonly threaded through the handles, and the stoppers for sealing the mouths. The bulk of these vessels were blown from glass of a bluish and shades of green color; colorless glass was always in the minority, just like strong monochrome and polychrome colors.

In Egypt, aryballoi are reported from Berenike (Nicholson 2000: 203–205, Figs 8-1, 8-2 and 8-3; the latter example has handles in a contrasting color—cobalt blue—to the colorless body; one handle still preserves a metal ring) and from Quseir al-Qadim (see Meyer 1992: 31, Pl. 10:225–228). Other findspots include the sites of Maximianon and Krokodilō (Brun 2003: 383, Fig. 5:8), and Didymoi (Brun 2011: 225, Fig. 272:147–150). Parallels are known also from Elephantine (Rodziewicz 2005: Pl. 4:56–59, 62–64), Karanis (Harden 1936: Pl. XX:767,773), Medinet Madi (Silvano 2012: 44–45, Pl. XXIX:423–436) and Akoris (Chikira 1995: Fig. 162, No. 41). A neck fragment with two handles, excavated at a Roman house in Marina el-Alamein, should also be cited here (Kucharczyk 2005: 98–99, Fig. 3:7). The colorless examples, with funnel mouths and rims folded deeply inward, are often decorated with wheel-cutting, both in the form of simple linear patterns and more complex linear- and facet-cut patterns. Aryballoi decorated in this way are believed to be Egyptian. They are known from Tebtynis, Kysis/Douch and Ain el-Turba (Nenna 2003: 367–368, Fig. 23), Karanis (Harden 1936: 259–260, Pl. XX:774), Mons Porphyrites (Bailey 2007: 255–256, Fig. 8.15) and Balansourah (Edgar 1905: Pl. IX, No. 32730).

Looking for further evidence, one should not neglect fragments with complex decor composed of large circular and rice-

grain facets found at the Roman bath in Marina el-Alamein (personal observation).

Catalog

1. Body fragment, pillar-molded bowl

Dia. body 12 cm; Th. wall 0.2 cm

Thick wall with remains of two elongated ribs, reaching the bottom, prominent on the upper body; horizontal tool marks on the tops of the ribs; uneven surface above (exterior of rim) caused by tooling; light horizontal tooling indentations just above the tops of the ribs; two narrow horizontal wheel-cut grooves on the inside of the lower body.

Light yellowish-green glass with many small spherical bubbles; glossy on the outside, matt inside with rotary polishing marks.

Late 1st century BC to early 1st century AD

Tomb VIII, S.7A/82
Field No. 172.1

2. Rim, short and wide cylindrical neck, aryballos

Dia. rim 3 cm; Th. wall 0.3 cm

Rim bent out, up and diagonally in; traces of two handles on either side of neck; body and handles of the same color.

Pale bluish glass with many spherical and elongated bubbles, some black impurities.

2nd/3rd century AD

Tomb X, S.7C/82
Field No. 430

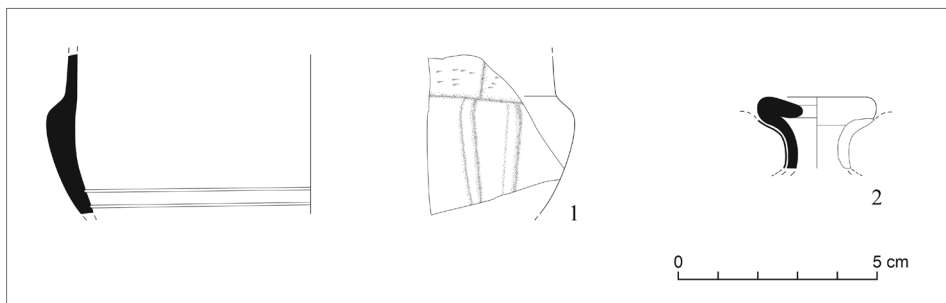


Fig. 1. Early- to mid-Roman glass (1st–3rd century AD): 1– pillar-molded bowl; 2– aryballos (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kucharczyk, M. Momot)

