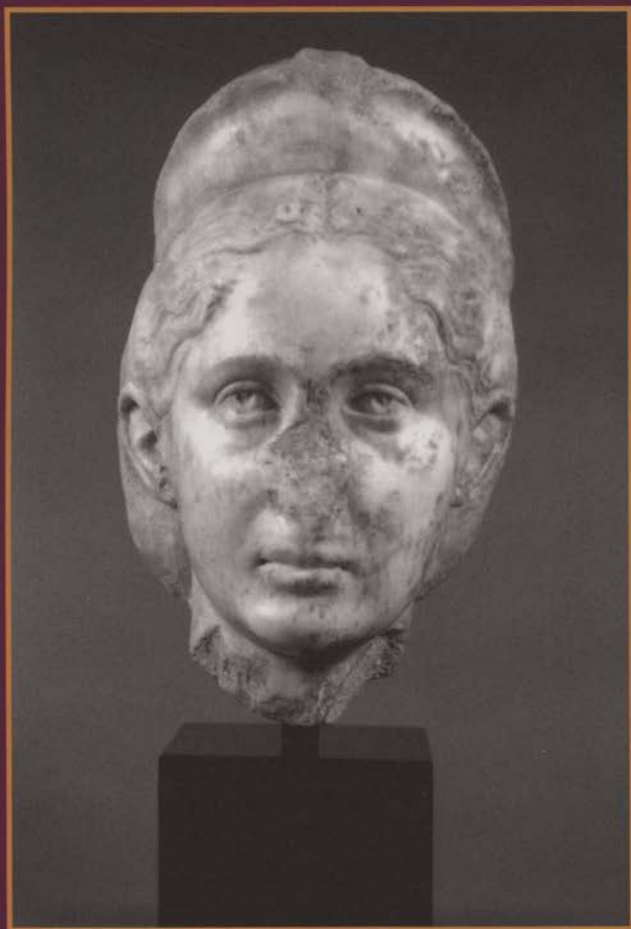


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†GLADYS D. WEINBERG

E. Marianne Stern

In September 2000, I gave a lecture in honor of Dr. Gladys D. Weinberg (Fig. 1) at the Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri. The following text is an annotated and edited version of the first half of the lecture.¹ That visit to Columbia was to be the last time I saw her alive. My first contact with her had been in the 1970s on the advice of the Israeli glass expert Dan Barag. I had mailed him a copy of my first book on ancient glass in recognition of his assistance when I researched the subject in Israel. Dan Barag suggested I send copies to two scholars: one was Gladys Weinberg in the United States and the other was Nina Sorokina in Russia. At that time, the superpowers were not on friendly terms, but glass scholars strove to maintain contact. I was a newcomer and had just embarked on a university career in the Netherlands. I felt embarrassed about sending my publication to such eminent scholars. Gladys's response was characteristically double-edged: "You have set yourself a very high standard; it will be difficult to keep up."

When I refer to Dr. Weinberg as Gladys, I mean no disrespect. It reflects the personal friendship that grew between us as our paths converged in the wake of shared interests. She has been my role model for publishing ancient glass ever since I wrote my first article. Over the years, Gladys and her husband Saul supported me and my research in many ways. I was delighted by the opportunity to thank her publicly for all that she had done for me.

My remarks here are limited strictly to her publications on ancient glass. I have tried to convey the significance of her research in this field and attempted to explain why she was such a dominant figure in ancient glass studies. She had many accomplishments in other areas such as the founding and editing of *Muse*, editing *Archaeology Magazine* in its infancy, and with Saul creating and then sustaining the Museum of Art and Archaeology. Her friends and colleagues in Columbia can address these issues far more competently.

