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## UNPUBLISHED GLASS FINDINGS FROM THE EASTERN NECROPOLIS OF NAISSUS (JAGODIN MALA, NIŠ)

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*Abstract* – In the period from 1952–1967, during the systematic archaeological excavations of the area of the eastern necropolis of *Naissus*, in the modern day city quarter of Jagodin Mala, in Niš, a large number of glass objects was found. A representative portion of the findings was published in various publications, while the other findings, which belong to the study collection of the National Museum in Niš, have not been the subject of any separate study. These are new kinds of findings, such as glass lamps, window panes and *tesserae*, and the collection also includes the familiar, standard repertoire of glass vessels of the Late Antiquity period. The findings come from the grave units, the cemetery basilica with its crypt, and the archaeological layers from the area of the necropolis in Jagodin Mala. Besides the typological-chronological, as well as the topographic analysis, the paper also presents a complete image of the glass objects from the area of the necropolis, used in the burial and liturgical practices of the population of *Naissus* in Late Antiquity.

*Key words* – Late Antiquity, Jagodin Mala, *Naissus*–Niš, necropolis, basilica, glass vessels, glass objects.

The archaeological excavations of the eastern city necropolis of *Naissus* (Niš, SRB) (Fig. 1) were carried out, with short interruptions, by the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade and its associates, during the period from 1952 to 1967.<sup>1</sup> To date, over 365 graves, as well as four cemeterial churches have been discovered in the course of the research (Fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> The necropolis, built along the road to *Ratiaria* (Archar, BG), to the east of the rampart of the Late Antique city, was active from the 4<sup>th</sup> (the time of Constantine I) until the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and the first decades of the 7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> Within that chronological span, churches were also erected on the territory of the

necropolis, to meet the requirements of the funerary rites and burials of eminent church, civilian or regal (?) figures. This was period of significant socio-economic changes in *Naissus*, followed by periodical rises and falls, and a period which brought about the definite establishment of the influence and power of the Christian organisation.<sup>4</sup>

The glass objects, found during the excavation of this necropolis, and which are located in the study collection of the National Museum in Niš, have not been studied in depth so far, but due to the importance and diversity of the material, we believe that they deserve the attention of the academic community. This paper

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Fig. 1. Late Antique provinces in the Central Balkans with the location of Naissus  
(Stamenković 2012, 19, map 2)

Сл. 1. Касноантичке провинције на Централном Балкану, са положајем Наисуса  
(Stamenković 2012, 19, karta 2)

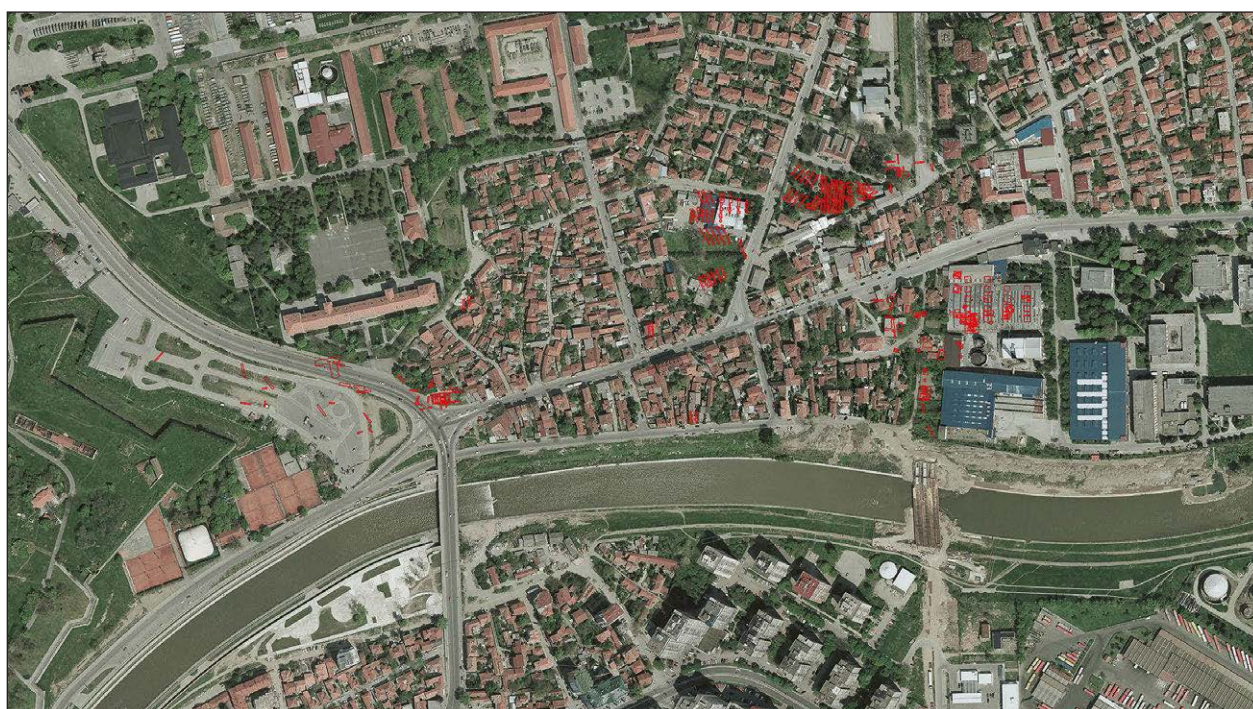


Fig. 2. Location of the Jagodin Mala necropolis (A. Vukojević, documentation of the project): red lines – excavated areas; 1. the basilica with a crypt

Сл. 2. Ситуациони план некрополе у Јагодин мали (А. Вукојевић, документација Пројекта): црвене линије – истраживана област; 1. базилика са криптом

includes all the groups of glass findings, which, in the area of the necropolis, appear in various contexts: as grave goods (vessels), as a part of personal jewellery (pearls or strings of beads), or as objects for lighting, glazing and decoration of church complexes (lamps, window glass, mosaic *tesserae*). These findings, together with the published materials (Fig. 3),<sup>5</sup> provide an insight into the diversity and quality of the glass objects, which were used in funerary or sacral contexts at the eastern city necropolis of *Naissus* in the Late Antiquity period.

### Bowls

The study collection of the National Museum in Niš is represented by seven hemispherical bowls and a shallower container (T. II, cat. 1–7).

Based on its manufacture technique, a dip-mould blown ‘honeycomb’ bowl (cat. 1) stands out significantly among the mostly undecorated, free blown examples (cat. 2–7). The contexts of the findings of this type of vessels are different: two bowls were found in graves (cat. 3, 7), one was a part of the inventory of an accidentally discovered tomb in no. 63 Ratka Pavlo-

vića Street (cat. 2),<sup>6</sup> while the other examples come from the archaeological layers or the 20<sup>th</sup> century rubble from the opened trenches.

The dip-mould blown bowl (cat. 1) was registered in the vicinity of the basilica with a crypt on Nikola Tesla Boulevard (Isings form 107a; Ružić 1994 tip

<sup>1</sup> Excavations of the necropolis were also carried out on several occasions before World War II, by the associates of the Museums Society in Niš (Оршић Славетић 1934, 303–305, сл. 1–7. The important finds from that research are included in the catalog of the exhibition *Jagodina Mala* 2014, *passim*). Excavations of the necropolis, of a rescue character, were carried out during the past few decades by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Niš, in collaboration with the experts from the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade and the National Museum Niš Cf. Jeremić 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Oršić Slavetić 1934, 304, fig. 1; Zotović 1961, 171–175; Zotović, Petrović 1968; Jeremić 2013, 127–129.

<sup>3</sup> The upper chronological limit of the necropolis was dated to the first decades of 7<sup>th</sup> century by the findings of the money of emperor Heraclius from October 613 AD from one of the barrel-vaulted tombs, cf. Popović 1975, 494, fig. 14, note 3.

<sup>4</sup> Petrović 1979, 39–41; *Jagodina Mala* 2014, 52–58.

<sup>5</sup> Ružić 1994; Drča 2000; *Jagodina Mala* 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Modern day Knjaževačka Street.



Fig. 3. Glass vessels from the necropolis in Jagodin Mala (photo Ž. Čajić, documentation of the National Museum, Niš)

Сл. 3. Стаклене посуде са некрополе у Јагодин мали (фото: Ж. Чајић, документација Народног музеја, Ниш)

VII/10b; Lazar tip 3.10.3). It has its parallel in the specimen from the grave with a brick and *tegulae* construction from Gradsko Polje in Niš, which belongs to the necropolis formed along the road to *Viminacium* (the modern village of Kostolac), and about 800 m to the northwest of the basilica with a crypt. In the grave, next to the head of the deceased, an olive green glazed ceramic jug, a set of playing tokens and a beaker made of greenish glass ornamented with vertical ribs and shallow hexagonal indentations were laid as grave goods.<sup>7</sup> Specimens decorated with a ribbing motif are encountered in the grave inventory and in the layers of the last third of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century in *Pannonia*, as cone-shaped or hemispherical specimens made of olive green or yellowish-green glass.<sup>8</sup> According to the analogies, the specimen from Jagodin Mala could be dated to the period of the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> – middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and it could probably be connected to an earlier layer of burial in the area around the basilica with a crypt. It could also

have been a part of the grave inventory of a vaulted tomb inside the basilica or a grave unit in its immediate vicinity.<sup>9</sup>

The hemispherical bowls, made using the technique of free blowing, do not represent a common finding at the necropolis in Jagodin Mala (Isings form 96, 107; Ružić tip VII/10b). Besides the six specimens from the study collection that we present in this paper, the research carried out so far has registered another speci-

<sup>7</sup> Ajdić 1975, 35; Jovanović 1977, 132–133; Drča 2000, 211, 218, kat. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Barkóczy 1988, Kat. 140–142, 165–166.