GLASS VESSELS FROM THE LATE ROMAN PERIOD

Most probably in the second half of the 2nd century “the upper terrace of the Hatshepsut temple was abandoned or at least used in a very restricted form for cult purposes in that period” (Łajtar 2006: 95). The numerous Greek inscriptions, which appeared in the last quarter of the 3rd cen-

tury AD and the first forty years of the 4th century AD, point to some cultic activities taking place in that area. It has been suggested that they were left by members of an iron-workers corporation (*siderourgoi*) from Hermonthis, visiting Deir el-Bahari for socio-religious reasons, probably on the

occasion of the Choiak–Nechebkau festival (Łajtar 2006: 102–103).¹ The highlight of these celebrations, as learned from papyri from the first half of the 4th century AD, was a ritual banquet, when an offering of a donkey and beer drinking took place (Łajtar 1991; 2006: 95–100; Bagnall 2004). The glass for serving and consuming food (dishes and bowls), for drinking (beakers) and for serving liquids (bottles) undoubtedly suggests that group-eating took place in the chapel. These cheap, simply shaped and purely utilitarian specimens can hard-

ly be considered a luxury. But if the rarity of glass vessels in both tombs—and the region in general—is taken into account, it is highly probable that they must have had value for their users.

DISHES

Fragments of large dishes, featuring a massive projecting rim, triangular in section and contrasting with the thin, vertical walls, were recorded in the assemblage. They were made of yellowish-green and light green bubbly glass [Fig. 2].

Catalog

1. Rim and body wall fragment, shallow dish Dia. rim 18 cm; Th. wall 0.2 cm Thick everted rim, triangular section; vertical walls curving under to a flat floor. Translucent yellowish-green glass, small and large elongated bubbles, parallel to the rim, and in the rim; some peacock weathering.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.2
2. Rim and body wall fragment, shallow dish Dia. rim 18 cm; Th. wall 0.2 cm Thick solid rim, triangular in section; thin vertical walls. Translucent yellowish-green glass, small and large elongated bubbles, parallel to the rim, and in the rim.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.3
3. Rim and body wall fragment, shallow dish Dia. rim 18 cm; Th. wall 0.2 cm Thick solid rim, triangular in section; thin vertical walls. Translucent yellowish-green glass, large elongated bubbles, parallel to the rim.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 276
4. Rim and body wall fragment, shallow dish Dia. rim 16 cm; Th. wall 0.2 cm Thick solid rim, triangular in section; vertical walls. Translucent light green glass, large elongated bubbles, parallel to the rim.	4th century AD Shaft tomb S.07 Field No. 537

1 Six coins found under the stairs leading from the Bark Hall to the Statue Room are associated with the presence of the *siderourgoi* (Łajtar 2006). Aleksandra Krzyżanowska (2004) dated them to between AD 330 and AD 348, and suggested that they were lost by someone visiting the cemetery in the ruins of the Upper and Lower Terraces of the temple (for the cemetery see Godlewski 1986: 19, 47–49). A recently found late Roman coin is attributed to Theodosius I, AD 379–383 (Lichocka 2016: 679–685).