Her very first publication—at least in my card index—was already indicative of her future research interests: an article in the *American Journal of Archaeology* of 1940 on a medieval glass factory at Corinth [1]. The fact that the subject was an

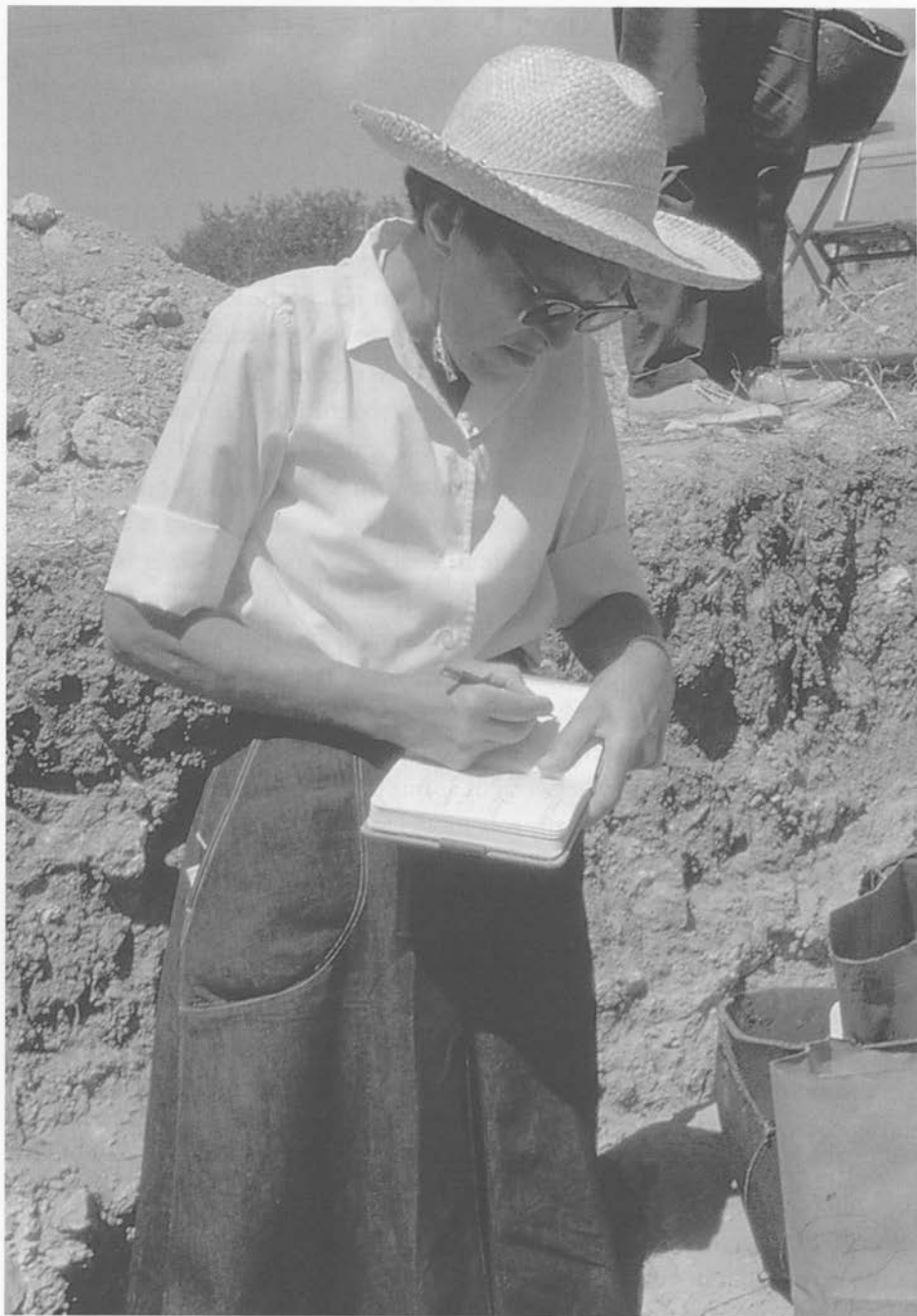


Fig. 1. Gladys D. Weinberg at Jalame, Israel.

eleventh-century glass factory proved to be prophetic of the broad chronological range her research would cover, exceptional for a classical archaeologist and comparable to that of Donald Harden, the founder of modern glass studies. The article itself touches on two of the three areas in which Gladys was eventually to become the leading authority not only in the United States, but worldwide, namely glass in Greece and the excavation of glass factories.