<sup>9</sup> The construction of the basilica with a crypt is placed within the time span of the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century (Mano-Zisi, Jovanović 1952, 367; Zotović, Petrović 1968, 16; Milošević 2004, 121–140), while the vaulted tomb in the southern part of the basilica, as well as the finding of the lead sarcophagus with emperors' busts, more closely dated to the Theodosian epoch (Buschhausen, Buschhausen 1991, 51–53), would belong to the period of the 4<sup>th</sup> – first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

men of this shape of vessel, found in the vicinity of the largest barrel-vaulted tomb discovered to date (north-south oriented).<sup>10</sup> The specimen is dated to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>11</sup> The closest parallels for this type of bowl, either undecorated or with applied dark blue blobs, can be found in the vicinity of *Naissus*, within the complex of the villa with a peristyle with *balneum*<sup>12</sup> and in the trench with architectural remains<sup>13</sup> in the south-eastern part of the Late Antique settlement of *Mediana*.<sup>14</sup> Both findings belong to the younger horizons of *Mediana*, from the time of Constantine I to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>15</sup>

A fragment of the rim of a bowl (cat. 3) was found in a grave by the feet of the deceased and can be roughly dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, while a greenish glass fragment (cat. 7) was found in the area of the decedent's chest, together with parts of the rims of two pots, of coarse fabric, which are also dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>16</sup> The fragment of a bowl's rim with thicker walls made of greenish glass (cat. 5), found in the area of the crypt, was registered together with ceramic findings from the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> century (unpublished), and could also be related to the older horizon of burials which preceded the erection of the complex with the Christian basilica with a crypt. The finding of a fragment of a bowl rim of similar characteristics (cat. 6) would also belong to this horizon, while a fragment of a rim of a bowl (cat. 4) could only be roughly dated to the period of the 4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century, due to the unreliable stratigraphy in the researched part of the crypt area.

### Beakers

The beakers from the study collection of the National Museum in Niš are represented by five conical specimens (T. III, cat. 8–12).<sup>17</sup>

Conical beakers are not numerous among the vessels of the study collection of the National Museum in Niš. The findings in question are five fragments, out of which three are parts of the rim with the body (cat. 8–10) and two are parts of a bottom and foot, which can be classified as belonging to this type of vessel with great certainty (cat. 11, 12).

In the garden of Engleski dom, in the central part of the necropolis, near the brick-built grave (or a tomb), a rim fragment made of yellowish glass with shallow ribbed walls was found (cat. 8) (Isings form 106; Ružić tip VII/12). The finding probably belongs to a grave unit. It is a kind of beaker characteristic of the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, found

at a large number of sites in the area of Roman provinces in the territory of Serbia.<sup>18</sup>

A random finding from Jagodina Mala, made of colourless glass with two wider horizontal incisions,<sup>19</sup> also belongs to this type and to this chronological span.

The findings of the rims of two beakers (cat. 9, 10) from the surface layers of the trench excavated in 1967 may belong to the type of stemmed beakers encountered at Late Antique and Early Byzantine sites and could have been used as lamps.<sup>20</sup> According to their shape and technological characteristics, the specimens from Jagodina Mala are most similar to those from Gradina, on Mt Jelica, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup>

The finding of the bottom of a ring-shaped foot of a vessel made of yellowish glass (cat. 12) also belongs to a stratigraphically unreliable unit.<sup>22</sup> This type of container and vessel base is typical of beakers of a funnel shaped or ring-shaped thickened rim and conical container (Isings form 109c). It represents a very common

<sup>10</sup> *Jagodina Mala* 2014, 118, cat. 107.

<sup>11</sup> Inside the tomb, which has been researched through multiple campaigns, a relatively large quantity of movable material was registered (*Jagodina Mala* 2014, cat. 7 (five rings), 63 (a bead)), among which the finding of an amphora from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a bowl-shaped lamp from the 4<sup>th</sup> – the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and also coins of Constantine I from the years 317–318 and 321 to Valentinian I from the years 364–367, especially stand out (*Jagodina Mala* 2014, cat. 154, 172, 178–179, 185).

<sup>12</sup> Squares II D 369, 374/1962.

<sup>13</sup> Trench no. 190/1961.

<sup>14</sup> Drča 2000, 210–211, 218, kat. 1–2, 5, 5a.

<sup>15</sup> Vasić 2005, 169, 172–173; Vasić 2013, 99.

<sup>16</sup> Cvjetičanin 2016, 72–73, tip 4b.

<sup>17</sup> The terms were taken from the general bibliography and previously published works: Ružić 1994, Drča 2000, Lazar 2003, Ignatiadou, Antonaras 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Ružić 1994, 50–52, cat. 968–1014.

<sup>19</sup> Drča 2000, 218, cat. 6, fig. 6; *Jagodina Mala* 2014, 119, cat. 108.

<sup>20</sup> Barkóczy 1988, 107–109, Kat. 172–181 (early forms of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD); Gavrilović 1988, 90–92, tip IV/1, IV/3B; Čolakova 2009, 267, T. VI, 2–6; Stern 2001, 270–271, Kat. 172–174.

<sup>21</sup> Gavrilović 1988, T. 1/7; 2/4–7. The documentation from the research in 1967 is missing from the institutions which carried out the excavations and protection, in Belgrade and Niš. In the published report of the research, it is known only that the excavations were carried out in the northern and eastern part of the necropolis, and we presume that they were also carried out around the basilica with a crypt itself, which was conserved that year (Zotović, Petrović i Petrović 1967, 115–116).

<sup>22</sup> The fragment was discovered with the recent ceramics Cf. Lj. Zotović, *Arheološka iskopavanja antičke nekropole u Nišu 1962. god.*, Documentation of the Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, 56.

finding at Late Antique sites of the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century in the territory of Serbia.<sup>23</sup>

The fragment of a conical foot and ring-shaped outer rim (cat. 11) most likely belongs to a stemmed goblet with a rounded container. In Jagodin Mala, another entirely preserved specimen of this type of vessel was found during the excavations of the Niš Museum, in 1954, the records of which were published.<sup>24</sup> This is a type of vessel characteristic of layers of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century and registered at a series of early Byzantine sites in the area of the limes (Čezava–Novae, Saldum, Kostol–Pontes, Mora Vagei) and on the mainland (Gamzigrad–Romuliana, Gračanica–Ulpiana, Caričin Grad–Justiniana Prima).<sup>25</sup>

#### **Toilet bottles**

Seven toilet bottles (T. II–III, cat. 13–19) come from the study collection of the National Museum in Niš (*unguentaria*, *balsamaria*). They are manufactured using the free blowing technique, out of colourless, whitish, light blue, yellowish and greenish glass. Among them, specimens with a square container with indentations (cat. 13–15) (Ružić tip III/10a) and specimens with a spherical container, with a shorter or longer cylindrical neck (cat. 16–19) (Ružić tip III/7e) can be differentiated.

All the specimens were found next to the deceased inside the graves and tombs in Jagodin Mala. In three cases, we are dealing with children's funerals, in grave constructions made of bricks (T. I).<sup>26</sup> The skeletal remains of these deceased are very poorly preserved, and have no other grave goods except for the *balsamaria* (cat. 13, 14, 16). In one case, it is a brick-built grave in which two decedents are inhumed (Fig. 4),<sup>27</sup> also with *balsamaria* as the only grave good (cat. 15). All the graves are West-East oriented, and the skeletal remains of the deceased from the double grave indicate adult persons. In the case of the grave in which several deceased are buried,<sup>28</sup> next to the head of one of them the remains of as many as three *balsamaria* were found.<sup>29</sup>

Toilet bottles with a square container with indentations (cat. 13–15) are registered at the necropolis in ten more cases, which makes them one of the more frequent forms of findings in Jagodin Mala.<sup>30</sup> According to the circumstances of the findings, they belong mostly to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> and last until the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and have been found at the necropolis of St. Sinerotes in *Sirmium* (site 26), the necropolis in Beška and inside the camp and settlement in Čezava–Novae and Kostol–Pontes.<sup>31</sup>

The bottles with a spherical container also belong to the period of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (cat. 16–18), of which 21 more specimens were found in Jagodin Mala, with variations in shape of the rim, neck and the container.<sup>32</sup> This shape of vessel is characteristic of the period from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and is most frequently encountered at necropolises. Specimens are registered in Kolovrat, *Sirmium*, Vojka, *Singidunum* and *Romuliana*,<sup>33</sup> as well as in the Hungarian part of *Pannonia*, at the necropolises of *Intercisa*, *Ságvár* and *Brigetio*.<sup>34</sup>

#### **Bottles**

Among the material of the study collection from the necropolis of *Naissus* in Jagodin Mala, there are also five bottle fragments (T. III–IV, cat. 20–24). They are spherical bottles (cat. 20–23), with a flared rim and a longer cylindrical neck, made of glass from yellowish to green colour (Isings form 101, Barkóczy 1988, Typ 118; Ružić 1994, tip I/4b). These types of bottles enjoyed special popularity in the Late Antiquity period, from the time of Constantine I (306–337).<sup>35</sup> According to the more precisely dated grave units from *Pannonia*, the specimens are mostly present in the graves of the period from 340 to 380, and predominantly made of green, greenish or white glass, while olive green bottles are predominant by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>36</sup>

Besides these unpublished findings, bottles are represented by five more specimens at the necropolis in

<sup>23</sup> Ružić 1994, tip XII/12a, 50, cat. 959–967; *Mediana*, unpublished.