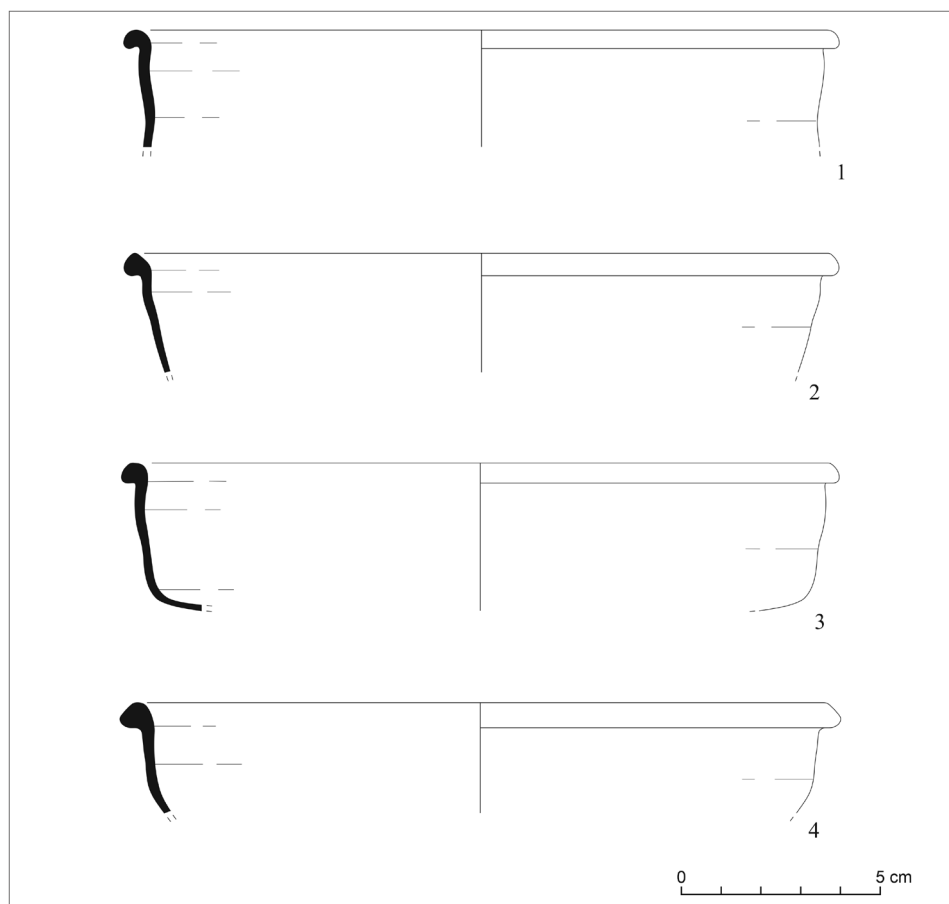


Fig. 2. Late Roman dishes (4th century AD) (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kucharczyk, M. Momot)

BOWLS

Bowls, either deep and small or large and shallow, are attested by five fragments from their upper parts. The four rim fragments belong to specimens characterized by fine walls and an incurving, out-folded rim with small elongated openings, and slanting walls [Fig. 3A:1–4]. An isolated rim fragment came from a large, thin-walled shallow bowl with a tubular rim [Fig. 3A:5]. They were manufactured of low-quality bluish-green and green glass.

Dishes and bowls of late Roman date, particularly those of Egyptian manufac-

ture, are usually furnished with high ring bases, often with tooling marks on the outside or inside of the ring, resulting from their shaping. One such example with incised criss-cross design on the outside of the ring was recorded [Fig. 3B:6]. Another base with flaring thick walls and a series of slanting impressions on the outside could also have come from vessels of this kind; however, a definite match between these bases and rim fragments is not possible [Fig. 3B:7]. It should be emphasized that the similarities in the treatment of the rims, the similar

Catalog

1. Rim and body wall fragment, deep bowl Dia. rim 8.2 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm Incurving, out-folded rim; thin slanting wall. Translucent light bluish-green glass, with spherical bubble and long elongated bubbles, parallel to the rim.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.4
2. Rim and body wall fragment, deep bowl Dia. rim 7 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm Incurving, out-folded, tubular rim, rounded and thickened; thin slanting wall. Translucent light bluish-green glass, with spherical bubble and long elongated bubbles, parallel to the rim.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.5
3. Rim and body wall fragment, deep bowl Dia. rim 7 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm Incurving, out-folded, tubular rim, rounded and thickened; convex curving body wall. Bluish-green glass; black weathering.	4th century AD Tomb X, S.7C/82 Field No. 276
4. Rim and body wall fragment, deep bowl Dia. rim 11 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm Incurving, out-folded rim, wall contracts sharply below rim; thin slanting walls. Transparent light green glass, large ovals parallel to the rim.	4th century AD Tomb XII, S.2/07 Field No. 540
5. Rim and body wall fragment, large shallow bowl Dia. rim 22 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm Upright rim, edge bent out and down to form an open oval, narrow tube; very thin walls. Translucent light bluish-green, very bubbly glass, particularly in the rim; some black impurities.	4th century AD Tomb XVIII, L.4/08 Field No. 723