The article on the medieval glass factory was followed in 1952 by a volume [3] in the series on the excavations at ancient Corinth, published by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. The publication was devoted not only to the glass from the excavations, but also to all the small finds, objects that are notoriously difficult to classify and interpret. The volume's title, *The Minor Objects*, belies the significance of the contents. Gladys was the first to publish any glass from Greece in a scholarly fashion, and she put Greece firmly on the map for ancient glass studies. Not only that—for the next fifty years all major studies on ancient glass in Greece were to be from her hand. Glass in ancient Greece is the number one area in which she was the world's leading scholar.

"The art of glassmaking is not one of the accomplishments for which ancient Greece is renowned." This is the first sentence of her important publication *Glass Vessels in Ancient Greece* (1992) [55]. This book was yet another significant first for ancient glass from Greece: Gladys presented here the first (and to my knowledge sole) history of glass in ancient Greece. I continue the quote from her foreword:

From the extant works of Greek and Roman authors we learn of famous centers of glass production—Alexandria, Sidon, Rome— never once of Greece. But archaeological discoveries tell us otherwise. Material evidence shows clearly that Greece did indeed have a place in the development of this craft, from Mycenaean times through the Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and Early Christian periods, and even in the Middle Ages.

It is precisely this material evidence that led Gladys to identify certain glass shapes as local products of northern Greece (Thessaly) [11], of Crete [6], and of Rhodes [25]. In addition, she published authoritative studies on the glass retrieved from a ship that sank ca. 65 B.C.E. near Antikythera [21], an island just off the southern coast of the Peloponnese, and several studies on selected finds from Corinth [42, 49] and the Athenian Agora [8, 12, 19].

In her book [55], Gladys published a selection of glass vessels in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. The museum owns some of the most amazing glass vessels ever produced in antiquity, such as a stunning, 0.35 m high bottle, which by any account is huge for a glass vessel [55, no. 48]. It comes from a Hellenistic grave in Thessaly. The pattern imitating agate is made with polychrome mosaic canes of brown, white, and purple, and the vessel itself consists of two parts that join at the shoulder. Near the rims of the two parts are small drilled holes for metal fittings to hold top and bottom together. The book contains no less than three such outstanding pieces, all from one or more graves in the same village, Palaiokastro in northern Greece, and all made before the invention of glassblowing. Whereas the how, when, and where of their production has not yet been established, finds such as these and many others which Gladys published for the first time prove that Greece was at the forefront with respect to the use of luxury glass vessels in the Hellenistic period.

Gladys's gorgeously illustrated publication has had an enormous effect on Greek archaeologists who are finally beginning to realize what treasures they possess. Interest in ancient glass is burgeoning. The first international symposium on glass in Greece was held in the spring of 2001 in Rhodes, and building on the firm foundation that Gladys provided, several young scholars are currently exploring the field.² In recent years, they have identified two important Hellenistic production centers, one in Macedonia, the other in Rhodes. It was a matter of course for Gladys to be the first person to whom they sent their publications, and she read them all carefully, whether they were in Greek or some other modern language.

The second area of research for which Gladys was internationally renowned was her quest for ancient glass factories. After noticing that a group of characteristic thick-walled cylindrical containers with domed lids could be traced to southern Crete [55, no. 39], she excavated at a site that looked promising [7]. In this particular instance, the workshop itself eluded discovery, but she kept searching, dogged in her resolve to excavate a factory that would shed light on ancient glass production methods. She found the perfect site in Israel.

The site of Jalame, below the slopes of Mt. Carmel, was destined to be the first glass factory ever excavated with the explicit purpose of understanding the technological process of ancient glass production. The publication is universally regarded as a milestone in ancient glass studies [54, see also 53]. From the beginning, Gladys and Saul worked with the Corning Museum of



Fig. 2. Furnace foundation wall, seen from interior. Reprinted from *Excavations at Jalame*, fig. 3–4, by Gladys D. Weinberg. By permission of the University of Missouri Press. Copyright © 1988 by the Curators of the University of Missouri. Drawing by Jörg Schmeisser.