<sup>24</sup> The documentation from these excavations is also missing. In the more recent literature, the vessel was dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century according to its form (*Jagodin Mala* 2014, 120, cat. 110, with older literature).

<sup>25</sup> Ružić 1994, tip XII/13, 52–53, kat. 1049–1125; Jeremić 2009, 151, cat. 442–443; 2012, 288, Fig. 6, 33–34.

<sup>26</sup> Graves no. E-22/1960; E-26/1960; D-28/1960.

<sup>27</sup> Grave no. O-93/1961.

<sup>28</sup> Grave no. M-79/1961.

<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, the grave report was lost, so there is no more specific data about the grave and the deceased.

<sup>30</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 136–141, cat. 143–152.

<sup>31</sup> Šaranović-Svetek 1986, 65, cat. 120–125; Ružić 1994, 33, cat. 456–476.

<sup>32</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 126–131, cat. 122–142.

<sup>33</sup> Ružić 1994, 29–30, cat. 369–371, 381, 393–396.

<sup>34</sup> Barkóczy 1988, 118–120, Typ 90, Kat. 215–223.

<sup>35</sup> Barkóczy 1988, 137.

<sup>36</sup> Barkóczy 1988, 137–140.

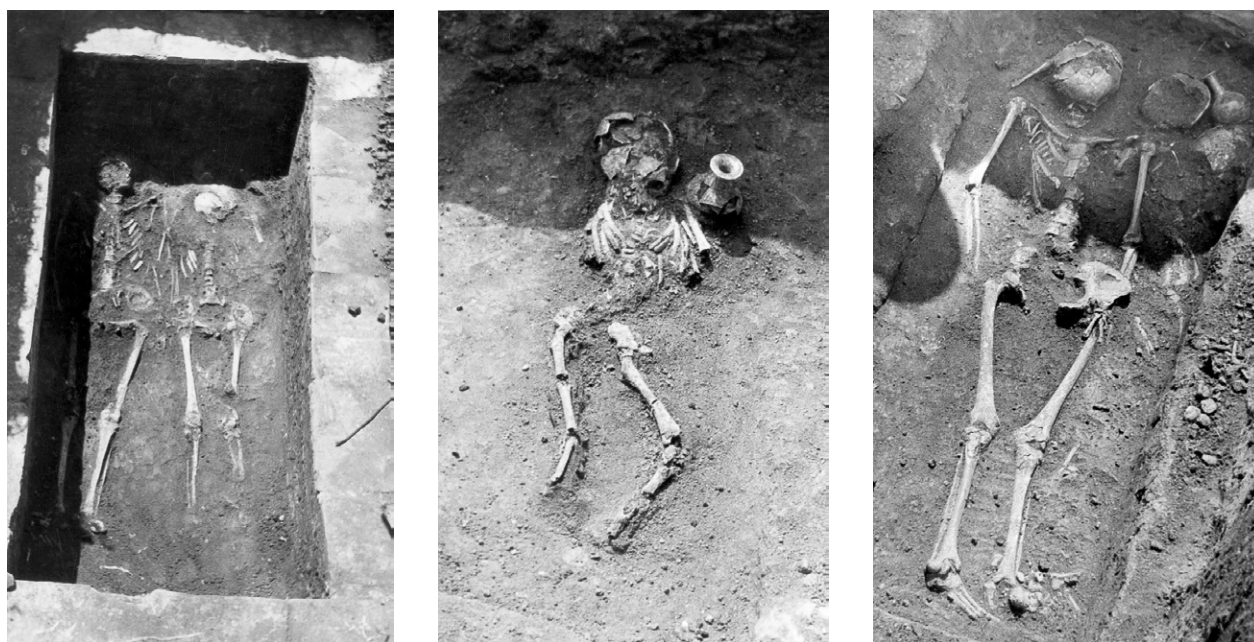


Fig. 4. Grave with a construction of bricks II O-93, 1961 (photo-documentation of Institute of Archaeology)  
Fig. 5–6. Examples of laying a bottle next to the deceased: Graves II L-50 (fig. 5) and II L-59 (fig. 6), 1961 (photo documentation of the Institute of Archaeology, featuring N. Borić)

Сл. 4. Зидани гроб II O-93, 1961 (фото-документација Археолошког института)

Сл. 5–6. Примери полагања боца поред покојника: гробови II Л-50 (сл. 5) и II Л-59 (сл. 6), 1961 (фото-документација Археолошког института, обрада: Н. Борић)

Jagodin Mala.<sup>37</sup> They are vessels of about 14 cm in height, made of glass of various colours, usually with the body decorated with dip-mould blown ribbing, the favourite motif by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> This type of bottle used to be laid, just like the *unguentaria*, next to the deceased, in the graves as well as in barrel-vaulted tombs (Fig. 5–6).

### Jugs

A smaller number of fragments of jugs are located in the study collection from the excavations of the necropolis in Jagodin Mala (T. V, cat. 25–26). The finding in question is one of a fragment of a funnel-shaped rim with a part of a handle and a band-shaped handle of the vessel, which most likely belonged to a jug. The findings come from layers from the area of the basilica with a crypt (cat. 25) and the necropolis (cat. 26), so the interpretation of these findings in funerary or sacral practices is made difficult because of the unreliable units they belong to.

The fragment of funnel-shaped rim with a part of a handle (cat. 25) most likely belongs to the type of jugs with ovoid containers, characteristic of the Late

Antiquity period, from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Isings form 120a; Ružić 1994, tip II/5).<sup>39</sup> A jug which is 20.5 cm high, made of greenish glass and with the body adorned with oblique ribbing, found during the excavation of the graves in Jagodin Mala in 1954, belongs to this type.<sup>40</sup>

### Lamps

The lamps from the area of the necropolis in Jagodin Mala have not been published so far. In the course of the excavations carried out to date, numerous fragments belonging to this type of vessel were registered, discovered in the zone of the basilica with a crypt (T. VI, cat. 27–29). The specimens in question are those with bell-shaped containers and the bottom in the shape of a teardrop, predominantly made of yellowish glass.

<sup>37</sup> Drča 2000, 218, cat. 9–13.

<sup>38</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 120–121, cat. 111–113.

<sup>39</sup> Ružić 1994, 18, kat. 97–106.

<sup>40</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 123, cat. 117.

The lamps made of glass are placed within the Late Antiquity or Early Byzantine context, most often inside church structures, and sometimes they appear at necropolises too. They were used for the lighting of the tombs during memorial services dedicated to the deceased or to martyrs, or they were left as votive gifts.<sup>41</sup> The bell-shaped lamps with a teardrop-shaped bottom are most frequently found in the Early Byzantine layers of the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century at sites in the provinces of the territory of Serbia.<sup>42</sup> In the territory of *Naissus*, fragments of lamps of this type are registered in the Early Byzantine horizon within the building with an octagon at Gradsko Polje (the excavation of 2016, unpublished), which was assumed to have served as a *palatium* in the Late Antiquity period.<sup>43</sup>

### **Beads**

Beads (T. VI, cat. 30–32), cylindrical and spherical, made of glass or gold, were found in a grave with a simple inhumation (cat. 30), about 100 m to the west of the basilica with a crypt. The two remaining findings of beads are from the disordered layers in the area surrounding the basilica with a crypt (cat. 31, 32), so they can be roughly placed within a wider chronological span of the 4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century.

Beads, as parts of necklaces or pendants on earrings, represent a relatively frequent element of jewellery in female and children's grave units in Jagodin Mala.<sup>44</sup> The largest number of the recorded beads is made of glass, in various shapes (conical, spherical, joint-shaped and polygonal), while in a smaller number they are made of gold leaf, amber, or, less frequently, semi-precious stones, usually combined with glass beads, achieving the effect of diverseness and an imitation of precious materials that were less available to the different social strata of *Naissus* in the Late Antiquity period.

### **Window glass**

The excavations on the territory of Jagodin Mala have recorded several fragments of window glass (cat. 33–37). The findings in question belong to the complex of the basilica with a crypt (5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century). The small number of discovered fragments does not allow for the reconstruction of window panes, and yet, these findings unequivocally indicate that probably both structures, the basilica and the crypt, had glazed windows in their upper zones. These are panels made of glass in the shades of yellow and green, the window panes being 2–3 mm thick and, in one case, a part of a flat rim was registered.

The use of window glass was recorded in numerous church structures of the period between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> century in the Roman provinces in the territory of Serbia: in Brangović, Kladenčište, Caričin Grad, Gradina on Jelica, Nebeske Stolice and other complexes.<sup>45</sup> The window glass findings in question are of inconsistent quality and morphological-technological characteristics. The tradition of window glazing was also confirmed in the structures in *Naissus* and the nearby *Mediana* during the Late Antiquity, especially during the 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century (the building with an octagon in Gradsko Polje, Niš and multiple structures at *Mediana*).