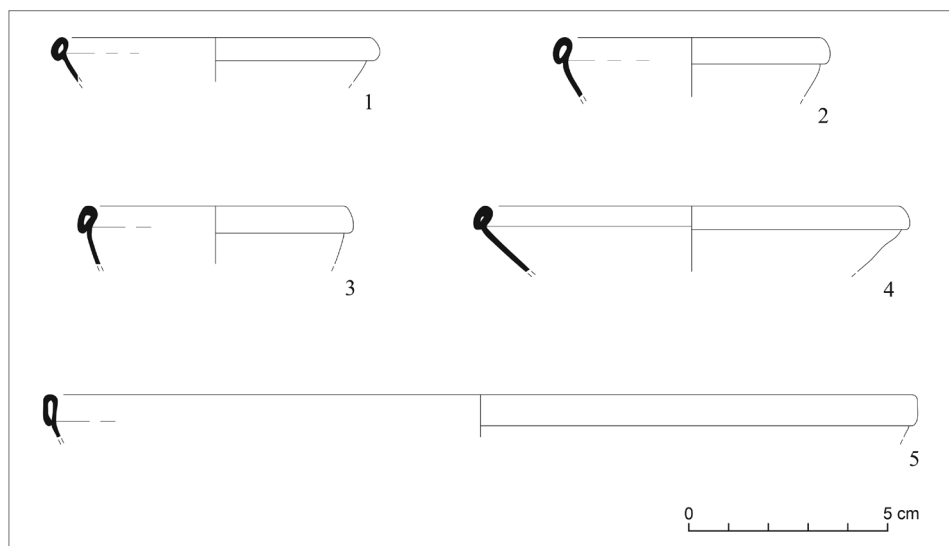


Fig. 3A. Late Roman vessels (4th century AD): 1–5 bowls (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kucharczyk, M. Momot)

dimensions of most of the vessels, and their fabric suggest that they were made in the same workshop, possibly even by the same glassworker.

Dishes and bowls of different shapes and sizes with varied rim profiles, as well as ring bases, similar to those from the shaft tombs, are quite well represented at various sites in Egypt. A noticeable number of them came to light in late Roman contexts at Kom el-Dikka. They undoubtedly represent the output of local workshops, where the variously shaped bases with tooling marks were particularly favored (Kucharczyk 2007: 51–52, Fig. 3:6–7; 2016: 89–92, Fig. 2A–B, with references to earlier finds from the site and similar finds from the Marea

site on Lake Mareotis near Alexandria and Marina el-Alamein on the Mediterranean coast). Some good parallels can also be found at Karanis (Harden 1936: Pls XI:1–17, 21–29; XII: 83–116, 122–130; XIV:228–234), the monastery of the Archangel Gabriel in Naqlun (Mossakowska-Gaubert 2012: 358–361, Fig. 2: Assiettes/Bowls; Fig. 3: Assiettes/Bowls–5th/6th century) and at Medinet Maadi where a number of ring bases, with or without tooling marks, came to light (Silvano 2012: 53–54, Pl. 39:777–808). Shallow plates and deep bowls on ring bases are in the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Edgar 1905: Pl. I: 32.407–408; 32.411; 32.415; 32.421–423; 32.426, 429; 32.433, 436, 438).

Catalog

6. Base ring, bottle or bowl Dia. base 6 cm	4th century AD
Flaring base ring with irregular criss-cross tooling marks on the outside; wavy worked edges.	Tomb X, S.7C/82
Transparent yellowish-green glass, some bubbles.	Field No. 431
7. Base, probably bowl Dia. base 6 cm; Th. wall 0.4–0.5 cm	4th century AD
Thick outsplayed base-ring with series of slanting impressions on the outside.	Unfinished shaft tomb,
Transparent green glass, many small spherical bubbles, and some larger ones.	S.2/06 Field No. 548

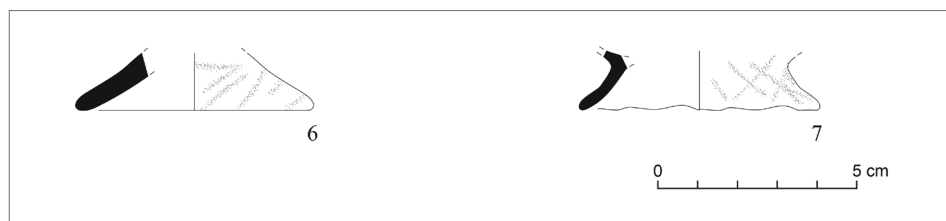


Fig. 3B. Late Roman vessels (4th century AD): 6–7 bowls (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kucharczyk, M. Momot)

CONICAL LAMP OR BEAKER

Four fragments of conical lamps or beakers were also found. This was one of the most common vessel types of the late Roman period (Isings 1957: Form 106). Two of the pieces are body shards with decorative dark blue glass drops; one preserves a cracked-off, unworked rim, while the last one is the lower part of a vessel [Fig. 3C:8–12]. Such specimens are well attested at many sites in Egypt, in the 4th–5th century contexts, at Kom el-Dikka, Marina el-Alamein and Marea (Kucharczyk 2011b: 61, Fig. 3:1–2), Karanis (Harden 1936: Pl. XVI:436–478), Medinet Madi