Glass. The excavation was a joint project of the University of Missouri and the Corning Museum. Paul Perrot, then director of the Corning Museum, served as administrative director, and Corning scientist Robert H. Brill and engineer John F. Wosinski participated in the excavation. The late Frederick Matson, ceramic technologist at Pennsylvania State University, was also a member of the team. Several Missouri students were involved, among them Sidney Goldstein, Gloria Merker, and Barbara Johnson, all of whom wrote sections of the final publication.

All I know about the dig is by hearsay. One fine day, a visitor dropped by and was interested in joining. He became the excavation's draftsman. The drawing of one of the foundation walls of the glassblowing furnace shown in Figure 2 and many other drawings in the final publication are the work of Jörg Schmeisser, an artist whose name has since become familiar in many parts of the world and especially in the Museum of Art and Archaeology. Gladys and Saul "discovered" him.

In the wake of the Jalame publication, it has now become fashionable to illustrate reconstructions of ancient glassblowing methods in almost every book on ancient glass. Unfortunately, most reconstructions do not come near Gladys's scholarly standards. She consulted with contemporary glassblowers, Frederick Schuler and Dominick Labino, but unlike her epigones, she based her queries on specific technical details that could be observed in the factory waste. Furthermore, she stressed that successful duplication does not prove an ancient manufacturing technique; at best, it shows a possible technique. A practicing glassblower myself, I was struck in particular by her observation that the crosscutting shears, one of the most common tools in use nowadays (a tool that is depicted in every modern reconstruction of an ancient technique), was apparently not used at Jalame.

Gladys's work in Rhodes was at the request of the Greek Archaeological Service [35, 50]. They had uncovered the waste from a glass workshop active in the first half of the second century B.C.E. The main production was beads, but certain finds suggested that sandwich gold-glass was being made in the near vicinity. Bead making is a specialty in itself. Even today, glassblowing and bead making are two different crafts. It was characteristic of Gladys's approach that she decided to go and watch bead makers who work traditionally at primitive bead furnaces. Together with the glass artist Baker O'Brien, then Dominick Labino's assistant, Gladys visited several of these workshops in Turkey.

The third area in which Gladys's publications furnish the basis for all future research is the chronology of Hellenistic glass. I have already mentioned her publication of the finds from the shipwreck at Antikythera [55, see also 21]. This material provides the most important evidence for establishing the chronology of Hellenistic glass. The glass vessels, which were part of the ship's cargo, are all of the highest quality and include both polychrome and monochrome ones. Most are familiar types, which previously could not be dated independently. A blue green bowl with delicate decoration in half-raised half-sunken relief is, however, unique: two elaborate leafy sprays, probably meant to be olive, spread out over the entire surface [55, no. 62]. The date of the shipwreck has been established as around 65 B.C.E., based on the coins, amphoras, and other finds.

Numerous fragments of common Hellenistic drinking vessels like the intact conical grooved bowl in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens [55, no. 53] came to light in the Athenian Agora, many in relatively well dated layers. Gladys's publication of these and related bowls from the Agora [8] as well as from two sites in Israel [37, 39] provided evidence for dating the period of their production. The glass from Tel Anafa [37] is of special interest for chronology because it was found during Saul and Gladys's excavation of the site.³ The smooth-walled conical bowls found in abundance at Tel Anafa often occur in the company of ribbed bowls. These are the earliest predecessors of a type that was to dominate early imperial Roman glass. In the area of the rim and the upper part of the ribs the bowls display curious tool marks as can be seen in the drawings of fragments found at Hagoshrim [39] (Fig. 3). Gladys was the first to document and study these tool marks carefully. She concluded that each rib must have been tooled individually. Many years later, Rosemarie Lierke and I conducted practical experiments in the Toledo Museum of Art glass studio and were able to confirm the feasibility of Gladys's hypothesis.