### **Mosaic tesserae**

The basilica with a crypt on Nikola Tesla Boulevard had rich interior decoration, which included mosaic pavements and fresco-painted walls, out of which only individual tesserae or fresco fragments have been preserved.<sup>46</sup> The data concerning the look, position and size of the floor mosaic and possible mosaic wall decoration are, unfortunately, missing since, at the moment of the discovery, the complex had already been badly damaged, even in the lower zones. We have learnt about the mosaic decoration as a result of the findings of a large number of red, dark blue, grey and whitish tesserae made of marble and stone (study collection of the National Museum in Niš). Among the tesserae, a couple of specimens made of glass were discovered, their dimensions being 0.7 x 0.7 and 1.1 x 1.1 cm (cat. 38). These findings come from the layer at the west side of the west wall of the basilica, but they probably adorned the floor of the central nave of this structure.

The glass *tesserae* were mostly used for finer details (figural, floral, and zoomorphic) of the floor mosaics or minutely detailed works on wall mosaics (*opus musivum*). The use of glass tiles was ascertained on the floor and wall mosaics in neighbouring *Mediana*,<sup>47</sup> but in this case there is certainly no continuity of the local mosaic workshop, considering the chronological gap of at least one century.

<sup>41</sup> Uboldi 1995, 94, 96–97.

<sup>42</sup> Ružić 1994, tip XII/2, 55–56, kat. 1149–1189; Metzger, Duval 2010, 419, fig. V, 56, a; Križanac 2015, 347, Fig. 5/84–100.

<sup>43</sup> Čerškov, Jeremić, Vitezović 2016, 104–105, with older literature.

<sup>44</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 87–94, cat. 53–67.

<sup>45</sup> Pecikoza 2016, 329–340; Križanac 2016, 271–282.

<sup>46</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 152, cat. 174–175.

<sup>47</sup> Jeremić 2010, 138–139.



### Discussion and conclusion

The glass material from the National Museum in Niš (study collection and the inventories), which comes from the excavations at the eastern necropolis of *Naissus* in the modern-day city district of Jagodin Mala, represents a significant collection of glass findings from the period of the Late Antiquity and gives a good insight into the repertoire, technological achievements and the use of this group of findings in the final periods of the development of *Naissus* in Late Antiquity.

The necropolis, established along the main road to *Ratiaria*, used to occupy a considerable area of land, the borders of which were determined by the excavations, which point to an area of about 800 x 350 m.<sup>48</sup> Although the graves do not overlap, the research of this necropolis clearly defined two horizons of burials, which also correspond to certain historical and socio-economic changes in the very city of *Naissus*.

The graves and tombs erected during the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century belong to the first period. These are the findings of monumental grave architecture which, in the territory of *Naissus* in previous periods, had not been recorded, either by archaeological excavations or by random findings. Family mausoleums were erected along the main road and probably in the vicinity of church buildings.<sup>49</sup> The custom of laying glass vessels next to the deceased is recorded in both brick-built graves and simple inhumation burials, or next to the deceased buried in cist graves, and they certainly represent a consistent burial practice. The vessels were laid either next to the head or by the feet of the deceased.

Laying glass vessels into the graves of the Late Antiquity period has its roots in an earlier Roman practice of offering a liquid sacrifice to the decedents – a libation.<sup>50</sup> Different shapes of glass vessels probably had different roles in burial customs, during the funeral. Next to most of the deceased, glass *unguentaria* were found, or, as their equivalent, a smaller bottle. Vessels like these probably contained a measure of liquid content for the decedent.<sup>51</sup> There has been no analysis of the contents of the *unguentaria* from Jagodin Mala, but we assume that they couldn't have been significantly different from the contents of containers in Italy or in the northern provinces in which the remains of scented oils, musk, sesame and almond oil and amber powder were registered.<sup>52</sup>

Beakers, as the containers for drinking liquids, in which a liquid did not necessarily have to be laid in the grave, probably used to be put in graves together with

ceramic or glass jugs as a part of the grave set with which, symbolically, liquid was taken. A good example of a beaker used as a part of a set, and not a vessel in which liquid was laid in the grave, was given by a grave finding from 2012, from the area of the Benetton factory, in the south-eastern part of the necropolis. Namely, in a simple inhumation grave a grey fired jug with a beaker that was placed on it upside down was found.<sup>53</sup>

In the first burial horizon, decedents were often laid in graves with rich personal jewellery and equipment, and among the jewellery, bracelets or necklaces made of beads are predominant, in most cases made of glass of various colours.<sup>54</sup>

The period in which the burials were carried out in the first horizon in Jagodin Mala corresponds to one of the most prosperous periods in the history of *Naissus*. The city, according to written sources and archaeological evidence, was thriving in the Late Antiquity, from the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>55</sup> Two emperors were born in *Naissus*, Constantine I and Constantius III, and it is known from sources that Constantine significantly influenced the visual identity of the city and initiated notable construction works.<sup>56</sup> *Naissus* is an important seat in which the rulers of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century often resided, passed acts, and had an organised court

<sup>48</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 17.

<sup>49</sup> With the excavations carried out so far, out of the four registered cemetery churches, one was dated to the Constantinian epoch, according to the findings of a copper coin of Constantine I. The unreliability of the data from the research in 1933–1934, when the remains of the foundations of a structure with a semicircular wall on the west end were unearthed, do not allow for the interpretation of this structure as a church (Oršić Slavetić 1934, fig. 4), but rather opens the possibility of a different interpretation, that it might have been a Late Antique mausoleum with a dome (Jeremić, Filipović 2016, 1746).

<sup>50</sup> Zotović 1975, 48.

<sup>51</sup> During the excavations in 1954 in the area of the “Ratko Pavlović” factory, a glass jug with remains of a liquid was found in one barrel-vaulted tomb, which the researchers assumed to represent the remains of the original content, and which the laboratory analyses showed to be just pure water. However, water could have been collected in the vessel over the course of time, and not represent its original content. Cf. Haevernick 1965, 118–120. The findings from the tomb with two deceased buried in oak coffins, contained, apart from the above mentioned glass jug, another jug made of glass and a ceramic amphora, dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> century (*Jagodin Mala* 2014, cat. 115, 117, 153).

<sup>52</sup> Veržár-Bass, 1998, 170.

<sup>53</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, cat. 109, 159.

<sup>54</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, 87–94, cat. 53–55, 57–66.

<sup>55</sup> Petrović 1979, 39–47.

<sup>56</sup> Petrović 1979, 39–40.

with workshops for the production of objects made of noble metals, in which valuable objects given as rewards, *largitio*, to those who deserved them were produced.<sup>57</sup> The presence of the emperor, the court and court's craftsmen in *Naissus* certainly represented a model and inspiration to the population and probably provided a powerful momentum to the development of economic activity, both on a wide and smaller scale (the development of the public *fabrica*, smaller factories or private workshops – *officinae*), where objects used in the burial practice at the necropolis in Jagodin Mala could have been created. A higher standard of living of the citizens, or a display of the desired, but possibly not real status, was reflected in the burial rites through the rich and abundant inventory of the graves and tombs, among which the glass material has an important place.<sup>58</sup>

The decline of the economy and the standard of living in *Naissus* can be traced throughout the first decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and would culminate in the invasions of the Huns in 441 and 447, when a large portion of the population perished and numerous buildings were destroyed or damaged.<sup>59</sup> During this period, the church organisation becomes increasingly important, and its strengthening can best be traced through the intense construction activity and developed production of objects for liturgical purposes or through the equipping of churches with artisanal and art works and objects. This rise can best be seen in the example of early Christian cemetery churches in Jagodin Mala, which are the best researched ones in *Naissus* and which, in spite of the evident decline of the city population and, therefore, the number of individual and collective burials, were erected in several places on the necropolis during the period of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>60</sup> This could as a result of the fact that most of the cult activities connected to the rites after the burial, which previously used to be performed next to the graves, were displaced in the Early Byzantine period and moved to the cemetery churches.<sup>61</sup>

Glass had multiple uses in the furnishing of cemetery churches. Out of all the recorded structures from the area of the necropolis, in the Museum in Niš today there are objects from the complex of the basilica with a crypt in Nikola Tesla Boulevard. From the archaeological material we can see that the craftsmen, the mosaic makers (*tessellarii*, *musivarii*), used glass *tesserae* to decorate the interior of this complex, either for the elaborate wall compositions or those on the floors, of which, unfortunately, nothing but the *tesserae* remained. The structure also had glazed windows of an unknown shape and glass lamps set into metal *polycandela* –

chandeliers, which made it possible to attend services and vigils in the evening hours, or lighted the underground chambers or the spaces that could not be reached by daylight.

The number of glass findings of this period is very scarce and it is very difficult to link it to any grave unit. A stemmed goblet, entirely preserved,<sup>62</sup> which, by its morphological and technological properties, corresponds to this chronological stratum, as well as a fragment of the base of a vessel of the same kind (cat. 11), are found outside the defined grave units and they cannot be attributed to a set for offering liquid grave gifts with any degree of certainty. The vessels like these could sometimes have had a different purpose – they could have been used as lamps. The scarceness of the rest of the grave inventory or, in most cases, its absence, in the graves of the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century, leads to the assumption that in this period a certain discontinuity or a change in burial customs of the population of Early Byzantine *Naissus* occurred, where the new generations neglected, or abandoned altogether, certain old, pagan practices.