(Silvano 2012: 53, Pl. 39:766–773), Tebtynis (Foy 2001: 465–466, Fig. 1:1–5) and Berenike (Kucharczyk and Zych 2019: 92, Fig. 2:1–2) among other places. They are also reported from monastic sites: Naqlun (Mossakowska-Gaubert 2012: 358–359, Fig. 2: Lampes) and Kellia (Bonnet Borel 2013: 169–170, 215–216, Fig. 44:E 360 and Fig. 63:89) where this type of lamp was particularly common. Several examples, either plain or decorated, with applied threads or blobs, were in the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Edgar 1905: Pl. III: 32.478; 32.479; 32.483; 32.484; 32.487; 32.488; 32.491; 32.493).

Catalog

8. Rim and body wall fragment, conical lamp or beaker Dia. rim 8 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm Small curved rim; edge cracked-off, thin sides tapering in. Pale green glass.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.6
9. Body wall fragment, conical lamp or beaker Th. wall 0.1 cm Thin wall with applied blue blob. Yellowish-green glass with few spherical bubbles; blue glass very bubbly.	4th century AD Tomb XVIII, L.4/08 Field No. 720
10. Body wall fragment, conical lamp or beaker Th. wall 0.1 cm Thin wall with applied blue blob. Yellowish-green glass with few spherical bubbles; blue glass very bubbly.	4th century AD Tomb X, S.7C/82 Field No. 431
11. Body wall fragment, conical lamp or beaker Dia. base 0.9 cm; Th. bottom 0.5 cm, Th. wall 0.3–0.4 cm Thick, flat base and thick wall. Light green glass, bubbly; pontil scar on the underside.	4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.7
12. Body wall fragment, conical lamp or beaker Dia. base 1.6 cm; Th. bottom 0.5 cm, Th. wall 0.15–0.3 cm Thick, flat base and thick wall. Yellowish-green glass, very bubbly; pontil scar on the underside.	4th century AD Tomb XIV, S.1/21 Field No. 2944

BEAKER

One complete solid base is of a shape and color of the glass that identifies it as a special type of cylindrical beaker with a thickened, rounded, almost vertical rim, and a straight or slightly concave body profile [Fig. 3C:13]. Occasionally, the upper half of this type of drinking vessel, is adorned beneath the rim with a horizontal trail wound around the wall. It belongs to one of the most common types of the

4th–early 5th centuries AD, hugely differentiated in size and shape, particularly popular in the Syro-Palestinian region (Weinberg and Goldstein 1988: 60–62, Figs 4–23; Gorin-Rosen 2009: 88–91, Fig. 2.53:1–9; Dussart 1998: Pl. 21, B VIII.121), but not in Egypt. Worth mentioning in this context is the evidence from Kom el-Dikka (Kucharczyk 2010a: 63, Fig. 5:1–3) and Tell Farama/Pelusium (Gawlikowska 2017: 643, Fig. 8:56, Cat. 56).

Catalog**13. Base and body wall fragment, beaker**

Dia. base 3 cm; Th. wall 0.3 cm; pontil scar 1.2 cm

4th century AD

Thick, solid base and beginning of wall; base narrower than the bottom of the body, concavity at the joint between base and wall; flat floor; large pontil mark; thin flaring walls.

Tomb IX, S.7B/82

Colorless glass with yellowish tinge; sandy deposit.

Field No. 276

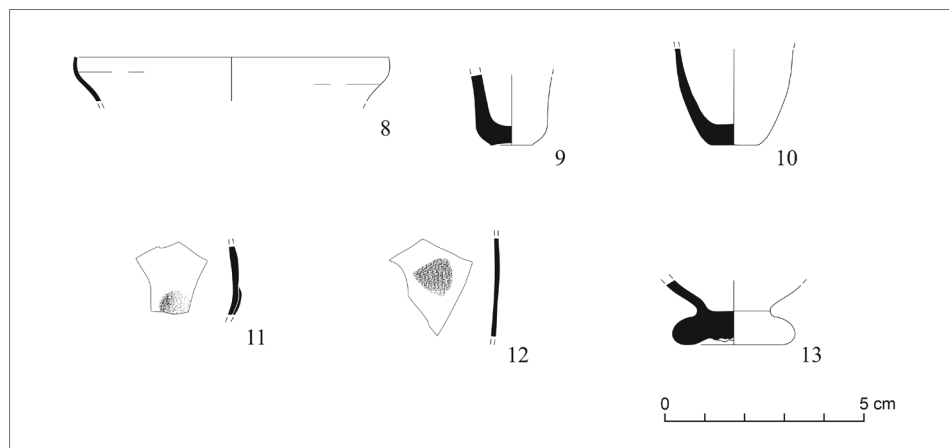


Fig. 3C. Late Roman vessels (4th century AD): 8–12 – conical lamps; 13 – beaker (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kucharczyk, M. Momot, A. Pawlikowska-Gwiazda)