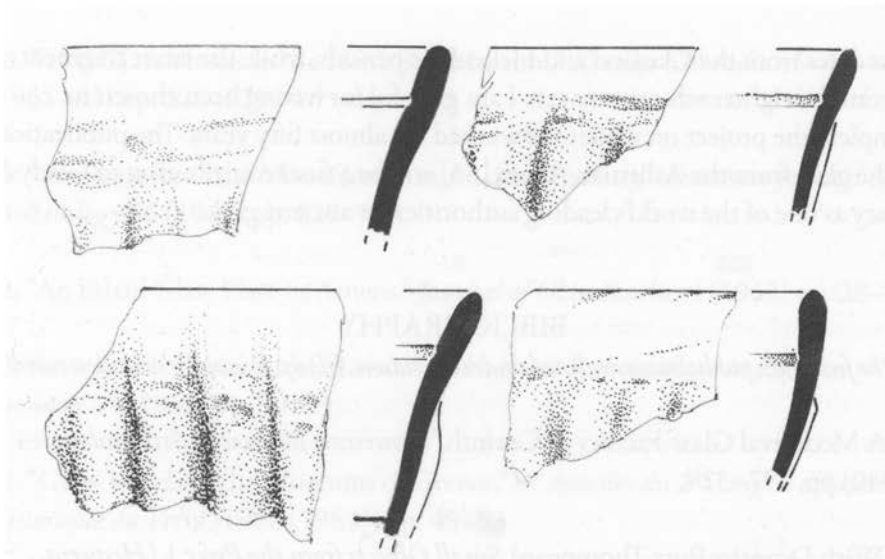


Fig. 3. Profiles of bowl fragments with tooled ribs. First century B.C.E., glass. Museum of Kibbutz Hagoshrim, Israel. From *Journal of Glass Studies* 15 (1973) p. 41, nos. 21, 23, 26, 29.

I have discussed the three areas in which I believe Gladys made the largest impact: ancient glass in Greece, ancient glassblowing facilities, and the chronology of Hellenistic glass. Her bibliography, encompassing fifty-six publications, demonstrates, however, the much wider range of her interests than I have addressed in this brief account.

I would like to conclude this encomium by mentioning some features that characterize all Gladys's publications: an inimitable style of writing, perfection in editing, and last but not least an open mind. Just one personal anecdote—when I was all excited about my discovery that ancient glassblowers would have been able to blow glass without having a pot of molten glass, one colleague remarked “that is not possible.” When I said I did so myself twice a week and asked the reason for this colleague's response, the answer was “because that is just not possible.” Gladys's reaction was “I can't believe that is possible.” Upon which she and Saul drove to Toledo to see for themselves.

Gladys was working hard on the ancient glass found during the ongoing excavations conducted by the American School of Classical Studies in the Athenian Agora, and she had written about two thirds of the volume when disaster struck in 1995. Mentally as sharp as ever but physically incapacitated, she asked me to complete the volume, which Homer Thompson, former director of the Agora Excavations, had commissioned her to write. A large proportion of the

glass dates from the Classical and Hellenistic periods, while the latest fragment is from the eighteenth century C.E. I am grateful for having been chosen to complete the project on which she worked for almost fifty years. The publication of the glass from the Athenian Agora [56] will be a final contribution to Gladys's legacy as one of the world's leading authorities on ancient glass.

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NOTES

1. I am grateful to the museum and its then director Marlene Perchinske for the invitation to participate in the festive celebration of Dr. Weinberg's manifold achievements. I have retained the colloquial tone of the oral delivery. The second half of the lecture became the nucleus for "Kaniskia: Glass and Metal Openwork Lamps," *Annales du 15e Congrès de l'Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre* (2001 [2003]) pp. 98–101.
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E. Marianne Stern, an independent scholar and practicing glass blower, is the author of numerous publications in the fields of classical archaeology and ancient glass. Her latest book, *Roman, Byzantine and Early Medieval Glass: Ernesto Wolf Collection*, appeared in 2001. Her volume (with Gladys D. Weinberg) on the glass vessels from the Athenian Agora is scheduled to appear in 2008.