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*Translated by Jelena Mitić*

<sup>57</sup> Drča 1983, 10; Popović 1997, 134–138; Vasić 2008, 12–21.

<sup>58</sup> Jeremić, Čerškov, Vulović 2014, 99–101.

<sup>59</sup> Petrović 1979, 40–41.

<sup>60</sup> Oršić Slavetić 1934, 304, fig. 1; Jeremić, Filipović 2016, 1746–1747.

<sup>61</sup> Zotović 1975, 50; Rebillard 2012, 134–146.

<sup>62</sup> *Jagodin Mala* 2014, cat. 110.

## CATALOGUE

**1.** Sector I/1962, Martirium (Square C5), depth 0.78 m, field inv. No. 30

diameter of the rim 7.8 cm

Funnel-shaped rim and semi-spherical container with vertical incisions on a bowl made of yellowish-green glass.

**2.** Tomb in Ratka Pavlovića Street no. 63, random finding

diameter of the rim 9.0 cm

Part of a circular, funnel-shaped rim, of a vessel made of yellowish glass.

**3.** Trench II-D/1960, grave below the wall, depth 0.96 m (0.20 m SE of the right foot)

diameter of the rim 9.5 cm

Fragment of funnel-shaped rim of a bowl vessel made of greenish glass.

**4.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square B4 (east of wall I), depth 0.46 m

diameter of the rim 10.8 cm

Fragment of a mildly funnel-shaped rim and semi-spherical container of a vessel made of light greenish glass.

**5.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square B4 (south of wall III and north of grave 7), depth 0.87 m, under the layer with lime

diameter of the rim 8.5 cm

Funnel-shaped rim and semi-spherical container of a vessel made of greenish glass, with thicker walls.

**6.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square B5, depth 0.46 m

diameter of the rim 10.0 cm

Funnel-shaped rim and semi-spherical container of a vessel made of olive green glass, with thicker walls.

**7.** Trench I-B/1962, grave 3

diameter of the rim 7.0 cm

Fragment of funnel-shaped rim and semi-spherical container of a smaller vessel made of greenish glass.

**8.** Trench II-D/1957, depth 1.10 m

diameter of the rim 10.5 cm

Fragment of a mildly funnel-shaped rim of a beaker made of translucent yellowish glass. There is a shallow, wider fluting on the outer side below the rim and on the body.

**9.** Trench H/1967, depth 0.20 m

diameter of the rim 7.0 cm

Fragment of a plain rim and conical container of a vessel made of yellowish-green glass, with thinner walls.

**10.** Trench H/1967, depth 0.20 m

diameter of the rim 7.0 cm

Fragment of an inverted and ring-shaped rim of a vessel made of yellowish glass.

**11.** Trench H/1967, depth 1.15 m

bottom diameter 4.2 cm

Fragment of a conical foot, ring-shaped rim of a vessel made of yellowish glass.

**12.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square D2, depth 0.82 m

bottom diameter 3.2 cm

Part of a conical container and flat bottom on a ring-shaped foot of a vessel made of yellowish-green glass.

**13.** Grave II E-22/1960, field inv. No. 5

rim diameter 1.7 cm, height 6.7 cm, bottom diameter 2.8 cm

Ring-shaped rim, cylindrical neck, shoulder, square-shaped body with four indentations and concave bottom of a vessel made of thin colourless glass.

**14.** Grave II E-26/1960, field inv. No. 9

rim diameter 2.6 cm, bottom diameter 3.4 cm

Ring-shaped rim, cylindrical neck, part of the shoulder and slightly concave bottom of a vessel made of thin colourless glass.

**15.** Grave II O-93/1961, field inv. No. 55

rim diameter 3.2 cm, bottom diameter 4.0 cm

Ring-shaped rim, short funnel-shaped neck, shoulder and round conical bottom of a vessel made of greenish glass.

**16.** Grave II D-28/1960, field inv. No. 9

rim diameter 2.1 cm, bottom diameter 3.2 cm

Ring-shaped rim, cylindrical neck, shoulder and round conical bottom of a vessel made of thin colourless glass.

**17.** Tomb II M-79/1961, by the head of the northern skeleton (from NW corner 0.15 m to the south and 0.35 m to the east), depth 1.37 m

rim diameter 2.4 cm, bottom diameter 2.8 cm

Fragment of a ring-shaped rim and slightly funnel-shaped neck, part of the shoulder and round, slightly

concave bottom of a toilet bottle made of light blue glass.

**18.** Tomb II M-79/1961, by the head of the northern skeleton (from NW corner 0.25 m to the south and 0.43 m to the east), depth 1.37 m  
rim diameter 2.0 cm  
Fragment of a ring-shaped rim and part of the neck of a toilet bottle made of light yellowish glass.

**19.** Tomb II M-79/1961, by the head of the northern skeleton  
height 7.5 cm  
Fragmented spindle-shaped toilet bottle, slightly widened across the middle, narrowing towards the bottom, made of whitish glass.

**20.** Sector II/1962, grave below the foundations of the Dom srednjoškolske omladine (boarding school) in Kosovke devojke street no. 6  
South wall, west of the entrance  
rim diameter 5.8 cm  
Flared rim and cylindrical neck of a vessel made of greenish glass. On the outer side below the rim there is a moulded band.

**21.** (a finding from the tomb together with previous cat. No. 20)  
Fragment of ring-shaped and wider funnel-shaped inverted rim and shoulder of a vessel made of yellowish glass. On the outer side below the rim there is a moulded band.

**22.** Sector II, sewage units in Kosovke devojke street, Block 13, tomb II 13-2, depth 2.20 m  
bottom diameter 5.4–5.8 cm  
Cylindrical neck, spherical body and concave bottom of a bottle made of green glass.

**23.** Sector II/1962, grave below the foundations of the Dom srednjoškolske omladine (boarding school) in Kosovke devojke street no. 6  
South wall – west of the entrance  
height 7.0 cm  
Cylindrical neck and a part of the shoulder of a larger vessel made of yellowish-green glass.

**24.** Sector II/1962, grave below the foundations of the Dom srednjoškolske omladine (boarding school) in Kosovke devojke street no. 6

South wall – west of the entrance  
bottom diameter 5.8 cm  
Slightly concave bottom on a ring-shaped hollow foot of a vessel made of greenish glass.

**25.** Trench I-D/1962, depth 0.30 m  
rim diameter 4.0 cm  
Circular, funnel-shaped rim of a vessel made of greenish glass. Below the rim on the outer side a band-shaped, double-folded handle is applied.

**26.** Trench II-A/1961, profile A–D  
width 2.3 cm  
Fragment of a band-shaped handle with three vertical flutings preserves made of greenish-bluish glass.

**27.** Trench I-A/1962, depth 2.10 m, field inv. No. 16, 17  
Fragment of a slightly ring-shaped rim, spherical container and teardrop-shaped bottom of a vessel made of yellowish glass.

**28.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square D3, depth 0.97 m  
Part of a container and teardrop-shaped bottom of a vessel made of yellowish glass.

**29.** Sector I/1962, Basilica  
Trench on the outside of wall I, a finding from the extension above grave 4  
Part of a container and teardrop-shaped bottom of a vessel made of yellowish glass.

**30.** Grave I E-13/1962, depth 2.00 m, field inv. No. 91  
gold, glass  
Four larger and nine smaller beads made of green glass, seven smaller specimens made of red glass and one cylindrical bead made of gold leaf.

**31.** Trench I A/1962, depth 1.63 m, field inv. No. 14  
dimensions: 1.8 x 0.6 cm  
Spindle-shaped bead made of black glass, with circular, vertical perforation across the middle.

**32.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square D3, depth 0.91 m  
dimensions: 1.0 x 0.7 cm  
Larger blue glass bead.

**33.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square B4, depth 1.22 m  
thickness 0.2–0.3 cm  
Two fragments of smooth light green window glass.

**34.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square B5, depth 0.70 m  
thickness 0.2 cm

Fragment of the edge of light greenish window glass.

**35.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, squares D2–D3, depth  
1.20 m

In the layer below the wooden beam and rammed earth  
wall of III pilasters  
thickness 0.3–0.4 cm

Three fragments of smooth greenish window glass.

**36.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square D4, depth 0.42 m  
thickness 0.2–0.3 cm

Several fragments of smooth yellowish-green window  
glass.

**37.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square D5, depth 0.84 m  
thickness 0.2 cm

Two fragments of smooth yellowish window glass.

**38.** Sector I/1962, Martirium, square C5, depth 1.08 m,  
between wall 6 and east side of wall IIb  
dimensions: 0.7 x 0.7 cm and 1.1 x 1.1 cm

Yellowish glass *tesserae*.

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## НЕОБЈАВЉЕНИ НАЛАЗИ ОД СТАКЛА СА ИСТОЧНЕ НЕКРОПОЛЕ НАИСУСА (ЈАГОДИН МАЛА, НИШ)

*Кључне речи.* – касна антика, Јагодин мала, *Naissus* – Ниш, некропола, базилика, стаклене посуде, предмети од стакла.