BOTTLES/FLASKS

With only five vessels identified, bottles and flasks are poorly represented in the assemblage, unlike dishes and bowls. They

are defined by two folded-in rims with narrow openings, a cylindrical neck with the beginning of a shoulder, and two concave bases [Fig. 3D:14–17].

Catalog		
14. Rim fragment, small flask Dia. rim 4.2 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm		4th century AD
In-folded rim, flattened diagonally on inside; narrow opening. Light yellowish-green glass; many spherical bubbles.		Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.8
15. Rim fragment, small flask Dia. rim 4 cm; Th. wall 0.1 cm		4th century AD
In-folded rim, flattened diagonally on inside; narrow opening, unevenly in-folded. Colorless glass with a greenish tinge; many spherical bubbles.		Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.9
16. Neck and shoulder fragment, flask Th. wall 0.1 cm		4th century AD
Cylindrical neck; thin walls. Transparent pale green bubbly glass.		Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.10
17. Base fragment, bottle Thickened concave base with a pontil mark and beginning of wall. Transparent bluish-green, very bubbly glass.		4th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.11

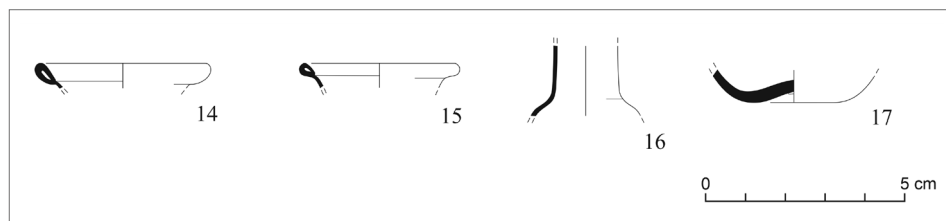


Fig. 3D. Late Roman vessels (4th century AD): 14–17 – bottles/flasks (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kuchar-czyk, M. Momot)

GLASS FROM THE 6TH–8TH CENTURIES AD

Pagan worship ceased at the temple site sometime in the mid-4th century AD, but the Christian monastery of St Phoibamon, famous for a healing shrine, was built on the Upper Terrace of the ruined temple, but not before the end of the 6th century (for the dating of the monastery to the 6th–8th century AD see Naville 1906: 5; Godlewski 1986: 60–78; Lajtar 2006: 94–104; Schenke 2016). Surprising and frustrating at the same time is the absence of any evidence of glass vessels used by the monk community. A single find of a metal wick-holder from a shaft tomb (S1/88) in the vestibule of the Hatshepsut Chapel points to the use of stemmed lamps. The wick is of the two-armed variety, still with a linen wick inserted into a short tube at its end.² Lamps of this type, equipped with such a device, were used either in hanging *polycandela* or in wall holders, like torches.³ They would have been used at the monastery to illuminate the focal point of the main chapel, that is, the altar.

WINDOWPANES

Windowpanes are the only finds that can be directly related to the monastery. Window glass from the fill of the tombs encompasses 14 small fragments, four of which are definitely examples of the well-known “crown windowpanes” or “bull’s eye” type (for a discussion of “crown glass” see Whitehouse 2001). These are thin pieces with fire-thickened rims; none of them reveal any trace of mortar

or any other kind of adhesive along the edges that could have secured the panes in a window opening. The panes are of a diameter between 22 cm and 32 cm, the thickness varying between 0.2 cm and 0.3 cm. None of the fragments represented the thick center part where crude remains of the pontil rod, so characteristic of this type of panes, can be found. A few other small flat pieces apparently belong to this type of glass as well [Fig. 4].