Систематским археолошким истраживањима највеће градске некрополе касноантичког Наисуса (*Naissus*, Ниш), које је током 1952–1967. године спроводио Археолошки институт из Београда са сарадницима, у градској четврти Јагодин мали утврђени су бројни гробни облици, разноврстан археолошки материјал, а у већем обиму испитан је и најзначајнији комплекс гробљанске базилике са припадајућом криптом. Ископавањима су утврђене границе простирања некрополе, која се формирала источно од касноантичких бедема града, дуж магистралног пута за Рацијарију (*Ratiaria* – Арчар), на десној обали Нишаве. Овим радовима одређене су хронолошке границе некрополе – сахрањивање у Јагодин мали вршено је у континуитету од времена Константина I па све до краја VI, односно првих деценија VII века. На некрополи се јасно издвајају два хоризонта сахрањивања, и то IV – прва половина V века и средина V – VI/почетак VII века, код којих се јављају разлике у гробним облицима и погребној пракси.

На некрополи у Јагодин мали забележени су током истраживања релативно бројни покретни налази, међу којима се нарочито издвајају налази од стакла. Део стакленог материјала, који је чинио главни инвентар Народног музеја у Нишу, био је предмет проучавања (Ružić 1994; Drča 2000; *Jagodin mala*, 2014), док студијски материјал није посебно разматран. Намера истраживача била је да се уради типолошка, топографска и функционална анализа ове врсте материјала и да се представе нове, до сада непубликоване врсте налаза, као што су лампе, мозаичке тесере и прозорска окна, а потом да се овај материјал сагледа у ширем контексту стаклених налаза са некрополе.

Међу стакленим материјалом из студијске збирке Народног музеја у Нишу јављају се зделе као хемисферичне посуде израђене у калупу (кат. 1) или израђене техником слободног дувања (кат. 2–7). Нађене су у гробовима или гробницама (кат. 2, 3, 7), или потичу из слојева са простора некрополе. Сви примерци припадају старијем хоризонту сахрањивања из IV и прве половине V века. Пехари (кат. 8–12) из студијске збирке припадају ширем хронолошком оквиру IV–VI века и везују се за стандардне форме које се срећу на бројним налазиштима централнобалканске области.

По бројности, међу стакленим посудама из Јагодин мале издвајају се тоалетне боце (*unguentaria, balsamaria*) (кат.

13–19), израђене као посуде четвртастог реципијента са удубљењима или примерци дужег или краћег цилиндричног врата и сферичног реципијента, које су полагане поред главе или ногу покојника. Обе врсте посуда везују се за старији хоризонт сахрањивања на некрополи – хоризонт IV и прве половине V века. Овом хронолошком оквиру припадају и релативно малобројне боце (кат. 20–24), крчази (кат. 25–26) и налази делова накита – перле (кат. 30–32).

Из комплекса базилике са криптом на Булевару Николе Тесле, из млађег слоја V–VI века потичу налази стаклених лампи који припадају типу звоноликних примерака са дном у облику капљице (кат. 27–29), а који су се постављали у металне полијелеје – поликандела. Базилика је имала застакљена прозорска окна, о чему сведоче налази фрагментата прозорског стакла (кат. 33–37), док о луксузној декорацији грађевине сведоче налази малог броја стаклених тесера (кат. 38), које су могле бити коришћене за декорацију зидних површина или компликованијих фигуралних приказа на подним мозаицима.

Период у ком су вршене сахране у првом хоризонту IV и прве половине V века у Јагодин мали одговара једном од најпросперитетнијих раздобља у историји Наисуса, судећи према писаним изворима и археолошким траговима. Виши стандард или представљање прижељкиваног статуса огледа се у погребном ритусу код ове популације у богатом и бројном инвентару гробова и гробница, међу којима стаклени материјал има значајно место.

Опадање привреде и животног стандарда у Наисусу кулминирало је у време најезде Хуна 441. и 447. године, када је дошло до страдања великог дела популације и до уништења или оштећења бројних грађевина. Од тог периода на значају добија црквена организација, чије се јачање може пратити кроз интензивну градитељску делатност и развијену производњу предмета за литургијске потребе или кроз опремање цркава занатским и уметничким радовима и предметима. Иако је у периоду V и VI века евидентно смањење градске популације у Наисусу, а самим тим и броја индивидуалних и колективних сахрана, на више места на некрополи у Јагодин мали подигнуте су цркве, у којима је могао бити обављан већи број култних радњи везаних за погребне обреде.



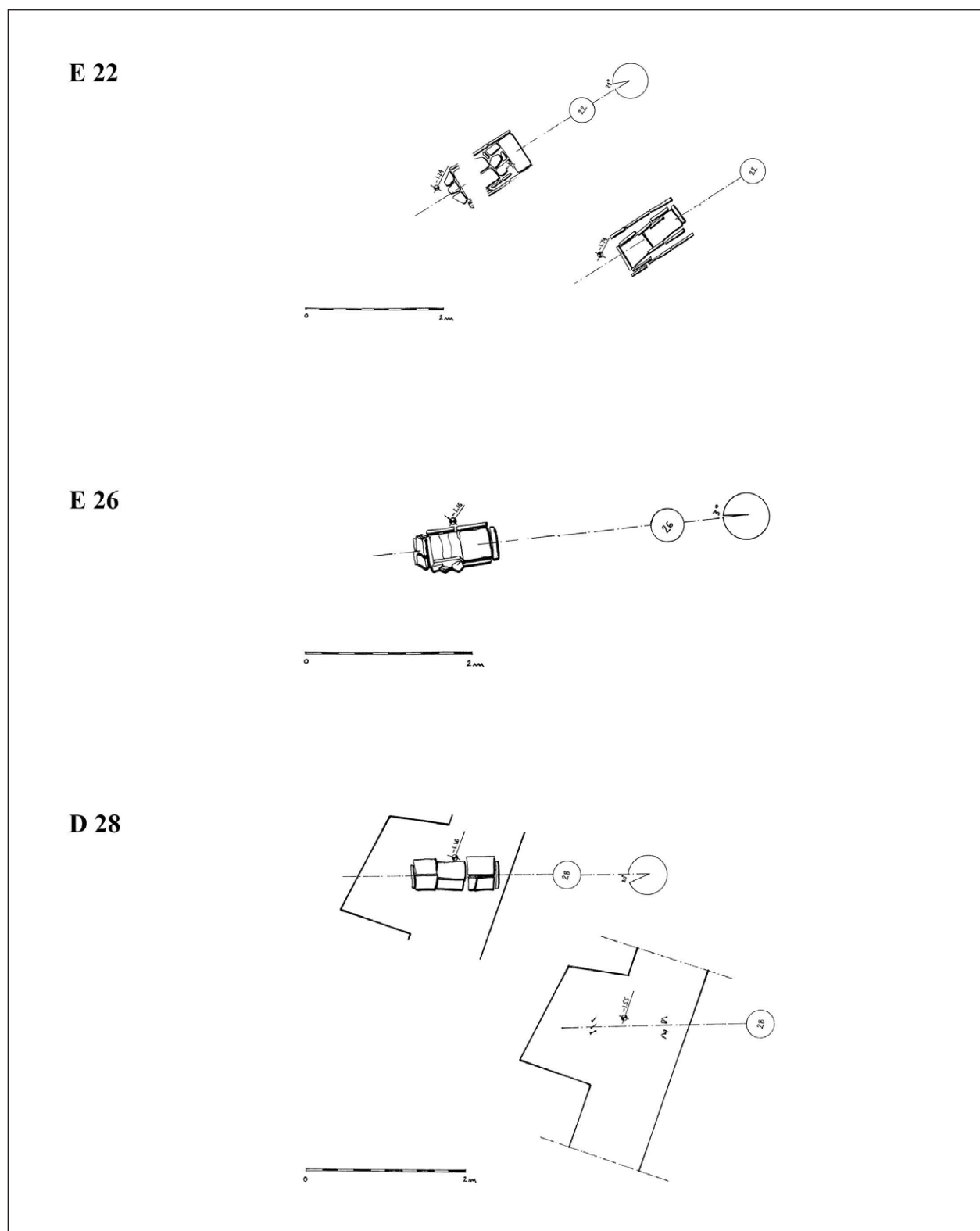


Plate I – Grave II E–22, 1960; Grave II E–26, 1960; Grave II D–28, 1960  
(drawing V. General'ski, documentation of the Institute of Archaeology)

Табла I – Гроб II E–22, 1960; гроб II E–26, 1960; гроб II Д–28, 1960  
(цртеж: В. Генералски, документација Археолошкој институцији)

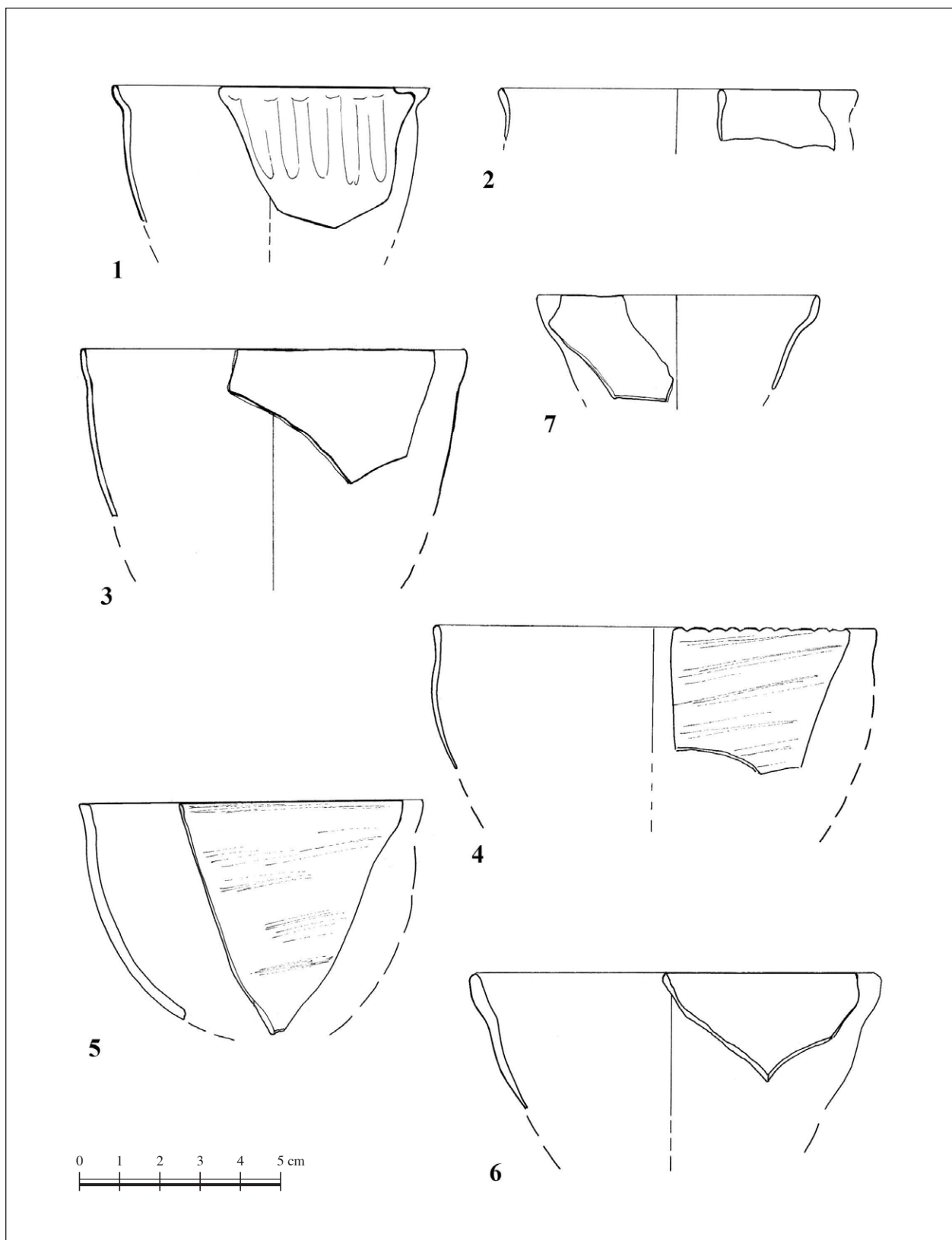


Plate II – Glass vessels: 1–7) hemispherical bowls

Табла II – Стаклене посуде: 1–7) хемисферичне зделе

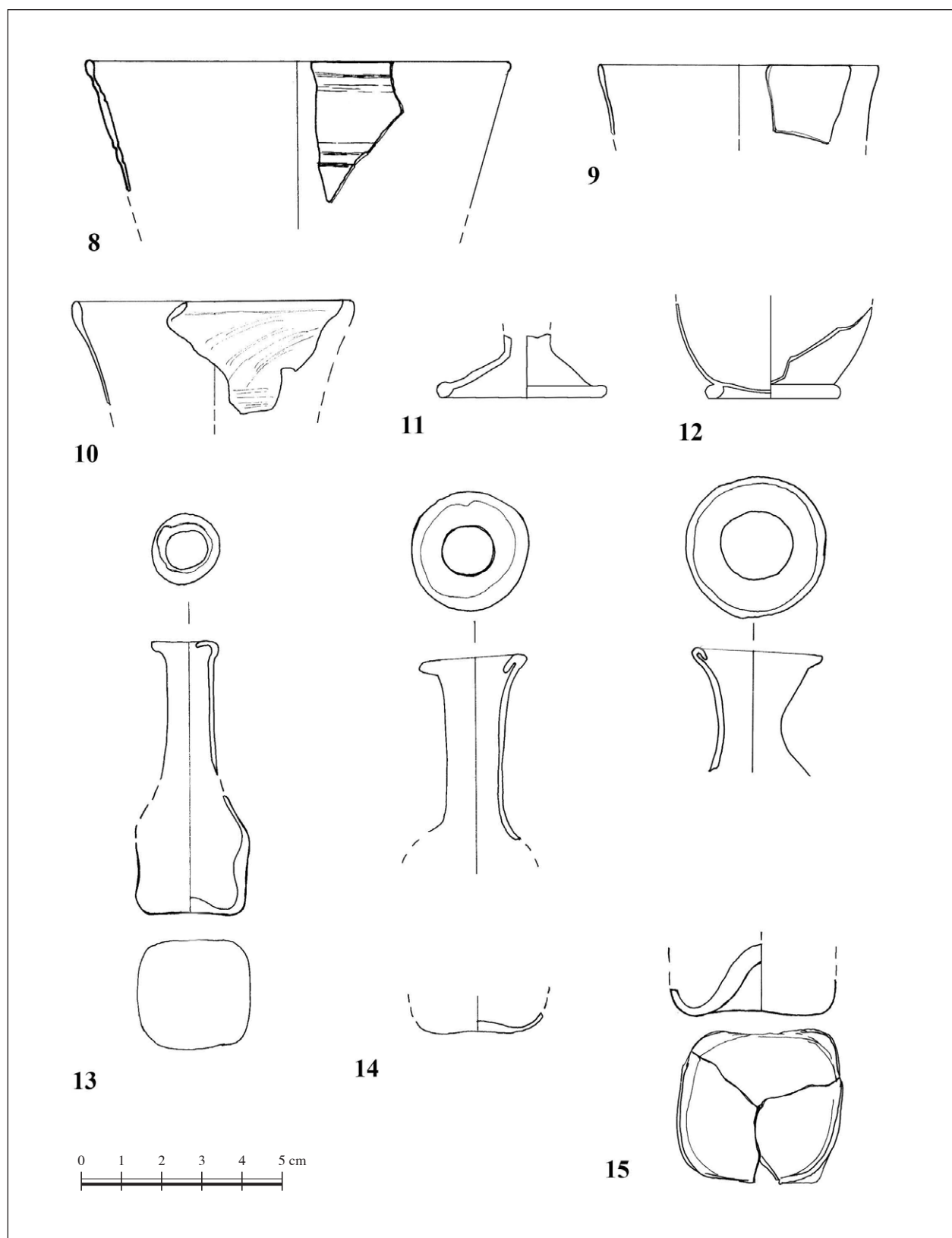


Plate III – Glass vessels: 8–12) conical beakers; 13–15) toilet bottles

Табла III – Стаклене посуде: 8–12) конични пехари; 13–15) тоалетне боце

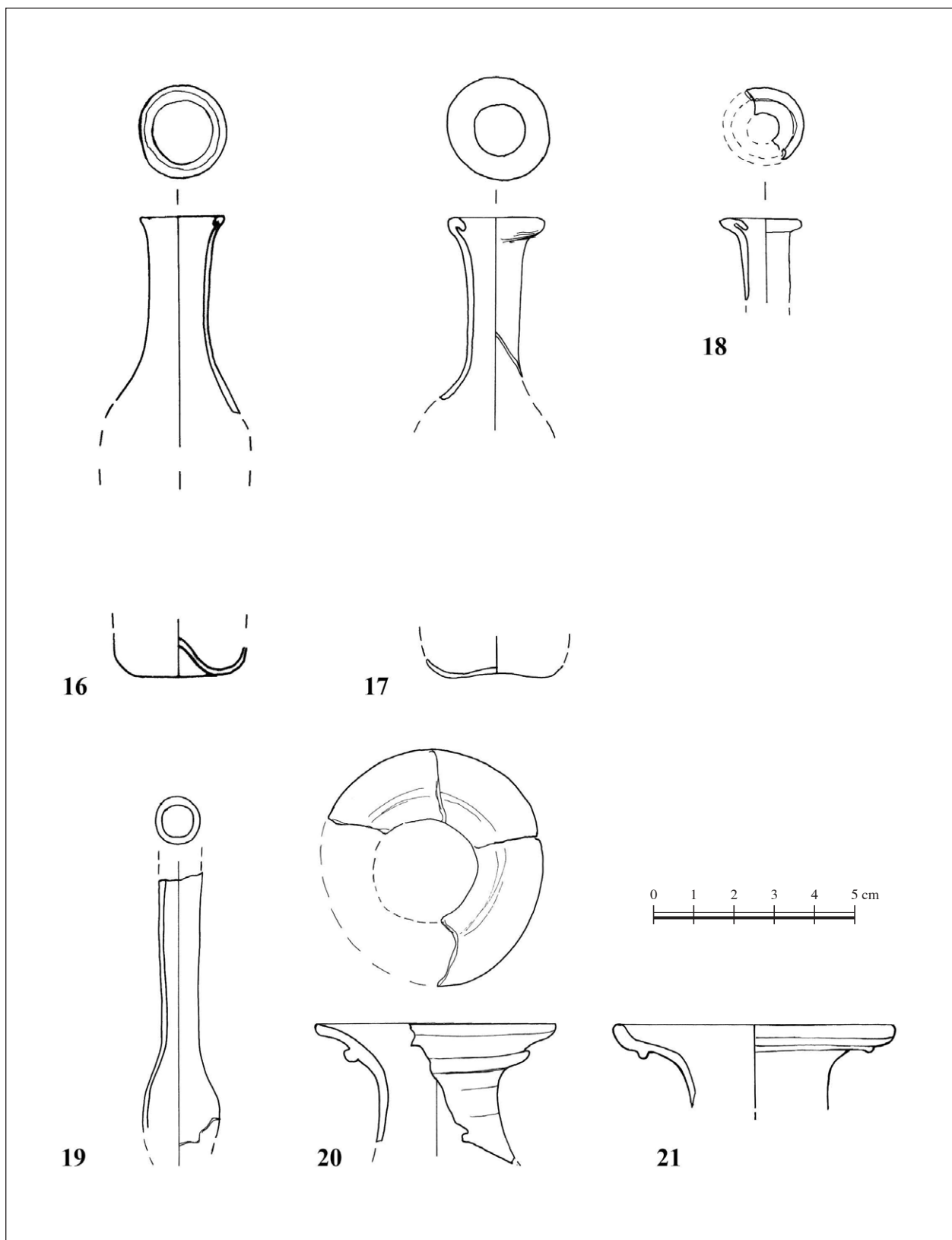


Plate IV – Glass vessels: 16–19) toilet bottles; 20–21) bottles