The ruins of the monastery were removed from the Upper Terrace at the end of the 19th century, during archaeological exploration aimed at the complete uncovering of the pharaonic Temple of Hatshepsut (Naville 1906), but some observations relating to windows can be made from documentation made at the time. The mud-brick walls of the monastery were not preserved high enough to identify glazed window openings save for a few locations. The first direct evidence of windows is a tower located in the southeastern part of the monastery, but its obvious defensive function makes glazing of the rectangular openings in its walls more than just improbable (Godlewski 1986: 28–29, Figs 10–11). Other locations are inside the monastery itself. The outer walls of the northern part of the complex, which were preserved to a height of 5 m above the ground, had a row of openings on the second floor: five in the south wall and one in the eastern one. These windows could have been glazed on

2 I would like to thank Aleksandra Pawlikowska-Gwiazda for information on this find.

3 A good number of these simple devices has been reported from sites in Syria, Jordan, Greece and Turkey; see Foy 2011: 215–217.

the assumption, suggested by the excavators, that the monks' cells were located on this floor. Glazed windows may have also been located in the nearby chancelery and adjacent, alleged residence of bishop Abraham (Godlewski 1986: 46). Other rooms in this part of the monastery were identified as a refectory and kitchen. There is no indication whatsoever that they could have been furnished with window openings (Godlewski 1986: 32, Plan I, Room F and G respectively).

The small number of recorded panes could suggest that window glass was reserved for special places. The chapel was a prime candidate for such a 'luxury' as glazing in a monastery. However, this does not seem to be the case here, because the main chapels of the St Phoibammon monastery were placed inside the Hatshepsut Chapel and the sanctuary of Amun (Godlewski 1986: 33–38, 41–44). The original stone walls and vaulting of these rooms were plastered and painted, and there is no evidence of window openings being introduced in this latest period.

Neither is there any direct evidence for the shape of these presumably glazed window openings. Were they single cir-

cular *oculi* as in the monastery at Kellia, where they were set in a vaulted ceiling (Henein and Wuttmann 2000: 117–119, Figs 150–152; Ballet 2003: No. 10: 7th/8th century AD)? Or were they similar to those from Adaïma (Sauneron 1974: 189–190, Pl. XXXVIII: 7th–8th century AD) and Esna (Jacquet-Gordon 1972: 94, Pl. CCXXXIII: 9, 6th/7th century AD) where a round opening was sealed with a circular dish? They could have been window panes set in plaster screens with circular openings, *claustra*, as in the case of the finds from the monastery at Baouit (Bénazeth 2005: Nos 139–140: 7th–10th century AD). Finds of *claustra* from remote monasteries and chapels in southern Sinai are assigned a similar date (Gorin-Rosen 2000). *Claustra* with remains of circular and rectangular panes, dated to the 9th–10th century AD, were also reported from the monastery of the Archangel Gabriel at Naqlun (Maślak 2019: 376) and the Monastery of the Syrians in Wadi Natrun (Evelyn-White 1933: 98–99). They are also found in other architectural contexts, such as the late antique bath at Marea on Lake Mareotis (Kucharczyk 2009).

Catalog

1. Windowpane, "bull's eye" type Dia. 22 cm Two fragments with a fire-thickened rounded rim, with lines of small elongated bubbles, running roughly parallel to the edge. Pale green glass with some elongated bubbles.	Probably end of 6th to 8th century AD Tomb VIII, S.7A/82 Field No. 172.12
2. Windowpane, "bull's eye" type Dia. 22 cm Fire-thickened rounded rim. Pale bluish glass with lines of small elongated bubbles running roughly parallel to the edge.	Probably end of 6th to 8th century AD Tomb IX, S.7B/82 Field No. 276

3. Windowpane, "bull's eye" type Dia. 22 cm Fire-thickened rounded rim, with lines of small elongated bubbles running roughly parallel to the edge, and a mid-pane fragment. Pale greenish glass with some small and larger bubbles for the rim and transparent pale bluish glass with small elongated bubbles for the mid-pane fragment.	Probably end of 6th to 8th century AD Tomb X, S.7C/82 Field No. 431
4. Windowpane, "bull's eye" type Dia. 30 cm Two fragments of a fire-thickened rounded rim, most probably from one pane. Transparent pale bluish glass with some black particles and lines of small elongated bubbles running roughly parallel to the edge; glossy on both sides.	Probably end of 6th to 8th century AD Tomb XI, S.1/04 Field No. 372
5. Windowpane, "bull's eye" type Flat fragment with no edges. Transparent pale bluish glass with many small elongated bubbles; glossy on both sides.	Probably end of 6th to 8th century AD Tomb XI, S.1/04 Field No. 375
6. Windowpane, "bull's eye" type Fire-thickened rounded rim. Transparent pale bluish-green glass with many small elongated bubbles.	Probably end of 6th to 8th century AD Unfinished shaft tomb S.2/06; Field No. 548