Табла IV – Стаклене посуде: 16–19) тоалетне боце; 20–21) боце

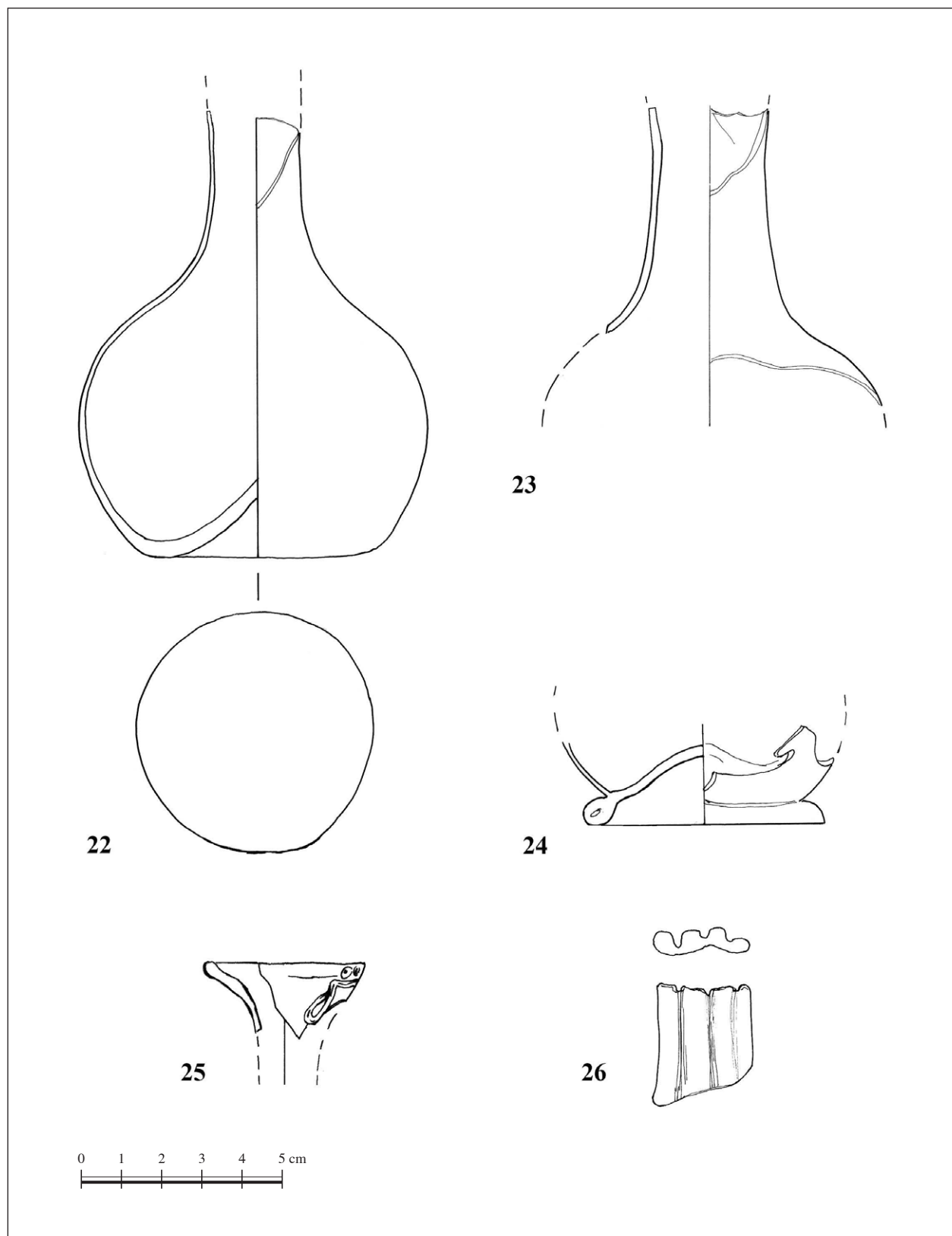


Plate V – Glass vessels: 22–24) bottles; 25–26) jugs

Табла V – Стаклене посуде: 22–24) боце; 25–26) крчази

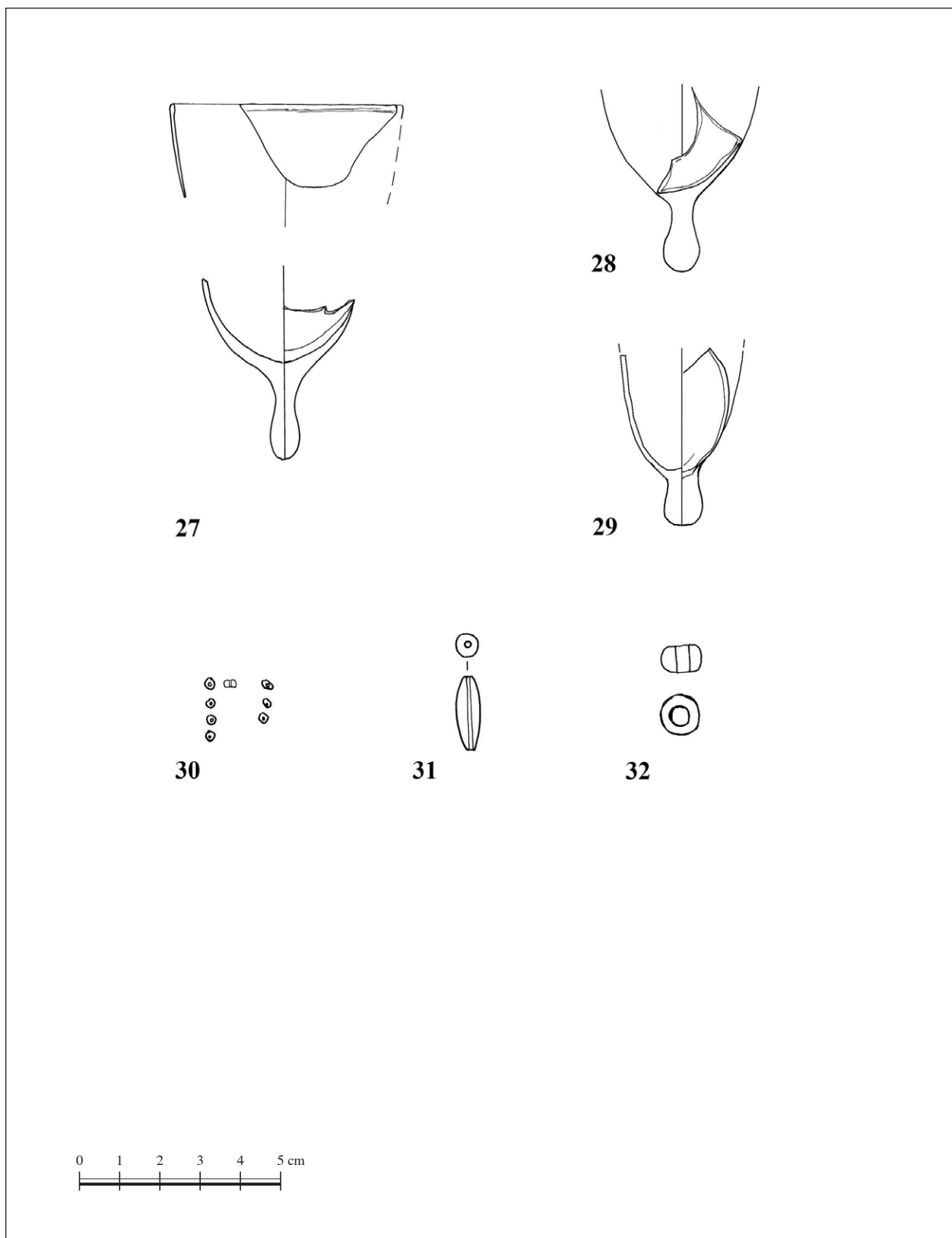


Plate VI – Glass vessels: 27–29) lamps; Jewellery: 30–32) beads

Табла VI – Стаклене посуде: 27–29) лампе; накит: 30–32) перле