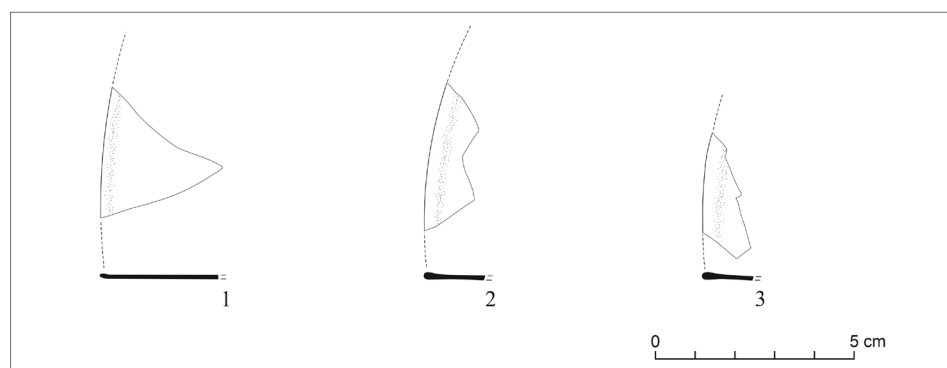


Fig. 4. Fragments of "bull's eye" windowpanes (6th–8th century AD) (PCMA UW | drawing R. Kucharczyk, M. Momot)

CONCLUSION

Although the glass assemblage from the shaft tombs is insignificant in number and highly fragmented, it is of considerable importance for a number of reasons. First, it adds to the rather limited published evidence of Roman and early Byzantine glass from Western Thebes. Glass was only briefly mentioned in a report on the excavation of the Monastery of Epiphanius. The material recovered then was described as: “coming mainly from the monastery itself and less frequently from the cells, contains a quantity of glass fragments, including so frequently found in the 4th century ruins, yellowish conical lamps, with applied blue decoration (blobs and threads), bottles, coarse jars, and beads” (Winlock and Crum 1926: 94–95). Added to this small assemblage are two bottles from the Roman period reported from the Temple in Medinet Habu (Hölscher 1954: 71, Pl. 40:31–32).

Second, the assemblage is a useful contribution to the discussion of chronological and geographical distribution of Roman and early Byzantine glass in Egypt. It particularly applies to the finds from the second group (4th century AD). This fairly common glass could be considered as being made locally in the region for it seems unlikely in light of the available evidence (practically no record of glass production in southern Egypt) that it would have been transported over a long distance. Perhaps the production source of the glass from Deir el-Bahari should be sought in Middle Egypt, where glass manufacture is mentioned in textual sources. A papyrus from AD 315 mentions a glassworkers’ guild in Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy

64.4441), another one from AD 317 speaks of the price of glass (P. Oxy 54.3742); yet another one from AD 326 describes the glazing of public edifices (P. Oxy 44.3265). A glassworker was attested in Hermopolis in the late 4th century (P. Ross. Georg. 5, 60). A glassworking area was identified in Antinoopolis, including three small furnaces, and glass-blowing and hot-glass working waste products probably from late antiquity (Silvano 2015). Perhaps the origin of the glass finds from the Hatshepsut temple should rather be sought in Alexandria, where the glass industry flourished in the late Roman period. Evidence from the Kom el-Dikka site—in the form of significant quantities of vessel shards, pieces of windowpanes, beads and other glass objects, glass-production debris (raw-glass chunks, pieces of a dismantled furnace with glass in various stages of vitrification, and various kinds of glass wasters)—is indisputed as corroboration of primary and secondary glass-making in the city. Close similarities are evident between finds from the shaft-tombs and those from the Kom el-Dikka site, taking into regard vessel shape, decoration and workmanship. Furthermore, tooling marks on the ring bases—practically a trademark of the Alexandrian glasshouses—as well as the colors and quality of the fabric, point to a common provenance.

Third and last, the assemblage is remarkable testimony of the craving for ‘a little bit of luxury’ in a community living in a remote location in Western Thebes.

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